



## **Personal Address by DeLoG Secretariat**

Dear partners in decentralisation and local governance,

We at the DeLoG Secretariat cannot recall an event of comparable magnitude in our lifetimes. Over the last few weeks COVID-19 has challenged all of us – as professionals but also as citizens and family members. The abilities of local governments are currently being tested as they try to adequately respond to the multi-faceted needs of their citizens in light of this quickly spreading virus.

### **The case for local governance**

The most urgent needs are in the health sector but the challenges for education and economic development are daunting, too. As the DeLoG Network's Secretariat we would like to take this opportunity to underline the importance of decentralisation and local governance endeavours in order to respond to global challenges like the COVID-19 crisis effectively and timely in future.

Well-defined functional assignments, decentralisation mechanisms and effective coordination between central and subnational government enable local governments to efficiently organise local actions. Local governments are in a better position to identify the requirements of the most vulnerable (disadvantaged groups, slum dwellers, homeless people, informal workers) in times of emergency. Thus, they are better able to identify and allocate scarce resources like affordable local materials and ad hoc solutions for protective equipment, quarantine facilities and the mobilisation of inexpensive local labour and volunteers for the epidemic response. Among other organisations our members [UN-Habitat](#) and [UNCDF](#) have published key messages and guidance notes that help to understand the impact and importance of local governance for the COVID-19 outbreak.

### **Challenges for network activities**

As a Network of practitioners and development partners we are dedicated to strengthening governance capacities at the local level. The objective of our Network is to promote more harmonised and aligned interventions and to improve development effectiveness in the field of Decentralisation and Local Governance. Under the uncertain conditions we are forced to adapt to the changes in public life caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The established mode of operation of the Network is limited by the lockdown measures applied worldwide.

### **Staying effective and connected through the DeLoG Network**

To keep in touch and provide services to our members and partners in spite of these challenges, the Secretariat and DeLoG's Strategic Support Group (Steering Committee of the Network), have decided to adjust the way we work. As you might already know, our preparations for the Annual Meeting 2020 have been put on hold. This decision was inevitable, and we would like to thank LOGIN Asia for the efforts they had already put into the preparations. We are currently setting up on-line sessions, and as part of a DeLoG Webinar Series, members and partners will provide specific inputs during the up-coming months. The first Webinar "Local Authorities and the Challenge of Urban Violence" will be organised together with [VNG](#) and will take place mid-May (further information to follow). Last but not least, we want to raise awareness once more for our [DeLoG Twitter Account](#) and the [DeLoG Homepage](#) where we feature news, trends and current discussions in the world of local governance and decentralisation to keep you updated regularly.

Currently it is impossible to predict when we will return to the traditional way of working or if some changes brought about or accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic are here to stay. In the meantime, we can learn from the efforts and endeavors of local governments in fighting the pandemic. We can follow the upcoming



activities and publications of DeLoG members and partner organisations. The responses of local governance and decentralisation approaches are key for tackling COVID-19 and for shaping more resilient, prosperous and equal societies.

Dear colleagues: Enjoy our newsletter, keep in touch and stay healthy,

Sincerely,

Your DeLoG Secretariat