



# bulletin

COMMONWEALTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT FORUM

issue 1/06

■ Promoting democratic local government ■ Sharing good practice

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## Driving the delivery of the MDGs in Africa

**Local government can drive the delivery of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Africa if local democracy, good governance and local government capacity are strengthened.**

This will be the key message at the CLGF Africa regional symposium - Local democracy, good governance and delivering the MDGs in Africa in Uganda on 26-28 April.

More than 150 delegates from across Africa are gathering in Kampala for the symposium, which is being organised by CLGF in partnership with the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Uganda Ministry for Local Government and the Uganda Local Government Association.

The symposium, which will be addressed by Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni, will look at the link between good local governance and service delivery, mechanisms for measuring local democracy, and hear about successful cases where local government has made a difference in realising the MDGs. It will be the first major event in CLGF's democracy programme following the Commonwealth Local Government Conference in Aberdeen and the publication of the *Aberdeen Agenda: Commonwealth principles on good practice for local*



A child health day in Kampala: reducing child mortality is one of the MDGs

*democracy and good governance.*

His Worship John Ssebana Kizito, Mayor of Kampala will welcome delegates to the conference. Other speakers include Florence Mugasha, Deputy Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, Julia Dolly Joiner, Commissioner of Political Affairs, African Union and Father Mkhathswa, President of United Cities and Local Government Africa.

"The symposium is very timely, being just six months after the UN World Summit to review progress on the MDGs and follows the

Commonwealth Heads of Government endorsement of the CLGF *Aberdeen Agenda: Commonwealth principles on good practice for local democracy and good governance*," said CLGF Chairperson John Otekat.

"There is now considerable agreement about localising the MDGs and that local government is at the forefront of this. To help local governments deliver, we need to strengthen local democracy, improve local governance and ensure that they have the necessary capacity," he said.

### CLGF chair takes parliamentary seat

CLGF Chairperson **John Otekat** was elected to the Uganda parliament in the recent elections in Uganda, winning the parliamentary seat for Serere County.



Mr Otekat has been President of the Uganda Local Authorities Association since 2002 after becoming District Chairperson of Soroti in 1998.

He became CLGF vice chair in 2003 and chairperson in 2005.

### Simpson Miller is first woman PM for Jamaica

CLGF Board member **Hon Portia Simpson Miller** is making history in Jamaica as the first woman to become Prime Minister. Winner of a keenly contested race for the presidency of the ruling People's National Party, she took over as Prime Minister of Jamaica at the end of March 2006 replacing Hon P. J. Patterson.

Hon Portia Simpson Miller had been the Minister of Local Government and Sport since October 2002, having previously held a number of other ministerial posts.

Hon Simpson Miller was elected to the CLGF Board in 2003, and hosted the Caribbean Regional Symposium in Montego Bay in 2004 which set up the Caribbean Forum of Ministers of Local Government of which she was elected chair. She has spoken at a number of CLGF events, including the Commonwealth Local Government Conference 2005 in Aberdeen.

### New base for CLGF HQ

CLGF is moving its London HQ to 16a Northumberland Avenue, London WC2N 5AP. The new base is more centrally located nearer to other Commonwealth organisations and the UK High Commissions, and local and central government departments.

The move will take place at the end of May with the new office open from 1 June 2006.

## CLGF headquarters in London is moving....



From 1 June 2006 CLGF's new address will be:

**CLGF, 16a Northumberland Avenue, London WC2N 5AP**

Please update your records and check out CLGF's website: [www.clgf.org.uk](http://www.clgf.org.uk) for details of the new telephone and fax numbers

## Commonwealth news in brief

### Assistance priorities

Commonwealth countries in the Caribbean and regional organisations met in Grenada in January 2006 to identify challenges, constraints and development priorities for the Commonwealth Secretariat's technical assistance programmes and assess the impact of the Commonwealth's development programme and projects.

### Delivering a development dividend

The Commonwealth will work towards the global promotion of tolerance, bridging the digital divide and enhancing the economic stature of its 53 members, Commonwealth Secretary-General Don McKinnon said in his Commonwealth Round Table Lecture in Melbourne, Australia, on 21 March 2006. These are among priorities agreed by Commonwealth leaders at their summit in Malta in November 2005.

The Secretary-General also highlighted the Commonwealth's commitment to bridging the economic divide, by pushing for free and fair trade for all, and ensuring that the Doha Round of international trade talks delivers a genuine development dividend.

### Commonwealth radio

A new 30-minute monthly radio programme - Pick of the Commonwealth - has been launched. The programme can be downloaded for free in broadcast quality from the website of the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association (CBA) - [www.cba.org.uk](http://www.cba.org.uk). The programmes are funded by the Commonwealth Secretariat and produced by the CBA.

The programme is to help to get more information about the Commonwealth to the public. It is presented by experienced journalist Robin White, former editor of the African Service of the BBC World Service.

### Action for gender equality

The Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality Monitoring Group held its first meeting in New York in February 2006. Representatives from both government ministries and civil society organisations in 15 Commonwealth countries looked at developing quantifiable targets to be presented at the 8th Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting in Uganda in June 2007.

### Bridging the digital divide

The Commonwealth Action Programme for the Digital Divide (CAPDD) Special Fund now stands at more than 1.1 million euros. The fund will facilitate the implementation of specific programmes, projects and activities to develop information and communication technology (ICT) capacities of member countries to bridge the digital divide and achieve the performance targets endorsed by the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Malta last year. The CAPDD is intended to accelerate the social and economic development of least developed countries and small island developing states of the Commonwealth through the use of ICTs to compete effectively in the global marketplace

# Focus on

**The fourth of our regional symposiums - being held in Kampala will focus on local democracy, good governance and delivering the MDGs in Africa.**



## Secretary-General's introduction

Almost a third of the 53 countries of the Commonwealth are in Africa. Commonwealth countries — and Commonwealth local governments - have many cultural, linguistic, legal traditions and professional links. There is growing cooperation at regional and sub-regional levels and this is most evident in Africa, where CLGF is working in close partnership with UCLGA and other pan-African and regional organisations on capacity building projects — including in Ghana, Lesotho, Malawi, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Zimbabwe and election monitoring in Lesotho, Mozambique, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

CLGF Chairperson John Otekat and myself attended the UCLGA founding congress in Tshwane last year, and the close cooperation between CLGF and UCLGA was echoed when John Otekat and UCLGA President Father Mkhathshwa jointly authored the

Commonwealth Secretariat pamphlet *Make it local, make it democratic*.

CLGF also took a lead in feeding back its members views to the 2005 Commission for Africa and G8 Summit in Scotland to ensure that reference was made to the role of African local government and we are working with African partners in the EU-ACP Local Government Platform to lobby for EU resources for strengthening local government capacity throughout the continent.

In 2005 almost all African leaders of Commonwealth countries were amongst those attending the 2005 Commonwealth Heads of Government summit that gave its approval to the CLGF's *Aberdeen Agenda: Commonwealth Principles on Good Practice for Local Democracy and Good Governance*. This followed the endorsement which the Aberdeen Agenda had already received by many

African CLGF members.

Indeed, South African local government minister and CLGF Board member, Hon Sydney Mufamadi, has proposed that Africa should take a lead in piloting the *Aberdeen Agenda* and seeking its practical application

The Kampala symposium will consider how to take forward the Commonwealth principles of local democracy and good governance and their practical application for realising the MDGs in Africa. This is the first major event in the CLGF programme to take forward the Aberdeen Agenda and help our members use and implement the principles. Kampala will give our African members, both local and central government, an opportunity to do this and to show leadership not only in Africa, but in the wider Commonwealth and beyond.

Carl Wright, Secretary-General, CLGF

## Commonwealth strengthens ties with AU

The Commonwealth Secretariat and the African Union Commission have agreed to revise and update the two organisations' 1993 Agreement in order to tackle the challenges that are facing Africa.

This was among the issues discussed by Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General Florence Mugasha in talks with political leaders and senior officials of the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 6 to 8 March 2006.

The Deputy Secretary-General described the talks as fruitful and said: "The stage has now been set for the two organisations to move decisively in tackling the challenges that confront Africa. We agreed to develop new collaborative relationships in a number of areas including democracy and governance, trade, human rights, youth, gender and social issues.

Mrs Mugasha, who is one of the key speakers at the CLGF symposium in Kampala, said that "the

Commonwealth is determined to work together with the African Union towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Africa."



Florence Mugasha

## SADC countries support Zimbabwe project

The local democracy programme in Zimbabwe is well under way, with new partner cities in South Africa and Namibia now engaged in the process. The Urban Councils Association

of Zimbabwe (UCAZ) has received requests from a number of other cities to roll out the Urban Governance Index (UGI) application. The project will run for another

year and an experience-sharing workshop of all six project cities will be held in mid-2006 to discuss the results of the UGI and the peer reviews.

# Africa

## Income innovations focus in Ghana

**Wasa Amenfi in Ghana is full of natural resources – diamond and gold fields, timber and cocoa production – but the West Amenfi District Assembly has not been able to exploit these fully due to poor income generation and accounting systems. Now, thanks to a CLGF Good Practice Scheme project, help is at hand from the Surat Municipal Corporation in India and the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham in the UK.**

A unique three-way partnership has been set up to help Wasa Amenfi District Assembly to identify new sources of income, and to improve budgeting and accounting systems to increase the funds coming in to the Assembly so that it can provide the services needed to raise living standards for the people living in the area.

The first step was to hold a workshop in Wasa where representatives from the Surat Corporation and Hammersmith and Fulham Council explained the reforms they have introduced to improve their accounting systems.

Future activities will include the creation of jobs and economic

investment to tackle poverty and low earnings, and therefore low tax level, as a first step in helping them on the road to recovery. Another will be to improve

the use of technology: with tailored accounting programmes to better record transactions, prepare budgets and facilitate information exchange.



Local government practitioners from Surat and Hammersmith meet colleagues in Wasa Amenfi

# Supporting local democracy in Malawi

**CLGF Secretary-General Carl Wright, visited Malawi in February to discuss the forthcoming local government elections there, support for local government reforms and the work of the Malawi Local Government Association (MALGA).**

The meeting was a result of discussions between CLGF Chairperson John Otekat, Mr Wright and the Foreign Minister of Malawi at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Malta in November.

Mr Wright met with Hon Dr George T Chaponda MP, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development, senior Ministry officials and representatives of the MALGA, the chief

executives of Blantyre, Lilongwe and Mzuzu councils and with representatives of international development agencies supporting Malawi's programme of decentralisation.

Mr Wright said: "It's heartening to learn that the Government of Malawi intends to proceed with local government elections later this year. Democratically elected local councillors have a key role to play in development

and realising the Millennium Development Goals. Following the elections, the CLGF looks forward to working with its members in Malawi in helping the realisation and promotion of local democracy and good governance."

CLGF also helped to promote international partnerships between Malawi councils and their Commonwealth counterparts, including in the UK and Scotland, as well as the SADC region.

## News in brief

### Gender policies must be mainstreamed

There have been some striking achievements in empowering women and ensuring their involvement in governance at local level, but there is still a long way to go to mainstream gender policies, according to CLGF Secretary-General Carl Wright.

Speaking to the Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting in New York in February, he highlighted the CLGF's principles on good local governance that include a target of no less than 30 per cent of women in decision-making and described how countries such as India, Pakistan and Uganda have one third of council seats reserved for women

"However, strategies to promote greater decision-making in local government do not only entail statutory reservation of seats, important as this is. As critical is ensuring equal access to and full participation in local power structures a full mainstreaming of gender policies and principles," said Mr Wright.

CLGF is working with the Commonwealth Secretariat and the UK Foreign Policy Institute to take forward its policy on mainstreaming gender in local government and is planning to hold an event in Asia later this year to look at these issues and what support members can be given.

### Right to the city

CLGF has been invited to join the Working Group set up on the joint UNESCO/UN-HABITAT initiative on Urban Policies and the Right to the City. The second meeting was held in Barcelona on 27/28 March 2006. The discussions centered on concrete activities to input to the World Urban Forum III in Vancouver in June. CLGF's participation will help to link the initiative with the *CLGF Aberdeen Agenda*.

### Local government in St Lucia

CLGF is helping St Lucia with its plans for local government and how to implement them. Mike Reardon, Director of Local Government Practice at the UK Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, visited St Lucia recently to work out and cost a plan to implement the recent proposals for elected local government in St Lucia.

### Closer cooperation with Canada

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities has agreed to strengthen its links with CLGF. CLGF Secretary-General Carl Wright visited Toronto and Ottawa at the end of February. Mr Wright met with representatives of Canadian local and federal government, including CLGF Board member André Juneau.

### PNG councils seek partners in Australia

Four councils in Papua New Guinea are seeking partners with councils in Australia as part of the CLGF's Commonwealth Local Government Practice Scheme in the Pacific. The scheme, which has been operating since 1998, is run by CLGF in partnership with the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) and is supported by funding from the Australian Government's aid agency, AusAID. The projects will focus on strengthening local governance arrangements and local skills and service delivery capacity.

## Seeking experts

The first selections for the Commonwealth Local Government Practitioners Database were held in India in February 2006.

The database will be used to select local government practitioners to offer practical support and advice to member countries across the Commonwealth. The aim is to provide local authorities in developing countries within the Commonwealth with a source of experienced and knowledgeable assistance for their projects.

Most assignments will focus on creating and implementing change within local government organisations. The length of time could vary from a two week project to a series of shorter visits but none will involve rapid deployment, as the projects take some time to plan.

In the first pilot phase, we are looking for experts in India, South Africa and the UK. The database will be expanded to other countries of the Commonwealth in the future. For further details, or to apply to be on the database, log on to the Practitioners Database on [www.clgf.org.uk](http://www.clgf.org.uk)

# Three-year capacity building project for Honiara

**CLGF's Pacific Office is working with Honiara City Council in the Solomon Islands to strengthen the council's governance structures and enhance its capacity to deliver services to improve the quality of life for its citizens.**

Following an initial scoping mission by CLGF in November 2004 and follow-up activities a framework was developed to plan the project and activities. This recognised that, as Honiara is the national capital, it should be governed to standards that reflect its status, that it should have a sound town planning scheme, and that it should ensure that basic services are provided and public health is protected.

The three-year project will see a return to democratic local elections,

preparation of a local planning scheme, enhancement of performance management and policy development, improvements to services such as road maintenance and waste management and disposal. It will also include councillor training, staff training programmes, and procurement of essential equipment.

The project will use capacity building mechanisms such as the Good Practice Scheme and partnership working. Key partners are the Papua New Guinea Urban Level Local Government Association, Local

Government New Zealand, Maryborough City Council from Australia and UN Habitat. The project is supported by NZAID and other partners in the region.



Street scene Honiara

## What's on..

- April 2006**  
24 **CLGF Board meeting**, Kampala, Uganda  
25-27 **CLGF Symposium on Local democracy, good governance and delivering the MDGs in Africa**, Kampala, Uganda
- May 2006**  
15-19 **CLGF/ACP Local Government Platform Caribbean seminar on the Role of Local Government in the ACP-EU Cotonou Agreement**, St Vincent
- June 2006**  
5-9 **Commonwealth Executive Programme on Finance for Subnational and Local Governments**, run by Commonwealth Secretariat at the University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK. For further details: [m.alam@commonwealth.int](mailto:m.alam@commonwealth.int)
- 13-23 **World Urban Forum**, Vancouver, Canada
- July 2006**  
24-25 **CLGF/Commonwealth Secretariat symposium** on Strengthening decentralisation in Pakistan, Islamabad, Pakistan
- September 2006**  
18-24 **Africities Summit 2006**, Nairobi, Kenya. Further details from the Africities secretariat: [coordinator@afrcities2006nairobi.org](mailto:coordinator@afrcities2006nairobi.org); tel: +254 20 244041
- October 2006**  
21-26 **CAPAM biennial conference** - Rising to the challenge: enhancing public sector capability, Sydney, Australia. For details contact: [capam@capam.org](mailto:capam@capam.org)
- November 2006**  
15 **CLGF Sub Committee** on finances and membership
- March 2007**  
26-29 **CLGF Commonwealth Local Government Conference 2007** on Delivering Development through Local Leadership, Auckland, New Zealand

## New publication

*Better local services: improving local government delivery through innovation and partnerships* is the latest in the Collaborative CLGF/Commonwealth Secretariat 'Making Local Governance Work' series. The publication, edited by Graham Sansom, presents a report of the CLGF/Commonwealth Secretariat Asia-Pacific regional symposium held in Kuala Lumpur in July 2005. It presents perspectives on policy frameworks, service partnerships and gives a number of case studies from Asia.

## The CLGF Board

### Members:

#### Africa:

John Emily Otekat, President, Uganda Local Government Association, Uganda\* *Chairperson*  
Cllr Josiah Magut, Chairman, Association of Local Government Authorities of Kenya *(Alternate)*  
Hon Ezenwo Nyesom Wike, Executive Chairman, ALGON, Nigeria  
Mayor Winstanley R Bankole Johnson JP, Freetown City Council, Sierra Leone *(Alternate)*  
Hon Charles Bintin, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development, Ghana  
Hon Ponto's Suzan Matumelo Sekatle, Minister of Local Government, Lesotho  
Hon Sydney Mufamadi, Minister of Provincial and Local Government, South Africa *(Alternate)*

#### Americas:

Mayor Murchison Brown, Chairman, Trinidad and Tobago Association of Local Government Authorities *(Alternate)*  
Mayor Hon Cllr Robert Montague, Association of Local Government Authorities of Jamaica\*  
Charles Gregoire, Dominica Association of Local Authorities, Dominica *(Alternate)*  
Hon Alfred Gray, Minister of Local Government and Consumer Affairs, Bahamas\*  
Hon Michael Browne, Minister of Social Development and Local Government, St Vincent and the Grenadines *(Alternate)*  
The Hon Portia Simpson Miller, Minister of Local Government, Community Development and Sport, Jamaica\*  
Hon Menissa Rambally, Minister of Community Development, Culture and Local Government, St Lucia *(Alternate)*

#### Asia Pacific:

Cllr Basil Morrison, President, Local Government New Zealand\*  
Cllr Paul Bell, President, Australia Local Government Association *(Alternate)*  
Hon Mark Burton, Minister of Local Government, New Zealand\*

Hon Jim Lloyd MP, Minister for Local Government, Territories and Roads, Australia *(Alternate)*

Hon Kumari Selja, Minister of State for Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation, India

Dato' Ahmed Fuad bin Ismail, Secretary-General, Ministry of Housing and Local Government, Malaysia *(Alternate)*

#### Europe:

Cllr Ken Bodfish OBE, Local Government Association, UK  
Dr Ian Micallef LLD, President, Local Councils of Malta, Malta *(Alternate)*  
Phil Woolas MP, Minister for Local Government, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, UK  
Dr Lazaros Savvides, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Interior, Cyprus *(Alternate)*

#### Members at large

Father Smangaliso Mkhathswa, City of Tshwane, South Africa  
Mayor Matheus K Shikongo, Mayor of Windhoek, Namibia

#### Associate members

Dr Jatin V Modi, President, All India Institute of Local Self-Government, India  
Dr Bishnu Ragoonath, Lecturer, The University of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago *(Alternate)*  
Prof P S Reddy, University of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa  
Dr Graham Sansom, Director, UTS Centre for Local Government, Australia *(Alternate)*

#### Co-opted members

William Saunders, Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, UK  
André Juneau, Deputy Minister, Infrastructure Canada, Canada  
Hon Pio I Wong, Minister of Local Government, Housing, Squatter Settlement and Environment, Fiji

#### Ex-officio

Michael Ashley, Director, Local Government International Bureau, UK, *Honorary Treasurer\**

Carl Wright, Secretary-General, CLGF\*

Len Duvall OBE AM, Immediate Past Chair, CLGF

\*Member of Sub-Committee on Finances and Membership