

Conference calls for local government access to funding



CLGF is to develop a toolkit for its members to understand development funding following requests for more information and guidelines on how local governments can access development funding. The idea is the result of discussions at a conference on *Access to Development Funding for Local Governments in Africa* held in South Africa from 15-17 September. The outcomes and recommendations of the conference were also presented to Commonwealth Finance Ministers at their meeting in October.

Local governments are often excluded from discussions about national poverty strategies and development plans. Yet they are often the ones who are responsible for basic services which can make the greatest difference to people's quality of life. Because of this, they may be ill-informed about the process for accessing development funds which may be different for different development partners and bureaucratic and resource heavy. Delegates called for a more consistent system to help local governments understand and manage the process.

More than 300 delegates from some 20 African countries and international organisations turned up to the event

which was held in Johannesburg and was run by CLGF in collaboration with Developing Markets Associates and with the support of United Cities and Local Governments Africa (UCLGA), the South African Local Government Association and the government of South Africa. Microsoft Corporation and the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) also helped sponsor the event. Participants included ministers of local government, local government leaders and officials, the Commonwealth Secretariat and representatives of development agencies such as the DFID, EU, GTZ, USAID and UNCDF.

Delegates welcomed the recent Accra Agenda for Action, the outcome of the

Third High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, which was adopted by governments and donor agencies and for the first time broadens country policy dialogue on development with greater reference to the inclusion of local government in development programmes and commits country governments in Africa to work more closely with local authorities in preparing, implementing and monitoring development policies and plans. They also pointed to the key role of local government associations in such discussions and in bidding for development funds and called on international development partners to help strengthen the capacity of associations.

Commonwealth call to support Zimbabwe

CLGF has written to members to ask them to support the Commonwealth's appeal for humanitarian support to Zimbabwe.

Commonwealth Secretary-General Kamallesh Sharma has expressed grave concern at the dire humanitarian situation in Zimbabwe and called on Commonwealth member countries to give their strong support to the appeal launched by the United Nations to assist the country.

CLGF has been leading a group of Commonwealth organisations to discuss what support can be given to Zimbabwe to help both with short-term humanitarian aid and in longer term reconstruction. Mr Sharma met with a this group, including CLGF, to discuss the Commonwealth's response to the crisis.

"It is deeply disturbing that nearly six million people require emergency food aid and that the outbreak of cholera has killed hundreds in Zimbabwe and now spread to its neighbours. I am concerned at the collapse of essential services, such as health, sanitation and education. The Commonwealth's priority is to ensure that urgent relief is made available to the people of Zimbabwe," Mr Sharma said.

"We applaud the work of humanitarian charities and Zimbabwean local authorities in their response to the crisis and hope that they will receive the urgent support they need."

At their meeting in Vancouver in September, the CLGF Board endorsed the Policy and Resources earlier statement on Zimbabwe and pledged CLGF's support for democratic local government structures in Zimbabwe through the Urban councils Association of Zimbabwe (UCAZ). UCAZ has called for support with health supplies, waste management vehicles and parts, and water and sanitation treatment supplies to help local government deliver basic public health services. CLGF Secretary-General Carl Wright visited Harare in September for further meetings with the UCAZ to look at ways in which CLGF can support training and help local governments respond to the crisis, particularly on health issues.

Commonwealth news in brief

Finance ministers call for international support for vulnerable economies

Commonwealth finance ministers have called for the international community to support countries adversely affected by the food and fuel crises, which may be further compounded by the current financial turbulence around the globe.

During the meeting in Castries, St Lucia, on 8 October 2008, ministers discussed the impact of food and fuel prices and the global financial crisis which is affecting all countries, in different ways. Developing countries are likely to suffer badly with less growth and less access to finance, and progress towards reaching the Millennium Development Goals could be halted or even reversed.

Maldives meets elections commitments

Commonwealth Secretary-General Kamalesh Sharma has applauded the people of Maldives for the peaceful conduct of their first ever historic multiparty and multi-candidate presidential election, and the spirit of co-operation and inclusiveness which marked the transition to a new government.

The Maldives Presidential Election was held on 8 October 2008 and the run-off on 28 October and observed by a Commonwealth Observer Group which issued its final report in November. The Commonwealth Observer Group found that the process was credible overall and met many of the benchmarks for democratic elections to which Maldives has committed itself.

CLGF Secretary-General Carl Wright visited the Maldives in November for the launch of a decentralisation campaign which is expected to lead to the first ever local atoll elections in mid 2009.

Cooperation to strengthen local government in the Caribbean

Caribbean ministers with responsibility for local government met in Montego Bay from 1-3 December to agree a "Policy and cooperation framework on local governance and democracy in the Caribbean". This document is based on a wide consultation of stakeholders across the region and will underpin a stronger and more regional approach towards strengthening local government across the Caribbean. The Caribbean Forum of Local Government Ministers (CFLGM), chaired by Hon Robert Montague, Minister of State for Local Government, Jamaica, welcomed the document and indicated that they plan to use the policy to encourage CARICOM to place greater recognition on the role of local government across the region.

CLGF was invited to work together with other partners including the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, CFLGM and the Caribbean Association of Local Government Authorities to help implement many of the recommendations in the report through practical training and capacity building initiatives.

Commonwealth commitment to the Aberdeen principles

Secretary-General's introduction



At its 2008 annual meeting, the CLGF Board adopted the *Vancouver Statement on Strengthening Local Democracy and Good Governance*. This statement builds on the Commonwealth Aberdeen Agenda, endorsed by Commonwealth Heads of Government, and highlights the CLGF's work to promote democratic values and good governance, including through capacity-building and exchange of experience.

Much of this Bulletin touches on areas where the *Aberdeen Agenda* is actively being promoted, for example our councillor training programme in Asia. However, there are also places where these fundamental principles are being challenged, for example in Fiji, Malawi and Pakistan. Indeed the *Aberdeen Agenda* should apply to Zimbabwe - although it is currently outside the Commonwealth. Many years ago the late

Oliver Tambo told me that the people of South Africa remained in the Commonwealth and today the democratically elected local government leaders of Zimbabwe tell me that their people also remain in our family of nations. That why I am proud that the CLGF Board is backing CLGF in taking a leading role in seeking the Commonwealth's re-engagement with Zimbabwe.

In Vancouver, we sought to enhance commitment to the Aberdeen principles by calling on Commonwealth member states to monitor their implementation, building on the successful methodology developed in Uganda. We encourage all member countries to prepare regular reports and provide these to CLGF. The CLGF Board also committed us to provide appropriate expertise and technical and other support to our members to take forward the

implementation of the principles.

This cannot be done overnight and it should not entail a mechanistic application of the Aberdeen Agenda, but an approach that takes into account our different national traditions. *Improving Local Government* is the theme of our 2009 Commonwealth Local Government Conference in the Bahamas and this will provide a key occasion to give further consideration to how local democracy and good governance can be consolidated and strengthened.

CLGF looks forward to working closely with the Commonwealth Secretariat, the UN and our many development partners in taking forward our common endeavours to produce tangible benefits and improvements for local government in all our countries.

Carl Wright, Secretary-General

Pakistan measures up to principles

Pakistan's system of local government, set up in 2001, is generally in line with the Commonwealth Aberdeen Agenda according to a recent report for CLGF.

A review of how the local government system operates in Pakistan was carried out by CLGF's former treasurer Mike Ashley in October. He notes that though the system is overall in accordance with the Aberdeen Agenda: Commonwealth Principles on good practice for local democracy and good governance, there are some operational difficulties in the way some of the principles are applied and accountability and transparency should be strengthened through actions such as better internal and external audits and

financial overview by the provinces.

Mr Ashley also advised the Pakistan government, who are currently reviewing local government in the country, that any reforms should be forward-looking and that local government associations should be strengthened to provide greater support for local governments as well as helping to foster international links.

A corresponding citizen survey has also pointed to overwhelming public support for democratic local

government retaining responsibility for many local services, and local government is seen as a relatively good service provider.

CLGF Secretary-General Carl Wright visited Islamabad in November to present the ideas behind the Aberdeen principles and the finding and recommendations of the report. He said that the 2001 structures had not yet had much time to evolve but they are fundamentally sound and it was important to build on these and strengthen them.

A space to play in Suva

Finding a space to play by Vereniki Tamani was one of the winning entries in the CLGF Pacific Urban Art Initiative - a photography competition for urban stakeholders to capture their views of life in Fiji's cities and towns in 2008. This year's theme was 'Eyes on the Street' celebrating cities and towns as seen through the eyes of their inhabitants and visitors.



Closer working with Canada

CLGF held its annual Board meeting in Vancouver prior to the Vancouver roundtable event. Board members also met with representatives of Metro Vancouver. CLGF Chairperson Basil Morrison, Vice-chairperson Minister Burty David and Secretary General Carl Wright also met with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to look at closer working between Canadian municipalities and CLGF.

Financing municipal infrastructure

Whatever their stage of development all countries have increasing demands and expectations for infrastructure and must find innovative ways of financing it, though some of the challenges and scales may be different, according to speakers at a recent CLGF roundtable on *Municipal Infrastructure Planning and Financing*.

Most major infrastructure projects cannot be financed from local government general revenues; specific grants from national government play a big part in financing infrastructure, but increasingly other means such as municipal bond issues, public-private partnerships, borrowings and specific levies and taxes are all being used to enable the development of municipal infrastructure projects. Good planning and prioritising are essential in a world where public financing will always be limited.

Delegates at the recent CLGF roundtable heard about the many ways in which national and local governments from Canada and across the Commonwealth are trying to bridge the gap between infrastructure needs and resources



available. The event was organised by CLGF in association with Metro Vancouver and with the support of British Columbia and Infrastructure Canada and held at the Morris Wosk Centre in Vancouver on 3 September.

■ Building Canada provides long-term structure and funding for all levels of government to plan and build a modern Canada. It provides \$33 billion for funding public infrastructure up to 2014, with more than half of the funding as transfers to local governments.

■ South Africa is using a wide variety of tools to raise money to fund infrastructure projects including grants from central government, development charges, municipal bonds and borrowing. The City of Johannesburg and the City of Cape Town

have successfully launched bonds totalling R5.7 billion and R1 billion respectively. These are helping with a huge programme of electrification, improved water supply and sanitation facilities, and public transport facilities.

As well as participants from Canada, ministers and senior local government representatives from Africa, Asia-Pacific, the Caribbean and Europe attended the event to discuss the issues and share knowledge and experience.

"This forum provided a wonderful opportunity to share experiences and learn about different approaches to financing infrastructure projects from Canada and other Commonwealth countries," said Cllr Lois Jackson, Chair of Metro Vancouver which hosted the event.



Country-driven approach for CLGF Pacific Project

An extension to the CLGF Pacific Project should preserve the flexible, country driven nature of the Project and have a renewed focus on partnerships and regional collaboration according to the CLGF Pacific Project Technical Advisory Panel which met in Samoa in October to discuss the future of the project.

The CLGF Pacific Project held its tenth Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) meeting from 25-31 October 2008 to discuss the recommendations of the Project Mid-term Review conducted by an independent consultancy team during July-August 2008. The deliberations are expected to lead to a strengthened programme throughout 2009 and to the extension of the project beyond its current five year term.

A key message throughout the meeting was the importance and success of the flexible, country driven approach of the

project and the TAP recommended a renewed focus on partnerships and collaboration at regional level within the Pacific.

"What is unusual with this project is that the work plan of activities is based on actual priorities as the beneficiaries of the project see them. This is a pragmatic approach that has the potential to fill in the gaps by implementing activities that otherwise would not normally be funded through bilateral programmes," said Hon Fiamé Naomi Mataafa, Minister for Women, Community and Social

Development, Samoa speaking at the official opening of the meeting.

The TAP is an annual event that brings together member countries and project partners to report on the yearly achievements and challenges, exchange lessons learned from activity implementation and current research, and agree on priority activities for 2009. CLGF Pacific Project has a membership of nine Pacific island countries - Cook Islands Fiji Islands, Kiribati, Samoa, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

News in brief

Asia training on Aberdeen principles

CLGF has been developing a training programme for elected representatives in South Asia, with funding from the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF). The programme is based on 4 core principles from CLGF's *Aberdeen Agenda*: transparency, accountability, inclusiveness and resource mobilisation. The programme will develop a set of training modules, based on consolidated feedback from each country, which each country will then adopt as part of its core training methodologies. By including a training of trainers element, the programme ensures that the principles can be rolled out across the region directly impacting upon local decision making.

In association with the Kerala Institute for Local Administration (KILA) a pilot training session was held in 19-22 January 2009.

Does decentralisation empower women?

Mayor Zenaida Moya from Belize and Cllr April Crowther-Gow from the Bahamas represented CLGF at a conference on *Decentralisation, Local Power and Women's Rights*: global trends in participation, representation and access to public services. The event was run by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and held in Mexico City to discuss whether decentralisation has helped to empower women and improve women's lives.

Developing links with La Francophonie

CLGF Chairperson Basil Morrison and Secretary-General Carl Wright visited Paris in September for meetings with the Deputy Mayor of Paris, Mr Pierre Schapira and Olivier Chambard, Secretary-General of the Association International des Maires Francophone (AIMF) - the francophone network of mayors. CLGF was invited as guest to the annual AIMF meeting in Quebec in October, which Vice Chair, Hon James Burty David and Mr Wright attended. CLGF is exploring ways of working with AIMF and developing closer links in the future.

Regional collaboration in planning theme at WUF

Reinventing Planning in the New Urban Pacific was the theme of a CLGF event on the first day of the World Urban Forum in Nanjing, China from 3-7 November. The event provided an opportunity to raise awareness of the unique challenges faced by urban planners and managers in the Pacific. Speakers and delegates, including representatives from Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Kiribati, were able to share country experiences, innovative approaches and tools being used by planners, governments and their partners. They highlighted the importance of regional collaboration in addressing the unique challenges of urbanisation in small island states in the Pacific and the opportunities presented by the Pacific Urban Agenda (PUA), the collaborative regional plan to provide better coordinated support to address urban planning and management challenges.



Commonwealth Local Government Conference

Improving local government: the Commonwealth vision

Freeport Grand Bahama Island
10-14 May 2009

A **three-day** international conference on the future of local government to meet the needs and aspirations of its citizens

Speakers will include:

- Rt Hon Hubert Ingraham, Prime Minister of The Bahamas
- Hon Bruce Golding, Prime Minister of Jamaica
- Hon Patrick Manning, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago
- HE Kamalesh Sharma, Commonwealth Secretary-General
- Dr Anna Tibaijuka, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN-HABITAT
- HE Edwin Carrington, Secretary-General, CARICOM (fbc)
- Gerri Elliott, Vice President of Microsoft Corporation (fbc)
- Ministers for local government, Mayors and local government leaders from across the Commonwealth

Guest gala dinner speaker:

- The Hon Sir Shridath (Sonny) Ramphal

For further information contact:
CLGF +44 20 7389 1490;
or email clgc2009@clgf.org.uk

www.clgc2009.org

What's on..

January 2009

15-22 **CLGF/UNDEF Local Democracy and Good Governance Training Programme.** Including training of trainers and workshop, Colombo, Sri Lanka

February 2009

4 **CLGF UK meeting: International innovations in local government and UK priorities**

March 2009

10 **Commonwealth Day**

May 2009

10-11 **CLGF Research Colloquium**, Freeport, Grand Bahama

11 **CLGF Board meeting**, Freeport, Grand Bahama

11-14 **Commonwealth Local Government Conference 2009. Improving local government: the Commonwealth vision**, Freeport, Grand Bahama

14 **CLGF General meeting of members**, Freeport, Grand Bahama

15 **CLGF Board meeting**, Freeport, Grand Bahama

For further information visit www.clgf.org.uk or contact: info@clgf.org.uk.

CLGF condemns Asia terrorist attacks

CLGF conveyed its solidarity with the people of India and Mumbai, following the terrorist attacks which took place there in November and sent its condolences to the families of victims.

In a statement issued after the attacks CLGF also said that it would not be deterred from closer cooperation and future work with local governments in India.

Chairperson Basil Morrison said: "I condemn in the strongest possible terms the terrorist outrage committed in Mumbai which has led to the loss of innocent civilian life and many human casualties. There can be no excuse, political or otherwise, for this type of indiscriminate attack, wherever it is.

"India is a country of strong democratic tradition at local, state and federal level and this great democracy, like democracies everywhere, will I am sure, refuse to bow to the gun of the terrorist'.

Many local governments in India are members of CLGF and India earlier this year hosted a number of important CLGF events. Mr Morrison has written to CLGF Board member Hon Kumari Selja, Minister of State for Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, to convey the organisation's full solidarity with

the people of Mumbai and of India and sincere condolences to the families of the victims on behalf of all of the members of the CLGF throughout the world.

CLGF also condemned the attack in Islamabad in September and expressed its sympathy to the government of Pakistan. CLGF representative Mike Ashley was staying in the Marriott hotel in Islamabad at the time of the attack but fortunately was not seriously hurt.

The CLGF Board

Members:

Africa

Mayor Amos Mazono, Chairperson, South African Local Government Association

His Worship Mayor Herbert A George Williams, Freetown City Council, Sierra Leone (*alternate*)

Leonard B Bihondo, Chairman, Association of Local Authorities of Tanzania

Francisco Mabjaia, Secretary-General, Association of Local Government, Mozambique (*alternate*)

Hon Dr James Burty David, Minister of Local Government, Mauritius (*Vice Chairperson*) +

Hon Musalia Mudvadi, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Local Government, Kenya (*alternate*)

Hon Emmanuel Edou, Minister Delegate, Territorial Administration and Decentralisation, Cameroon

Hon Sylvia Masebo, Minister of Local Government, Zambia (*alternate*)

Americas

Mayor Zenaida Moya, President, Mayors Association, Belize (*Vice chairperson*) +

Clr April Crowther-Gow, President, Caribbean Association of Local Government Authorities (*alternate*)

Mayor Murchison Brown, Chairman, Trinidad and Tobago Association of Local Government Authorities

Charles Gregoire, Chair, Dominica Association of Local Authorities (*alternate*)

Hon Byran Woodside, Minister of State for Lands and Local Government, The Bahamas +

Hon Kellawan Lall, Minister of Local Government and Regional Development, Guyana (*alternate*)

Hon Minister Robert Montague, Minister of State for Local Government, Office of the Prime Minister, Jamaica

Hon Julian Francis, Minister of Housing, Informal Human Settlements, Lands and Surveys, Physical Planning and Local Government, St Vincent and the Grenadines (*alternate*)

Asia-Pacific

Basil Morrison, Local Government New Zealand (*Chairperson*) +

Clr Paul Bell, Australian Local Government Association (*alternate*)

Hon Anthony Albanese, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, Australia (*alternate*)

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

Dato' Ong Ka Chuan, Minister of Housing and Local Government, Malaysia (*alternate*)

Europe

Lord Hanningfield, Local Government Association, England and Wales +

Baroness Andrews OBE, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, UK

Dr Lazaros Savvides, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Interior, Cyprus (*alternate*)

Members at large:

Father Smangaliso Mkhathshwa, President, United Cities and Local Government of Africa

Hon Ibrahim Jalo-Waziri, National President, Association of Local Governments of Nigeria (*alternate*)

Clr Marvin Hunt, Chair of Committee for International Relations, Federation of Canadian Municipalities (*alternate*)

Associate members

Dr Graham Sansom, UTS Centre for Local Government, Australia +

Dr Jatin V Modi, President, All-India Institute of Local Self-Government, India (*alternate*)

Dr Bishnu Ragoonath, University of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago

Professor P S Reddy, University of Kwazulu Natal, South Africa (*alternate*)

Co-opted members

Hon Kwadwo Adjei-Darko, Minister of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment, Ghana

Lord Mayor Ratu Peni Volavola, Suva City Council, Fiji
Simon Baker, Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, UK (*Honorary treasurer*) +

John Forster, Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Cities and Communities Infrastructure Canada

Minister Hope Mwesigye, Minister of State for Local Government, Uganda

Ex-officio

Carl Wright, *Secretary-General* +

+ member, Policy and Resources Committee