

KAMPALA AGENDA FOR AFRICAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

African central and local government representatives and other stakeholders from Cameroon, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, meeting in Kampala, 26-28 April 2006 under the auspices of the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) and Commonwealth Secretariat, in association with the Government of Uganda and the Uganda Local Government Association and in association with United Cities and Local Governments of Africa, (UCLGA);

RECOGNISING that the existence of vibrant, active and democratic local government worldwide is essential to safeguarding and strengthening of the fundamental principles of democracy and good governance everywhere;

HIGHLIGHTING the key role which local government has in delivering key services such as water, healthcare, education and housing and its importance in meeting development objectives and ensuring the delivery of the Millennium Development Goals to the local community;

RECALLING the need, as emphasised in the 2005 Commission for Africa report, to strengthen the capacity of African local governments, especially its financial capacity, to allow it to fulfil its tasks;

WELCOMING the establishment of the UCLGA, representing unity among local government throughout Africa as laid down in the founding principles agreed in Tshwane in 2005 and its role as the voice of African local government;

APPRECIATING the role of CLGF, embracing both central and local government, and its mandate under the Commonwealth Heads of Government endorsement of the principles of local democracy and good governance set out in the 2005 Aberdeen Agenda;

AGREE the following:

Localising the MDGs

Participants noted that local government in Commonwealth Africa is responsible, in whole or in part, for the delivery of every one of the MDGs. There is a mandate and responsibility for local government to localise the MDGs in their planning and service delivery.

It was noted that:

Effective local government structures that are able to provide minimum standards of social services to all citizens in the community, and that are committed to, and empowered to facilitate and promote local economic development, have a key role in addressing extreme poverty and hunger.

Local government should work in partnership with a range of stakeholders to ensure the implementation of universal primary education; this includes sensitisation of the public, planning and provision of education infrastructure, the use of by-laws, and working closely with parents' associations.

Local government provides a range of services which contribute towards ensuring healthy communities. These include waste management, environmental health, physical planning which takes into account public health, potable water public health education, curative services, and infrastructure development. Local government is working with local communities to address HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

Local government faces the challenge of empowering women to participate in the political process to meet the Commonwealth target of no less than 30% representation of women in decision-making in the political, public, and private sectors. Some Commonwealth countries have played a leading role in implementing affirmative action policies such as quotas to increase the participation of women in local democracy.

A range of local government responsibilities are contributing towards the achievement of environmental sustainability. These include, development and physical planning, development control, sanitation, provision of healthcare services, law enforcement, infrastructure (water, sewerage, roads), waste management, community development, local economic development, and poverty reduction.

Local government is promoting and engaging in global partnerships, both within Africa and beyond. This includes city-to-city partnerships such as those facilitated by the CLGF's Good Practice Scheme and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Partnerships Program.

Recommendations:

- Local government should be empowered and have the capacity to provide minimum social services, have access to resources, and be able to define policies to enable local economic development.
- Local government is one of a number of stakeholders responsible for improving educational standards and should build effective partnerships to help achieve universal primary education.
- Local government should play an integral role in preventative health; this should be done through effective partnership with appropriate agencies and stakeholders.
- Consideration should be given to enacting legislation to adopt reserved seats for women in local government, and women should also be encouraged and supported to contest local elections openly. Equal opportunities within political party structures are essential to the achievement of gender equality in local government.
- Local and central government should promote gender balance in the public service.

Implementing the Aberdeen Agenda

Participants welcomed the Aberdeen Agenda as an important tool to support the development of effective local government. They recommended that the Aberdeen Agenda be operationalised by local governments, local government associations, national governments, and multi-lateral agencies particularly UCLGA and the Africa Union in order to ensure effective peer pressure to take appropriate action.

It was noted that:

Constitutional recognition of local government must be accompanied by a strong legislative framework setting out clearly the roles, functions and powers of local government, and clarifying fiscal arrangements.

Local government associations, which are autonomous and recognised as negotiating partners are essential to effective intergovernmental relations.

Elected local government provides legitimacy to democracy nationwide. It provides a solid foundation for an emerging democratic culture and society in Africa. To deepen local democracy, citizens must be engaged in the democratic process and local government should engage actively with civil society to promote participation in local decision-making. Provision should be made for

strengthened systems of justice at the local level. Effective communications are seen as an essential part of deepening local democracy. This includes communication among spheres of government, with the community, and with other stakeholders.

There is a need to balance the financial viability of councils with democratic legitimacy. Equitable resource allocations are essential for local government to be effective, and should be considered in a framework of inter-governmental dialogue between central, provincial and local government. In this context, local government should have access to a wider variety of funding sources including direct donor support and resources from the private sector.

There should be commitment to minimum standards in accessibility and participation in local government.

Actions required to enable local government to operationalise the principles set out in the Aberdeen Agenda include:

Central government in consultation with local government should seek to set minimum standards for:

- Realistic service levels for local government.
- Inclusiveness across the whole community in line with accepted Commonwealth targets, to ensure accessibility and participation.
- Adequate, equitable and objective resource allocation.

Strengthen and expand the role of local government in local economic development and integrated development planning to ensure that local priorities and service needs are met.

Transparency of local government is enhanced by effective communication with citizens throughout the cycle of accountability that includes planning, consultation, budgeting, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting, which is central to open local government. It is recognised that for this to be effective there is a need for capacity building in both local government and civil society.

To be accountable to its electorate, local governments must have the autonomy to set and implement budgets developed in accordance with the legislative framework.

There are recognised capacity needs for local government in operationalising the Aberdeen Agenda, where CLGF and other partners' support would be valuable:

- Strengthening local government associations to make them more effective lobbyists and advocates.
- Building the capacity of local government and civil society to ensure effective transparency and accountability. Emphasis should be given to developing effective communication with all partners.
- Training for local government staff training remains a crucial element in ensuring that local authority work is held in esteem.
- Enabling local government to adopt appropriate methods to measure and monitor the quality of local democracy and governance and the operationalisation of the Aberdeen Agenda.
- Providing research and building research capacity to inform planning and policy-making. This should take the form of case studies, exchange of good practice, models, and the development of methodologies and guidelines on undertaking research to inform policy.

Follow-up Action

Participants recognised the value of CLGF's unique and representative membership in Africa, bringing together the different spheres of government and other key stakeholders and welcomed the

growing partnership between CLGF and UCLGA including in respect of common policy positions and joint programme activities.

Participants welcomed the decision of the CLGF Board to develop a programme in selected countries in Africa to operationalise the Aberdeen Agenda.

They looked forward to closer cooperation with the African Union and other African regional institutions and noted the existing partnership between the Commonwealth Secretariat and the AU and hoped that CLGF, working in partnership with UCLGA, would help to ensure that the AU will promote the interests of African local government in its work and develop a regular dialogue with local government, based on the recommendations set out in the Kampala Agenda.

Participants acknowledged the importance of civil society and the need for African local government to strengthen its policy dialogue with African civil society and, where appropriate agree on service delivery partnerships, designed to implement the MDGs. Participants hoped that the CLGF, working with the Commonwealth Foundation and its Civil Society Advisory Committee, would assist in facilitating such partnerships. They also welcomed CLGF's partnership with UN HABITAT, and the practical cooperation between CLGF and ComHabitat.

They further endorsed the work of the ACP Local Government Platform which brings together CLGF, UCLGA, MDP/PDM and other partners and encouraged it to continue to ensure that African local government is fully involved in the ACP-EU Cotonou Agreement and is able to draw on resources under its national and regional indicative programmes, including for the development of local government information centres designed to share knowledge and good practice at regional level.

They looked to the CLGF and other partners in ensuring that the Kampala Agenda was submitted to forthcoming African and international meetings and looked for a strong African representation at these events including the World Urban Forum (Vancouver, June 2006), the Pan African Conference of Ministers of Local Government (Maseru, August 2006), the Africities Summit (Nairobi, September 2006) and the Commonwealth Local Government Conference (Auckland, March 2007).

Participants warmly appreciated that HE President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni would consult about bringing the recommendations of the Kampala symposium, and related issues of local government, to the attention of other Commonwealth Heads of Government at their Meeting to be held in Kampala in 2007.

They further requested all African national local governments associations, ministries of local government and other key stakeholders to take forward the Kampala recommendations within their own organisations and countries and ensure their practical implementation.

Appreciation

Participants expressed their warm appreciation to HE President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, for the Keynote Address delivered at the symposium. They acknowledged the addresses and support provided by other senior speakers, chairpersons, and facilitators. They recorded their sincere thanks to the Uganda Local Government Association and the Government of Uganda, through its Ministry of Local Government, for the invaluable logistical and other support for the symposium, as well as the warm hospitality provided.