

# Bulletin



## Fit for the future

Resources and capacity for effective  
local government



# Comment

By Dr Greg Munro, Secretary-General, CLGF



At the end of my first year in CLGF, I am convinced now, more than ever, that the future success of the world lies with effective local government and the communities it serves. I have heard many people reflect recently on the current state of the globe – divisive politics, radicalisation, ethnic cleansing, the reversal of gender equality gains, the tearing up of climate change agreements, self-interest and big business driving harmful decisions and more and more wealth into the hands of fewer and fewer people. Ordinary men and women feel excluded from the globalisation and developmental agenda – mostly because they are outside any benefits of that agenda. As an example, global trade deals are limited if they are not coupled with local economic development, market opportunities and poverty relief at a community level.

It is time for local government and communities to take control of their destiny. Since it is at a local level that we can meaningfully create integrated cohesive communities to counteract radicalisation: it is at a local level that we can develop local economic and employment opportunities; it is at a local level that we can grow and work with local businesses to create value for the entire community; it is at a local level that we can develop civil society into a powerful partner for development. The world faces a huge developmental task between now and 2030. The Sustainable Development Goals cannot be achieved without community ownership and local government implementation. On top of this, local government faces the need to deliver more services with less and less funding. In many parts of the Commonwealth we have burgeoning cities with a population that is young, unemployed, poor and restless. The future for those communities is challenging.

It is not easy being in local government today. Developmental needs are huge and local government leaders are the custodians and facilitators of that community development. This requires nimble leadership; the ability to meaningfully engage with communities, working across the private sector, civil society and other levels of government; and, most importantly, the need to think and act differently. The world today is complex, challenging but connected, and it is working innovatively in partnerships at a local or community level, which will result in tangible results for global development.

We hope to touch on some of this at the Commonwealth Local Government Conference in Malta in November with the theme - *Fit for the future: resources and capacity for effective local government* - to have the conversation; to share best practice examples, learn from each other and develop new ways of working; and to seek innovative but practical solutions to the myriad of challenges we face. The future is in our hands and we need to be fit for that future.

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# Resourcing local government

For the last twenty years, CLGF has worked relentlessly to ensure that local government is at the heart of development. Now that there is increasing recognition of local government's role and we have a blueprint for achieving a better world by 2030 in the form of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the new challenge is to ensure that local government has the capacity and resources to deliver quality services and achieve the SDG targets.

That is why CLGC2017 is focusing on finding new and innovative ways of resourcing local governments across the Commonwealth. The SDGs pose diverse challenges – gender equality and climate change for two – to achieve a better world by 2030. We need to change the way we approach resourcing our

local governments. We will discuss improving fiscal decentralisation; but, as well as raising money, we will look at increasing finances through efficiency savings and using innovative and entrepreneurial approaches.

Belize City has financed large scale projects, including improving open spaces and updating road infrastructure, by floating municipal bonds with yields every second, fifth and tenth year. Logan City Council in Australia is keeping electricity costs down by commissioning an off-grid solar and Tesla battery storage system.

As well as the plenary sessions and keynote speeches, there will be a range of working groups looking at issues such as transparency and accountability; local government's role in promoting trade and investment; and resourcing local development in small states. Resources also include skills and capacity and working groups will focus on local governments maximising the use of digital tools, professionalising the sector and inclusive decision making.

## Fiji leads on COP23

Fiji Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama took on the presidency of COP23 this month, when countries from around the world gathered in Bonn, Germany to discuss climate change. COP23 is the 23rd annual 'conference of the parties', under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Hosted by Germany, this is the first time that a small island nation at risk from rising sea levels and extreme storms has presided over discussions, involving more than 25,000 politicians, negotiators, environmental activists and journalists from across the globe.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the two week conference, Prime Minister Bainimarama said that Fiji would be using the conference to try and build a coalition focused on promoting a target of keeping global average temperatures below 1.5°C of warming. He warned the packed audience that it was vital to do everything possible to make the Paris Agreement work and to increase support for climate action before 2020.

## Second phase of DFID support



Discussions are underway with CLGF members and partners in these regions to develop target work plans at both the country and council level to deepen existing LED programmes, build capacity for LED, increase awareness of LED and support national roll-outs of LED and approaches for financing LED. To date country level programmes are in development in Botswana, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Zambia with more to come on line following the Commonwealth Local Government Conference 2017.

In August CLGF was pleased to agree a second phase of its work supporting Local Economic Development (LED) in Commonwealth countries with a further £3.9million funding from the UK. Building on the successes of CLGF's 2012-2016 work the new project *Reducing poverty through local economic development in the Commonwealth* will run from 2017-2020 and continue to focus its work in the three target regions of: Southern Africa, West Africa and South Asia.





## India: review of 73rd and 74th amendments

A two-day, national conference reviewing processes since the passing of the 73rd and 74th Constitutional amendments in India 25 years ago took place in Maharashtra at the beginning of November.

These amendments are very significant to decentralisation in India because, until they were passed, it was not mandatory for Indian states to enact local government legislation. The 73rd amendment established rural local government in every state; and ensured that mandatory elections to panchayats (rural councils) took place, which included mandatory representation of minority communities such as scheduled castes and tribes, as well as a minimum reservation of 30% of seats for women. The 74th Amendment similarly defines urban local bodies.

In addition, the amendments mandate

the constitution of two state-level commissions: an independent election commission to supervise and manage elections to local bodies, and a state finance commission, established every five years, to review the financial position of local bodies and recommend the principles that should govern the allocation of funds and taxation authority to local bodies.

The meeting brought together scholars of decentralisation, political scientists, NGOs, policy makers and elected representatives to explore the challenges that local government have faced over the past three

decades including the devolvement of functions, empowerment of women, administrative issues, media and local body elections. CLGF, through Anuya Kuwar, who heads up the Asia office, shared some Commonwealth good practice to enhance the debate.

Discussions looked at how Maharashtra, and other states across the country, have implemented decentralisation and sought recommendations and proposals. This resulted in a series of recommendations to the State Minister, including the need for more induction training for newly elected councillors.

## LED World Forum

CLGF joined more than 2800 participants from 80 plus countries at the end of October for the 4th World Forum of Local Economic Development (LED) in Cape Verde. Representatives from central and local government, civil society, the UN and its agencies and other members of the development community, came together over four days to look at:

- LED as foundation for integrated and cohesive territories;
- LED as a foundation for resilient and peaceful societies in fragile contexts;
- LED as a foundation for sustainable and inclusive economies; and
- Special focus on Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

An associate member of the Forum, CLGF was represented by:

Ms Phumla Ndaba, CLGF Regional LED

Advisor in Southern Africa, a panellist on *Enabling Policies and Measures for Achieving Territorial Cohesion through LED: Employment and Decent Work through Youth and Women Economic Empowerment*.

Mr Leon George Thomas, Mayor of Portmore Municipal Council, Jamaica and Ms Colisile Tfwala, LED Officer for the Municipal Council of Mbabane, Swaziland; who took part in the panel on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Small States: Common Challenges and Potential.

And Ms Nyasha Simbanegavi, CLGF Regional Programme Manager for Southern Africa, who participated in the panel on *Public Goods and Services for Women's Economic Empowerment* as part of CLGF's membership of Cities Alliance.

The Forum's concluding declaration included:

- The importance of integrated LED systems in localising the SDGs;
- The key role of local and regional governments and their associations, and city-to-city dialogue for mutual learning;
- The transformative role of the private sector;
- The need for stronger coalitions with civil society actors/associations;
- The key value of research and accessible, evidence-based knowledge systems;
- The potential of LED in further unlocking and 'localising' the development potential of Small Island Developing States;

The conference was an important opportunity to share lessons and experiences of the first phase of the DFID project.

# CHOGM 2018

Tim Hitchens is overseeing the UK government team responsible for delivering the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), working closely with the Commonwealth Secretariat and member states. With the outcomes of the Commonwealth Local Government Conference in Malta feeding into the CHOGM discussions, we asked Tim to tell us more about the event.



April 2018 will be an extraordinary month as the UK prepares to host what is likely to be the largest leaders' summit in its history. After Easter, many of the world's top athletes will assemble in Australia's Gold Coast for a thrilling fortnight of sport at the Commonwealth Games, and a celebration of the Commonwealth's vibrancy and diversity.

Immediately following this, 52 leaders and their foreign ministers will join thousands of young people, business leaders, and civil society groups to discuss and decide the Commonwealth's future. Taking place in London and Windsor across some of our most iconic landmarks, over seven days, it will be a truly memorable occasion.

On the last day of the summit, leaders will retreat to Windsor Castle to address big global challenges. And the day after – Saturday 21st April – Her Majesty The Queen will celebrate her 92nd birthday.

After a period when the Commonwealth has perhaps been less evident on the world stage, it will be a great showcase for the best

of the organisation, but also of its reform and rejuvenation.

The UK took on this mantle when, as the tragic events in the Caribbean so starkly remind us, Vanuatu was all but wiped out by Hurricane Pam in 2015. While the summit has been long in the planning, it also provides an opportunity for British people to describe who we are in the 21st century, and how we are different from the last – diverse, at home with our differences, outward and international looking, with family links across the Commonwealth.

This will be one of the UK's most complex undertakings in recent memory and we will be looking to our partners to help celebrate the Commonwealth and make the summit a success.

In September, the Prime Minister joined Commonwealth leaders and the Secretary-General in New York to set out her vision for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. Next April we will welcome them to London and Windsor as we work towards a common future. A future that is more prosperous, secure, sustainable and fair for the 2.4 billion citizens across the Commonwealth.

For more information visit the website [www.chogm2018.org.uk](http://www.chogm2018.org.uk) Facebook page [www.facebook.com/Commonwealth2018](https://www.facebook.com/Commonwealth2018) and Twitter - [@commonwealth18](https://twitter.com/commonwealth18).



“ This will be one of the UK's most complex undertakings in recent memory and we will be looking to our partners to help celebrate the Commonwealth and make the summit a success. ”

## Caribbean: Localising the SDGs

The CLGF-EU project *Localising the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)* is progressing well in Trinidad and Tobago, with a second workshop for municipal corporations on project management. Focusing on the importance of integrating monitoring and evaluation into the planning process and use of tools, the workshop demonstrated how effective monitoring and corrective actions during a project can make a significant contribution to achieving the predicted output and outcomes.

Participants used projects from their own local councils SDG pilot projects as case studies: developing and implementing a multi-platform, eco-tourism application for Sangre Grande municipality; walkability in the Central Business District for Port of Spain City Corporation; and regulation of development, building codes and standards for expansive soils in the Penal-Debe region.

This is a key action to ensure programmes and activities are showing real results against SDG targets. Participants will be able to put what they have learned into practice before the next workshop and, as well as increasing skills, the workshops aim to increase confidence. Sandra Singh from the CLGF Caribbean Office is overseeing similar pilot projects in Dominica and Jamaica.

# EU supporting CLGF work in the Commonwealth

**CLGF has been actively using the EU support it receives to strengthen its network and support its members**

CLGF has a Framework Partnership Agreement with the European Union. This is a political agreement that stresses the overlapping areas of interest between CLGF and the EU. To support this agreement, the EU has awarded a strategic grant to CLGF to strengthen its network and work with its member countries in localising the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). There are currently six pilot projects underway in Dominica, Ghana, Jamaica, Malawi, Rwanda and Trinidad and Tobago. The EU support is allowing CLGF to work with local government associations in these countries to design a road map to localise the SDGs. This includes dialogue with government ministries to increase the recognition of local government as an agent in delivering the SDGs; building understanding and awareness within local government of the SDGs and what they mean for local councils; and working with pilot councils to concretely test a variety of methods to integrate SDGs into their existing work and services.

Through a second Framework Partnership Agreement, this time as a partner in Platforma's Strategic Grant, CLGF is receiving further support for the development of knowledge products and learning events. Based in Brussels, Platforma is a forum that brings together European local government associations involved in development work.

At Platforma's October steering group meeting, CLGF's representative Claire Frost detailed outputs to date under this partnership.

- The first, a themed publication *Igniting Sustainable and People Centred Socio Economic Development in Southern Africa: the importance of LED* was delivered at CLGF's Southern Africa regional conference in June and published in July 2016.
- The second, a publication looking at the key financial and capacity challenges facing local government in their ability to deliver on local needs and priorities and providing strategies for them to play an integral role achieving Agenda 2030, will be presented as part of the background paper at the 2017 Commonwealth Local Government Conference.
- Finally, at CLGC2017 in Malta, Platforma is a partner in a number of targeted working group sessions looking at innovation in funding, resourcing and capacity.

These discussions will bring together CLGF's membership from across the Commonwealth, including European members, and focus on strengthening local government's resource base and professionalising local government within the wider global context of localising SDGs.

Look out for more updates on the EU Strategic Framework Agreements as the work continues.



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# Pacific female market traders increase skills



Women across the Pacific are increasing their skills and knowledge about operating local markets thanks to the UN Women Markets for Change (M4C) project delivered by CLGF, funded largely by the Australian Government.

Extending across Fiji, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, the project set out to help women in a number of ways, including:

- increasing the ability of female vendors to be heard and participate by looking at market place governance structures, as well as accessibility and inclusiveness;
- helping local government to make decision-making processes more transparent, accountable and responsive to vendors' needs;
- assessing and responding to the financial and business needs of vendors and rural producers; and
- working with local government and vendors to ensure market place infrastructure and onsite services are gender responsive.

In Vanuatu, the training was based on a 2015 training needs assessment, with a focus on management and leadership for market and council staff, elected members and the executives of the Market Vendors Association.

Some of the topics covered were leadership, management – stress and conflict, negotiation skills; and training sessions encompassed a variety of methods: from role play and group activities, to formal presentations and discussions.

To help female market traders become more successful, the training targeted their skills gaps and also those of the local councils and the associations running the markets. The aim was to help markets become more responsive to the views and needs of female market traders.

The training also allowed participants to talk about the most serious issues affecting market trading, for example, in Fiji, absence of a market constitution, lack of facilities, thefts, transportation costs, stray dogs and limited knowledge of market by-laws.

Evaluation of the training in all three countries was very positive. In the future, participants said they were keen to cover subjects such as financial literacy and budgeting, role of councillors and computer training.

## News in brief

### Land-Urban Nexus and Inclusive Urbanisation in East Africa

CLGF has joined a research project on the Land-Urban Nexus which will focus on inclusive urbanisation in Dar es Salaam and Mwanza in Tanzania, and Khartoum in Sudan. The research is led by the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex and CLGF's role will be to engage city councils in the action research. The study will run over the next two years and explore how location within the city affects food security, water and sanitation and livelihoods, with a focus on the poor, women and migrants.



### CLGF research published

The outcomes of a CLGF research collaboration with the University of Birmingham on decentralisation in post conflict countries have been published in a special edition of the academic journal – Third World Thematics. Building on CLGF's post-conflict work in Sierra Leone and the Solomon Islands, the three year collaboration involving several academics looked at the role of local government and decentralisation in supporting communities in post-conflict countries. Web link: [www.tandfonline.com/toc/rwtw20/1/6](http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rwtw20/1/6)

## Side events and activities for delegates



### Commonwealth Women in Local Government Network

It is remarkable that, in 2017, when women have successfully broken into leadership roles in politics, business and the third sector, across the Commonwealth and beyond, there is still a need to call for gender equality and inclusion in our politics and public institutions. CLGF's Aberdeen Agenda and the Commonwealth Charter make clear commitments to both and, the 2017 Commonwealth Local Government Conference will launch a Network for Commonwealth Women in Local Government to support women leaders and ensure CLGF mainstreams gender across all its activities.

*The Commonwealth and the CLGF are committed to a target of no less than 30 per cent of women in decision-making in the political, public and private sectors, and to developing strategies for increasing their active participation. (CLGF, Aberdeen Agenda, 2005)*

When the Sustainable Development Goals were adopted in 2015, the international community restated its commitment to realising gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, mainstreaming this across all goals and targets and allocating a specific goal - SDG5. Political leadership is central to SDG5 and target 5.5 - *ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life* will be key. For local government, indicator 5.5.1 is especially important, monitoring the proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments. The new Network will provide a strong Commonwealth

voice in ensuring that this data is collected, and CLGF is already working with UCLG and UN Women on the best way to do this.

With only one third of Commonwealth countries having met the 30% target, it is clearly not possible to continue with a *business as usual* model of work on political inclusion. The launch will focus on some of the searching questions that Network members have to address:

- how can we best overcome the barriers to women's inclusion?
- How do we empower women to play a full role in decision making?
- How can we best use international policy and national and sub-national commitments to these to address these issues?

Malta's Verdala Palace is the venue for the launch on 22 November; with a message from President Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca of Malta, and in the presence of Commonwealth Secretary-General Rt Hon Patricia Scotland and former NZ Prime Minister and UNDP Administrator Rt Hon Helen Clark, together with male and female decision-makers from across the 52 countries of the Commonwealth.

With its work at the international, regional, national and local levels, we hope that the Network will provide momentum towards greater empowerment of women and a greater focus on gender mainstreaming across CLGF's work, advocacy, and leadership.

If you are in Malta, join us and lend your voice to this critical issue. If not, encourage local government leaders and prospective women leaders to join the network and share their ideas. Watch twitter [@CLGF\\_News](https://twitter.com/CLGF_News) and the CLGF website [www.clgf.org](http://www.clgf.org) for updates.



### CLGF Research Colloquium

Taking place on 19 and 20 November at the

University of Malta, Valletta Campus, representatives of universities, institutes and local government policymakers from the Commonwealth will meet before the main conference to present and discuss research on local government, with discussion outcomes presented to the main conference.



### Commonwealth Local Young Leaders' Forum

Taking place on 20 and 21 November at the Fortress

Builders, CLGF has joined forces with the Commonwealth Secretariat Youth Affairs Division, Royal Commonwealth Society and Commonwealth Youth Council to hold a special Youth Leaders' Forum, running alongside the main conference, to which the outcomes of the forum will be presented.

**CLGF will be providing some bursaries to enable young leaders to participate in the conference as full delegates.**



### Expo2017

The historic Sacra Infermeria Hall in the

Conference Centre provides an impressive venue for the conference exhibition. Exhibitors from around the Commonwealth will showcase products, services and good practice.

**CLGF extends you a special invitation to visit the CLGF stand. Meet the staff and take a selfie with one of our hashtags.**

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