

END - OF - YEAR MESSAGE TO MEMBERS

As 2025 comes to a close, CLGF warmly thanks members of the Commonwealth Sustainable Cities Network (CSCN) for their leadership, insight and sustained engagement. Throughout the year, CSCN has continued to demonstrate the value of city-led learning and collective advocacy in responding to the realities of rapid urbanisation, climate risk and constrained local finance

REFLECTING ON 2025

A major milestone this year was the launch of the CSCN **Member-Led Webinar Series**, beginning with Belize City's session on unlocking municipal finance. This exchange illustrated how cities can responsibly access capital markets, strengthen local autonomy and build public trust through sound legislation and financial management. It set a strong foundation for peer-to-peer learning grounded in lived municipal experience.



Local Government at the Cities and Regions for International Partnerships Forum – left to right:

- Dieudonné Bantsimba, Mayor of Brazzaville, Vice-President of the AIMF;
- Cristian Zamora Matute, Mayor of Cuenca, and President of FLACMA;
- Sunita Dangal, Deputy Mayor of Kathmandu;
- Bernard Wagner, Mayor of Belize City, and Chairperson of CLGF

CSCN members also played an important role in strengthening the global voice of cities and regions. At the **Cities and Regions for International Partnerships Forum in Brussels**, local and regional government networks jointly advanced a declaration calling for stronger recognition of local government within the EU's **Global Gateway** strategy. The declaration reinforced a clear message: global investments will be more effective, inclusive and sustainable when cities are recognised as partners in planning and delivery, not only as beneficiaries.

Capacity-building and leadership development remained central to CSCN's work. CLGF continued its partnership with the **African School of Decentralisation**, supporting participation and convening a mayoral dialogue on decentralisation and finance. Discussions highlighted shared challenges across regions, including fiscal autonomy, institutional capacity and the growing importance of digital systems for revenue and service delivery.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026

In 2026, CSCN will enter a new phase of activity with the launch of a **new FCDO-funded Sustainable Urbanisation Project**. This initiative will deepen work on multi-level governance, urban finance and climate resilience, with CSCN members closely involved in developing policy recommendations, applied learning and peer exchange.

Building on the momentum of the Global Gateway declaration, CSCN will also focus on supporting cities to translate international commitments into practical opportunities. This includes strengthening understanding of how local and regional governments can better position themselves to access international development funds and align local priorities with large-scale investment frameworks.

Engagement will continue through regional and thematic events, including global dialogues on multi-level governance, a planned urbanisation and climate workshop in India, the Pacific Urban Forum and the ongoing work of the CSCN Steering Committee.

As we move into 2026, CLGF looks forward to working with CSCN members to ensure that shared learning leads to tangible improvements in how cities plan, finance and deliver sustainable urban development.

With best wishes for the festive season,
Commonwealth Local Government Forum

Key CSCN Moments – 2025

- Launch of CSCN Member-Led Webinar Series (Belize City, May)
- Cities & Regions for International Partnerships Forum and Global Gateway Declaration (Brussels, December)
- African School of Decentralisation and CSCN-hosted Mayors' Roundtable (Cape Town, October)