

CONFERENCE NOTES



Commonwealth Local Government Conference
Improving local government:
the Commonwealth vision

11 - 14 May 2009, Freeport, Grand Bahama Island



The following material is a selection of edited presentations and additional text from the Conference Working Group program. Further details about this program, including additional presentations, can be viewed at the CLGF conference website: www.clgc2009.org

WORKING GROUP 1

Inclusive cities and the needs of the urban poor: Taking forward the vision for improvement.

Christine Platt:

President, Commonwealth Association of Planners.

Thanks to a growing realisation that planning fit for purpose in the 21st Century is a form of local governance, and that planning and local government are inextricably bound, there exists a strengthening relationship between CLGF and the Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP). There is clearly synergy in what CAP do and in addition, the developmental challenges they face in the Commonwealth are so great that the only hope we have of making a difference is by global collective action.

This aims to be a short overview of where planning is in the Commonwealth and then to present a reflection on work done by the Commonwealth Association of Planners relevant to this CLGF conference and to the Inclusive Cities Network in particular.

The last decades of the 20th Century arguably saw planning in decline, to the point of sometimes being regarded as irrelevant or an impediment to development. There were indeed grounds for criticism. Too often technocratic masterplans and attempts at micro-managing land use failed the poor, yet still lacked the powers or political will to protect vital assets of land and environmental resources. Planners had become increasingly uncertain of their contribution, and too often had become mired in systems of planning

which were never designed to cope with the demands being placed on them, or were too narrowly focussed on micro - managing land use with the resulting contestation, uncertainties and lack of coherence.

The [World Urban Forum](#) in Vancouver (WUF 3) was a watershed, because governments and civil society organisations agreed that planning is a key tool for the strategic coordination of sustainable urbanisation. The official UN Habitat [report](#) on WUF 3 listed planning as one of four headline issues, and recorded that: “The Forum stressed the important role of planners as agents of change and underlined the importance of sustainability as the backbone of new forms of planning.” But importantly WUF 3 was also the occasion at which planners and those responsible for planning began to seriously engage in debate about the fundamental role of planning in addressing the urgent challenges of the 21st Century. A new groundswell of energy emerged with the common purpose of reinventing planning fit for purpose in the 21st Century. The paper [Reinventing Planning](#) presented an agenda based on 10 key principles, which were presented at WUF 3. Time doesn’t allow a full expose of these, the most critical points are:

- *Sustainability*: which requires reconciling and integrating social, economic and environmental considerations in human settlement development.
- *Integrated Planning*: which is a fundamental part of governance and which requires strategic thinking which is not done in silos or boxes, about policies that support each other and which ensure effective linkages to private and public budgetary processes.
- *Planning with Partners*: which requires planning to be participatory, inclusive and to involve all sectors of the community not least the youth, women, the poor and ethnic minorities.
- *Subsidiarity*: which requires that decisions are taken at the most appropriate level of preferably decentralised government.
- *Appropriate Planning Tools*: which should be strategic, affordable, relevant to their context and compatible with indigenous traditions and practices.

The response of planners and people responsible for planning has been remarkable. There is compelling evidence that planners in the Commonwealth have responded to the call to reinvent planning. A series of events bears testimony to this. Responses from

grass-roots planners have been heard from around the world over the past two years, including the Pacific Islands, Australia, the Caribbean, Canada, the Great Lakes area of East Africa and Cameroon. Here is a flavour of just one of these. Planners from around the world gathered in Johannesburg in April 2008 at the [Planning Africa conference](#) to explore the “Lessons, challenges and responses from Reinventing Planning post-Vancouver.” The messages were clear and consistent:

- Governments need to grasp how spatial planning which is strategic, integrated and participatory can help,
- Governance issues, including insufficient funding, lack of political will, and political instability are affecting the delivery of planning,
- There is a skills shortage in ALL regions of the world and in all areas of planning and planning decision making,
- We need cross boundary thinking if we are to effectively deal with the big issues such as climate change, deepening poverty, increasing slums and the food and energy crisis,
- Globalisation and its impact on new migrations, densities, heritage and changing sense of place cannot be ignored,
- Last but not least, we need to reinvent planning education and to support the “Barefoot Planners” who are working hard to serve communities in rural areas and small island states, with few opportunities to access new knowledge and skills.

But there were also some very positive messages. There is a clear determination to make planning work and recognition that this means doing things differently. We have heard how women planners are preparing practical guidance on planning residential areas from a woman’s perspective; how governments have recognised the strategic role which planning can play; about innovative new legislation and planning systems being established; about the recognition now given to the importance of informal trading for the livelihoods of the urban poor; and increasing gender and diversity awareness. The list goes on, but the message is clear that planning is indeed being re- invented, and largely from grassroots. But let me not mislead you - the work is far from complete.

There is also a new spirit of global solidarity. The Institute of Town Planners, Sri Lanka and the Planning Institute of Australia have worked together on re-planning after the 2004 Tsunami. The Royal Town Planning Institute of Great Britain and the

Commonwealth Association of Planners have undertaken a global diagnostic assessment of capacity in planning, the largest ever study of the global planning community. Their message is clear: the potential of planning is not being properly exploited, and we need to build capacity.

Significantly there have also been a number of high level sessions at which ministers and senior officials have engaged in discussion about how to re-invent planning. UN Habitat's GC 21 in April last year agreed the [Draft Medium Term Strategic and Institutional Plan for 2008-2013](#) which had as one of the five strategic focus areas "Urban Planning, management and governance". The Plenary Dialogue sessions at GC 21 agreed the need for properly funded, sustainable planning systems and frameworks relevant to the 21st Century and agreed that the enhanced capacity of planning and of local authority administration is crucial. At GC 22 this year the Plenary Dialogue went on to stress the need for stronger partnerships and networks, knowledge sharing, research and capacity building. We have seen similar sentiments expressed at the Inter-Ministerial [Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements](#) and also by civil society in the Commonwealth People's Forum Kampala Civil Society Statement to CHOGM in Uganda last year.

The messages have been consistent. We cannot talk about sustainable development without talking about sustainable urbanisation, and we cannot talk about sustainable urbanisation without talking about planning. But concerns remain, particularly about political leadership, governance, capacity, social inclusion, and funding. The lessons and responses are clear. The spatial dimension of planning remains the core and quintessential element of planning as we know it, but that is no longer enough. Planning fit for purpose in 21st Century needs to be strategic, integrated and participatory, otherwise we have no hope of dealing with the challenges we face. Planning must ensure that the wealth created by urbanisation is shared fairly. Without it there is no hope of the people for whom and with whom we need to plan accepting, defending or adhering to the outcomes of our efforts

The challenges we face are overwhelming and we know that we are inextricably bound together in resolving them. None of us is immune from the impacts of cities which are set to double in size in the next 10-15 years, from the 150m climate change refugees which are being spoken of, or the 1 billion people living in slums, with consequences for health,

security and stability in our world. As one speaker in Johannesburg said, “If the developed world thinks it is isolated from poverty issues, it is wrong on every count. Climate change and failed cities will trigger international migration that will become unstoppable.”

In this context it is a pleasure to report that the Commonwealth Association of Planners has commenced work on three projects to advance planning, and thereby contribute to better local government in the Commonwealth. It is the third that is of particular significance. It is important however to record that the Commonwealth Association of Planners commissioned a research study into “Good Practice in Planning with Gender in the Commonwealth” [[allied document](#)] which provided an overview of key generic guidelines on gender in relation to human settlement planning and presents 10 good practice case studies from across the Commonwealth as examples. This work is to be published shortly. The second is a Capacity Building for Planning project. The first phase of this is an investigation into the State of Planning Education in the Commonwealth which is due to commence very shortly.

The project which is undoubtedly of the most significance today is the State of the Commonwealth Cities project. The Commonwealth Association of Planners was instrumental in having included in the Communiqué from the [Commonwealth People’s Forum](#) (CPF) (held in Kampala in November 2007 at the time of the last CHOGM), a call on:

Commonwealth Member States, and the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements to produce a ‘State of the Commonwealth’s Cities’ report for the next CHOGM, which would assess opportunities and threats of urban growth in relation to poverty alleviation, sustainable and people-centred development and reducing disparities in living conditions, and would recommend inter-governmental actions.

In 2001 the Commonwealth committed to the goal of “demonstrated progress towards adequate shelter for all with secure tenure and access to essential services in every community by 2015” but with no systematic analysis of or mechanisms for reporting on what is happening in the cities of the Commonwealth this remains an aspiration. The Commonwealth Association of Planners is working in partnership with CLGF, the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Foundation on this very important project. The ultimate outcome is intended to be a set of country reports in which

urbanisation issues are reported on at each CHOGM, with an agreed set of key indicators to monitor what is happening in the Commonwealth cities. The intention is to establish a network of cities throughout the Commonwealth, as resolved in New Delhi, which can pilot a programme of action research. Twelve cities have been identified however this list is not exclusive and any Commonwealth cities which are able to contribute will be welcomed. The first phase of the State of the Commonwealth Cities report was presented at CCGHS in March in Nairobi. We need now to move ahead in order to report more fully to CHOGM in November. We therefore welcome this very important event – the launch of the [Network of Inclusive Commonwealth Cities](#), which will play a critical role in deepening our understanding of urban issues in the Commonwealth.

The call which has been repeated throughout the world is that with political support, greater capacity, coordinated research and open sharing of knowledge and information, planning and local government could deliver much more in addressing the critical challenges we face. The crises are urban but the City is the solution.

*Other speakers to Working Group 1 were **Cllr Andrew Mua**, Lord Mayor of Honiara, and **Mayor Obed T Mlaba**, eThekweni, South Africa.*

WORKING GROUP 3**Promoting gender equality: Taking forward the vision for improvement****Shelia Roseau**

Executive Director, Directorate of Gender Affairs, National Women's Machinery, Antigua and Barbuda¹

Local governments are key promoters of gender equality and can make a difference to the lives - and the life chances - of women. Increasing the number of women in local government, and keeping the needs of women in mind when developing policies and services, is essential to achieving the goals of sustainable development. It is also a question of justice and recognising gender equality as a human right. Although women comprise more than half of the population in most countries and indeed the world, they continue to be under represented as leaders, and elected officials including at the local and national levels. Local government has become the focus of widespread development strategy in developed and developing countries, and is transforming the structure of governance. This process of governance not only strengthens democracy but encourages citizen participation. It is also about promoting democratic governance and the equitable sharing of economic opportunities and responsibilities.

Recognising the importance of the role of women in local government and access to public services, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), and in collaboration with other international agencies, organized an international conference on [‘Decentralization, local power and women’s rights: Global trends in participation, representation and access to public services’](#). This conference was held in Mexico City 18-21 November 2008.

The Conference reviewed global trends in relation to representation and participation; access to public services; access to women’s representation and participation as well as how to improve lives of communities at the local level. In seeking to do this it looked at issues of decentralization as a means of deepening democracy. In addition, it reaffirmed

¹ National Women's Machineries (NWMs) are the main constituents at country or national level that are charged with the responsibility of pushing women's issues and agenda forward. In some cases, they are embedded within the Ministry for Women and Gender Affairs, while in some others, they are stand-alone department, albeit working with the Ministry of Women's Affairs.

the critical importance of local government as an integral part of representative democracy. It was further acknowledged that decentralization could create opportunities for women and men on issues that affect their lives.

To take advantage of such opportunities, the importance of adopting the rights-based approach was acknowledged as a strategy to increase women's representation and participation.² In this context the global frameworks including the UDHR, ICCPR, ICESCR, CEDAW, BPFA, the [Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender Equality \(2005-2015\)](#), MDGs, and regional instruments that provide for equal and full participation of women and men in all spheres of life were reviewed. On a practical level, basic social services such as water, sanitation, education and food were discussed as how best they can be delivered for the benefit of all. From a global perspective, the Conference reaffirmed the importance of promoting gender equality and equity from national to local levels, thus, acknowledged, the role of central government to promote and protect women's access to local governance and to ensure the availability of financial and other resources to meet women's practical and strategic needs and create structures of accountability that enable women to exercise their rights.

Highlighting a few findings and recommendations from IDRC's research:

- Both women and men are enthusiastic about the opportunities at the local level for participation in public life and are committed to promoting gender equality and equity. Thus they must be provided the necessary access and resources to participate and be represented.
- In the context of food, financial and climate change crises, policies are often formulated at the higher levels without involving women in their formulation; ie transferring the responsibilities of payment and care to communities and civil society and extending women's unpaid domestic and care giving responsibilities into the public sphere.
- A major finding of the conference is the lack of disaggregated data on local government representation such as a resource like the [IPU website](#).
- Insufficient resources and special measures such as quotas and affirmative actions are useful mechanisms to promote women's participation.

² A Rights-based approach or citizen-based approach is an approach that recognises that men, women and young people have a role and responsibility in the governance of their community as documented in the universal declaration of human rights.

- The importance of gender responsive budgeting is critical to ensure effective and maximum benefits for women, men and young persons.
- The need to build and strengthen capacity at local levels is essential to promote ownership.

Recommendations from the IDRC include:

- Design and review policies that promote gender equality and equity. We can start with CLGF.
- Promote and recognize the roles and responsibilities of organizations that promote and protect women's rights and participation including grassroots women's and community-based groups.
- Implement mechanisms and special measures for women's participation and representation.
- Ensure access to decentralized services and resources.
- Fiscal decentralization, access to finances and remuneration.
- Capacity building.
- Communication, dissemination and support networks.
- Monitoring and evaluation.

I would like to conclude with some recommendations for CLFG 2009:

- That the CLGF in collaboration with Commonwealth and regional groups develop a "Gender and local government action plan a framework for improving gender in local government"
- Adopt the outcomes of IDRC (Mexico) Conference
- Promote and enhance gender responsive budgeting at local government level.

Finally, over 2,400 years ago the ancient Greek scholar, Plato wrote that a city should be ruled by philosophers, by those who sought wisdom, those who avoided petty squabbles to focus on the great issue of how to secure the welfare of the state and all its residents. In the twenty first century we too need the wisest people, the modern philosophers to ensure we survive these troubled times. How will we ever have wise rulers, if we continue to ensure that over half our citizens are excluded from those positions of power and influence where they can do most good?

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Co-facilitator of Working Group 3.

Local government and decentralisation: A critical analysis of women's representation and participation in the Commonwealth

Increasingly, decentralisation and local governance reforms are transforming the structure and efficiency of governance in some countries, with the implication that local people will be 'enfranchised' and therefore transformed from 'subjects into citizens.'³ In this context, it can be translated therefore, that women will be enfranchised, their voices heard, and they can contribute to decisions that affect their lives.

Women's participation and representation in local government with decentralised power, refers to any change in the organisation of the state which involves the transfer of power or functions from the central level to any sub-national levels, from one sub-national level to another lower level,"⁴ thus, providing opportunities for women to contribute to the decisions that affect their lives. Often, the amount of power transferred informs the extent of impact and access. For example, whether the system offers devolution, deconcentration, delegation and/or privatisation, could determine the level of opportunities available for women on issues.

A critical question for consideration is 'why is the transfer of power necessary?'

I believe such power transfer is essential because the process of promoting good governance requires the transformation of society through socio-economic, political as well as cultural empowerment of all citizens - in particular, the empowerment of marginalised groups to participate in their own development. At the practical level, as documented by Commonwealth countries and others, local governments can play a key role. Women, through their participation at the local level are able to influence decisions so they are gender sensitive and support women's empowerment. Subsequently, such women can be conduits for communities and often have the opportunity to build constituencies. At the last Commonwealth Local Government Conference (Aberdeen),

³ Ribot, *Waiting for Democracy: The Politics of Choice in Natural Resource Decentralisation*. Washington DC: World Resources Institute, p. 7, 2004.

⁴ Chikulo BC, 'Decentralisation and the role of the state in the future' in Mandaza I (ed.), *Governance and Human Development in Southern Africa*. Harare: Sapes Books, 1998, p 82.

the Heads of Government endorsed a twelve-point plan outlining the key principles for strong local democracy and governance. Among this 12 point agenda is the need for “inclusiveness in all sectors of the community, particularly women.”⁵ To promote this commitment, the Commonwealth Local Government Forum in association with the Commonwealth Secretariat organized a session on ‘Women and Local Government’ during the 2009 Annual Commonwealth Local Government Forum held in Freeport, Grand Bahamas. The session further reaffirmed the provisions of the Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender Equality (CPoA, 2005-2015) adopted by the Commonwealth Ministers Responsible for Women and Gender Affairs in Fiji Islands in 2004.⁶

Within the context of ‘rights’, political participation and democratic governance, the session reviewed women’s participation, representation and contributions to governance in Commonwealth countries and beyond. It outlined strategies to improve women’s participation and representation in governance, a panacea for achieving sustainable development. A notable outcome is the agreement by the Commonwealth Local Government Forum to develop (in partnership with the Commonwealth Secretariat and national partners) a ‘Gender and Local Government Action Plan’. This will serve as a practical mechanism and advocacy and resource tool to promote the ‘Aberdeen Agenda’, in particular, women’s increased participation and representation in governance and politics.

Political participation is a fundamental right of every person. As noted in the Universal Declaration of Democracy, “...the achievement of democracy presupposes a genuine partnership between men and women in the conduct of the affairs of society in which they work in equality and complementarity drawing mutual enrichment from their differences.”⁷ The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which came into force in 1976, guarantees every citizen's right to participate in public affairs, vote or be voted into office, and have access generally to public services within her/his country.⁸ This right, further reaffirmed by other frameworks and ratified by States, which includes the [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women](#)

⁵ ‘The Aberdeen Agenda: Commonwealth Principles on Good Practice for Local Democracy and Good Governance’ Commonwealth Local Government Forum: UK.

⁶ Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender Equality (2005-2015), Para 3:13

⁷ Universal Declaration on Democracy, Principle No. 4, 1997

⁸ ICCPR, Article 3, ‘The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to ensure the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all civil and political rights set forth in the present Covenant.’

(CEDAW), must be exercised by all, including women. Ratification of these instruments by states confers and signifies accepted obligation to take all necessary measures to equal and full participation in the lives of men and women. This presentation will seek to review how far States have sought to fulfil this obligation especially through decentralization and local governance.

In relation to women's participation and representation, reports indicate that women constitute more than half the world's population, and have consistently out-voted men in elections. To ensure that women's voices are heard and the gender equality gap is closed, the [Fourth World Conference for Women](#) adopted a minimum target of at least thirty per cent (30%) women's representation and participation in government and decision-making positions. This target was set on the assumption that with 30%, women would achieve 'critical mass' or in other words, sufficient numbers to make a difference. Thus, the former UN Secretary General in his report stated that a "critical mass" (estimated at a level of at least 30-35% in decision-making bodies), has a visible impact on the style and content of political decisions. The current Commonwealth Plan of Action has called for countries to push beyond the 30 per cent minimum target for women's representation. In fact, the African Union has adopted a fifty/fifty (50/50) gender balance framework for all African countries. The challenge remains not only its implementation but translating such commitments at the local level of governance.

It is pertinent to mention that progress recorded has largely been due to institutional mechanisms through special measures such as quotas and/or affirmative action by governments, constitutional/legislative reforms, political will and women's advocacy. For instance, the 73rd & 74th Constitutional Amendment Act in India (1992/3), reserved 33 per cent (33%) of seats in all local bodies (Panchayats & Municipalities) for women, with a proviso that a third of the Chairpersons at all levels have to be female. Other countries that have adopted similar measures include Pakistan, Bangladesh, Uganda, Tanzania, and Lesotho, to mention a few. More recently though, the Indian State of Uttarakhand passed a bill (Uttarakhand Panchayat Law [Amend] 2008), which has up-scaled reserved seats for women to 50 per cent (50%) at the Panchayats, with a double term at the Pradhan level.

The story of women's representation at the local government is much similar to that presented above. Data on women's participation and representation at local government

levels highlight an uneven trend often with region specificities. Despite the above statistics, most countries have relatively poor records in terms of women being elected to representative bodies whether at national or local levels. What is also true is that while progress has been made in some countries, women have no representation at the local level in some countries.

Despite these calls and efforts by women organizations, activists and stakeholders; women's representation and participation in local governance processes remain slow and uneven. Several factors are responsible for such minimal progress. These include, lack of political will and commitment; discriminatory practices and laws; the culture of politics; traditional and religious barriers; financial and organizational considerations among others. Irrespective of challenges and barriers to women's representation and participation, it would appear that recent waves of decentralization and the push for accountability – and women's dogged interest to influence decisions that affect their lives – have increased across the globe. Recent trends from Arab countries Kuwait, Bahrain, UAE (where women took part in elections for the first time) is encouraging. In addition, Swaziland's adoption of a Constitution which provided 33 per cent (33%) reserved seats for women is evidence of 'the wind of' transformation.

The importance of transforming societies, promoting democracy and sustainable development underscores the critical importance of women's full and equal participation. The current situation of women in government has been aptly summarised thus

...historically, women have been sidelined from the structures of governance that determine political and legislative priorities. The legitimacy of political agendas that do not include the views of those affected, however, must be questioned.⁹

The question of legitimacy is critical as overall development of a society is unlikely to be achieved without women's advancement, equality and equity.

Following from the 2008 global conference on 'Local Government, Decentralisation and Women's Rights' organised by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC – Canada) with other partners in Mexico, the CLGF annual conference in the Bahamas re-

⁹ *Equality in Politics: A Survey of Women and Men in Parliaments*, Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), p6, viewed 22 February. See [Hhttp://www.ipu.org/PDF/publications/equality08-e.pdf](http://www.ipu.org/PDF/publications/equality08-e.pdf). See also IPU *e-Bulletin*, 'Is Parliament Open To Women' Issue No.19, Article 2, viewed 22 February [Hhttp://www.ipu.org/eB-e/19-2.htm](http://www.ipu.org/eB-e/19-2.htm)

affirmed the promotion of women's rights to participate in governance, thus, reinforced the question of representative and democratic legitimacy. As the Fourth World Women's Conference noted, "without the active participation and representation of women at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved."¹⁰

*Other speakers to Working group 3 were **Hazel Brown**, Network of NGOs of Trinidad and Tobago, and **Douglas Campbell**, Department of Local Government and Community Development, Dominica.*

¹⁰ The Beijing Platform for Action, 1995.

WORKING GROUP 4**Effective leadership-Implementing the Auckland Accord:
Resourcing local government for improvement****David Grossman**

Director, ICMA International

[ICMA](#), the International City/County Management Association, shares with the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) the principle that strong and effective local governments are central to the advancement of the democratic system.

Since its foundation, in 1914, ICMA has been committed to “the preservation of the values and integrity of representative local government and local democracy and a dedication to the promotion of efficient and effective management of public services.” To fulfill the spirit of this commitment, ICMA works to “maintain and enhance public trust and confidence in local government, to achieve equity and social justice, to affirm human dignity, and to improve the quality of life for the individual and the community. Members of ICMA dedicate themselves to the faithful stewardship of the public trust.”¹¹ Therefore, to no one’s surprise, ICMA’s work compares greatly with CLGF’s work. Due to time constraints, let me just mention some of the similarities between the Auckland Accord and ICMA’s Ideals and Values.

We recognize the central role of citizen inclusion and participation in the planning and decision-making processes of any local government. And we believe that participation must be encouraged under a framework of respect to cultural and ethnic diversity. Ethics is also at the core of any good local government. Its legitimacy is built on the trust of its citizens. We recognize that without true accountability, it is not possible to ensure the trust of citizens. Local government is given the responsibility of several key public services that must be delivered with the highest quality standards possible. Most importantly, these public services must represent a value added to the community and serve as a foundation for its social and economic development, all the while safeguarding the environment. Likewise, ICMA recognizes, as the CLGF does, the central role of city

¹¹ ICMA’s Declaration of Ideals.

councils in “ensuring that they are able to promote and build the local economy, skills, and cultural attributes to attract investment, jobs and tourism.”¹²

Local governments to be successful in today’s complex environment require a combination of strong political leadership, policy development, a relentless focus on execution and results, a commitment to transparent and ethical government, and a strategy for representing and engaging every segment of the community.¹³

Professional managers facilitate the establishment of the system of local government called the council-manager form. This is where elected officials are the community leaders and policy makers who establish a vision for their city, town, or county, and who, hire the manager to carry out policy and ensure that all residents are being equitably served. The manager coordinates the work of department heads and other employees who help ensure the smooth and efficient delivery of services. By building public/private partnerships, managers can or might target all of a community's resources to solve current problems.

Professional managers’ primary responsibility is to keep communities running smoothly. To do so, they work with a range of individuals involved in public safety, public works, community and economic development, and many other service areas. Therefore they ought to be highly trained, experienced men and women committed to meeting the challenges their community faces day in day out. A professional, in any discipline ought to perform better than an amateur. And in order to do so, he/she must draw from experience, knowledge and skills. Among the tasks a professional local government manager must do are:

- *Administration of personnel:* Provide direction and leadership to department heads and those who provide direct services to the community.
- *Management of public funds:* Ensure the cost-effectiveness of programs, balancing budgets, and securing the financial health of the community.
- *Implementation of programs and policies:* Work with elected officials and community leaders to achieve common goals and objectives for the community.

¹² The Auckland Accord, CLGF March 29, 2007.

¹³ See for instance, ‘The Mayor-Manager Conundrum that Wasn’t’. See [Hhttp://icma.org/main/ns.asp?nsid=1543&hsid=1&scid=1&moreDocs=1&t=0](http://icma.org/main/ns.asp?nsid=1543&hsid=1&scid=1&moreDocs=1&t=0)

- *Coordination of service delivery*: Anticipate future needs, organizing work operations, and establishing timetables to meet community needs.

In a world undergoing constant rapid changes, local government officials require access to the latest technology and knowledge. It does not matter if it is an elected or appointed official: all individuals that have a responsibility with respect to the performance of a local government must be up to date on the latest innovations in management and programming which could benefit their communities. ICMA's central role is to provide access to our members to the newest technology, knowledge and management approaches to support their performance and enhance their organization's ability to cope with today and tomorrow's challenges.

One of the responsibilities of a professional manager is to support the elected body she or he serves. Therefore ICMA provides training and information for council members. Elected officials have significant responsibilities, not only to dictate policies and provide guidance to the local government, but also to oversee the performance of the government staff. Given the variety of functions a local government performs, elected officials must have sufficient knowledge to be able to conduct their business efficiently and effectively.

ICMA helps professional managers to stay on top of the latest developments in management and technical issues. ICMA furthers the professional and personal development of our members through a core set of training programs, information sharing mechanisms and network of services domestically and internationally. Under ICMA University we have defined the Practices of Local Government Effective Management that involve four general areas:

1. **Democratic Values** (Policy facilitation; Democratic Advocacy and Citizen Participation; Diversity)
2. **Strategic Leadership** (Strategic planning, Initiative, Risk Taking, Vision, Creativity and Innovation, Technological Literacy)
3. **Good Management General Principles** (Human Resources - Staff Effectiveness, Policies and Procedures; Finances – Budgeting, Financial Analysis; Service Delivery - Functional and Operational Expertise and Planning, Citizen Service, Quality Assurance)
4. **Personal Skill and Values** (Advocacy and Interpersonal Communication; Presentation Skills; Media Relations; Integrity; Personal Development)

Regarding the last point, ICMA has a clear commitment to ethics. ICMA has as a condition of membership the adherence to the principles of the ICMA Code of Ethics, developed in 1924. Members agree to submit to a peer-to-peer review of their conduct under established enforcement procedures. ICMA members are strongly encouraged to become champions of the ethics culture by “walking the talk”. The ethics culture involves the building of ethical habits in the local government. The Core Values ICMA promotes are:

- Equity – treat everyone fairly and avoid inappropriate political activities.
- Trust and transparency – be open and share information generously.
- Honor – do the right thing.
- Integrity – tell the truth and seek no favors.
- Commitment – make a commitment to continuous learning for yourself and for your organization.
- Stewardship – leave your community in better shape than you found it (be a true custodian of the public trust).

As a complement to the training program, ICMA offers a voluntary credentialing program that is a means of defining and recognizing an individual ICMA member who is a professional local government manager qualified by a combination of: education and experience; adherence to high standards of integrity; and has an assessed commitment to lifelong learning and professional development. Managers are recognized by ICMA through a peer review credentialing process. The program also assists ICMA members in focusing and reflecting upon their lifelong professional development experience. The designation of ICMA Credentialed Manager is granted by the ICMA Executive Board. ICMA Credentialed Managers are viewed with growing distinction by local governing bodies and progressive, civically engaged communities. The program involves a five-year performance-based assessment to keep the credentialed status.

Since its foundation, ICMA has become a repository of information about local government performance and issues. Several of ICMA’s publications are used in graduate programs by well-known universities. ICMA experience as publisher is vast and comprehensive. Beside book publication, ICMA also produces case studies and special reports so our members and colleagues have timely information to support their decision-making processes about relevant issues. Recently, ICMA added the delivery of audio

conferences on current issues such as how to deal with financial crises, sustainability, customer service, and performance measurement among others.

Our continuously changing global environment has a direct impact on local government's demands. In order to be prepared to successfully cope with the changes, ICMA works on a thorough assessment of critical issues facing local governments. The survey research capacity and other analytical tools are used to generate a clear picture of environmental forces and the status of local government capacity to address the issues. Best practices, tools, and resources are identified and shared with our members and colleagues to help their local government solve their toughest challenges. The current focus areas are:

- Management and Leadership - helping local governments become more effective and efficient.
- Sustainability - balancing the values of environmental stewardship, economic development, and social equity in a way that leaves the community better for the next generation.
- Public Safety - new approaches to preparing, responding to, and recovering from emergencies.
- Healthy Communities - uncovering the best ways to help citizens and employees achieve health and wellness.

An important management tool that ICMA has been a leader in is Performance Management. Since its first publications on this topic in the late 1930's, ICMA has been promoting this management tool as a key element in the toolbox of local government managers. In 1994, ICMA created the [Center for Performance Measurement](#) that provides direct assistance to local governments and manages a system of performance indicators that allows jurisdictions to compare their performance with other similar public entities.

I would also like to share another important area of our work as an Association. Since 1989, ICMA International has leveraged the experience of local government practitioners and veteran international consultants to further the ICMA mission to create excellence in local governance worldwide.

ICMA International has introduced sound management practices to local governments, municipal associations, nongovernmental organizations, national ministries and agencies in developing countries and emerging democracies throughout the world. As a result, ICMA has participated in more than 500 projects in over 40 countries with a strong, practical, hands-on approach adapted to the local conditions. The areas in which ICMA International has worked are: Association Development; Citizen Involvement; Environmental Management; Infrastructure Development; Local Economic Development; Management Tools and Practices (Budgeting, Financial Management, Institutional Strengthening and Capacity-building, among others); Partnerships (among levels of government, as well as with NGOs and the private sector); Performance Measurement; Technology (including the application of IT for information sharing); Transparent Governance; and Water and Sanitation. ICMA International has two regional offices, one in Mexico and another in India.

Finally, I want to share with you a couple of examples of ICMA's information and knowledge sharing activities which impact the life of professional local government officials and therefore their communities. Since the early 1990's ICMA has been fortunate to collaborate on a number of projects in the Latin America region. As result of some of those projects, Guatemala and Mexico have developed certification programs for municipal financial officers. What these programs offer are a means to assess the participants' knowledge and experience and to create a pool of qualified professionals from which elected officials can choose, promoting more professional local government.

Another example is the work on performance measurement that has helped to improve the capacities of both personnel and organizations to meet their goals and objectives. ICMA has supported performance measurement initiatives in several places, in developing countries as well as countries in transition. Two examples that come to mind are Mexico and India where ICMA has contributed to the establishment of countrywide performance measurement programs. Because creating a culture of performance measurement institution-wide is so critical, ICMA has designed and carried out workshops for elected and appointed officials in performance measurement to ensure buy-in throughout the institution. If a municipality is successful at improving performance, the entire municipality benefits – from the local elected officials to appointed staff – and ultimately the community.

I hope that this brief overview of ICMA activities can help CLGF visualize how the Forum can contribute to the advancement the Auckland Accord.

Dr. K K Pandey

Professor Urban Management

Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi

The workshop 'Resourcing local government for improvement' was conducted in the overall context of a resource crunch at the municipal level covering both financial as well as physical resources. It was emphasised that there is a wide mismatch between funds, functions and functionaries. It was also indicated that this difference requires an inter-governmental action agenda to encourage synergy and convergence from all stakeholders. Finally, existent resources are not being tapped by city governments to bridge the gaps. The presentation on local government capacity building emphasized a three-tier approach to capacity building: Awareness creation; Education and class-room training; and, Hands on learning, mentoring and 'on the job' capacity building.

It was indicated that last couple of decades have undergone a process of decentralisation and empowerment of local governments. Countries across the globe have promoted political, functional and fiscal decentralisation through constitutional recognition, enabling legislation, specific schemes and programs under bilateral, multi-literal and central/provincial and civil society collaboration. It is now imperative to build capacity of concerned urban sector stakeholders to exercise the powers devolved to them in this process of decentralisation.

As mentioned, **awareness** of the issues is the first step in building the capacity of stakeholders in a wider context of urbanization, political participation and sustainability. In this regard, awareness workshops, seminars and conferences at macro levels need to be organized. This should occur at international, national and sub-national levels, with particular foci upon local democracy, economic development, productivity, equity and climate change and a safe environment.

The workshop also stated that local government capacity was needed to upgrade the **skills** of a cross section of functionaries involved in municipal matters. These include

urban planning, land management, environment, operation and maintenance, municipal finance, community participation and so on. This training should be based on material developed from best practices applied in the field.

The third aspect of capacity building focused on **sharing experience** and ‘on the job’ training so skills can be transfer ‘at the door step’ so to speak of the recipient. This can or should also include specific coaching, guidance and mentoring regarding manuals, check lists, and guidelines. It was also felt that elected officials and representative from Nongovernment Organisations (NGO) and Community-based organisations (CBO) in addition to municipal staff also require training in their respective field. In this regard, UN Habitat has developed specialized stakeholder training materials that have been implemented in a number of countries, with training tools for suitable adaptation in local contexts.

As elaborated earlier, the workshop indicated that the last three decades have witnessed an increased focus on a three-tier capacity building approach, however, the availability of resources (financial and physical) is one of the key-constraints to extending such capacity building networks. Resources are needed for both trainers as well as trainees. In this regard, wider cooperation among countries to share in-country experience can be used with a view to replicating innovations in other local contexts. This cooperation should *inter alia* include city-to-city cooperation, exchange visits, hands on learning and a mentoring approach by training institutions and civil society organisations. Further, Training of Trainers (ToT) programs are also needed to develop a pool of trainers at regional and local levels who can realise capacity building potential in this regard. This could be based on experience sharing on innovations at different levels of operations such as international, national, provincial and local. Initiatives on TOTs could be accelerated through extensive cooperation among various stakeholders.

There was a consensus amongst workshop participants that cities have the potential to extend resources for capacity building, provided adequate initiatives are taken to tap funding municipal infrastructure. This can be achieved through building the capacity of urban sector functionaries under alternate types of skills development programs (also essential for elected and non elected functionaries as mentioned). As has been implemented by certain countries, it is also essential to allocate a fixed proportion of a municipal budget for capacity building. In addition, various initiatives undertaken under

bi- and multi-lateral programs (and other public sector schemes) should be used for optimum capacity building. Finally, it was emphasised that building the capacity of local governments is essential for making local government an effective tool for establishing local democracy. This support will enable local governments to engage, encourage, guide, support and motivate various stakeholders towards a common goal of sustainable habitats, taking into account objectives of the UN's Millennium Development Goals and other policy objectives of a welfare state.

*Other speakers to Working Group 4 were **Karibaiti Taoba**, Manager, Pacific Capacity Building Project, CLG and **Seve Lausaveve**, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Tuvalu.*

WORKING GROUP 5

Capacity to deliver infrastructure finance: Resourcing local government for improvement

Ronald McGill¹⁴

Program budget adviser

Ministry of finance and economic development, Ethiopia

Building capacity for LG to perform

The session focused on three areas of practical capacity building in local government, to allow it to perform. These were:

1. **Performance** – measuring LG delivery;
2. **Capacity** – getting LG to be able to deliver; and
3. **Organisation** – the building blocks for basic capacity.

Each is explained in turn.

1. Performance – measuring LG delivery

Development

The demand for infrastructure and services confronts every local government in the developing world. The weakness of that local government compounds the enormity of the challenge.¹⁵ The fundamental importance of access to infrastructure and services, as a means of supporting both economic development and to impact on various parts of the poverty spectrum, is now accepted in common parlance. The key point is that we are seeking to establish ‘what difference LG is making out there?’ with the money it is spending. One method for measuring such delivery is performance budgeting (PB).¹⁶ PB

¹⁴ Formerly senior technical adviser with the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) in New York. He is now the program budget adviser to Ethiopia’s ministry of finance and economic development (MoFED), based in Addis Ababa.

¹⁵ McGill, R. (1997) *Institutional development: A Third World city management perspective*, St Martin's Press, New York, NY [Macmillan Press, Basingstoke (Nov, 1996)], republished 2007 as *City Management in Developing Countries: an Institutional Development Perspective*, BookSurge. See <http://www.amazon.com/City-Management-Developing-Countries-Institutional/dp/1419659707/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1266884654&sr=1-1H>

¹⁶ McGill, R. *Achieving results: performance budgeting in the least developed countries*. United Nations Capital Development Fund, New York (2006), p. 234. See <http://www.uncdf.org/english/local_development/documents_and_reports/thematic_papers/pbb/index.phpH> and ‘Performance budgeting’ *International Journal of Public Sector Management* (2001), Vol. 14, No. 5, pp.376-390.

is founded on the principle of delivering infrastructure and services, economically, efficiently and effectively. Each measurement criterion is explained in turn.

Economy of inputs

Any organisation's leader knows that if you budget X, you should spend X and that you should deliver what you promised. Variance analysis is the first technique in measuring the economy of inputs. Thus, if the item of infrastructure or the targeted service to be delivered costs 10,000, the following is already assumed:

1. That the budgeted figure is technically accurate;
2. It is based on experience (if service delivery, dominated by personnel costs) or an engineer's 'bill of quantity' (if a capital project); and
3. It anticipates any cost fluctuations, say, because of the prospect of a rise in inflation.

Thus, the first score in measuring PB performance is:

$$(1) = \quad \underline{\textit{Economy of inputs}} \text{ (where } T = 100\%)$$

Here, 'T' is the target of 100%. So, if the budget is 10,000 and the actual is 10,000 then we are on target; a score of 100%. If at the end of the year, only 5,000 is spent, then the score is 50% and so on. The basic intellectual principle is that of common sense.

Efficiency of outputs

Any organisation's leader knows that if you budget to deliver outputs (a road, primary health care), it is that for which you are most obviously accountable. This is especially so if you have told the public that 'these are the things we intend to deliver next year'. In order not to drown in data,¹⁷ only two criteria are advocated for measuring the delivery of outputs. These are:

- **A** = % specification
- **B** = % time

¹⁷ Probably the most famous collapse of PB in the form of a planning, programming, budgeting system (PPBS) was the Greater London Council's (GLC) attempt in the 1970s. It collapsed, literally, because it drowned in too much data.

Thus, the second score in measuring PB performance is:

$$(2) = \frac{(A+B)}{2} = \textit{Efficiency of outputs} \text{ (where } T = 100\%)$$

Here again, 'T' is the target of 100%. So, if the specification is fully satisfied and everything has been delivered according to time, then the score is for each, 100% which is then divided by two to give the aggregate score for that deliverable. Again, the basic intellectual principle is that of common sense.

Effectiveness of impact

Any organisation's leader knows that the economy of inputs and the efficiency of outputs, ultimately, have no practical meaning if there is no effective impact. At the annual level, there are two basic criteria to measure this impact. These are:

- **C** = % occupancy rate / use of facility
- **D** = % assessment of 'problem solved'

Whether delivered through capital or recurrent expenditure, the result of the asset created, or the service delivered, has to be in terms of a basic impact question(s): Is the school or clinic fully utilized; Is the new market being fully used?¹⁸ What is the 'bottom-line' here? Has the original problem, defined by the community, been solved? Thus, the third score in measuring PB performance is:

$$(3) = \frac{(C+D)}{2} = \textit{Effectiveness of impact} \text{ (where } T = 100\%)$$

Again, 'T' is the target of 100%. So, if the customers are satisfied with the infrastructure or the service, then 100%. If more objectively, 'has the original problem has been solved', then 100% again; which is also divided by two, to give the aggregate score for that deliverable's impact. For fear of repetition, the basic intellectual principle is that of common sense.

¹⁸ In Lilongwe, Malawi, a donor agreed to fund the construction of a new city centre produce market. This was agreed subject to the location being moved to a zone adjoining the city centre. The result? The new market was built economically (according to budget), efficiently (to specification and time) but was not effective (only 10% of the asset was ever used) because it was in the wrong location!

Total program performance measurement

Total program performance is economy (1), efficiency (2) and effectiveness (3), divided by three, to give the final percentage score, as follows:

$$T = (1+2+3)/3 = \text{Total performance}$$

In this approach to PB performance, equal weight is given to the ‘3-Es’. If this is accepted as a basis for measuring LG performance, then the next step is to establish tests for LG to be able to perform in the first place!

2. Capacity – Getting local government to be able to deliver

There are certain fundamentals that every local government should have by way of capacity to allow it to perform. Assuming for the moment a district council, then there should be:

1. A current district development plan and budget.
2. A functioning district council and district administration.
3. A functioning financial management system.
4. The establishment of a development fund (i.e. capital funds) account.
5. Key district staff in place.

An assessment table best illustrates this (refer Table 1 below). In short, in order to deliver (to perform), local government must have certain key prerequisites in place (and these items are, of course, not exhaustive).

3. Organisation – The building blocks for basic capacity

We recognise that all infrastructure and services cannot be delivered without people in LG. An immediate focus for intervention is therefore, to get people in place to do the work! The following table presents a framework for assessing capacity. This happens to include measuring progress in applying gender equitable local development (GELD) principles¹⁹ in building a local authority (the proclaimed “bonus item” in the working session). (Refer Table 2).

¹⁹ UNCDF. Gender-equitable local development program (GELD).
[Hhttp://www.uncdf.org/search/index.php?cx=016494082687074386866%3Aawcu-dhgu3uo&cof=FORID%3A10&ie=UTF-8&q=GELD&sa=Go#908](http://www.uncdf.org/search/index.php?cx=016494082687074386866%3Aawcu-dhgu3uo&cof=FORID%3A10&ie=UTF-8&q=GELD&sa=Go#908)

Points for consideration:

- The question to be asked is “how many people will be required to perform the specific service in the district?” This has to include the question of the quota of women (the quota comes from the appropriate legislation). The answer to the number of people should be followed by a basic understanding of the ‘level’ of post or posts required, including any hierarchical relationship. Once the number of posts is known, assessing the ‘measurable progress’ can start!
- Ideally, if the estimate of the number of posts is accurate, the district will ensure that the ‘authorised establishment’ (i.e. the approved number of posts) is altered to accommodate the extra posts. This accommodation must include the quota for women.
- The recruitment process is known to all. It must be open and transparent.
- Whatever the minimum requirements to fill a post, it is often (but not always) necessary to provide training so that the new personnel are able to perform. Affirmative action, through additional training, may be required to ensure that the women recruited are able to perform as well as men.
- ‘Facilities’ is so obvious, it should not need to be defined and yet, it is so often overlooked; office space, furniture, equipment and supplies. This is where sensitivity is required to support women’s specific needs. These can include adequate sanitation facilities, personal safety, and childcare where possible.
- Performance is measured according to the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- The total score is simple addition for each row because the weighted score can only add up to 100% maximum. The council’s total score is then the addition of all rows, divided by the number of rows.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In the light of these three stages of ‘building capacity for LG to perform’, the Working Group considered the presentation as a foundation for offering specific recommendations. This included the group’s particular concern with MDG indicator number 12: ‘proportion of seats held by women in national parliament.’ The group lamented that there was no equivalent indicator for women’s political representation in local government which, for the participants, suggests a lack of understanding of and

belief in local government. This conclusion was therefore the springboard for five, sound policy-based recommendations:

1. MDG-3's indicator number 12 reads "Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament."

ISSUE: There is no reference to political representation at the local government level.

RECOMMENDATION: *That local government's political representation be targeted at a minimum of 30% of all seats / wards by women and by a figure exceeding that percentage, as soon as possible.*

2. **ISSUE:** Implementation capacity is a bane of local government, especially when development funds actually become available.

RECOMMENDATION: *That all local government development projects, subject to an initial assessment, include explicit capacity-building element in the fundamental areas of planning, budgeting, procurement, construction management, and financial management (including accounting and auditing); and, the capacity building to include explicit systems' development.*

3. **ISSUE:** There is a desperate shortage of engineers in development countries; a key to success in local development practice.

RECOMMENDATION: *That national governments in developing countries increase their investment in the education of civil engineers by 50% and that scholarships be awarded to those willing to serve at least two years in a local council after graduation.*

4. **ISSUE:** It is often impossible to recruit professional and other staff to councils outside the main urban centres because of a lack of incentives such as the availability of housing for staff and education for their children.

RECOMMENDATION: *That national governments introduce a policy and provide supporting resources for councils classified as remote (and not being able to attract staff) to provide free housing and primary education in these locations.*

5. **ISSUE:** Councils often recognize potential sources of local revenue but are not permitted in law to raise such revenue.

RECOMMENDATION: *That national governments introduce or amend local government legislation to permit councils to raise such additional revenues as they deem*

possible and practical, subject to the appropriate council resolution and subsequent bye-laws being passed.

Table 1: Enabling 'LG' To Deliver

Minimum conditions	Capacity Targets	Percentage weight	Actual score %
Existence of a gender-sensitive District development plan and budget. Max = 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved development plan, through community participation (3-5 years). Approved annual budget to implement that year's portion of the plan. 	10	
		10	
Functional District council and District administration. Max = 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full council and committees' meetings timetable honoured in full. Women's participation quota met Accurate 'minutes' produced within two weeks of any such meeting. 	5	
		10	
		5	
Functional finance system. Max = 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily accurate financial records by CoB. Monthly bank reconciliations, within two weeks of month-end. Quarterly financial reports submitted to the zone, within two weeks of quarter end 	10	
		5	
		5	
Establishment of GELD fund (i.e. capital funds) account. Max = 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Functional capital account 	10	
Key District staff in place. Max = 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrator Finance officer Planner Five technical supervisors (Ed; Ag; Health; Women; Capacity) 	5	
		5	
		5	
		15	
100		100	

Table 2: The Building Blocks For ABSIC Capacity

	Number of posts <u>required</u> (% of women according to national standards). (Note 1)	Number of posts <u>establishe d</u> (% of women according to national standards) (Note 2)	All establishe d posts to perform each devolved function, <u>filled</u> in the district? (Note 3)	All establishe d personnel fully <u>trained</u> to perform the devolved functions? (Note 4)	Facilities: <u>accommodation</u> (gender sensitive, including hygiene arrangements), plus furniture, systems, equipment and transport <u>provided</u> ? (Note 5)	Assessment of <u>productivity</u> : i.e. performing economically , efficiently and effectively in the performance of the function? (Note 6)	Total score of "capacity to perform the function" (including % of women according to national standards)? (Note 7)
	% n/a	10%	10%	10%	30%	40%	T = 100%
Generic functions of a district council							
‘LINE’ FUNCTIONS*							
Education, Youth, Sport and Culture							
Health, Gender, Family Promotion							
Economic Development							
Infrastructure, Land, and Planning							
‘STAFF’ FUNCTIONS**							
Administration and Good Governance							
Human Resource Development and Support Services							
Mayor, Executive Committee and District							
COMPLETE DISTRICT SCORES:							

* Line functions: Those that *do* the actual delivery.

** Staff functions: Those that support the people that deliver (such as finance and HRM).

WORKING GROUP 6**Strategies for effective service delivery: Resourcing local government for improvement.**

John Hayes
IDeA, UK

It's a mixed picture for local government in the UK. On the one hand local government is acknowledged as the most improved part of the public sector, with a growing political consensus that strength provides the basis for greater future freedoms. This can lead to enhanced responsibilities for direction of local public services. On the other hand, despite service improvements, the reputation of local government amongst the public is low, making support for local government hard to come by as cuts in public expenditure bite.

The Improvement and Development Agency for local government ([IDeA](#)) has a very specific role in council improvement. Essentially it exists to enable politicians and officials to help each other. Core to this is the concept of "peer working" where practitioners engage with each other to define what practices work best, challenge each other's practice using this definition (peer review) and, where local authorities struggle, finding peers who are willing to help directly.

The techniques associated with this are becoming ever more sophisticated. A current programme is the [London Efficiency Challenge](#) where the 33 London Boroughs have made a commitment to actively help each other save money. This has involved the Finance Directors working together to define performance measures for all key areas of spending. The IDeA contribution to this programme will be: developing an online self-assessment that will enable councils to rank their performance against each other; a three day peer event for each of the 33 councils where the self assessment is challenged, and; an agreement on common problems and a joint approach to their resolution.

There are a range of similar initiatives with varying degrees of sophistication all aimed at helping UK councils and practitioners help each other. Perhaps the largest one in terms of involvement is the [Beacon Scheme](#) where every year for the past ten, councils have

submitted their practice for assessment against current policy priorities (there are different priorities each year). Councils which "win" then commit to a range of practice sharing activities which include direct support to councils who need the help most.

Looking forward, the IDeA see technology as increasingly important to the process of identifying and sharing best practice. To this end it has developed its own "community of practice" [web-site](#), a sort of Facebook for local government, which currently has some 35,000 users working in around 900 specific communities of practice. These communities of practice of course present the ideal means of joining up practitioners across UK local government and internationally.

*Other speakers to Working group 6 were **Victor Dumas and Kai Kaiser**, World Bank and **Mark Robinson**, DFID.*

WORKING GROUP 10**Working with civil society, volunteering and social enterprise:
Partnerships to improve local services.****Andrew Fiddaman**

Managing Director

The Prince's Youth Business International. Youth Business Initiative

Working with civil society, volunteering and social enterprise

Many local governments face increasing pressure to address challenges such as improving school and other education systems, environmental concerns, climate change, migration and social disruption as they try to support their communities and constituents. In addition, national and local governments often struggle to find ways in which to engage with young people and to make them feel valued as a vital part of the community. Young people sometimes feel that they have no role in the political process and feel frustrated by what they perceive as a lack of interest in their concerns. Such frustrations can be exacerbated when there are difficulties in finding employment.

[Youth Business International](#) (YBI) was invited to the Commonwealth Local Government Forum in the Bahamas to participate in discussions looking at different examples of working with civil society, volunteering and social enterprise. YBI, whose President is HRH The Prince of Wales, works through a network of local youth business programmes in 39 countries, 20 of which are in the Commonwealth, to help young people start successful and sustainable businesses that will, in turn, provide employment opportunities for others.

Although youth employment issues are national concerns, it is often the local government authorities that have to deal with disaffected young people and social disruption. There are 1.5 billion people in the world today between the ages of 12-24 – the largest number ever – and 1.3 billion of them live in developing countries. Although this number will rise slightly, it is fast approaching a plateau as fertility rates decline, producing a ‘youth bulge’ in the population as outlined in the 2007 [World Development Report](#).²⁰ In addition to the pressures caused by this ‘bulge’, additional pressures are

²⁰ World Bank, World Development Report ‘Development and the Next Generation’ 2007.

being caused by the current economic climate and a subsequent reduction in employment opportunities. The [International Labour Organization](#) estimate that young people are 2.8 times more likely to be unemployed than adults.²¹ This is a worrying statistic at a time of increasing unemployment.

Young people are at the forefront of global, social, economic and political developments. They are often agents of change and innovation and social and economic entrepreneurs. Given advances in the fields of technology, education and communication, they are also potentially the best-educated and informed young people to date. However, those benefits are not evenly distributed and many young people are left outside, often struggling in the informal economy and often also living in dangerous circumstances. Therefore, one of the greatest challenges facing governments, business and society at large is to determine how they can be successfully integrated into the workforce and their own communities.

Thankfully, all is not doom and gloom. Young people represent an enormous amount of talent and energy and it is essential that it is used as productively as possible rather than going to waste.

Volunteering

Volunteering represents an effective way of using such talent. It can take the form of young people volunteering to work with others on their own initiative or through the development of support schemes by local government. Many young people are interested in volunteering to work with community organisations and others providing that such activities are considered productive and of value. It is important that the individual and the organisation concerned treat the relationship as a partnership where all concerned feel that their contribution has produced real benefit. For the organisation that might be the tangible support and outcomes that the young person has provided, while for the young person it might be improved social and business skills and an increased sense of self worth. It may also lead to offers of employment, further training and increased education opportunities.

²¹ ILO Global Employment Trends. Jan 2009. See http://www.ilo.org/empelm/units/lang--en/WCMS_DOC_ELM_DPT_TRD_EN

The potential for local government involvement was covered in the UN's [World Plan of Action for Youth](#) (WPAY) in 1995 and WPAY+10 in 2005.²² It that outlined the benefits of voluntary service programmes for youth such as youth camps, community service projects, environmental protection and inter-generational cooperation programmes and emphasised the need for youth organisations themselves to be actively involved in designing, implementing and evaluating such programmes.

Efforts have been made by the Commonwealth Secretariat, through the [Commonwealth Youth Programme](#) and others, to mainstream and empower youth and engage them in training, health awareness and citizenship programmes, however, in general, the idea of youth as an asset to development is little acknowledged or appreciated. There are many opportunities to build on such programmes to demonstrate the important role that young people can play in developing their communities. For example, in Sri Lanka the links between young people, young entrepreneurs, the Chamber of Commerce, YBI's local partners the Hambantota Youth Business Trust and local government in Hambantota, all played an important role in rebuilding the local community after the tsunami.

Volunteering should also be seen as a two-way street. Many individuals from local government are already engaged in volunteering within their communities whether in schools, with youth organisations or faith-based groups. Such volunteering provides the young people with active role models for community involvement while at the same time providing the volunteers with a greater understanding of the challenges faced by young people and others that they represent.

Employment and entrepreneurship

Finding and starting a job remains the greatest challenges for most young people. Unemployment and under-employment are major problems and the difficulty of finding a job can be compounded, particularly for young people, by issues of poor or insufficient education.

Local government can and should encourage employment schemes such as internships and apprenticeships that can build on the benefits of volunteering to provide long-term employment opportunities. There are an increasing number of vocational training

²² See 1995 UN resolution (A/RES/50/81) -World Plan of Action for Youth – Employment. See [Hwww.un.org/youth](http://www.un.org/youth)

facilities and organisations willing to help although it is essential that such training is designed to meet the needs of current and future employers rather than older ‘traditional’ jobs that may no longer be relevant. There are also increasing opportunities for young people who wish to consider self-employment as business or social entrepreneurs who want to achieve their dreams. In this regard, YBI estimates that about twenty percent of young people have the capability of starting their own business but that fewer than five percent actually do so.

There are several hurdles facing young people who wish to start a business and, although they may differ from country to country, there are many common issues. Cultural attitudes sometimes favour the old over the young or men over women. Some embrace new opportunities while others avoid risk at all cost. In many countries the idea that young people might consider starting their own business is never suggested, and careers advice tend to focus on the benefits of working for a well-established large company or for government.

Entrepreneurship is not suitable for all, but regardless of their talents and experience it is vital that opportunities must be available when young people finish education and training. Small and Mediumsize Enterprises (SMEs) form the background of many economies, providing the bulk of jobs, yet entrepreneurship for school leavers is often considered as the last resort.

Legal and bureaucratic constraints, unfortunately, often make it difficult for anyone, regardless of age to start a new business. Many self-employed young people also work in the informal economy because the administrative procedures for business registration are too cumbersome or costly.

While some people are fortunate enough to enjoy support from other individuals and organisations, and the access to the various networks that help business and government to develop, unfortunately, such support and networks are rarely available to young people.

The last, and by no means the least, challenge for young people in virtually every country is the lack of access to credit and start-up funding. There are many micro credit and micro-finance schemes available but few are open to young people. That may be

because of the perception that the young represent riskier investments, and even where micro finance is available there are often tight limits on the amount of money available.

Youth Business International exists to address at least some of these issues through its network of local youth business programmes that help young people start successful and sustainable businesses that will, in turn, provide employment opportunities for others. Over 80 percent of new jobs created are in small to medium sized businesses and as pressure on employment in government and large corporations rises, it becomes even more important for the SME sector to provide such employment opportunities.

Each local programme operates on three common principles to

1. support young people, typically aged between 18-30, who have a good business idea but who cannot obtain help elsewhere,
2. provide access to start-up funds in the form of a loan without the need for guarantees or collateral; and
3. provide the young entrepreneur with a volunteer business mentor and access to business networks.

The YBI Network helped nearly 7,000 new entrepreneurs get started in business in 2008 and YBI's goal is that by 2020 it will have grown the Network to make it capable of supporting 100,000 new entrepreneurs each year and creating one million jobs.

Building such new businesses does not only benefit the individuals concerned and their employees but makes significant contribution to government. For example, the Canadian Youth Business Foundation, YBI's partner in Canada, was able to demonstrate to the federal and provincial governments that it had generated over \$30million for government through employment and corporate taxes paid by the new youth led businesses the foundation had supported and in savings on unemployment benefits.

The YBI Network firmly believes that it can only achieve its goals by working in partnership. Leaders from business and local government are involved as board members, mentors and supporters and companies are encouraged to share their business skills with others in a way that provides benefit to the company as well as the young person. Training and secondary finance are also essential ingredients of a successful start-up and so there are strong links with local government programmes and other

training and financial partners both in preparing the young person for self-employment and helping them grow their new business.

However, business and non-governmental organisations such as YBI cannot address all the concerns on their own. It is vital that governments also become actively involved through the development of national youth action plans and poverty reduction strategies. Many of these are developed at national level and several are linked with the Youth Employment Network of the UN, however, it is essential that local government plays a vital role in both the development and implementation of the plans.

There is a need to reform the regulatory framework in order to make it easier for young people to start and run their own businesses, and to improve access to micro-finance and to effective business advisory and support services from local authorities and also from the private sector. There should be greater emphasis in school on preparing young people for the transition between school and work. Support for the formation of self-help groups, improvement of the effectiveness of entrepreneurship training in vocational high schools and the identification of success stories for dissemination and replication are all essential.

The UN's World Plan of Action for Youth states that:

...in order to have a real impact on poverty reduction, the challenge at the national and international levels is to 'scale-up' the successful aspects of these initiatives (supporting entrepreneurship and self-employment among youth). Therefore, there is a need to increase financial commitments to youth employment initiatives.

The Freeport Declaration on Improving Local Government: the Commonwealth Vision, agreed at the 2009 Conference, encouraged local government to "Initiate new services which help local business and other stakeholders e.g. social support services and promotion of local economic development." The Declaration also suggested that "Local economic development strategies, best driven by councils in partnership with the private sector and other stakeholders, offer an effective way of attracting jobs and investment and creating resources to support local development", and recommended that:

Many of the local government improvement strategies will be enhanced by close cooperation with civil society and promoting and funding local NGOs. Local

government should actively support youth for example through volunteering and youth entrepreneurship.

Opportunities

By working in partnership with local and national government, business and other stakeholders, YBI allows local communities to build for the future. It helps to create initiatives to reduce youth unemployment and alleviate poverty through wealth creation. These initiatives benefit society through the opportunities created to reduce the frustration of young people and their dependency on the state and develop an entrepreneurial culture among young people and significantly increase their employability. They generate wealth and dynamism in the small business sector of the economy and provide others with the opportunity to recycle their experience and energy into their local communities.

For young people it increases self-esteem, increases their employability and helps them achieve economic independence. For business it encourages involvement in the local community, develops an entrepreneurial culture, improves workforce skills and encourages the development of a dynamic small business sector. For society it reduces youth unemployment, helps to alleviate poverty, helps in wealth creation and reduces youth alienation and social conflict, and for local government, it provides opportunities to benefit from the talent, enthusiasm and energy of the young people it serves.

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WORKING GROUP 11**Strengthening local government through regional cooperation:
Partnerships to improve local services.****Paul Spencer**Secretariat for Political Affairs, Department of State Modernization and Governance
Organisation of American States**The inter-American network on decentralization, local government, and citizen participation**

The vital importance of decentralization processes has been recognized at the highest political levels, and reflected in the commitments of the Inter-American Summits in Santiago de Chile (1998) and Quebec City (2001), which emphasized the need to strengthen sub-national levels of government and the participation of civil society in decision-making on political affairs. To aid in effective compliance with these mandates, in July 2001 the [Organization of American States](#) (OAS) convened the first hemispheric meeting in La Paz, Bolivia of ministers (or authorities) at the highest level responsible for policies on decentralization, local government, and citizen participation. Its purpose was to establish the bases for inter-American cooperation to stimulate the decentralization processes.

The meeting of ministers and high authorities established the Inter-American Network on Decentralization, Local Government, and Citizen Participation, known as RIAD, as an instrument for inter-American cooperation on these subjects, and to provide systematic monitoring of the Summit commitments. The OAS Department of State Modernization and Governance was designated as the network's technical secretariat.

RIAD's objectives

The network was established with the following objectives:

- To provide an opportunity for exchange of experiences, knowledge, and specialized information on the topics of decentralization, local government, and citizen participation.
- To develop guides and general strategies in the area to provide a framework for the design and preparation of public policies to strengthen and guarantee

continuity of the processes of decentralization, local government, and citizen participation.

- To provide follow-up and systematic support for implementation of the Summits of Heads of State and Government of the Americas in this area.
- To promote activities with international organizations and institutions or the private sector, which can cooperate with financing of experts, sub regional and national forums, courses and training, seminars, research, publications, etc.

Ministerial meetings

Every two or three years the network holds an inter-American meeting of ministers and high-level authorities to review and evaluate activities undertaken and identify new areas of work that will facilitate progress toward the proposed objectives and tasks. The following has occurred so far:

- The first ministerial meeting convened by the OAS and supported by the Quebec Summit took place in La Paz, Bolivia, in July 2001.
- The second meeting was held in Mexico City in September 2003.
- The third meeting took place in Recife, Brazil in October 2005.
- A date for the next Ministerial meeting (possibly Jamaica) is yet to be determined.

Achievements of RIAD

From its inception RIAD has established – among other things – a reference framework for its action, which consists of:

- The Declaration of La Paz of 2001
- The Mexico City Plan of Action of 2003
- The Declaration of Recife of 2005.

These documents establish strategic guidelines and priority areas for action, among which the following should be noted:

- The execution of activities to strengthen relations among its members, including horizontal cooperation, the use of information technologies, and the holding of sub regional or thematic meetings with participation of local and regional representatives.

- The establishment of basic parameters and reference frameworks, including general indicators, to facilitate comparison of experiences, organization of the results, and guidance for decentralization policies.
- The development and improvement of methodologies and strategies to promote decentralization policies.
- The establishment of RIAD as a vehicle for cooperation for the exchange of experiences, and the drafting of proposals and public policies to strengthen decentralization of local and regional governments, and channels for civil society participation in public administration.
- Cooperation for strengthening of public-private partnerships to consolidate decentralization processes and fashion public policies.
- Support for research on the particular aspects of the decentralization in each RIAD member state, as well as general and regional trends.

RIAD has made great strides in many of these areas:

- In addition to the abovementioned hemispheric meetings, we have held thematic and sub regional meetings in the Caribbean countries, Central America, South America, and North America. The latest sub regional meeting took place in February 2009 in Costa Rica for the Central American countries, to present progress achieved in the decentralization processes. The meeting resulted in signature of a commitment to strengthen and carry on these processes.
- Preparation for the next meeting in Jamaica.
- We have been supporting processes for preparation of a Regional Strategy for Local Government and Democracy in the Caribbean, taking part in several meetings to develop the framework for the policy and cooperation on this subject (the May 2008 meeting in Port of Spain and the December 1-3 consultation and conference in Montego Bay)
- The OAS and the Alberto Hurtado University have established a virtual diploma course on decentralization and local economic development, which has been offered since 1999 with excellent results.
- In addition, we are preparing a virtual Latin American course on decentralization and citizen participation, designed for professionals and experts at the central and sub-national government levels and leaders of civil society organizations that are

active in the decentralization processes. We hope this will be operational in the next six months.

- Several studies have been completed, and are available on the website of the OAS Department of State Modernization and Governance. The most recent, “Decentralization and the challenges for democratic governance,” contains recommendations for creative solutions to decentralization processes in the hemisphere.
- Moreover, the RIAD technical secretariat is upgrading the website to be more useful as a space for exchange of information, virtual forums, and exchange of experiences. You will soon be able to access it through the website of the Department of State Modernization and Governance of the Secretariat for Political Affairs of the OAS.
- We have formed and are continuing to seek partnerships with other networks and organizations.
- In addition, when requested by OAS member states, we provide technical assistance for the preparation and review of project proposals and support for identification of financing.

Conclusion

In carrying out our work in various regions of the Americas, we are fully conscious of the challenges faced by local and regional governments in this process. There is no panacea for these problems. But we are convinced that with i) clear legal frameworks, ii) with the transfer of sufficient resources to be able to function effectively, iii) with proper coordination mechanisms, iv) with strengthened institutional capacities, and v) with citizen participation, local and regional governments can effectively reduce poverty, generate and offer decent jobs, prevent crime, strengthen social cohesion, involve citizens, and establish effective channels with citizens, among other things. May I take this occasion to reaffirm our ongoing commitment to decentralization processes in the region and this is evidenced by paragraph 79 in the Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain, adopted by the V Summit of the Americas on April 19, 2009.

*Other speakers to Working group 11 included **John Mary Kauzya**, UNDESA, **Keith Miller**, Caribbean Forum of Local Government Ministers, and **Tavita Amosa**, Somoa.*

WORKING GROUP 13

Measuring local democracy and good governance - Implementing the Aberdeen Agenda and international peer reviews - Measuring Improvement.

Kristof Varga

Senior Program Manager, Open Society Institute

Assessing local democratic governance: experience from east central Europe**The rationale for measuring local democratic performance**

The [Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative](#) (LGI) of the Open Society Institute (OSI) ²³ initially conceived the idea of developing a system of measurement for local democratic performance to find the explanatory variables behind the apparent difference in democratic developments in countries with similar past systems of centralized Soviet type government in East Central Europe in the early 90s.

While the democratic institutions of decentralization were quite similar in these countries, the depth and strength of local democracy was very different in a region stretching from the Baltic states to the former Yugoslavia. Almost 20 years after the democratic turn in that region, and with most of its countries members of the European Union now, differences in the nature of local democracy are less marked. In addition, although systems of local governance are far from being standardized in the EU, general principles such as those laid down in the [Charter of Local and Regional Governance](#) adopted by the Council of Europe have become the guiding light in their development. However, the events of the global economic crisis served as an unexpected impetus for revisiting the issue of the performance of local democracy as a deeply connected area to national policies. As central governments are sometimes desperately looking for resources to fend off or mitigate the impact of the crisis there is a danger of a 'clawback' of democratic reforms. As local governments 'cost' central governments considerable

²³ The Open Society Institute (OSI) is an international development and grant-giving organization. OSI established its Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative (LGI) more than ten years ago. LGI is dedicated to supporting good governance focusing on the local level. We give grants, do research, consult, publish, build capacity and organize networks to share and disseminate experience focusing on Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. We are becoming active globally in Africa, South East Asia and South America.

amounts of money, the danger of retracting some of the democratic achievements in fiscal decentralization is growing. In situations of societal stress there is also a tendency in politics to look for easy and single answers rather than maintaining the plurality of opinions and agendas of which locally elected bodies and politicians have traditionally been a source and testing ground for. Some Latin American countries such as Argentina and Brazil can serve as a good example of efforts to solve an economic crisis being coupled with strong re-centralization tendencies. Eaton and Dickovick in their article ‘The Politics of Re-centralization in Argentina and Brazil’²⁴ show that in response to the economic difficulties of the 1990s the central presidency of these countries sought to re-centralize fiscal power.

A concept for local democracy

Democracy is not an easy term to define. Our project drew on Beetham’s conceptualization of democracy, nowadays one of the most frequently used frameworks in democracy evaluations. He argues that democracy implies decision-making about collectively binding rules and policies. A decision-making process is democratic to the degree that it is “subject to the control of all members of the collectivity considered as equals.” Therefore, the two key principles of democracy are *popular control* over decision-making (or at least decision-makers) and *political equality*. For evaluation purposes we broke down these principles into four criteria:

1. *A guaranteed framework of equal rights.* This includes access to justice and the rule of law, the basic civil and political rights. Citizens’ rights and their enforcement also provide limitations on government.
2. *Institutions of representative government.* Free and fair elections are a basic instrument of democracy to promote popular control. Elections are democratic if they are meaningful, inclusive, fair, and uninfluenced by government power. The idea of meaningful and fair elections also includes competition amongst political forces, which have equal access to communication.
3. *Institutions of open and accountable government.* A democratic government is transparent, and politically, legally, and financially accountable to other bodies. The power of democratic government is limited by other formal institutions.
4. *A civil or democratic society.* Independent associations have the potential to encourage government responsiveness to public opinion and to increase equality

²⁴ *Latin American Research Review*, Vol.39, No1, 2004, pp. 90-122.

among citizens. An organized society with a democratic political culture is a powerful instrument of democracy.

In order to adapt these principles to the assessment of local democracy we added two new dimensions. The first is drawn from the local nature of local governance. A distinctive feature of local governments is their *autonomy*, i.e. their freedom from the direct involvement of external forces. If local administrative units have no legal, political, and most importantly financial autonomy, the term 'local (self-) government' loses its meaning. The second dimension is *effectiveness*. Policy performance is a crucial dimension of a local democracy assessment. Unless local powers can have a meaningful impact on people's daily life they will become insignificant, no matter how democratic their mandate and solid their legal status are. In sum, local democracy is conceptualized for a local government that is autonomous, effective, open, and representative, surrounded by a civil society in the framework of guaranteed political rights.

Although developed independently it is easy to see how these six dimensions can be mapped on the '[Commonwealth Principles on Good Practice for Local Democracy and Good Governance](#).' Although the Principles are more robust in their coverage, more detailed and specifically deal with issues such as participation of women, there is nothing in the six dimensions we used for measuring democratic performance that is not in harmony with the 12 principles.

Methodology: A profile approach

As there is no uniform definition of local democracy there is no uniform list of priorities when it comes to applying those principles in practice. It is the essence of local governance that its structures allow for differences in local circumstances, whether cultural, socio-economic, political, demographic or tied into the local geography (in the case of remote communities, for example). Thus our choice of approach for a methodology was a *profile approach* which we used to account for different and equally important aspects of governance, essentially based on the six principles described above. We outlined the main areas to assess however there was nothing in the methodology that prescribed any specific relations to different elements of the profile. The profile makes it possible to encompass the most important aspects of local democracy but in a way that takes into account local specifics.

The next step in the development of the research was to identify explanatory variables which can be used to measure the strength of different profile components in a given municipality.

As with all performance measurement systems the selection of these variables was possibly the most difficult task in our endeavor. We were looking for variables with the most explanatory force but with certain characteristics that had more to do with the practicalities of data gathering than the theoretical foundation for the selection. We felt that a good compromise was found between what *should* be measured and what *can* be measured in a verifiable and ideally easily quantifiable way across types and sizes of municipalities in a cross national context.

To use one example as an illustration for our approach for the profile component *effectiveness of local government* we identified an explanatory variable as policy performance defined as ‘the capability of the LG to make informed and coordinated decisions given the *time constraints* on it’. The measurements we took for this variable were:

- delays in making key decisions such as passing the budget;
- the proportion of agenda items postponed; and
- the frequency of stalemates in decision making in the local council.

In the final survey design we used four groups of variables:

1. *Characteristics of Local Governments and the Local Government System* - the budget, distribution of Formal Authority, Administrative Staff, characteristics of the local Representative Body.
2. *Local Institutions*, i.e. Political Parties, Civil Society and Local Media.
3. *Characteristics of the Local Political Culture* - Citizen Participation in Local Politics, Citizens’ Political Culture, the political culture of elected Representatives.
4. *Characteristics of the Municipality* - size, socio-economic development, level and nature of inequalities, heterogeneity and cleavages, history and administrative status and geography.

Once we established the groups of explanatory variables we developed proxies to measure them. These formulated the basis for our data gathering method (quantitative, based on surveys and statistical information). During the course of the study we surveyed over 5000 mayors, councillors and chief administrative officers surveyed and conducted interviews in 2024 municipalities in four countries. Our plan is to repeat the surveys so that the data can be used to identify trends. So far two surveys were done in 2001 and 2004.

Results

There are several products that we developed on the basis of our survey data. The first level of analysis was the country reports.²⁵ The second level of analysis was to select issues important for the democratic change in the countries surveyed and to complete regional cross-country comparisons on them. Topics included – but were not limited to – the gender gap in local political leaderships, the influence of local media on local government and different types of institutional balances or imbalances between local councils, mayors, and city managers.²⁶ The third direction we plan to take the analysis (based on this initiative) is to use the data to identify trends in the development of local democracy at the country and regional level.

While it would go beyond the scope of this paper to summarize concrete results of the research, there are a few items that have the potential to provoke discussion among participants of the CLGF workshop.

Firstly, we found that local politicians are a special breed across all political parties and countries. They follow their own opinion, care less about the party line *and* have little professional training. While this is good news from the point of view of local independence it also highlights a serious problem from the effectiveness and efficiency point of view of local governance. If local leaders are motivated and capable to lead their communities (and often do it without assistance from national structures) there is a danger that non-appropriate public policies could be developed and applied.

²⁵ OSI LGI have published reports on the development of local democracy in Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Estonia and Slovakia. These reports can be downloaded from the OSI LGI website. See [Hhttp://lgi.osi.hu/publications_datasheet.php?id=100H](http://lgi.osi.hu/publications_datasheet.php?id=100H); [Hhttp://lgi.osi.hu/publications_datasheet.php?id=340](http://lgi.osi.hu/publications_datasheet.php?id=340)

²⁶ Papers on these topics and more are available from: [Hhttp://lgi.osi.hu/publications_datasheet.php?id=265](http://lgi.osi.hu/publications_datasheet.php?id=265)

A second interesting result of the study was that citizen interest and involvement in shaping local decisions is lowest in very small municipalities. This result was contrary to the prevailing thought that small communities are easier to mobilize given their high level of social capital. The research showed that although a higher level of activity was present in the beginning of the democratization period, citizens soon realized that small local governments have virtually no means of having a significant impact on the life of the community. They have no fiscal independence, their small budget only covers centrally mandated tasks and their influence in regional politics is minimal. As a result, the early enthusiasm for civic participation in local governance in small communities soon was replaced by the inertia and disinterest previously thought to be characteristic of large metropolitan settings.

*Other speakers to Working group 13 included **Francis Duri**, UCAZ, **Phil Amis**, University of Birmingham, UK, **Shuaib Lwasa**, Makerere University, Uganda and **Raphael Magyezi**, ULGA, Uganda.*