

MAKING LOCAL GOVERNANCE WORK SERIES 4

# Local Democracy, Good Governance and Delivering the MDGs in Africa

Report of the Africa Regional Symposium  
held in Kampala, Uganda, April 2006

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## Preface

The Africa Symposium was an important staging point in reviewing the role of African local government in delivering the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It was also a valuable opportunity to review implementation of the Commonwealth Local Government Forum's *Aberdeen Agenda: Commonwealth Principles on Good Practice for Local Democracy and Good Governance*, which was endorsed as part of the Commonwealth's fundamental political values at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Malta in 2005.

The participants – ministers, mayors, senior officials and other key local government stakeholders from across Africa – unanimously adopted the *Kampala Agenda for African Local Government*, which is reproduced in full elsewhere in this report. In it, they note that local governments in Commonwealth Africa are responsible, in whole or in part, for the delivery of every one of the MDGs and that there is a mandate for local governments to localise the MDGs in their planning and service delivery.

Participants welcomed the *Aberdeen Agenda* as an important tool to support the development of effective local government and recommended that it be operationalised by all partners concerned. In this context, they recognised the capacity needs of local government and looked to support from the CLGF and other partners, welcoming the decision of the CLGF Board to develop a programme in selected counties in Africa to operationalise the *Aberdeen Agenda*.

The CLGF was honoured that the symposium was officially opened and addressed by H.E. President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni. We were also delighted that President Museveni formally agreed to become a Patron of the CLGF for the Africa region and that he announced he would consult on bringing the recommendations of the Kampala Symposium, and related issues of local government, to the attention of other Commonwealth Heads of Government at their meeting in Kampala in 2007, which he will be chairing.

Given the strong extent of local democracy and decentralisation in Uganda, Kampala was an appropriate venue for the symposium; partici-

pants were able to view local examples of good practice in local government, such as in Uganda's successful fight to reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS. The CLGF is very appreciative of the support it received for the holding of the symposium from its Uganda member organisations, the Ministry of Local Government and the Uganda Local Government Association. As always, it valued its excellent cooperation with the Commonwealth Secretariat and the presentation made by the Secretariat's Deputy Secretary-General, Mrs Florence Magasha. It was also grateful for the supportive presentation made by the Executive Director of UN-HABITAT, Dr Anna Tibaijuka.

The *Kampala Agenda for African Local Government* is an important complement to the Commonwealth *Aberdeen Agenda*: the task now is to turn its recommendations into practical action. The CLGF will work with its members in Africa to take forward the *Kampala Agenda*. In this it will cooperate closely with the Commonwealth Secretariat and other partners. It also wishes to hold a dialogue with its African partners and responsible African institutions such as the African Union to ensure that African local government is given the recognition it deserves and that localising the MDGs is fully integrated into continent-wide, as well as country-wide and local, development strategies.

**Carl Wright**

*Secretary-General*

*Commonwealth Local Government Forum*

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## Foreword

This is the fourth publication in the series 'Making Local Governance Work', corresponding to the fourth regional local government symposium organised jointly over the last two years by the Governance and Institutional Development Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum.

The Symposium, which was held in Kampala, Uganda in April 2006, reflects the Commonwealth Secretariat's commitment to the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals and the significance of the Africa Region for the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth Secretariat will continue to align its programmes in Africa within the New Partnership for African Development framework and will also continue to work towards capacity development of local governments to enable them to meet new challenges. This report captures the deliberations and recommendations of the symposium on the localising of these targets, which local governments, because of their natural proximity to the common man, are in a better position to deliver.

The challenge of achieving the Millennium Development Goals in all regions of the Commonwealth by 2015 is a daunting one. Unfortunately, many Commonwealth countries are behind the MDG targets. The majority of young Commonwealth citizens are unable to realise their full potential because of high unemployment, poverty, HIV/AIDS and illiteracy. Significant statistics are that women constitute about 70 per cent of those living in poverty across the Commonwealth, and that about 60 per cent of the 40 million people living with HIV/AIDS are in Africa. This alone can seriously affect the attainment of the MDGs.

During the last Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, held in Malta in November 2005, the Heads of Governments noted that the MDGs are linked to poverty reduction, health, education and gender equality targets, and they urged member countries to re-commit themselves to human development. They called upon all member countries to continue to pursue macroeconomic stability and to strengthen the social and economic policies and human rights frameworks needed for sustainable growth and poverty reduction.

As GIDD is the implementing arm of the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation, the CFTC's geographic focus has more recently been on two key Commonwealth constituencies, Africa and small states, because they have been threatened with marginalisation and their share of global trade and investment has been declining. Consequently, a sizeable proportion of CFTC resources is allocated to the Africa region and to small states (32 countries, of which six are in the Africa region).

Sub-national Government and Administration is an important strand of our public sector reform programme. The recommendations of this and the earlier symposia have enabled the Commonwealth Secretariat and other development partners and member governments to align their priorities.

We hope that this publication, together with three other reports in the same series, in conjunction with GIDD's first book dealing with issues in the sub-national area, *Managing Change in Local Governance*, will serve as a useful resource on local governance in the Commonwealth for practitioners and policy makers in our member countries and beyond.

We wish to express our appreciation to the Ministry of Local Government in Uganda for its support and assistance in organising the regional symposium in Africa, as well as to the CLGF for its continued partnership with us in the important area of local government administration.

**Jacqueline Wilson**

*Director*

*Governance and Institutional Development Division*

*Commonwealth Secretariat*

## Acronyms

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| ACP      | Africa, Caribbean and Pacific  |
| ACPLGP   | Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Local Government Platform                          |
| ADEA     | Association for the Development of Education in Africa                           |
| AGOA     | African Growth and Opportunity Act   |
| ALGAK    | Association of Local Government Authorities of Kenya                             |
| AMCHUD   | African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development                  |
| AMICAALL | Association of Mayors Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at the Local Level |
| APRM     | African Peer Review Mechanism  |
| ART      | Anti-Retroviral Treatment  |
| ARVs     | Anti-Retrovirals   |
| AU       | African Union  |
| AULA     | African Union of Local Authorities   |
| CALGA    | Caribbean Association of Local Government Authorities                            |
| CBO      | Community-Based Organisation   |
| CFTC     | Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation                                      |
| CLGF     | Commonwealth Local Government Forum  |
| CEMAR    | Council of European Municipalities and Regions                                   |
| COR      | Committee of the Regions   |
| CSAP     | Commonwealth Service Abroad Programme  |
| DA       | District Assembly  |
| DBSA     | Development Bank of Southern Africa  |
| EAC      | East African Community   |
| EDF      | European Development Fund  |
| EESC     | European Economic and Social Committee   |
| EMIS     | Education Management Information System  |
| ESA      | Educational Sector Analysis  |
| GIDD     | Governance and Institutional Development Division (Commonwealth Secretariat)     |
| GPRS     | Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy   |
| IEC      | Information, Education and Communication   |
| LDC      | Least Developed Country  |

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| LEEDS | Local Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (Nigeria)        |
| LGB   | Local Governance Barometer                                       |
| LGI   | Local Government Index   |
| LGDP  | Local Government Development Programme (Uganda)                  |
| MDP   | Municipal Development Partnership                                |
| MDGs  | Millennium Development Goals                                     |
| MMR   | Maternal Mortality Ratio   |
| NAO   | National Authorising Officer                                     |
| NAPEP | National Poverty Eradication Programme                           |
| NEEDS | National Economic and Empowerment Development Strategy (Nigeria) |
| NEPAD | New Economic Partnership for African Development                 |
| NGO   | Non-Governmental Organisation                                    |
| ODA   | Official Development Assistance                                  |
| OPEC  | Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries                |
| OVC   | Orphans and Vulnerable Children                                  |
| PAF   | Poverty Alleviation Fund   |
| PALG  | Pacific Association of Local Governments                         |
| PDM   | Partenariat pour le Développement Municipal                      |
| PEAP  | Poverty Eradication Action Plan                                  |
| PMTCT | Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission                       |
| PPAs  | Participatory Poverty Assessments                                |
| PRIAs | Poverty Reduction Impact Appraisals                              |
| PRSPs | Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers                                |
| SADC  | Southern African Development Community                           |
| SALGA | South African Local Government Association                       |
| SHS   | Sustainable Human Settlements                                    |
| SNV   | Netherlands Development Organisation                             |
| UCAZ  | Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe                           |
| UCLG  | United Cities and Local Governments                              |
| UCLGA | United Cities and Local Governments of Africa                    |
| UGI   | Urban Governance Index   |
| ULGA  | Uganda Local Government Association                              |
| UNCDF | United Nations Capital Development Fund                          |
| UNDP  | United Nations Development Programme                             |
| UPE   | Universal Primary Education                                      |
| WTO   | World Trade Organization   |

## **PART ONE**

### **Report of the Symposium**



# 1

## Background and Objectives

The Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF), in collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Government of Uganda (Ministry of Local Government) and the Uganda Local Government Association (ULGA), organised the African Regional Symposium on Local Democracy, Good Governance and Delivering the MDGs in Africa in Uganda in April 2006. The symposium was held at Speke Resort and Conference Centre, Munyonyo, Lake Victoria, Kampala, 26–28 April 2006. It was attended by 230 participants from Belgium, Cameroon, Canada, Fiji Islands, Ghana, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, the Gambia, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, United Kingdom, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The symposium was held at a time when there was considerable official recognition of the importance of local government in ‘localising’ the delivery of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and of the need to strengthen local democracy, good governance and local government capacity. It followed other similar events organised by CLGF and the Commonwealth Secretariat in the Caribbean and the Pacific (April and December 2004) and in Aberdeen, Scotland (March 2005). It was intended to build on that momentum to explore further the importance of effective intergovernmental relations, and linkages between local democracy, good governance and ensuring effective delivery of the MDGs at local level.

The symposium’s overall objective was to help strengthen local governance in Africa so that local authorities can deliver more effective and accountable services to their communities. This was part of a co-ordinated effort within the Commonwealth to build local capacity to tackle poverty in line with internationally agreed targets.

The specific objectives of the symposium were to:

- (i) Consider the link between local democracy and good governance and improved service delivery in Africa, and to look at the role of local government in achieving the MDGs;
- (ii) Review the *Aberdeen Agenda* and exchange good practice policy and case studies that show how African countries are realising the *Agenda's* principles;
- (iii) Consider different mechanisms for measuring governance and democracy, and how these can be used to encourage local authorities to make the necessary changes to ensure that they can make more effective progress towards delivering the MDGs;
- (iv) Look at the practical experience of Ugandan local government in realising the MDGs in such areas as combating HIV/AIDS and tackling poverty;
- (v) Develop the principles contained in the *Aberdeen Agenda* into practical recommendations for essential action by central and local governments and other partners, to ensure that these principles can be embedded into local government policy at both national and local level.
- (vi) Agree on a strategy for future CLGF/Commonwealth Secretariat support, working with United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLGA) and other African partners, for the realisation of the principles contained in the *Aberdeen Agenda*.

## 2

### Symposium Opening

The opening session of the symposium was chaired by John Emily Otekat, CLGF Chairperson and President of the Uganda Local Government Association. Mr Otekat welcomed participants to the symposium which, he pointed out, followed the meeting held in Aberdeen, where Commonwealth members had committed themselves to specific principles of good local governance. He hoped that the Kampala symposium would affirm those principles and lay out clear strategies for enhancing local capacity to help achieve the MDGs. He then invited His Worship John Ssebaana Kizito, Mayor of Kampala and Chair of the Urban Authorities Association of Uganda, to welcome the participants.

In his welcome remarks Mayor Ssebaana Kizito expressed his deep gratitude to CLGF, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Government of Uganda (Ministry of Local Government) and the ULGA for holding the symposium in Kampala. This gave participants from various countries in the Commonwealth the opportunity to visit Uganda, and some of them were doing this for the first time. He also commended the organisers for focusing the symposium on the role of local government in attaining the MDGs, and stressed that the key to the achievement of the MDGs lay in strengthening local capacity and promoting good governance at local level. He wished the participants fruitful deliberations and invited them to enjoy the hospitality Kampala had to offer.

Following Mayor Ssebaana Kizito's welcome speech the following keynote addresses were delivered:

- *CLGF's role in strengthening local democracy, good governance and realising the MDGs in Africa*, John Emily Otekat, CLGF Chairperson
- *Local government priorities for Africa: Realising the MDGs and ensuring good local governance*, Father Smangaliso Mkhathshwa, CLGF Board Member and President, UCLGA
- *Sustainable urban development to meet the MDGs and the role of UN-HABITAT*, Dr Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director, UN-HABITAT

- *The challenge for the Commonwealth in promoting local democracy, good governance and localising the MDGs*, Florence Mugasha, Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General
- *Statement by the Uganda Minister of Local Government*, Professor Tarsis Kabwegyere.

These speeches are reproduced in Annex B.

## 3

# The Role of Local Government in Meeting the MDGs

This plenary session was chaired by John Emily Otekat. Presentations were made by Hon. Sydney Mufamadi, Minister for Provincial and Local Government, South Africa; Councillor Josiah Magut, Chairman of the Association of Local Government Authorities of Kenya (ALGAK); Warren Nyamugasira, Executive Director of the Uganda NGO Forum; Grace Kwiwucwiny, SNV representative; and Salil Shetty, Director, UN Millennium Campaign.

The Secretary General of CLGF, **Carl Wright**, outlined the four main objectives of the symposium, the first to be held in Africa, namely:

- to set out a vision for Africa that reflected the *Aberdeen Agenda* (to be articulated in the *Kampala Agenda*);
- to determine how local governments could form practical partnerships with the private sector, CLGF, and other institutions and international agencies to promote local democracy, governance and development;
- to determine the practical impact which an assembly of such high level practitioners, decision makers and academics could have on local democracy and governance; and
- to set out a vision rooted in practical realities for the implementation of the MDGs.

**Hon. Sydney Mufamadi** noted that the symposium was taking place six months after the UN Millennium Summit, which reviewed progress towards the achievement of the MDGs. An important outcome of this process was that the achievement of the MDGs had become universalised regardless of different country contexts; this was a positive development as all countries now had uniform goals to aim at. However, more capacity was required if municipalities and local governments were to

deliver on the MDGs, and external stimuli were necessary to assist most of them in that respect.

He drew attention to a project called *Municipal Deploy* which South Africa had embarked on in November 2006. Its purpose was to remove some of the bottlenecks in service delivery. South Africa had set targets that were even more ambitious than the MDGs and was pursuing a variety of approaches, including the use of indigenous capabilities and responding to municipal needs on a case by case basis. This allowed more systematic intervention and generated enhanced outcomes.

He pointed out that SADC Local Government Ministers had set up a framework for regional consultation through which it was hoped to coordinate strategy and share good practices. He challenged CLGF to ensure that expertise in countries that are performing well on the MDGs should be made available to those that are not doing so well, i.e. to bring about the transfer of skills through technical assistance or other means.

**Councillor Josiah Magut** drew attention to the multiple roles that local governments and associations can play in helping to attain the MDGs, including creating an enabling environment within which stakeholders could undertake MDG-related activities; mobilising human, material and financial resources; lobbying government and development partners for support; developing local community capacity for undertaking MDG-related activities; and evaluating progress towards the attainment of the goals.

He informed the symposium that Kenya has a Local Service Delivery Action Plan for each local government level. Local development is articulated through local budgets and development plans. ALGAK is engaged in lobbying central government for more resources for local governments. Currently the Kenyan Government allocates 5 per cent of total national revenue to local governments: ALGAK was pushing for this to be increased to 20 per cent.

He expressed concern that urban development was moving ahead of planning, implying that slums are likely to be a major feature of urban settlements for years to come. He stressed the imperative of urban planning for proper urban development, and the major role that local government associations can play in assisting local governments in this area, in addition to evaluating their performance.

**Warren Nyamugasira** set out a broad overview of performance towards the attainment of the MDGs in Africa and observed that the picture was checkered. Good progress was being made on some MDGs but not on others. This was because some MDGs, such as universal primary education (UPE), have positive political capital while others, such as women's access to land, have negative political capital. Political will towards each MDG was, therefore, linked to their perceived political capital.

Turning to Uganda, Mr Nyamugasira observed that some effort had been made to implement the leadership code. This included development of the Charter of Accountability for Local Governments by ULGA to guide local governments on the use of power and resources and to promote governance more generally. However, implementation of the Charter faced numerous bottlenecks, including:

- A surprisingly low level of awareness of the MDGs by local government officials;
- A low level of awareness among citizens of their rights and obligations: for example, citizens were easily bribed during elections and were not willing to pay taxes for the services they were demanding;
- The higher the local governments the more difficult it was to bring their leaders to account;
- Planning data are weak and dated, so planning is done using unreliable information;
- Local governments do not have adequate resources with which to undertake assigned activities;
- Although government talks a great deal about partnership with the private sector, the legislation in place is not conducive for facilitating this partnership.

Mr Nyamugasira made the following recommendations to facilitate attainment of the MDGs:

- The Uganda NGO Forum had developed a quality assurance mechanism with 34 minimum standards. This should be implemented.
- Service delivery standards and service charters for local governments should be developed.

- Progress towards attainment of the MDGs could be greatly facilitated by placing focus on 'quick win' activities that can be implemented with minimal resources.
- Economic policies that restrict expenditure on MDG-related activities should be revisited.
- Local governments should pay more attention to urban planning.
- Governments should change their attitudes towards non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and regard them as social entrepreneurs.
- Instead of producing Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), it would probably be better to write Greed Reduction Strategy Papers to counter the high level of graft in public offices.

**Salil Shetty** drew the attention of the conference to the main reasons why local governments should put attainment of MDGs at the top of their agendas. MDGs have very high political returns; they can be used as a basis for demanding more resources; they are measurable and therefore useful in planning and budgeting, and in developing monitoring and evaluating tools; and they help to strengthen democracy and accountable governance.

He suggested eight actions that local governments should focus on in order to increase the chances of attaining the MDGs:

- Take account of the local context in attempting to achieve the MDGs;
- Develop clear plans, policies and programmes;
- Emphasise participatory planning and the use of disaggregated data;
- Allocate adequate resources to MDG-related activities;
- Use MDGs to increase accountability to the poor;
- Demand more resources from central governments to enable implementation of MDG-related activities;
- Link the MDGs, rather than attempting to achieve them in isolation from each other;
- Join the global anti-poverty movement and participate in its activities on 17 October 2006 – MDG Day

Discussion followed the presentations. A further presentation was then made on the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Local Government Platform (ACPLGP) by Charles Katiza, its chairperson, who drew the attention of the delegates to the following points:

- Membership of the Platform comprises United Cities and Local Governments of Africa, the Caribbean Association of Local Government Authorities (CALGA), the Pacific Association of Local Governments (PALG), and the CLGF and its members in the ACP countries.
- The mission of the Platform is to enhance the role of government in the formulation, implementation and review of co-operation strategies and programmes supported under the Cotonou Agreement.
- The Platform has four core objectives: (i) to engage in structured dialogue with key partners; (ii) to provide information and networking services; (iii) to promote mainstreaming of local government participation through capacity development; and (iv) to consolidate the Platform's management and co-ordination structure.
- Key partners of the Platform include: the European Commission (Development Directorate-General and Europe Aid); the ACP Secretariat and Committee of Ambassadors; the ACP-AU Joint Parliamentary Assembly; the Committee of the Regions (COR); the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMAR); the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC); and UNG, CUF and the UK Department for International Development (DFID).
- A second call was being made for project proposals under the ACP-EU Water Facility, which has total available funding of €190 million. Proposals had been invited for projects with values ranging from €200,000 to €5 million to be executed through civil society and decentralisation co-operation initiatives that favour integrated activities in very poor peri-urban and rural areas. Assistance to applicants was available through the following websites:

*europaaid-water-facility-helpdesk@cec.eu.int*

*www.europa.eu.int/waterfacility*

*www.irc.nl or www.streams.net/www.lboro.ac.uk/rwell/index.htm*

*ngocoord@uwasnet.org (for Uganda)*

The deadline for applications was 30 June 2006.

- The 10th European Development Fund (EDF) programme (2008–2013) would come on stream in due course. Organisations wishing to be involved should contact their National Authorising Officer (NAO) to ACPLGP. New instruments for development co-operation from 2008 onwards were being developed for use by non-state actors and local authorities. Types of interventions targeted included: (i) difficult partnerships, conflicts and poor governance processes; (ii) strengthening capacity development processes; (iii) promoting alliances between stakeholders; and (iv) north–south and south–south co-operation.

Grace Kwiwucwiny, representative of SNV, spoke about the Ugandan experience in attainment of the MDGs. She identified the requirements for meeting the MDGs, including local leaders' capacity to spearhead development, political will and commitment, capacity of stakeholders and actors, availability of adequate resources (technical, financial and material), networking and building coalitions, and setting clear and specific milestones for achieving the goals.

Highlighting some facts and figures on Uganda and key characteristics of Uganda's local government system, she drew attention to the major activities through which local governments in Uganda are working to attain the MDGs. These included:

- Construction of classroom blocks and provision of scholastic materials and equipment;
- Recruitment, training and retention of teachers;
- Supervision of school management and performance;
- Training school management committees;
- Contracting out education goods and services;
- Sensitisation on gender policy, gender analysis, planning and budgeting, and development of gender-sensitive indicators;
- Entrepreneurship training, i.e. social change, savings and credit, income-generating activities and leadership;
- Recruitment and training of non-formal education instructors;
- Construction of health units and provision of health workers and supplies;

- Provision of primary healthcare services, for example immunisation;
- Training traditional birth attendants;
- Mainstreaming HIV/AIDS programmes, plans and budgets into local governments' development agendas;
- Effective monitoring and evaluation of development programmes to enhance their impact and sustainability.

Ms Kwiycwiny said that challenges facing local governments in Uganda in meeting the MDGs included weak and varying capacities in planning and budgeting; a low local revenue base; weak community participation in monitoring and evaluation of projects and activities; weak local community structures (for example school and health management committees); weak co-ordination of development actors; difficulties in integrating peace-building and conflict management in district planning; under-utilisation of social change workers; ineffective mainstreaming of cross-cutting activities such as gender, HIV/AIDS and environment in local development; and weak civil society organisations.

Ms Kwiycwiny recommended several measures to address these and other challenges, including:

- Developing technical and leadership capacities, particularly at sub-county level where school and health management committees were operating;
- Harmonising national monitoring and evaluation frameworks, guidelines and tools, and increasing joint poverty analysis, project implementation and monitoring and evaluation;
- Increasing community involvement in public expenditure tracking, citizen scorecards and action research;
- Enhancing local resource mobilisation;
- Establishing clear milestones for achieving the MDGs;
- Developing skills for business development, entrepreneurship and change management;
- Developing market linkages for agricultural and non-agricultural production; and
- Developing and enhancing micro-finance services.

## 4

### **Good Practice and Innovation: Empowering Local Government to Improve Service Delivery**

Panellists in this session shared examples of good practice from their countries. They were: Councillor Matheus K. Shikongo, Mayor of Windhoek, Namibia; Hon. Kofi Poku-Adusei, Deputy Minister of Local Government, Ghana; Dr Makhosi Khoza, Chief Executive Officer, South African Local Government Association (SALGA); and Luther Mashaba, Executive Director, South Africa Operations, Development Bank of South Africa (DBSA).

Councillor Shikongo talked about how local governments in Namibia are responding to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. He told participants that the first case of HIV/AIDS in Namibia was detected in 1986. By 1992 the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate was 4 per cent; by 2002 it had ballooned to 20 per cent, although the sentinel survey of pregnant women in 2004 had indicated a slight decline to 19.7 per cent. Namibia had responded to this development in several successive steps. The country launched a national response at independence in 1990 by establishing the first National Aids Control Programme, which emphasised awareness raising and prevention. The Second Medium Term Plan (MTP II), launched in 1999, while intensifying awareness and prevention, focused on care, treatment and mitigation programmes in addition to detailing a strategy for a multi-sectoral response. The current response was incorporated in the third Medium Term Plan (MTP III), 2004–2009. Still in the early stages of implementation, the response emphasises development of an enabling environment, prevention, mitigation, programme management and resource mobilisation. It assigns a central role to local governments in fighting the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Local governments had responded to these developments in deliberate and measured ways. Following the international conference on AIDS in Africa held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire in 1997, the Alliance of Mayors and

Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa was formed the following year to give more attention to impact assessment, planning and response systems. With support from UNDP, a road map was developed which led to the formation of the Alliance of Mayors Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at the Local Level (AMICAALL), with its headquarters in Windhoek, Namibia. AMICAALL provides the framework within which local government leaders, municipal authorities and civil society promote local leadership and ownership to enhance local capacity to deliver HIV/AIDS-related services. AMICAALL gets extensive support from UNDP through the UN-AMICAALL Partnership Programme and works in partnership with several external agencies, including UNAIDS, the World Bank, USAID, Government of the Netherlands, UCLGA, Afri-cities, Africa Capacity Building Foundation, PricewaterhouseCoopers and the OPEC Fund for Development. It was also looking forward to developing a vibrant partnership with the CLGF.

National AMICAALL chapters had been set up in 13 African countries and their co-ordinators were working with local governments, mayors and municipal leaders, relevant central government agencies, civil society and community leaders to support local government responses to the epidemic. This was in keeping with the overall objective of AMICAALL of promoting a strong and co-ordinated local response to the epidemic, to complement other efforts at national and international levels.

Namibia launched its own national chapter in 2001, under the auspices of the Association of Local Government Authorities. This had played a catalytic role, in collaboration with the UN AMICAALL Partnership Programme, in mobilising funding and technical partnerships to respond to the specific needs and priorities that have been identified in consultation with local partners. Local partners included local NGOs such as the Namibian Association of AIDS Service Organisations, the National Planning Commission, and the Ministries of Health, Education and Youth. The political commitment of mayors and municipal leaders had been crucial to the success of these efforts. They had led to a significant increase in services, from expanded home-based care to support for orphans and vulnerable youth who were benefiting from access to professional training and employment generation programmes.

**Hon. Kofi Poku-Adusei**, in his opening remarks, observed that democracy and good governance are meaningful at the local level only when

people have access to basic social services, economic opportunities and improved living conditions. Ghana was addressing this through the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) 1 and 2, whose objectives were aligned to the MDGs. The key pillars of the GPRS are macroeconomic stability, human resource development and good governance. Devolution of power to a vibrant local government system was key to achieving the objectives of the GPRS.

Under decentralisation the responsibility for overall development of districts in Ghana had been placed under the District Assemblies (DAs). A minimum of 5 per cent of total government revenue is allocated as a block grant through the District Assemblies Common Fund which the DAs can use with considerable discretion within broad government development objectives and priorities. Through their co-ordinating role in the planning and budgeting process DAs play a pivotal role in the following areas:

- Providing infrastructure and social and economic services such as market facilities, construction of feeder roads and investment in community health and education facilities;
- Promoting income-generating activities and creating employment using labour intensive technologies (for example in the construction and maintenance of feeder roads);
- Providing relevant vocational training schemes to local contractors to support local development activities;
- Playing a central role in the fight against the HIV/AIDS epidemic in partnership with national and local stakeholders.

A specific part of the District Assemblies Common Fund is ring-fenced in the form of a Poverty Alleviation Fund (PAF) which is managed as soft credits through local banks for access by small-scale enterprises, artisans, farmers, women groups, etc. Additionally, other micro-credit schemes are collaboratively operated by the DAs, banks and communities.

Central government ministries were also working in partnership with the DAs to promote local development. For example, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, in collaboration with the World Bank, was implementing a Community Based Rural Development Project which aims to:

- Strengthen the DAs in planning and implementing infrastructural and economic development programmes;
- Establish rural enterprise development and learning centres throughout Ghana to develop skills and create rural employment by assisting rural enterprises to manage and provide agricultural produce for value addition;
- Provide support for co-operative business activities, market research, business linkages and joint venture agreements, macro and small enterprise development, and youth employment. The Ministry of Tourism was also working in partnership with DAs on the planning and development of tourist sites and programmes to generate local income and enhance local employment, and in the process help to stem rural-urban migration.

The Minister drew attention to the following key challenges that Ghana faces in its attempt to strengthen local government for economic development and empowerment:

- Local government is still over-dependent on central government transfers, while local revenue generation capacity is still weak;
- There is a persistent lack of professional staff, particularly in remote areas;
- Collated socio-economic data is in short supply, which compromises private sector investment at the local level and constrains planning and budgeting processes;
- Infrastructure facilities such as telecommunications, power supplies, housing and road networks are poor;
- There are parallel structures at district level for the development and implementation of local economic programmes, which complicates local development management.

In conclusion, the Minister reminded delegates that effective promotion of partnerships between the private sector, civil society and local communities in local development requires the strengthening of local level accountability and transparency mechanisms.

**Dr Makhosi Khoza** talked about the role of planning and building strong communities in attainment of the MDGs, with reference to South

Africa. The South African Constitution, he said, requires municipalities to give priority to the basic needs of the poor. National and provincial governments are required to strengthen the capacity of local governments to carry out their mandate. South Africa has developed several strategies and objectives that relate to the attainment of the MDGs, namely: (i) *Vision 2014*; (ii) eradication of the bucket system by 2009; (iii) universal access to electricity and clean running water by 2012; (iv) integrated development of municipal plans; (v) provincial growth and development strategies; and (vi) the national growth and development strategy. The MDGs were, therefore, subsumed under constitutional requirements.

The specific policies and programmes that focus on the MDGs include the Free Basic Services Policy, Sustainable Human Settlements (SHS), equitable share of nationally collected revenue based on the number of indigent households, labour-intensive public works programmes, Sinyenza Mwanje, Masibambane, and Project Consolidate. The latter put specified municipalities under critical care to enable joint action by the state and these municipalities channelled resources to areas of critical need.

Several achievements had been registered as a result of these interventions, including the following:

- More than one million low-cost houses had been built in the last ten years, all of which have electricity, clean running water and proper sanitation;
- The national government has provided a grant of R190 for each child less than 15 years old;
- Internships have been arranged for university and college graduates;
- R370 billion has been allocated for infrastructure development over the next three years;
- Hospitals are currently being given a face lift;
- Revenue income has increased from R9 billion four years ago to more than R12 billion currently;
- 97 per cent of households in Msunduzi municipality have electricity and clean water and every household is within 250 metres of a clinic.

**Luther Mashaba** told delegates about the activities of DBSA and the lessons it had generated from its partnership with local governments to support infrastructure development in South Africa. It was estimated that at the current level of funding (R18–21 billion per annum) it would take 10–20 years to clear all infrastructure backlogs. Statistics indicate that 15–18 per cent of households do not have running water, 17–32 per cent do not have waterborne sewage and 26–30 depend on alternative energy sources, rather than on electricity.

Furthermore, local governments in South Africa faced challenges that constrained their ability to execute their mandate, including:

- Institutional capacity constraints relating to appropriate skills, staff, systems and plans;
- Transformational issues relating to division of fiscal transfers and the roles and responsibilities and central and local government;
- Limited local income and over-dependence on central government transfers;
- Difficulties in co-ordinating different spheres of government;
- Logistical difficulties arising from low population density in some regions;
- Meeting the varied needs of diverse communities.

DBSA was committed to progressively empower regions to make them free of poverty, inequity and dependence. It wanted to maximise its contribution to development by mobilising and providing finance and expertise, and forming partnerships for infrastructure development in order to improve the quality of life of the people of Southern Africa. The Bank, therefore, played a triple role: advisor, partner and financier.

The contribution of DBSA to local government was quite significant. Sixty-five per cent of local authorities are clients of the Bank and are obtaining financing to augment available funding for infrastructure delivery and accelerate investments, to undertake local economic development initiatives and to build capacity. Over 20 years the Bank had invested R43 billion, of which R20 billion (45%) was made up of cumulative investments delivered via local government and R10 billion (10%) was spent via supporting partnerships and resources leveraging.

In terms of technical support and capacity building, the Bank had so far provided R600 million for capacity building and planning support, 90 per cent of which had gone to local governments. The Bank had also provided knowledge intervention and support in various forms, including funding a resource centre, LOGNET, which had connected 180 municipalities; agencies services involving 30 active agencies; information support; a development fund; policy support; training through the Bank's academy; and project evaluation. Support had been provided to provincial governments to help them enhance the local government system, for planning and training and to facilitate the implementation of national programmes such as Project Consolidate, Sustainable Communities and the Capacity Development Task Force (Sinyenza Mwanje). Support had been provided via parastatal and other institutions (for example water boards and development corporations) with respect to shared services.

DBSA had learnt several lessons from its various development interventions in local government in South Africa. Support should be comprehensive and should involve finance, planning and institutional and human capacity building; and development investments should be designed to maximise their impact. Appropriate service delivery channels should be identified and smart partnerships should be established and promoted. It was also essential to adopt a sustainable communities approach. Furthermore, priority setting must be allocated to appropriate government levels; activities across all spheres of government must be effectively co-ordinated; and the key priorities of local governments must be properly articulated.

## 5

### **Address by His Excellency, President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni**

H.E. President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni joined the plenary session to open the conference officially. He welcomed the delegates to Uganda, and thanked CLGF and the Commonwealth Secretariat for bringing the conference to Uganda and for organising it so well. He provided the delegates with an overview of Uganda's local government system, in which he informed them that the country had approximately 28 million people, who were organised in 72 districts, 966 sub-counties, 5000 parishes and 50,000 villages.

President Museveni outlined six principles which guide decentralisation and local governance in Uganda:

1. People must have power over local development and service delivery. This is what 'local empowerment' really means.
2. Local development should focus on local interests and priorities: efforts should not be diverted into sectarianism because this is diversionary.
3. Local people should be allowed to articulate their interests because they know them better than anyone else.
4. Decentralisation should not be over-romantised (for example, it does not entirely eliminate corruption). Rather, it should be seen as a good tool for promoting democracy and enhancing service delivery, but one which has to be continuously nurtured and calibrated to address constantly evolving development contexts.
5. A variety of approaches should be used in local development: a combination of 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' approaches should be employed rather choosing one over the other.
6. In addition to promoting democratisation and enhancing service delivery, decentralisation is also good for preserving local heritage.

Some of the districts in Uganda had been created on this basis.

Following his speech, President Museveni launched the 2006 edition of the *Commonwealth Local Government Handbook*.

Professor Tarsis Kabwegyere, Uganda's Minister of Local Government, gave a vote of thanks to President Museveni after his speech. He assured President Museveni that the *Kampala Agenda* that would be adopted at the end of the conference would include justice for the people as an essential requirement for deepening democracy in the Commonwealth.

## 6

### The Role of Democracy in Achieving the MDGs: the *Aberdeen Agenda*

This session had three main speakers: Hon. Dr Ponts’o Matumelo Sekatle, Minister of Local Government, Lesotho; Andre Juneau, Deputy Minister, Infrastructure, Canada; and Colonel Musa Mohammed (rtd), Nigeria.

Hon. Dr Sekatle reminded delegates of the 12 Commonwealth principles of good practice for local democracy and good governance – the *Aberdeen Agenda*. These are:

1. Constitutional and legal recognition of local democracy
2. The ability to elect local representatives
3. Partnership between spheres of government
4. A defined legislative framework
5. Opportunities to participate in local decision making
6. Open local government accountability
7. Open local government transparency
8. Openness to scrutiny
9. Inclusiveness
10. Adequate and equitable resource allocation
11. Equitable service delivery
12. Building strong local democracy and good governance

She highlighted the key activities local governments in Africa were undertaking to realise the MDGs.

**Goal 1 *Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger:*** Local governments were involved in the provision of water, housing and construc-

tion; the construction of roads and provision of transport; land management; employment creation; provision of credit through micro-credit schemes; and urban and rural planning.

**Goal 2** *Achieving universal primary education:* African countries which are already implementing UPE include Botswana, Cameroon, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In some countries UPE is compulsory.

**Goal 3** *Promoting gender equality and empowering women:* Several countries had established quotas for women's representation in local government structures, varying from 30–50 per cent. This had led to a phenomenal increase in women councillors; for example the figures were 58 per cent and 48 per cent in Lesotho and South Africa, respectively. Fifty per cent of mayors of metropolitan councils in Lesotho are women.

**Goals 4 and 5** *Reducing child mortality and improving maternal health:* Local governments were responsible for providing health services in many African countries and had set up health clinics.

**Goal 6** *Combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases:* Uganda had dramatically reduced infection rates from 30 to 6 per cent and had demonstrated that involving local authorities and communities in fighting HIV/AIDS was crucial in containing the epidemic. Lesotho was following in the same footsteps.

**Goal 7** *Ensuring environmental sustainability:* Local governments, under central government oversight, were involved in environmental management, waste management, land use planning, forestry and land reclamation, and wetland management.

Hon. Dr Sekatle pointed out that the *Aberdeen Agenda* complemented these processes by demarcating the respective roles of central and local governments in achieving the MDGs. Central government was expected to provide constitutional and legal recognition for local government, political freedom and appropriate powers, defined by legislation, adequate and equitable resources, and support for strong local democracy and good governance. For their part, local governments were expected to be accountable, transparent, open to scrutiny and inclusive.

**Andre Juneau** described Canada's experience in strengthening local democracy and local governance. Canada's challenge, he said, has always been how the Federal Government should relate to local governments and to urban issues. According to the Canadian Constitution, which was drawn up in 1867, provincial governments have responsibility for municipalities, and they take that role seriously.

Canada is highly urbanised, with 27 metropolitan areas. About a third of Canadians live in the three largest metropolitan areas of Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. Sixty-five per cent of Canadians live in urban areas whose population is at least 100,000 people, while 80 per cent live in urban areas with a population of at least 10,000 people. In most provinces one or two cities contain a very large percentage of the provincial population, which creates interesting dynamic political and economic relationships between provincial governments and their municipalities, with some provinces moving towards granting significant autonomy to the municipalities, while others are proceeding more cautiously. There are also dynamic interactions between big cities, and small cities, and between cities and the regions that surround them. It is this interaction which Canadians are constantly grappling with. Nevertheless, municipalities across Canada are similarly charged with delivering local services comprising infrastructure (roads, water and sewers, and solid waste management), public transport, public health and emergency management, local education through school boards, parks and recreation, and some social services. Financing of local governments is heavily based on residential and commercial property taxes which account for about half the revenues, while the rest of the revenues come from user taxes, and other fees and transfers come from provincial and federal government.

Every federal government in Canada outlines its own policies on how government at the federal level relates to cities. The Conservative Federal Government that came to power in January 2006 identified five priorities: greater accountability in government, lower taxes, crime prevention for safer communities, day-care support for parents and lower healthcare waiting times.

The big question is always how to relate the centre to urban areas. Cities have two dynamics that are often in conflict: they provide physical and economic security to their residents and they also provide opportunities

for interaction and innovation. The latter has an international dimension because it attracts competition and immigration and therefore implies significant national interests and obligations. Thus national governments have a direct stake in urban areas, while at the same time they must respect the jurisdiction of provincial and state governments. The tradition in Canada is for the Federal Government to negotiate with the provinces over the mechanisms for this interaction and to be supportive of provincial local governance objectives.

Starting with canals and railways in the 19th century, and moving on to broadcasting and the trans-Canada highway in the 20th century, the Canadian Federal Government has always been involved in the design and funding of public infrastructure. Since the 1990s, funding of public investments has become more systematic. In the mid-1990s the focus was on funding small projects to create jobs; later, municipalities were invited to compete for infrastructure grants awarded by joint federal provincial committees. In 2002 and 2003 \$2 billion was set aside each year as part of the strategic infrastructure programme to fund large projects in each province. Decisions over what to fund in which province were negotiated through discussions involving federal politicians, ministers and members of parliament from the provinces in question, and relevant sectoral ministries (such as the Ministry of Transport), as well as representatives of provincial and local governments.

Several lessons have been learned in the last four years by the Canadian Government from these experiences. First, it is essential to be clear which level – federal, provincial or municipal – is accountable to its citizens and how. These obligations must be stated in legal agreements. Secondly, early public consultation is critical before designing and implementing major infrastructural projects because of their impact on cities and neighbourhoods. Finally, instead of attempting to sort out constitutional jurisdiction between different spheres of government first, a better result can be obtained if the different levels of government agree on the main issues first and then see with what levers their respective competencies provide them.

**Colonel Musa Mohammed** briefed delegates on the Nigerian experience of strengthening local democracy, good governance and realising the MDGs. Following adoption of the MDGs by the UN in 2000, Nigeria had demonstrated its commitment by launching the National Economic

and Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS), a comprehensive socio-economic reform compact that incorporates the MDGs. A presidential committee on the MDGs was formed to chart a strategy for their achievement, following which a sustainable framework was developed to enable the realisation of the goals of the Local Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (LEEDS) at the third tier of government – the local level. Nigeria has three levels of government: national, state and local. LEEDS was designed to enhance the capacity of local governments in Nigeria, in addition to promoting sustainable development, wealth creation, value-orientation and employment generation at local level.

Nigeria had realised the following achievements towards attainment of the MDGs:

**Goal 1 *Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger:*** The Government had established the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), aimed at implementing youth empowerment schemes, developing rural infrastructure, providing social welfare services and promoting natural resource development.

Agricultural development activities had been undertaken comprising seed production programmes, land management, poultry production, aquaculture development, organic fertiliser development and the National Special Programme for Food Security. Considerable emphasis had been put on providing farmers with agricultural inputs.

**Goal 2 *Achieve universal primary education:*** National primary education goals were set and the Basic Education Act was passed in 2004 to provide for compulsory free universal basic education for all children of primary and junior secondary school age in Nigeria.

The Education Management Information System (EMIS) was being strengthened and an Educational Sector Analysis (ESA) had just been completed. The ESA had generated information on the state of the education sector and its development policy options, based on empirical evidence, technical analysis and extensive consultation with national partners and decision makers.

**Goal 3** *Eliminate gender inequality and women empowerment:* The National Policy on Women (2000) provided for gender mainstreaming in all sectors. As a result, women had risen in the social and political structure and many held senior positions in national, regional and local establishments.

Several other policy initiatives had been taken, including prohibition of violence against women, the Strategy for the Acceleration of Girls Education in Nigeria and the Female Functional Literacy Health project.

**Goals 4 and 5** *Reducing child mortality and improving maternal health:* The Health Sector Reform Programme had been launched to improve the stewardship role of government. The National Health Policy had been drafted to enable Nigerians to lead socially and economically productive lives. The National Health Insurance Scheme had been set up to pool funds for developing the health system and provide financial protection for those who were insured.

Two hundred and seven primary health care centres had been renovated and 165 new centres had been constructed.

**Goal 6** *Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases:* The National Action Committee on AIDS had been engaged in concerted information, education and communication activities in the previous six years. In addition, it had developed a National HIV/AIDS monitoring, evaluation and strategic information framework known as the Nigeria National Response Information Management Systems, which contained national core indicators and guidelines for co-ordinating national monitoring evaluation and reporting.

Other initiatives included provision of Anti-Retroviral Treatment (ART); the establishment of an Orphan and Vulnerable Children (OVC) unit; and community interventions through the HIV/AIDS Fund.

Government action on malaria control focused on the management of cases, the prevention of malaria with treated nets, intermittent preventive treatment, health promotion monitoring and

evaluation, and promoting commercial cultivation of artemisia to enable local production of artemisinin-based combination drugs.

**Goal 7** *Ensure environmental sustainability:* Approximately 2000km of shelterbelt or green wall had been established in the desert prone region to check the rapid rate of deforestation in the country. In addition, a pilot rangeland was being embarked on to minimise land use conflict and to reduce or prevent resource degradation.

Several policies, guidelines and action plans had been developed to enhance the quality of environmental management, including the National Erosion and Flood Control Policy and Action Plan, the National Environmental Sanitation Policy and Action Plan and policy guidelines on solid waste management.

Two major institutions had been set up: the National Council on Shelterbelt, Afforestation, Erosion and Coastal Zone Management, and the National Oil Spillage Detection and Response Agency.

A presidential technical committee had been set up to review the housing situation and make appropriate recommendations. This had led to the establishment of the Federal Ministry of Housing and Urban Development. The mortgage sector had also been reformed to improve housing finance mechanisms.

**Goal 8** *Develop a global partnership for development:* Export incentives had been provided to certain sectors to boost their export capacity and to increase the revenue profile of the economy. The incentives included subsidies, further economic liberalisation and encouragement of private sector activities within the framework of NEEDS.

Nigeria was also involved in international partnerships such as the Doha Round of negotiations under the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).

Nigeria had channelled its savings from debt relief to meeting the MDGs. In 2006 alone N100 billion had been allocated to projects in 10 ministries

with mandates in health, education, agriculture, power and steel, women affairs, housing, urban development and youth development.

The main challenges facing the local government system in Nigeria were inefficient service delivery by most councils, inadequate resources and interference by the second tier of government. Strengthening governance to achieve the MDGs required strong partnership among the three tiers of government.

# 7

## Working Groups: Localising the MDGs

Six working groups discussed the role and responsibilities of African local government in delivering the MDGs, the approaches that were currently being employed and the challenges that were affecting the ability of local governments to play a full role. A summary of their deliberations and recommendations is presented below.

### **Role and Responsibilities of African Local Government in Delivering the MDGs**

It was noted that generally throughout Africa local governments had been assigned a broad range of responsibilities which are directly linked to the MDGs. Local governments were responsible for primary education, health, water and sanitation, roads, agricultural (crop, animal and fisheries) extension services, disease control and revenue collection. They were also responsible for physical planning, human resource development, statistics generation, legislation, law enforcement, promoting self-help activities, implementing central government policy and co-ordinating the activities of non-governmental, community-based and faith-based organisations. All this required a great deal of planning, budgeting and management capabilities.

### **Current Approaches**

Several approaches were being used to promote local development, including the following:

- Affirmative action quotas for women, youth, the elderly, disabled people and other marginalised groups to bring them into mainstream development;
- Integrated development planning based on participatory poverty assessments (PPAs), poverty reduction impact appraisals (PRIAs) and other evaluation tools. This was intended to attune the strategic planning process to the local development context and priorities.

- Using specific tools such as PRIAs, citizen report cards and the Urban Governance Index (UGI) to measure the impact of development and determine areas that require improvement.
- Forming alliances such as AMICAALL to reap the benefits of synergies and cross-fertilisation of ideas.

## **Challenges Faced by Local Government**

Local governments in Africa face a myriad of challenges that severely curtail their ability to effectively translate their development goals into outcomes. Some of these challenges originate from central government, while others are internal to local governments.

Three main challenges originate from the centre. First, virtually all local governments in Africa are not provided with adequate resources to discharge the responsibilities assigned to them by central government. This problem of unfunded mandates results in poor or inadequate service delivery because local governments are forced to spread themselves too thinly to make any significant impact. Second, local governments are often subjected to excessive central control, mostly in the form of conditions attached to grants. While central control is essential to ensure the realisation of national goals and to assure anxious donor countries and agencies that their resources are being put to proper use, its excessive application undermines the very essence of decentralisation because it reduces local governments' discretion in decision making. Finally, central government that is keen on controlling local government is often weak on co-ordination, oversight, and monitoring and evaluating local development. Coupled with the inadequate support and guidance given to local governments, this results in poor utilisation of resources at local level and general inability of local governments to meet local and national development goals and objectives.

Challenges at local government level include the following:

- Weak planning, budgeting, human resource management and other essential technical capabilities;
- Weak systems and structures;
- Conflict between political leaders and technical personnel;
- Weak local economies due to low skills, inadequate agricultural and

other inputs, poor extension services, weak markets and lack of access to credit;

- Poor co-ordination of local government development efforts and those of other stakeholders – NGOs, community-based organisations (CBOs), etc.;
- Weak participatory mechanisms resulting in ill-conceived interventions that do not meet the needs of target communities;
- Low community awareness of rights and obligations;
- Weak local revenue-raising capabilities;
- Inadequate development of natural resources;
- Poor environmental management;
- Inadequate empowerment and access to power and leadership structures for women;

## **Recommendations**

Several recommendations were made arising out of the above discussions, the most significant of which were:

1. Unfunded mandates hurt local development: local governments should be provided with adequate resources to enable them to carry out their responsibilities effectively.
2. Open government should be emphasised in the management of local affairs: local governments should be accountable, transparent and open to public scrutiny.
3. Communication is essential to ensure that communities have a thorough understanding of what is done on their behalf.
4. The public should be involved as much as possible in planning, budgeting and implementation of local development projects, in addition to monitoring and evaluation to ensure value for money.
5. Local governments should account for results, not only for budget spending.
6. Significant investment should be made in developing the capabilities of local governments in all technical areas, with particular emphasis on strategic planning.

7. While central government ministries have a legitimate role in ensuring that local governments follow proper procedures in budgeting, they should not review local government budgets that have been made within the framework of the law.
8. Governments should reserve seats for women in local government, but this should not prevent women from contesting elections in their own right.
9. Governments should promote gender balance in developing and implementing public policy. Women should have adequate representation at all tiers or spheres of government, including opportunities for training and professional development. Gender equality and women's rights are essential preconditions for the achievement of development, MDGs, democracy and peace.
10. Political parties should encourage participation by women within their cadres and provide them with equal opportunities for progression within the party system, together with their male colleagues.
11. Community awareness of rights and obligations should be enhanced so that citizens can play an effective role in local development.
12. Local economic development should be promoted to enhance local incomes and broaden the local tax base.

## 8

### Working Groups: Implementing the *Aberdeen Agenda* in Africa

Six working groups discussed different principles in the *Aberdeen Agenda* and their relevance to local government in Africa. Representatives of local government and local government ministries identified challenges and shared means of resolving some of the problems that arose. A summary of the deliberations and recommendations are found below. The *Kampala Agenda* encapsulates the recommendations adopted in the plenary session.

#### **The *Aberdeen Agenda* and the MDGs**

It was noted that, in local government in Africa, the principles of the *Aberdeen Agenda* are critical to realising the MDGs. Local democracy and good local governance are seen as integral to the effective planning required in all the development areas. Local government provides employment in the delivery of services and buys services creating employment indirectly. By working with communities and other spheres of government, local government is able to harness limited resources.

#### **Current Approaches**

- In many countries local government makes use of participatory budgeting processes. This promotes participation and where it is done well ensures greater inclusiveness in planning. Review of budget and expenditure outcomes also promotes transparency and accountability.
- Local government has been recognised in the constitution of most Commonwealth African countries. Some have entrenched local democracy. This is a situation that is particularly welcomed by local government practitioners.
- Many countries have adopted formal intergovernmental relations

forums to promote dialogue between the local and central spheres of government.

- Some cities have been able to access capital funds on the private markets through loans and bonds.

## **Challenges Faced by Local Government**

The challenges facing local government in extending local democracy further in Africa stem from three key areas:

- Legislative restrictions and lack of clarity in the lines of accountability;
- Human resource capacity among both elected councillors and local government officers;
- Financial resources.

The blurring of the lines of accountability arises when local councils are restricted in the decisions that they are able to make and implement. In some countries, locally agreed budgets must be submitted to the Ministry of Local Government for approval. This removes accountability to local citizens and makes the local council accountable to the Minister. Most countries lack sufficiently effective local government associations to advocate on behalf of their members' interests to ensure that appropriate changes are made.

## **Recommendations**

1. There was consensus in the workshop that ministries had a legitimate role in ensuring that the proper procedures in making local government budgets were followed, but it was agreed that ministers and ministries have no legitimate role in reviewing local authority budgets made within the framework of the law.
2. Strengthening local government associations to make them more effective lobbyists and advocates.
3. Building the capacity of local governments and civil society to ensure effective transparency and accountability. Emphasis should be placed on developing effective communication with all partners.
4. Training for local government staff remains a crucial element in ensuring that work done by local authorities is held in esteem.

5. Enabling local government to adopt appropriate methods to measure and monitor the quality of local democracy and governance and implement the *Aberdeen Agenda*.
6. Providing research and building research capacity to inform planning and policy-making. This should take the form of case studies, exchange of good practice, models, and the development of methodologies and guidelines on undertaking research to inform policy.

# 9

## Study Visits

The programme included study visits to areas where activities relevant to the theme of the symposium were being implemented. Ten such areas were identified, including five leisure and entertainment places. The delegates chose which sites to visit and were divided into five groups, each with a guide provided by the Uganda Local Government Association. The following is a synopsis of these visits.

### **Group 1: Kampala**

#### **Mpererwe Landfill**

The visit provided an insight into how Kampala City Council is handling solid waste management and urban environment protection. It was noted that Kampala City needed more than one such landfill site in order to cope with the growing amount of garbage. In addition, there was a need for more protective measures be put in place to ensure the health of people living around the site. It was noted that since 1997 Kampala City Council has engaged private firms for collection of refuse.

#### **Kamwokya HIV/AIDS Care Centre**

The Centre gave an overview of how people affected by HIV/AIDS were being cared for. Apart from providing simple medical treatment, the Centre focused on counselling. The study team noted with appreciation that the Centre, which is operated by an NGO, also provided health care for expectant mothers.

#### **Uganda Museum**

The delegates concluded their study tour with a visit to the Uganda Museum, which houses a wide range of treasured antiquities. The team learnt with dismay that many valuable items had been unaccountably lost.

### **Group 2: Kampala**

#### **Nakawa**

The study team heard about efforts to alleviate poverty through micro

enterprises. They learnt that the programme targeted very low-income earners. The poor were helped to identify viable income-generating activities that could be implemented at low cost, and were given seed money which they were expected to reimburse after a given period of time so that other people could also benefit. The programme was well managed and the beneficiaries were realising increased incomes and better livelihoods.

### **Makerere University**

The visit highlighted innovations being made by Makerere University to contribute to capacity building of local governments to strengthen decentralisation. They included supporting local government employees in accessing higher education at the university and providing internet services to local governments. The university is also running an innovations award programme that involves local government.

### **Kasubi Tombs**

The team was enthusiastic to learn about this site, the burial ground of the Baganda kings. It embodies the history and cultural values of the Baganda people and has been adopted by the UN as a world heritage site.

## **Group 3: Entebbe**

### **Entebbe Municipal Council**

The study team was briefed on how the public-private partnership was operating in the municipality, particularly with regard to local revenue generation. Through regulatory best practice reform, the municipality had greatly improved trade licensing processes, which had resulted in registering more businesses and increasing revenue for the municipality. With increased revenue the municipality was able to provide more and better services, which had in turn led to greater willingness by the business community to pay their dues.

### **The Airport Safety Project**

The project was being co-managed by Entebbe Municipal Council and Shell Oil Company. Its objective was to rid Entebbe Airport of obstacles that might be hazardous to air traffic, thereby increasing trade and tourism.

**Entebbe Wildlife Society (the Zoo)**

The purpose of the visit was to underline the importance of preserving the environment and its flora and fauna because of their significance to human life. The visitors were excited by the various kinds of wildlife they saw.

**Group 4: Jinja****Masese Settlement Scheme**

The purpose of the visit was to acquaint the team with efforts being made to provide low-cost housing to the urban poor. The visit highlighted an interesting development: that the beneficiaries had sold or rented off the better living quarters that had been built for them and moved to another slum instead. This raised the question of how to effectively improve living conditions of the urban poor, and the extent to which the beneficiaries had been involved in management of the whole project and process.

**Mpumudde Housing Project**

The project had the same objective as Masese, but focused mainly on empowerment of women in poverty alleviation and enabling them to participate effectively in community affairs. The visitors noted the improved livelihoods of the beneficiaries which resulted from their being provided with better housing.

**Bujagali Falls**

The purpose of the visit was leisure. The delegates enjoyed the beauty of the Falls.

**Group 5: Jinja****TASO Jinja**

This was one of the renowned centres in the country for providing HIV/AIDS-related services and caring for those affected by the disease. The services offered included counselling, screening and treatment. The visitors were astonished by the broad picture of the situation as presented by the Centre's co-ordinator, particularly by the effectiveness of the comprehensive approach to the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

**Source of the Nile**

This is a historic and popular tourist destination. The visiting team was happy to be among those who have seen where the great river Nile begins its long journey across the African continent to the Mediterranean Sea.

## 10

# Measuring Success and Planning Improvements: Mechanisms to Measure Local Democracy and Good Governance

Four presenters shared their views with participants on mechanisms for determining progress towards local democracy and good governance. They were Dr Makhosi Khoza, Chief Executive Officer, South Africa Local Government Association; Ms Shipra Narang, UN-HABITAT; Ms Nyasha Simbanegavi, CLGF/Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe (UCAZ); and Mr John Mitala, Head of Public Service, Uganda/New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD).

**Dr Khoza** informed participants that ‘success’ in the South African context meant substantial fulfilment by local governments of their mandate as articulated in legislation and national policy. South Africa’s constitution provides a broad governance framework for local governments set out in five statutes, which relate to physical location, division of powers and functions, establishment, political structure and systems, financial management and reporting, and taxation powers and processes.

Municipalities are required to hold free and fair elections every five years with political representation limited to two terms. They are also required to facilitate community participation in the preparation and implementation of integrated development plans and budgets, and in monitoring and reviewing municipal performance. Municipalities must establish performance management systems with clear performance indicators and targets, with effective participation of their communities. Their integrated plans and budgets must be subjected to oversight by provincial and national ministers, in addition to being placed on the municipal website, together with annual and other reports, performance agreements and information on financial commitment, for public scrutiny.

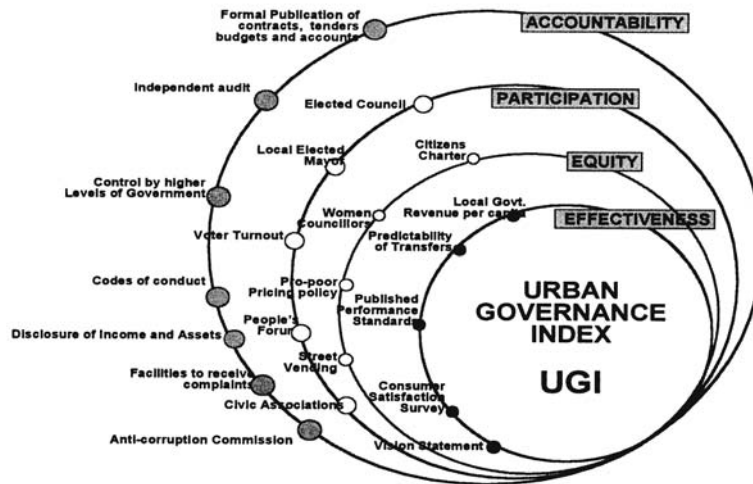
Three major measures have been put in place to enable municipalities to comply with these requirements. One is *Project Consolidate*, a hands-on

intervention and support strategy for struggling municipalities implemented by all three spheres of government. The other two are the *South African Cities Network* and the *District and Local Learning Networks*, which act as research, knowledge sharing and peer review mechanisms. Peer reviews are conducted extensively at metro and district levels with comprehensive report and follow-up processes. A state-of-the-cities report measuring the performance of ten cities against agreed indicators is produced every three years. Sector-based benchmarking is also conducted for adoption of best practice, but this is yet to be extended to the entire local government sector. Significant progress has been made in these areas. However, capacity at local, provincial and national levels is still not sufficiently robust to support consistent implementation.

**Ms Narang** drew the attention of conference participants to the Urban Governance Index, which had been developed to facilitate and promote the global campaign on urban governance. The goal of the campaign was to improve the quality of life in cities, particularly for the poor and marginalised, through good urban governance. Good urban governance was based on principles that were similar and complementary to those of the *Aberdeen Agenda*, namely: sustainability, subsidiarity, equity, efficiency, transparency, accountability, civic engagement and citizenship, and security. Measuring urban governance was essential for setting benchmarks for future reference, assessing the effectiveness of policies and obtaining datasets to enable reviews of urbanisation and governance strategies when necessary. It was also important in monitoring results and the impact of capacity-building efforts, providing an objective account of achievements of elected local leaders, making comparisons at national and regional levels, and correlating progress with other indices.

The UGI has two major objectives: to catalyse local action to improve the quality of urban governance and to demonstrate at global level the importance of good urban governance in achieving broad development objectives such as the MDGs. The UGI can be extremely useful in establishing correlations such as those between governance and poverty and between governance and human development; it is also valuable because it is the only indicator that focuses entirely on the local level and on governance as a process. It is valuable to cities because it is essentially

## The Urban Governance Index



a self-assessment tool. It allows comparison across themes, for example participation, equity, effectiveness and accountability. It helps to identify weaknesses in local governance and the required policy reforms and capacity building intervention. It can be the basis for plans for change and it can be used to seek peer or donor assistance in improving specific aspects of governance.

Regarding the application of the UGI, discussions are still ongoing at the global level to develop a Good Governance Hallmark, or award system based on the index results. This would include a benchmark, a seal of good governance and technical support to achieve the benchmark. Application of the UGI is already underway at national level in Somalia, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe and Mongolia and this process is being extended to other countries in partnership with CLGF and UNDP. Ms Narang said that UN-HABITAT would be pleased to help those interested in applying the UGI in their city or country.

**Ms Simbanegavi** talked about the *Local Democracy Framework*, a three-year pilot project, the aim of which was to strengthen local democracy in Zimbabwe through the peer review methodology. Involving five cities, the project was the result of partnership between CLGF and UCAZ and other partners from South Africa, Netherlands, Germany and Namibia. Through discussion among partners, including UN-HABITAT, a local democracy toolkit had been developed, together with indicators and

guidelines. Emphasis was placed on enhancing participation, effectiveness and efficiency, equity, accountability and transparency, and social security and welfare.

Several Zimbabwean cities had invited UN-HABITAT to apply the UGI on them, from which they had generated results that were of significant value to the peer review process. Two peer reviews had been held so far, which had led to development of change and funding proposals plans by the cities involved through a consultative process involving a broad range of stakeholders. The project had led to strengthening of some city-to-city partnerships, improvement in local governance and democracy, and attraction of more partners and the harnessing of more resources.

**Mr Mitala** placed the preceding discussion in the context of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), under the aegis of NEPAD. He pointed out that the APRM is a self-monitoring tool designed to help participating member states to improve their policy-making practices and to comply with established standards and codes set out in the *AU Declaration on Democracy, Political and Good Governance*. The APRM is intended to foster adoption of appropriate laws, policies and practices that promote political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated sub-regional and continental economic integration. In addition, it is expected to facilitate each country's access to the financial and human resources that are necessary for achieving the MDGs.

NEPAD, from which the APRM is derived, aims to eradicate poverty and place African countries individually and collectively on the path to sustainable growth and development, halting the marginalisation of Africa in the globalisation process and enhancing its full and beneficial integration into the global economy. It also aims to accelerate progress towards gender equity. NEPAD'S key principles are:

- Good governance as a basic requirement for peace, security and sustainable political and socio-economic development;
- African ownership and leadership, as well as broad and deep participation by all sectors of society;
- Anchoring the development of Africa in its own resources and the resourcefulness of its peoples;

- Partnership between and among Africa's peoples;
- Ensuring that all partners with NEPAD are linked to the MDGs and other agreed development goals and targets.

The NEPAD programme of action is thus a holistic, comprehensive and integrated sustainable initiative for the revival of Africa.

The APRM is the primary tool for implementation of the NEPAD initiative. Its key guiding principles are that:

- Overall responsibility for the mechanism lies with the committee of participating Heads of State and Government (APR Forum);
- The Panel of Eminent Persons will oversee its implementation and ensure its integrity;
- The APRM Secretariat will provide the necessary secretarial, technical, co-ordination and administrative support;
- The APRM process will entail periodic reviews of the policies and practices of participating states to ascertain whether progress is being made towards achieving mutually agreed goals, as well as compliance with the political, economic and corporate governance values and socio-economic development codes and standards outlined in the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance;
- National ownership by participating countries will be essential for the success of the process, as well as effective leadership in ensuring consistency with existing national efforts such PRSPs, Medium-term Expenditure Frameworks, National Human Rights Action Plans and MDG strategies;
- The APRM process will be open and participatory in order to engage key stakeholders and to facilitate national dialogue on good governance and socio-economic development, thereby enhancing transparency in the decision-making process and trust in the pursuit of national development goals;
- Transparency and accountability in the APRM process will be ensured through development and approval of rules and procedures, and codes of conduct for all components of the APRM, the Panel of Eminent Persons, the Secretariat and the APR teams;

- Every review exercise must be technically competent, credible and free of political manipulation.

However, Mr Mitala cautioned that NEPAD was not the first attempt by African countries to come out with a set of ideas for the rapid development of the continent. In the 1976, for instance, the *Lagos Plan of Action* had been adopted, but not much came of it in terms of concrete achievements. It was, therefore, essential for the renewed commitment under NEPAD to be given practical effect by providing stakeholders with the necessary capacity, resources and information on which to act. Equally important, it was essential not to saddle local governments with unfunded mandates.

Participants discussed the merits of the measurement tools that had been outlined by the four presenters. It was generally agreed that the tools were complementary. Clarifications were requested on the UGI with respect to why it contained nothing on security of tenure and whether it addressed poverty reduction and service delivery. In response, it was pointed out that a Security of Tenure Index was being developed separately to complement the UGI and that a number of UGI indicators relate specifically to poverty reduction and service delivery. The UGI focused primarily on those good governance variables that were instrumental in leading to effective poverty reduction and service delivery.

Clarification was also requested on how the system of traditional chiefs in South Africa related to elected local leaders and local public servants. It was pointed out that all three play their respective roles in local development, although their co-existence was sometimes problematic.

**Hon. Mark Burton**, Minister of Local Government, New Zealand, made a formal announcement about the Fourth Commonwealth Local Government Conference that will take place in Auckland, New Zealand in March 2007 with the theme 'Delivery of Development through Local Leadership'.

## 11

### Working with Local Government as a Development Partner

This session was chaired by Marc Denys, Chairperson of the Donor Decentralisation Sector Group, Uganda, who also made an address; Angelo Bonfiglioli, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF); Charles Drazu, Netherlands Embassy; and Dr Munawwar Alam, Commonwealth Secretariat.

*Marc Denys, Chairperson of the Donor Decentralisation Sector Group, Uganda*, told participants that Uganda had made significant strides in its decentralisation programme. More a third of the government budget was being allocated to the local government system to fund development programmes targeting poverty reduction and service provision. Most partners had responded positively to this commitment by providing support to the government's decentralisation programme, most notably through the Local Government Development Programme (LGDP), which was co-funded by the Government of Uganda, the World Bank, Ireland, Netherlands, Austria and Denmark. The LGDP was coming to an end and government and the development partners were considering a successor programme to consolidate its achievements.

Since 2004 government had been annually reviewing the decentralisation programme through the Joint Annual Review of Decentralisation to determine the extent to which different sectors (for example education, health, water and sanitation, and agriculture) were progressing in meeting the programme's objectives. Arising out of this process, the government had developed the Decentralisation Programme Strategic Framework to bring all the strands of the decentralisation programme into one coherent framework, and was in the final stages of developing the Local Government Sector Investment Plan. The donor group was developing a memorandum of understanding to present to the Ministries of Local Government, Public Service, and Finance, Planning and Economic Development arising out of both documents.

*Angelo Bonfiglioli, Chairperson of the Donor Decentralisation Sector Group, Uganda*, provided participants with an overview of the development interventions made by the UNCDF. The Fund was created in 1966 by the UN General Assembly to provide the least developed countries (LDCs) with support to overcome some of their development challenges. Its specialisation was in micro-finance and local development through decentralised institutions. Sixty five per cent of its investments were in Africa while its other major interventions were in Asia. Its major focus was in four areas:

- Institutional building to enhance organisational performance;
- Capacity building to improve the effectiveness of local authorities and civil society in local development;
- Supporting local governments to carry out planned development programmes and activities;
- Piloting development interventions to learn lessons that can be adopted by central and local government for wider replication.

A major contribution that UNCDF has made to Uganda's development is in funding the District Development Programme (DDP I and II). The DDP had conclusively established that, under appropriate conditions, lower levels of local government were capable of effectively planning the implementation of development activities at grassroots and community levels. These lessons formed the basis of the LGDP and UNCDF was preparing to start DDP III in Uganda.

*Charles Drazu of the Netherlands Embassy* paid tribute to the Ugandan Government's efforts in promoting local development through decentralisation and reaffirmed the commitment of the Netherlands Government to supporting these efforts. However, he drew attention to two major challenges that had the potential to stall Uganda's otherwise impressive decentralisation reform programme. One was the over-reliance of local government on central government transfers, which was compromising its ability to make independent decisions with respect to local development priorities. Matters had not been helped by government's recent decision to scrap graduated tax on which most local governments had been dependent for over 80 per cent of their local revenue, further reducing their discretionary powers, particularly as government was planning to compensate for the shortfall through

additional transfers. The second challenge was the decision by government to recentralise the appointment and control of the accounting officers of districts, Kampala City Council and municipalities. This had the unfortunate effect of reducing further their accountability to local councils, the very opposite of what decentralisation was meant to promote.

*Dr Munawwar Alam, Commonwealth Secretariat*, described the Commonwealth's work as a development partner, especially in the context of the MDGs. He observed that the achievement of the MDGs in all regions of the Commonwealth by 2015 was of crucial concern. At their meeting in Abuja, Nigeria, in December 2003 Commonwealth Heads of Government had envisaged a Commonwealth that was committed to the attainment of the MDGs through development and democracy as a way of achieving prosperity and peace. These principles and vision were reflected in the Commonwealth Secretariat's Strategic Plan (2004/05–2007), which placed emphasis on supporting pro-poor policies for economic growth and sustainable development, and on strengthening democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights.

The Secretariat assists members mainly through its technical arm, the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC). In recent years, the geographical focus of the CFTC had been on Africa (18 countries) and small states (32 countries, six of which are in Africa), because these countries were threatened with marginalisation and their share of global trade and investment had been steadily declining. Approximately 40 per cent of CFTC resources were allocated to the African region, while around 60 per cent was allocated to small states, with priority given to least developed and low-income countries. One of the greatest testimonies to the enduring relevance of the CFTC to its member states was that 41 of the developing countries and overseas territories had increased their voluntary contributions to the CFTC by 44 per cent since 1995.

Partnership with CLGF is an integral component of the Secretariat's work at sub-national level. The Kampala Symposium was the fourth in a series of regional symposia that the Secretariat and CLGF had jointly organised in the previous two years (the others were held in Jamaica, April 2004, Fiji Islands, December 2004 and Malaysia, July 2005). The recommendations of these symposia had enabled development partners

and practitioners to re-align their priorities. In addition, in collaboration with CLGF, the Commonwealth Secretariat had deployed a regional advisor for the Pacific region (Terry Parker) who was based in Fiji Islands, and the two organisations were making similar arrangements for the newly established Caribbean Forum of Ministers for Local Government, to be based in Jamaica.

Regarding attainment of the MDGs, it was clear that although some countries had made satisfactory progress on some MDGs, many other countries were not likely to meet the targets. During the previous Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Malta in November 2005, Heads of Government had noted that since MDGs were linked to poverty reduction, health, education and gender equality targets, it was of paramount importance for member countries to recommit themselves to human development. They had called upon all member countries to continue to pursue macroeconomic stabilisation policies and human rights frameworks that were essential for sustainable growth and poverty reduction. They had also urged the international community, led by the developed countries, to honour their commitments on official development assistance (ODA) and debt relief, particularly for least developed and low-income countries.

The emerging consensus was that the MDGs can best be attained through localisation, because local governments are in a better position to deliver due to their proximity to the population. It was therefore imperative to strengthen local democracy and to develop the capacity of local governments.

Dr Alam re-affirmed that the Secretariat would continue to align its programmes with the NEPAD framework and strengthen its partnership with the African Union. It would also endeavour to support programmes and needs that were identified at the Africa Partnership Forum and in the Report of the Commission for Africa. The Secretariat had recently undertaken a number of support initiatives to enhance the continent's development. These included agreeing with the AU Commission in March to revise and update the agreement between the two organisations made in 1993 in order to tackle the challenges faced by the continent, supporting the governments of Lesotho and Sierra Leone in their decentralisation programmes and starting discussions with the Government of Malawi about how to assist with its decentralisation programmes.

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### Closing Session

The closing session was chaired by John Emily Otekat, Chairperson of CLGF. It was addressed by Mr Otekat, Florence Mugasha, Deputy Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, Hon. Cllr Robert Montague, Mayor of Kingston, Jamaica and Professor Tarsis Kabwegyere, Minister for Local Government, Uganda.

The *Kampala Agenda* was adopted by the symposium.

**Mrs Mugasha** thanked the Government of Uganda for providing a very conducive environment that had facilitated excellent discussion throughout the three days of the symposium. She also thanked all other stakeholders who had provided guidance on the critical areas that must be addressed to ensure attainment of the MDGs. She stressed that it was extremely important for governments to acknowledge local governments in their constitutions, for local people to be involved in determining their development agenda, and for local governments to be empowered to deliver on the MDGs by, among other things, being provided with the requisite resources to do so.

**Mr Otekat** thanked all the delegates for having attended the symposium and participating so effectively. He expressed his deep appreciation to the CLGF Board and staff for the support he had been given during his tenure as chairperson of CLGF and wished his successor success in steering the organisation. He thanked Professor Kabwegyere, the Uganda Ministry of Local Government and his staff, and the Uganda Local Government Association for their hard work in ensuring the symposium's success. Finally, he paid tribute to President Museveni for having graced the symposium with his presence and participation.

**Cllr Robert Montague** expressed his thanks to the organisers and the delegates for a very successful symposium, which had attracted nearly twice the expected number of participants. He commended President Museveni for his commitment to the attainment of the MDGs, for his inclusion of local governance on the agenda for the CHOGM meeting in

2007 and for agreeing to become co-patron of CLGF together with the Prime Minister of Jamaica, Hon. Portia Simpson-Miller. He greatly appreciated the warm and generous reception of the people of Uganda. He paid tribute to the outgoing Chairperson of CLGF, John Emily Otekat, for his great service, and to the Secretary-General of CLGF, Carl Wright, and the CLGF Secretariat for the good work they were doing.

Professor Tarsis Kabwegyere commended the organisers and all participants for making the symposium a great success. He argued that the MDGs should not just be localised, but should be indigenised so that they are part and parcel of people's culture and values. Democracy and governance are expressed in institutions, values and processes, all of which take time to consolidate. He said that there was no dichotomy between central and local governments: rather, they should be seen as one institution and process.

Professor Kabwegyere commended Mrs Mugasha for the good work she had done at the Commonwealth Secretariat and Mr Otekat for the guidance he had given to the CLGF. He welcomed the latter to the Parliament of Uganda, to which he had been elected. Finally, he wished all participants a safe journey home.



**PART TWO**  
**Background Paper**



# Local Democracy, Good Governance and the Delivery of the MDGs in Africa

John Kiyaga-Nsubuga

## Introduction

The Millennium Development Goals, to which 189 governments committed themselves on the adoption of the Millennium Declaration at the UN General Assembly in 2000, constitute the greatest consensus the world has ever reached on human development. They are a set of concrete commitments, all intended to be met by 2015, calling for the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger; the achievement of universal primary education; the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women; the reduction of child mortality; improvements in maternal health; the combating of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; environmental sustainability; and the development of a global partnership for development (Annex E). In adopting the MDGs, world leaders publicly acknowledged the inherent injustice in the prevailing global order that has long consigned the majority of humankind to poverty-induced misery, and explicitly indicated their determination to correct this wrong by placing human development at the centre of global and individual country agendas.

Six years on, questions are being asked as to whether the goals were not over-ambitious for many developing countries, particularly those in Africa, considering their weak resources, capacities and capabilities; and whether, in any event, developed countries are really committed and willing to change existing unequal global relationships to allow the full attainment of the MDGs. Many people are wondering whether the poverty reduction approaches currently pursued by many developing countries can lead to the attainment of the MDGs in their entirety and within the specified timeframe without significant transformations at international, national and local level.

These issues have taken centre stage in development discourse in recent years as scholars and practitioners try to work out what can be done to

ensure that the MDGs do not turn out to be just another development mirage. Examples of this discourse include the Fifth International Conference on New or Restored Democracies, which took place in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia in September 2003 on the theme 'Democracy, Governance and Civil Society';<sup>1</sup> five regional conferences organised by the Dutch agency, SNV, in Burkina Faso, Nepal, Uganda, Peru and Nicaragua, May–September 2005, to discuss the progress being made and the obstacles being encountered in attainment of the MDGs;<sup>2</sup> and the UN World Summit held in September 2005. These and other discussions indicate mounting international interest in and concern over the pace of progress towards the attainment of the MDGs because various country experiences suggest that, even with the best of intentions, most of the targets may not be met unless drastic action is taken.

This paper is intended to provoke discussion and debate on the role of local government in the delivery of MDGs in Commonwealth Africa. Specifically, it considers:

1. The significance of the MDGs in contemporary development as well as the opportunities provided and challenges posed by the global MDG agenda;
2. The link between local democracy, good governance and poverty reduction in Commonwealth Africa, and the role of local governments in meeting the MDGs;
3. The role played by African continental and regional institutions and organisations in promoting local governance;
4. The various mechanisms for measuring governance and democracy and how they can be used to encourage local authorities to undertake the necessary changes to ensure more effective delivery of the MDGs;
5. The challenges local governments face as they strive to achieve the MDGs;
6. The future capacity needs of local government in Commonwealth Africa to meet the MDGs. The paper also provides some insight into how one district in Uganda is grappling with these issues.

The argument advanced is that while it may probably be too much to expect all countries in Africa to deliver on all the MDGs by 2015, given the continent's weaknesses in terms of resources, systems and

capabilities, considerable progress can be made if technical and transformational approaches can be contextualised and matched with country development aspirations and potential, and if local government is enabled to play a pivotal role in local development.

## **MDGs in Contemporary Development**

The contemporary focus on attainment of the MDGs constitutes a major shift in development thinking because it places improvement of the human condition at the centre of world progress, unlike previous development paradigms such as 'modernisation' and 'structural adjustment'. The universal appeal and inherent strength of the MDGs springs from at least four major considerations: they reflect the universal human values of justice, equity and compassion; they focus on qualitative improvement of people's lives, particularly the poor, the disadvantaged and the most vulnerable; their progress can be monitored because they are quantified and timebound; and they can be tailored to each country's specific circumstances due to their broad nature.<sup>3</sup>

It is for these reasons that the MDGs now form the core of many countries' PSRPs.

The MDGs are not just a lofty ideal. They spring from the human development paradigm of the 1990s inspired by Amartya Sen – which conceived of human well-being as resulting from enhancement of human capabilities through education, health and participation – and are a concrete measurement of human progress on key indicators that make the greatest difference for the majority of the world's population. This has special significance for Africa where poverty levels are extremely high, and where the majority of the people have not benefited from the 'trickle down' effect that was expected to accrue in earlier development models. Because they define the developmental problem for developing countries as lying in unacceptably high levels of poverty and inadequate access to basic services, the MDGs fit very well with the development goals and agendas of all African countries. For that reason, they are relatively free from the controversies that bedevilled previous development agendas.

What is uncertain, though, is whether all African countries can realistically attain the MDGs within the specified timeframe given their structural, institutional, financial and capacity constraints. At global

level, Africa is still locked in an unequal relationship with developed countries, characterised by unfavourable terms of trade and the widening digital divide. Most African countries are also aid-dependent, which makes them extremely vulnerable to changes in the aid policies of donor countries. Worse still, Africa suffers from a massive brain drain as her professionals – the very people who are necessary to make a difference – are attracted by greener pastures elsewhere. At the national level, on the other hand, many African countries are beset by weak state structures and institutions, inadequate resources, low capacities in critical functional areas and major governance challenges – all of which make it difficult to translate policies into tangible developmental outcomes.

Against this background a major global effort is already underway to ensure that the attainment of the MDGs remains at the forefront of global development efforts, with the centrepiece being improving governance in the public realm. Substantive steps in this direction include the EU Governance Agenda,<sup>4</sup> the UNDP Millennium Project,<sup>5</sup> the UN-HABITAT Global Governance Agenda<sup>6</sup> and the *Aberdeen Agenda* of the CLGF.<sup>7</sup> The African Union has also adopted governance as one of its major themes, which the NEPAD Secretariat is implementing through the African Peer Review Mechanism.

This international consensus on the centrality of governance to the attainment of the MDGs is complemented by broad international agreement on two other issues. First, there is need for greater investment in service delivery and infrastructure in order to make substantive steps towards attainment of the MDGs. The UN Millennium Project (2005) has estimated that, assuming the required annual investment per person in Africa to be US\$110, the total required investment would amount to US\$121 billion in 2006, rising to US\$189 billion in 2015. In that respect, donor assistance would have to rise from US\$65 billion (2002) to US\$135 billion (2006) to US\$195 billion (2015). From the perspective of the Commission for Africa, the additional resources required amount to US\$25 billion annually between 2005 and 2015.<sup>8</sup>

The second issue on which there is international consensus is that it is essential to 'localise' the MDGs in order to obtain tangible results. Localising the MDGs refers to taking their implementation to the lowest levels, beyond merely incorporating them within PSRPs or implement-

ing them through central bureaucracies. This requires changing centre–local relations to give local governments greater autonomy and to allow local communities to have more say on local investments, while leaving central governments to concentrate on policy-making co-ordination and oversight.<sup>9</sup>

Virtually all African countries have embraced the MDGs and have assigned the primary role of ensuring their attainment to their local governments.<sup>10</sup> A key consideration now is how to strengthen local governments so that they can effectively rise to the challenge in partnership with central government, the private sector, civil society and the citizens themselves. Critical to this is the relationship between local democracy, good governance and poverty reduction.

### **Local Democracy, Good Governance and Poverty Reduction**

It is now broadly accepted that local democracy and good governance have a positive relationship with local development, and that local governments are most suited for delivering services because their close proximity to the beneficiaries provides them with better understanding of local priorities and needs. This consensus is evidenced by the trend in Africa since the early 1990s towards decentralisation of power to local governments, although the substance of this decentralisation differs quite significantly from country to country. The current challenge is how to ‘deepen’ local democracy and governance to ensure significant improvement in service delivery and in poverty reduction.

‘Local democracy’ entails participatory and inclusive decision-making processes in which the beneficiaries have a substantial say in determining local development agendas. ‘Governance’, on the other hand, refers to the manner in which power and resources are used to further developmental goals and objectives. It can, therefore be good or bad. ‘Good’ governance entails efficient and effective use of power and resources, constitutionalism and rule of law, justice and equity, electoral and participatory democracy, security of person and property, promotion of human rights, transparency and accountability (political, managerial and financial), exemplary and inspirational leadership, and popular participation in social and economic processes. Its facilitating conditions include a strong state, a robust and dynamic economy, a vibrant civil society and an informed and empowered citizenry.

These elements reinforce each other in generating the right conditions for successful local development. Constitutionalism and the rule of law introduce checks and balances, reduce excesses and abuse of office and create an environment conducive to economic growth and investment. Justice and equity lead to even-handed treatment of people and distribution of resources; good leadership generates better pro-poor policies and improves performance; popular participation leads to better prioritisation and local ownership of development programmes; transparency and accountability in public office ensures that resources reach their intended targets; and an informed and empowered citizenry can hold public officials to account to ensure that the policies they pursue reflect its general will.

Generating these conditions requires the involvement of a broad range of stakeholders, including central and local governments, the private sector, NGOs, CSOs and CBOs. Building effective partnerships is, therefore, extremely important. Local economies must be developed to create jobs, enhance local incomes and broaden local the tax bases from which local governments can generate revenue to complement central government transfers. Local governments can obtain good results by engaging other partners in implementation of some activities, as Gabiro district in Rwanda discovered when it privatised milk, market and sand and stone revenue collection. Prior to taking this step the district's half-yearly revenue collection from milk, market and stone and sand quarries amounted to US\$702, US\$1,263 and US\$842 respectively. After privatisation of these activities, the district's revenue increased to US\$3,158, US\$5,614 and US\$1,228 per six months, enabling it to finance more services from this windfall.<sup>11</sup>

Improving access to social services improves livelihoods, but it does not automatically lead to poverty reduction. Conscious and purposeful measures must be taken to create robust and vibrant economies to complement social service delivery, making sure that this is done in an environmentally sustainable way and in the best interests of local citizens, particularly the poor and the disadvantaged.

The last point raises the question: 'Governance for who?'. While attainment of the MDGs is of benefit to everyone, it has special meaning for the poor and the disadvantaged who constitute the majority of the world's people and who always tend to be marginalised. Developmental

interventions are more meaningful if they are decidedly pro-poor and if emphasis is placed on outcomes rather than on process. For that reason there must be clear mechanisms for measuring the extent to which local democracy and governance is being entrenched in local development.

## **Measuring Governance and Democracy**

There is as yet no single universally agreed yardstick for determining the depth and robustness of local democracy and governance, but several tools and frameworks have been developed (and are being developed) for that purpose. The idea is to provide benchmarks against which progress towards deepening local governance and democracy can be measured, and to encourage transparency in public management through objective and empirically verifiable indicators that various levels of government can use as reference points. Four examples are provided here to illustrate the progress that has been made on this front.

UN-HABITAT and Transparency International have jointly developed the *Urban Governance Index*, which is used as a measure of good governance and inclusiveness in cities, as well as an advocacy and capacity building tool for assisting cities and countries to monitor the quality of urban governance. It measures governance using four variables – effectiveness, equity, participation and accountability – and 21 indicators. Already tested in several countries around the globe, the UGI has demonstrated its value in improving transparency, combating city-level corruption, improving efficiency and promoting effective citizen participation.<sup>12</sup>

Another framework has been developed by a group of researchers specifically to assess governance at the national level. Focusing on six core principles over which there is near universal consensus – participation, fairness, decency, accountability, transparency and efficiency – the framework analyses how they are applied within civil society, political society, government, bureaucracy, economic society and the judiciary (Table 1).

Another group of researchers have developed the *Local Governance Barometer* (LGB), which is used to measure local government capacity using qualitative and quantitative indicators. Qualitative and quantitative data is entered into a Local Government Model, which produces a Local Government Index (LGI) showing overall local

**Table 1: Governance fundamentals – based on political arenas and key principles**

| Principle/Arena   | Participation                                 | Fairness                                 | Decency  | Accountability                                      | Transparency                             | Efficiency                            |
|-------------------|---|--|--|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| Civil society     | Freedom of association                        | Society free from discrimination         | Freedom of expression                          | Respect for governing rules                         | Freedom of the media                     | Input in policy-making                |
| Political society | Legislature representative of society         | Policy reflects public preferences       | Peaceful competition for political power       | Legislators accountable to the public               | Transparency of political parties        | Legislative function affecting policy |
| Government        | Intra-governmental consultation               | Adequate standard of living              | Personal security of citizens                  | Security forces subordinated to civilian government | Government provides accurate information | Best use of available resources       |
| Bureaucracy       | Higher civil servants part of policy-making   | Equal access to public services          | Civil servants respectful towards citizens     | Civil servants accountable for their actions        | Clear decision-making processes          | Merit-based system for recruitment    |
| Economic society  | Consultation with the private sector          | Regulations equally applied              | Government respects property rights            | Regulating private section in the public interest   | Transparency in economic policy          | Interventions free from corruption    |
| Judiciary         | Consultative processes of conflict resolution | Equal access to justice for all citizens | Human rights incorporated in national practice | Judicial officers field accountable                 | Clarity in administering justice         | Efficiency of the judicial system     |

Source: *ODI Briefing Paper*, March 2006

governance performance as well as governance performance on specific issues. Five criteria are used to develop the LGI: effectiveness, rule of law, accountability, participation and equity. Specific governance situations can be expressed numerically on a continuum ranging from 'perfect' to 'very poor' and comparisons can be made between outputs over different locations and time periods.<sup>13</sup>

The *Citizen Report Card*, also known as *Participatory Service Delivery Assessment*, is another tool for measuring local governance and the impact of service delivery. Through this instrument the beneficiaries provide feedback to service providers on the quality and quantity of the services they are receiving. The value of the Citizen Report Card is that it provides service providers with credible feedback, it points to precise areas that require improvement and its participatory process involves all segments of the population, including the poor.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, it has the potential to generate consensus among providers and recipients over the direction and level of social investments, in addition to making planning and targeting of social interventions more evidence based.

CLGF is also running a programme in conjunction with the Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe, one of the intended outputs of which is to develop a framework or methodology for international peer review of democratic processes in local government. Drawing upon stakeholder workshops on the UN-HABITAT Urban Governance Index framework and methodology leads to development plans that specific local governments can implement.

These tools are very helpful in keeping the quality of local democracy and governance under scrutiny, encouraging the application of good practice in public management and providing the basis for technical and transformative capacity-building interventions at various levels of government. They could, for instance, be harmonised with individual country assessment tools to produce context-specific measurements and guidelines. However, while output indicators are important, a great deal of emphasis must be placed on process and outcomes, because this is where meaningful differences can be made.

To that end, the tools and frameworks should be harmonised and simplified to enable local governments to apply them to their specific contexts. This should be done in a participatory manner and it should involve all stakeholders in order not to appear as an external imposition. Further-

more, care must be taken to ensure that these tools do not translate into new donor conditionality instruments. Since donor countries are now generally agreed that the quality of governance is crucial to aid effectiveness, and the UN Millennium Project and the Commission for Africa have accepted the principle that more aid will be given to countries that are more likely to use it better,<sup>15</sup> there may be a strong temptation to refer to these assessments in determining aid allocations. Should this happen, it is important to ask whether it is fair to penalise the poor, the main target of the MDGs, by withholding or reducing assistance to their countries on account of the 'governance deficit' of their leaders?

### **Role of African Institutions and Organisations in Promoting Local Governance**

African continental and regional organisations and institutions were primarily formed to promote political, social and economic collaboration and/or integration among African countries, and the bulk of their activities are still directed towards achievement of those original ideals. The MDGs are a relatively recent development to which many of those organisations and institutions are now scrambling to respond. The main continental body, the African Union, has taken several important steps, including adopting a common position on the MDGs,<sup>16</sup> using the APRM to promote good governance at leadership and central government levels, and granting observer status within its structures to United Cities and Local Governments of Africa. Though commendable, these measures will take time to have any noticeable impact with respect to promoting local governance.

The challenge is even greater at regional level, where the main focus is still on promoting social, political and economic collaboration and/or integration. Although regional organisations recognise the significance of local governance, they have yet to give it the attention and profile it deserves. If anything, in at least one case a reversal of roles has taken place under which local authorities have influenced a regional organisation to take governance issues more seriously. The local authorities associations of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania formed the Lake Victoria Local Authorities Community in 2002 to encourage co-operation among local authorities (including urban ones) in sustainable management of

the Lake Victoria basin, an initiative that has been endorsed by the broader regional body, the East African Community (EAC). As a result of this prompting, the EAC has set up an office for the three associations at its headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania, and has incorporated the Ministers of Local Government from the three countries into its Council of Ministers.<sup>17</sup> These may be tentative steps and it will take time for them to yield tangible results in transforming the lives of the poor, but they point to great possibilities from proactive interventions. What is required of continental and regional organisations is to work more closely with local government associations to promote localisation of the MDGs.

### **Challenges Facing Local Governments in Delivering the MDGs**

Local governments in Africa face a monumental task as they struggle to deliver on the MDGs. They operate in a difficult environment, where there is often a wide divergence between what central government and society expects of them, on the one hand, and what they can realistically deliver, on the other. The problem is multifaceted and global and national in character, and requires effective policy, and technical and transformative interventions if it is to be resolved.

At global level, African governments have long been compelled to pursue policies that focus primarily on correcting macroeconomic imbalances and increasing aggregate economic output, without paying adequate attention to ameliorating human suffering. This has led to paradoxical situations where impressive GDP growth rates have not necessarily translated into similarly impressive enhancements of people's livelihoods. Fortunately, there seems to have been a rethink of these approaches. The G8 countries have committed themselves to increasing financial support to African countries on the basis of the strong arguments advanced by the Commission for Africa Report. The World Bank is moving away from 'adjustment lending', under which African countries have traditionally been required to follow externally prescribed programmes, to 'policy lending', under which they are expected to design their own programmes for funding by the Bank. The World Bank's shift is intended to enhance the capacity of the state to facilitate faster growth, cost-effective service delivery, and peace and security, and

the capacity of civil society to effectively engage the state in the national development process. It remains to be seen whether these developments will lead to a significant transformation of African development.

At the national level the environment is often not conducive to effective local government performance. Local governments are often saddled with unfunded mandates, forcing them to spread their limited resources too thinly to make any real impact. Often central governments are reluctant to devolve powers to local governments out of fear of losing overall control. In other instances there is incoherence in the way decentralisation and local governance are understood by different central agencies, resulting in inconsistent or parallel interventions at local level.

Local governments face many technical challenges, including inability to make effective plans due to superficial understanding of the dimensions of poverty and people's priorities; lack of current and reliable statistics and data; inefficient delivery systems, leading to wastage, duplication and unnecessary overlap; weak human resource capacity (in numbers and skills mix); and low capacity in critical functions such as human resource management, financial management, accounting, procurement, contract management, and monitoring and evaluation.

Local governments also deal with large numbers of NGOs, CSOs and other stakeholders which are operating within their areas of jurisdiction, often independently of each other. An interesting case came to light recently when the Dutch development organisation SNV commissioned a study to establish the extent to which there was shared understanding among nearly 400 NGOs that were operating in the Rwenzori region in Uganda, as well as between them and other stakeholders, including local governments, over the region's poverty reduction agenda, the priorities that had been identified for action and the appropriateness of the strategies that were being applied.<sup>18</sup> It was conclusively established that there was little shared understanding among the stakeholders, which contributed to lack of integrated planning and the inability of the region to benefit from the combined interventions of all those groups. A workshop was subsequently organised for nearly 300 leaders of these organisations during which common ground in thinking and understanding was developed. Some delegates had not even been aware of some organisations that were represented at the workshop, although they had been operating in the same region.<sup>19</sup>

Another major challenge at local government level is limited knowledge of the MDGs among the poor and disadvantaged – the very people who are supposed to be the primary beneficiaries – as well as among NGOs, CSOs, central and even local governments. The limited knowledge of the poor and the disadvantaged is particularly troubling because it means they cannot effectively hold local leaders to account. This means that delivery on the MDGs might remain entirely supply driven for a long time to come.

### **Capacity Needs of Local Governments**

All this shows that there is a clear need to develop the capacity of local governments to enable them to deliver on their mandate. But what is 'capacity building', precisely who or what should it target and what should be the expected outcome? These are not idle questions, particularly since the World Bank, which is at the forefront of capacity-building interventions all over the globe, has concluded from its own internal assessment that its own capacity-building programmes in Africa have fallen short of expectations.<sup>20</sup>

While clear consensus has emerged over the imperative of promoting local democracy and governance in order to attain the MDGs and achieve overall local development, there is considerable debate on how to go about this and where to place emphasis. The main dilemma is that effective local development requires a strong state, a robust and dynamic public sector, a vibrant civil society and an informed citizenry – conditions that do not obtain in many African countries.

Several steps need to be taken to address these formidable challenges. Uniform understanding must be created across government of the potential benefits from the devolution of power to popularly elected local governments. Not much progress can be made if different government agencies interpret local democracy and governance differently, as this generates confusion in implementation of development programmes, in addition to stiffening resistance against devolution of power to local governments. The state, the private sector and civil society must be strengthened so that they can perform their respective functions effectively, and they should also collaborate with each other in translating national development goals into tangible outputs and outcomes. Local citizens must also be empowered to understand their role in

development, as well as their rights and obligations, particularly with respect to paying taxes. This will enable them to hold local officials to account and to participate in making decisions that affect their lives. Finally, a clear link should be established over how local democracy and governance lead to poverty reduction. An example of how one district in Uganda is grappling with these issues is presented below.

## **Implementation of the MDGs in Uganda: Bushenyi District**

### **National Poverty Reduction Strategy**

The Government of Uganda considers poverty to be the main stumbling block to Uganda's development and has designed a Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) specifically to address this. The PEAP was first drafted in 1997 and is revised every three years. The current version (2004–2007), the third in the sequence, has five pillars on which national efforts are focused: economic management; enhancing production, competitiveness and incomes; security, conflict resolution and disaster management; governance; and human development. The PEAP pillars encompass the MDGs although they were developed well before the MDGs were formulated.

The PEAP was developed and refined on the basis of two participatory poverty assessments in which the poor in rural and urban areas were asked to define their status and what they thought should be done about it. The poor defined their status in terms of lack of basic needs and services such as food, clothing, bedding, shelter, basic healthcare and education; powerlessness and inability to influence one's condition; social exclusion; poor governance; low community status or affluence; and lack of knowledge or awareness. These were the elements on which there was common agreement. However, there were other elements that were emphasised by different groups in different socio-economic circumstances. For instance, the urban poor pointed identified poverty with hunger and lack of food, poor wages and escalating unemployment, while children stressed discrimination, child labour exploitation and voicelessness. On the other hand, the poor in northern Uganda, where insurgency caused by the Lord's Resistance Army has been raging for the last 20 years, placed insecurity and internal displacement above everything else.

Poverty was generally believed to be caused by several factors, including

ill health and disease, limited access to land, large families, lack of markets, unfair taxes and market dues, death of breadwinners within the family, alcoholism, lack of jobs, insecurity and inequitable gender roles.<sup>21</sup> On the basis of this assessment, government identified five priority programme areas for special emphasis: primary education, primary healthcare, water and sanitation, rural roads and agricultural extension. The PEAP is implemented through a sector-wide approach to ensure coherence.

### **A Decentralised Approach to PEAP Implementation**

Uganda is implementing the MDGs through a decentralised framework in which extensive powers, functions and responsibilities have been devolved to popularly elected local governments. Local governments have powers to set their development priorities, develop and implement their own development plans, approve and execute their budgets, raise and use resources according to their own priorities, make ordinances and bye-laws, hire and manage personnel, and manage their own payroll.<sup>22</sup> The purpose of this extensive devolution of power is to improve service provision and reduce poverty through enhanced governance. It is expected that more benefits will accrue to ordinary citizens if decision making can be shifted to the beneficiaries themselves, if there is more transparency and accountability in public sector management, if decision making becomes more inclusive, representative and gender sensitive, and if there is effective collaboration between central and local governments, donors, NGOs, CBOs, the private sector and other stakeholders.<sup>23</sup>

This approach is based on several assumptions, the most significant being that:

- Local governments will determine local development priorities and allocate resources through participatory processes;
- The national budget will reflect local priorities;
- Local politicians and technical officials will work in partnership towards the achievement of local development goals and objectives;
- Central government will effectively monitor, supervise and coordinate local government performance, in addition to providing local governments with effective guidance and support.

## **Bushenyi District and the MDGs**

Bushenyi district is located in south-west Uganda, bordering on the Democratic Republic of Congo. It has a land area of 3,949 square kilometres and a population of 731,392 (2002 census) which is projected to have risen 759,201 in 2006, giving an average population density of 192 persons per square kilometre. The population comprises 51.7 per cent females and 48.3 per cent males.<sup>24</sup>

Bushenyi is considered to be one of the most progressive districts in Uganda in implementing national and local programmes. It was ranked first in the Ministry of Health national league tables in 2005 and is frequently showcased by central government officials as an example of an effective local government. The basis of this good performance appears to be good leadership, effective teamwork, strong systems and relative wealth due to a strong agricultural economic base. Like all other districts in Uganda Bushenyi focuses most of its efforts on implementing MDG-related programmes. Although it has considerable achievements on this score, it is also facing numerous constraints that are characteristic of the challenges facing Uganda's local government system as a whole. This will be illustrated by drawing attention to three MDG areas, namely primary health, universal primary education, and water and sanitation.

### **Healthcare**

The achievements that Bushenyi district has made in the health sector are quite significant, as illustrated below (current figures):<sup>25</sup>

- The Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) is 326 per 100,000 live births (the national MMR is 505 per 100,000 live births);
- Ante-natal coverage is 89.3 per cent;
- Deliveries conducted by skilled health workers: 25 per cent (national figure: 20.3 per cent);
- All the district's 29 sub-counties have functional maternity wards;
- Accessibility to health services is 51.1 per cent;
- There are 500 trained traditional birth attendants to supplement midwives;
- The total number of health centres in the district (including at sub-county level 3) is 88. Each of the six health centres at county level (i.e.

level 4) has a resident doctor and four of those centres have functional theatres;

- Immunisation coverage is 115 per cent (i.e. the district has immunised all its children plus some children from neighbouring districts);
- Sixteen health centres are offering prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) services to pregnant women;
- Five health centres and hospitals are offering free ARVs to HIV/AIDS patients;
- A full-scale home-based programme offering HIV/AIDS counselling and training is operational in all sub-counties. Teams move from home to home testing for HIV/AIDS, counselling and making referrals;
- A programme called 'Home Based Management of Fever' has been started. Trained volunteers selected from villages distribute anti-malarial drugs to all children who complain of fever. Malaria is treated promptly within 24 hours of onset to prevent later complications. This has substantially reduced mortality;
- A programme called 'Jaja's Home' has been started in one of the health centres (Rugazi Health at level 4) to look after children who are HIV-positive so that they can live a socially acceptable life;
- All PMTCT sites and others that offer ARVs have post-test clubs. There is also a district organisation (BUDNET) for people living with HIV/AIDS.

### **Universal Primary Education and Water and Sanitation**

At the time the national UPE programme started in 1996/97 it was estimated that there were nearly as many children of school-going age outside the school system as there were in school. The onset of UPE saw enrolment jump from 2.9 million pupils to 6.8 million pupils in 1999/2000.<sup>26</sup> This had a negative impact on a number of indices: for example the pupil-to-teacher ratio jumped to a colossal 89:1, while the classroom-to-pupil ratio reached a staggering 110:1. Since then the Ministry of Education and Sports has been struggling to bring the ratios down.

Bushenyi district is well ahead of national average performance on these two important indices, according to 2005 figures. The district's pupil-to-teacher ratio was 46:1 in 2005 (the current national ratio is 51:1) against

the national ideal of 40:1 that the Ministry is working towards. The pupil-to-classroom ratio in Bushenyi is 72:1 compared with the national figure of 79:1 (2005). Parity in access has been achieved with girls constituting 108,964 (51.2%) of the total enrolment of 212,643 pupils, while boys make up 103,679 (48.7%) of the total.

Latrine coverage is 79.4 per cent and safe water coverage is 69.1 per cent. Both figures are better than the national average.

These are just a few indicators that provide some idea about how relatively well Bushenyi district is performing in implementing MDG-related programmes. Several contributory factors have to be considered in addition to those described earlier. The district gets substantial technical support from development partners; it has a good complement of qualified and committed staff; it has strong and effective inter-sectoral collaboration and it has forged strong partnerships with NGOs and CBOs in local development. Furthermore, it has committed local and national political leaders who work in partnership with technical staff, especially with respect to resource mobilisation.

But the district faces a number of challenges as well, which are characteristic of the general challenges that face other local governments in Uganda. First, fiscal transfers from the centre are inadequate to cover implementation of devolved functions and responsibilities;<sup>27</sup> this is sometimes aggravated by budget cuts and late release of money from the centre. For instance, cases have been reported when the district received funds at the end of the quarter for which they had been intended.<sup>28</sup> Secondly, sudden policy shifts at central government level have had negative repercussions for the district with respect to local revenue generation. During the recently concluded general election (February 2006) government suspended collection of graduated tax, which had hitherto constituted the largest percentage of local revenue for all local governments, without first putting in place appropriate compensation for lost income. As a consequence, all local governments in Uganda, including Bushenyi district, had to shelve a number of commitments and planned activities. To this must be added other problems such as loss of manpower due to HIV/AIDS, high school drop-out rates due to a variety of social and economic factors and understaffing due to an inappropriate structure that was centrally determined during the public service reform exercise.

Thus, Bushenyi district demonstrates that even when local governments are willing and committed to effecting tangible development, they are often up against a host of impediments that make it unlikely that they will be able to attain all the MDGs by 2015.

### **Which way forward?**

Attainment of the MDGs by 2015 by African countries will require concerted and co-ordinated efforts by stakeholders at global, national and local levels. It will also require extensive coalition building and effective partnerships, in addition to a great deal of ingenuity, commitment, resources and capacity building. The following constitute some of the most significant actions that must be taken.

#### **At global level:**

- Promote coalition and partnership building, harmonise frameworks and approaches, provide platforms for dialogue and exchange of ideas and good practices, and be sensitive to country specificities;
- Provide needed resources for real and substantive transformation;
- Support national economies so that they can grow fast enough in real terms to meet the requirements of the MDGs;
- Recognise the capacity-building needs of local government and provide commensurate support to address them.

#### **At national level:**

- Generate uniform understanding across governments of the positive relationship between local democracy and governance, on the one hand, and improvement in service provision and poverty reduction, on the other, to minimise resistance and ensure coherence in implementation of national MDG strategies. This will require investing heavily in attitudinal change;
- Enhance central government capacity for policy development, integrated national planning, co-ordination, oversight and monitoring and evaluation to reduce wastage and maximise resource use;
- Promote coalition and partnership building; harmonise frameworks and approaches; provide platforms for dialogue and exchange of

ideas and good practices; and be sensitive to local preferences and contexts;

- Strengthen local government associations in critical competencies including advocacy, conflict resolution, quality assurance and policy and institutional analysis;
- Develop national average and minimum standards of service delivery and service delivery indicators to guide implementation of MDG-related activities, and disseminate them to all stakeholders, including potential beneficiaries;
- Enhance citizen awareness of the indicators and capacity to determine priorities, demand services and hold leaders to account;
- Ensure that public service programmes are properly aligned to the task of delivering on the MDGs, with strong governance components;
- Assign to all the MDGs the same degree of seriousness that has been assigned to HIV/AIDS and universal primary education;
- Provide more assistance to struggling local governments to give them a realistic chance of attaining most of the MDGs;
- Delineate more precisely the respective roles of central and local governments and assign to the latter responsibilities and functions they can realistically and effectively undertake;
- Invest heavily in statistics generation, analysis and use for local and national development.

#### **At local level**

- Professionalise local government training in leadership and key functional areas including financial management, accounting, planning, human resource management and development budgeting, procurement and contract management;
- Empower communities to become more aware of their rights and obligations, and enhance their capacity and potential to play an instrumental role in implementation of MDG-related activities in their localities;
- Promote local economic development by creating conducive conditions for public-private partnerships and private sector develop-

ment, including providing support to private sector activities that lead to investment and employment;

- Build the capacities of local user committees to supervise, monitor and evaluate development interventions that are carried out in their localities.

## Notes

- 1 See [www.icnrd5.mongolia.mn](http://www.icnrd5.mongolia.mn)
- 2 For details of these conferences see [www.snvconferences.org](http://www.snvconferences.org); SNV, *Mobilising Local Capacity for the MDGs, report of the SNV Regional Conferences*, prepared for the SNV International Conference (The Hague, 28–30 September 2005); and SNV, UNDP and MDP, *Proceedings, Keynotes and Speeches, Conference on MDG Localisation in Africa: Options and Experiences*, (9–11 August 2005, Kampala, Uganda).
- 3 Selim Jahan, *ibid.*, pp. 2–3.
- 4 European Commission, *Handbook on Promoting Good Governance in EC Development Cooperation* (draft).
- 5 UN Millennium Project (2005), *Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals*, [www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org)
- 6 <http://www.unhabitat.org/campaigns/governance/>
- 7 Commonwealth Local Government Action Forum, *Time for Local Democracy. The Aberdeen Agenda: Commonwealth Principles on Good Practice for Local Democracy and Good Governance*, April 2005.
- 8 Aide Memoire, *Towards MDG Localisation in Africa: Options and Experiences*, Regional SNV/UNDP/MDP Conference for East and Southern Africa, Kampala, 10–11 August 2005, pp. 5–6.
- 9 *Ibid.*
- 10 For a survey of this, see Commonwealth Local Government Forum, *Commonwealth Local Government Handbook*, 2005.
- 11 Eugene N. Gatari, 'Local Capacity Development in Pursuit of Millennium Development Goals: The Case of Rwanda', paper presented at the conference on MDG localisation in Africa, 10–11 August, Kampala, Uganda.
- 12 UN-HABITAT, 'Urban governance in Africa', *Urban Governance*, August 2004, p. 3; and UN-HABITAT, 'Urban Governance in Africa: Experiences and Challenges', *Urban Governance*, December 2004), p. 3. See also: 'A Democratic Audit: the State of Local Democracy in the Commonwealth', in Commonwealth Local Government Forum, *Commonwealth Local Government Handbook*, 2005, p. 295.
- 13 Jean-Michel Dufils et al., 'The Impact Alliance Local Government Barometer: A Tool for Strengthening MDGs' Foundation', SNV, UNDP and MDP, *Compendium of Papers presented at the Conference on MDG Localisation in Africa: Options and Experiences*, Kampala, Uganda, 9–11 August 2005.
- 14 Mohammed Hafidh, 'Participatory Service Delivery assessment on Drinking Water and Primary Education in Zanzibar, A Pilot Citizen Report Card: A Summary of Key Findings', 3 March 2004, in SNV, UNDP and MDP, *Compendium of Papers*, op. cit.
- 15 *ODI Briefing Paper*, March 2006, pp. 3–4.
- 16 See African Union, 'Review of the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): An African Common Position', EX.CL/181 (VII) Rev. 2, Executive Council, Seventh Ordinary Session, 1–2 July 2005, Sirte, Libya.
- 17 Source: Discussion with Raphael Magyezi, Secretary General, Uganda Local Governments Association, 17 April 2006. For the collaboration between the local authorities associations of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, see *The East African Local Governments Associations of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, Memorandum of Understanding*, 23 April 2004.

- 18 The Rwenzori lies in the south west of Uganda, bordering the Democratic Republic of Congo. It comprises the districts of Kabarole, Kasese, Kamwenge, Kyenjojo and Bundibugyo.
- 19 Chris Roux, 'The Rwenzori Experience: Lessons Learnt Towards a Model for the Localization of the Millennium Development Goals', paper presented at the UNDP/MDP/SNV Conference on the Localization of the MDGs, Kampala, Uganda, 9–11 August 2005.
- 20 See World Bank, *Building Effective States, Forging Engaged Societies: Report of the World Bank Task Force on Capacity Development in Africa*, September 2005; World Bank, *Capacity Building in Africa: An OED Evaluation of World Bank Support*, April, 2005. Both can be assessed at [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)
- 21 Ministry of Finance, *Planning and Economic Development, Deepening the Understanding of Poverty: Second Participatory Poverty Assessment Report*, December 2003, pp. 11–45.
- 22 The full list of decentralised services is described in Schedule 2 of the Local Government Act, 1997.
- 23 Republic of Uganda, *Decentralisation in Uganda: The Policy and Its Philosophy*, Booklet #1, Kampala: Ministry of Local Government, May 1993; and, Republic of Uganda, *Decentralisation in Uganda: The Policy and its Implications*, Booklet #2, Kampala: Ministry of Local Government, April 1994.
- 24 Bushenyi District Local Government, *Budget Framework Paper: FY 2006–2007*, 16 January 2006, p. 3.
- 25 Sources: Bushenyi District Directorate of Health; Ministry of Education and Sports.
- 26 Ministry of Education and Sports, Policy Statement to Parliament, June 2001, p. 5. Some analysts argue that these numbers may have been inflated by school authorities for purposes of gaining access to higher levels of capitation grants. But there is no dispute that there was a massive increase in pupil enrolment at the onset of UPE.
- 27 The following have not yet been established by central government: the average cost of service delivery, the national average and minimum standards of service delivery and national service performance indicators.
- 28 Samson Kateregga and Marion Nareeba (Ministry of Local Government Inspectorate), *Inspection and Monitoring of Poverty Action Fund (PAF): Bushenyi District Local Council*, July–December 2004.



## Annex A

### ***Kampala Agenda for African Local Government***

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

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

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

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

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

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

AGREE the following:

#### **Localising the MDGs**

Participants noted that local government in Commonwealth Africa is

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

It was noted that:

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Recommendations:**

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

### **Implementing the *Aberdeen Agenda***

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

It was noted that:

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

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

Elected local government provides legitimacy to democracy nationwide. It provides a solid foundation for an emerging democratic culture and

society in Africa. To deepen local democracy, citizens must be engaged in the democratic process and local government should engage actively with civil society to promote participation in local decision-making. Provision should be made for strengthened systems of justice at the local level. Effective communications are seen as an essential part of deepening local democracy. This includes communication among spheres of government, with the community, and with other stakeholders.

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

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

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

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

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

There is a need to strengthen and expand the role of local government in local economic development and integrated development planning to ensure that local priorities and service needs are met.

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

To be accountable to its electorate, local governments must have the

autonomy to set and implement budgets developed in accordance with the legislative framework.

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

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

### **Follow-up action**

Participants recognised the value of CLGF's unique and representative membership in Africa, bringing together the different spheres of government and other key stakeholders and welcomed the growing partnership between CLGF and UCLGA including in respect of common policy positions and joint programme activities.

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

They looked forward to closer co-operation with the African Union and other African regional institutions and noted the existing partnership between the Commonwealth Secretariat and the AU and hoped that CLGF, working in partnership with UCLGA, would help to ensure that the AU will promote the interests of African local government in its

work and develop a regular dialogue with local government, based on the recommendations set out in the *Kampala Agenda*.

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

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

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

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

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

## **Appreciation**

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

## Opening Speeches

### 1. CLGF's Role in Strengthening Local Democracy and Good Governance and Realising the MDGs in Africa

Address by John Emily Otekat, CLGF Chairperson

Executive Director, UN-HABITAT, Dr Anna Tibaijuka; Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General, Mrs Florence Mugasha; honourable ministers of local government and parliamentarians; UCLGA President, Father Mkhathshwa and my local government colleagues; CLGF Secretary-General, Carl Wright; distinguished participants and guests:

#### Welcome

Welcome to all participants to this CLGF African symposium, it is good to see:

- so many African local government leaders, ministers and officials from across our continent;
- our Commonwealth visitors from Asia, the Pacific, the Caribbean, the UK and Canada;
- my own Ugandan colleagues.

#### Partnership

The Commonwealth Local Government Forum represents a unique partnership between central and local government, which are both equal members in our Commonwealth local government family. This is shown by the presence of senior ministers and mayors on the CLGF Board and gives special political strength to our organisation.

#### CLGF – a child of Africa

I recall that the CLGF was born in Africa. The very first CLGF meetings were held in Africa in 1994–95. At the pan-African roundtable meeting held in Harare 1995, African countries, represented by their ministers and local government leaders, agreed to join the organisation as full members. The first CLGF Chairperson elected in 1995 was my predecessor Christopher Iga.

## **Africa – always high on the Commonwealth agenda**

When the CLGF was established in 1995, Chief Emeka Anyaokou of Nigeria was Commonwealth Secretary-General. Since 1995 two Heads of Government Meetings have been hosted by Africa and attended by CLGF, in Durban in 1999 and Abuja in 2003. The CLGF held its second Commonwealth Local Government Conference in Tshwane, South Africa in 2003.

## **Strengthening local democracy and good governance**

The concept of the Millennium Development Goals is relatively new. However, the principles underlying the MDGs – reducing poverty, improved health, education and so forth have always been fundamental to local government's aim of providing better services to the community.

Since 1995 the CLGF has been working to strengthen local democracy and good governance, all of which has a positive impact on realising the MDGs. This has entailed:

1. *Policy roundtables* in Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, South Africa and Zimbabwe;
2. *National capacity-building programmes* in Lesotho, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe;
3. *Technical skills exchanges* under our Good Practice scheme involving partners in Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa and Uganda and including intra-Africa exchanges, for example between my organisation, ULGA, and our Ghana colleagues in NALAG;
4. *Local elections and monitoring* in Cameroon, Lesotho, Mozambique, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

CLGF has been active in marshalling resource and expertise to assist regional initiatives, for example the regional local government information centre, which was established for the SADC countries, which we hope will shortly be revived, together with a similar centre in Nairobi for the EAC countries.

We have ensured that African local governments, whether in small countries like the Gambia, Mauritius, Seychelles and Swaziland, or in larger countries like Namibia and Zambia, have been regularly supported to

enable them to take part in the CLGF's African and Commonwealth-wide events and programmes.

### **Representing African local government**

The CLGF has actively represented the interests of its African local government members:

- In the Commonwealth, in Durban, Abuja and elsewhere, we have been successful in getting endorsement for the work of local government, as in 2003 with respect to the principle of legal and constitutional recognition and in 2005 with respect to the CLGF *Aberdeen Agenda*, which covers 12 key principles on good practice for local democracy and good governance;
- In the United Nations, where we work closely with partners such as UN-HABITAT in Africa, for example under our current partnership programme with Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe;
- In organisations such as the European Union, where we have worked in partnership with AULA, MDP and PDM in the ACP Local Government Platform in seeking EU resources for local government activities under the Cotonou Agreement;
- In other initiatives, such as the 2005 Commission for Africa, where, working closely with Dr Anna Tibaijuka, we were able to ensure important references to the need to strengthen African local government, something I was able to further follow up with the G8 countries chaired by UK Prime Minister Tony Blair.

### **Partnership with UCLGA**

As CLGF Chairperson I am particularly pleased at the strong partnership we have established with UCLGA.

- Carl Wright and I attended and addressed the founding conference in Tshwane last year and pledged our support.
- UCLGA President Father Mkhathshwa is a long-standing member of the CLGF Board.
- The UCLGA President and I co-authored the pamphlet *Make it Local, Make it Democratic* which was distributed to all Commonwealth

Heads of Government by the Commonwealth Secretary-General.

- At its Board meeting this week, the CFGF endorsed a strengthened partnership between our two organisations.

### **The Commonwealth and the CLGF are outward looking**

- Our members include francophone countries, such as Cameroon and Mauritius, and lusophone Mozambique.
- We work with all African ACP countries within the ACP Local Government Platform and our Secretary-General, Carl Wright, serves on its Management Committee, together with UCLGA Secretary-General, Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi and other African colleagues.
- In collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat we are seeking to support key African institutions, such as the AU and NEPAD, and regional organisations such as the EAC and SADC.

### **Taking our work forward**

As an African I am proud that Africa has held the Chair of CLGF for more than half of the time since its establishment in 1995 – an indication of the important role our continent has played in the evolution of the organisation.

I hope this Kampala symposium will be a historic event for African local government:

- Strengthening African local democracy, especially in countries where it is weak, and ensuring its restoration in countries where, in breach of the Commonwealth's fundamental political values, it is absent;
- Promoting good local governance in line with the *Aberdeen Agenda* approved by our own African Commonwealth Heads of Government last November;
- Realising the MDGs by ensuring that they are truly localised so that poverty is reduced and there is effective delivery of key services to our local communities.

Thank you.

## **2. Local Government Priorities for Africa: Realising the Millennium Development Goals and Ensuring Good Local Governance**

Keynote address by Father Smangaliso Mkhathshwa, President of United Cities and Local Governments of Africa

Chairperson, His Excellency President Museveni; honourable ministers of local government; other honourable ministers; fellow local government leaders, presidents and representatives of national associations; national and local government officials, representatives of civil society organisations and academic institutions; development partners and NGOs; ladies and gentlemen:

### **Introduction**

Common among us all is the conviction that all the Millennium Development Goals are equal priorities, especially in Africa, where a conspiracy of slavery, imperialism, colonialism, civil wars, poverty and back-breaking debt has effectively compromised the speed of development. For my contribution to the symposium, I propose to unpack priorities we have to interrogate and implement what we need to do in order to achieve the MDGs. The United Cities and Local Governments of Africa, over which I preside, has 12 priorities for African local government, but I will focus on those which are critical for the realisation of the MDGs.

In our promotional material for this symposium we rightly refer to the formal endorsement of the CLGF *Aberdeen Agenda* by Commonwealth Heads of Government. We also point to the publication of the Commission for Africa report, particularly its reference to the importance of strengthening local government capacity to realise the MDGs. We also recognise the important link between the timing of our symposium and the increasing official recognition of the importance of local government in 'localising' and delivering the MDGs, and of the need to strengthen local democracy, good governance and local government capacity.

### **Priorities Relating to the Role of Local Government**

Indeed, centralising the role of local government towards achieving the MDGs is a crucial paradigm shift promising to speed up meeting the MDG deadlines.

It should not escape us, however, that this is a conceptual framework adopted, first, by a forum – the Commonwealth – in which only a limited number of African countries sit, and second, by another forum – the G8 – in which no African country at all sits. Both forums by no means represent the reality on the ground, even with regard to at least some of the African countries which are members of the Commonwealth. This, however, should not blind us to the groundbreaking significance of that framework as an evolving understanding of the indisputable centrality of local government in the development of countries and their individual communities. Neither should it blind us to the fact that its progressive adoption, which we are increasingly seeing also in Africa, brings with it challenges we must prioritise for local government on the continent.

The effectiveness of local governments in the attainment of the MDGs depends largely on national governments. That explains why a critical priority for African local governments is to ensure that the idea of local government as the centre of MDG implementation should also be practically supported by all the countries of Africa, both in their individual capacities and their collective existence as the African Union. That is why we, the UCLGA, representing as we do the united interests of African local governments, have proposed a formal relationship with the African Union so that, as national and local authorities, we can develop a common understanding of this idea as well as its implications – mainly financial – for local government, given its status as a junior sphere of government to national and provincial governments.

Ensuring a continent-wide positioning of local government as a vehicle for the attainment of the MDGs must be our priority because upon it hinges two other priorities on which the development capacity of local government depends. The one is to ensure that local government is legislatively recognised as a distinct but subsidiary sphere of government. The other is to statutorily prescribe equitable funding for local government. These, I beg to argue, will also enhance good governance as they both imply accountability.

The recognition of local government as a distinct sphere of government implies a clear delineation of its mandate, something which in itself promotes effective delivery and accountability. Clearly defined funding parameters also enhance planning and, with their accounting implica-

tions, demand sound corporate governance. In this, then, is a meeting of delivery and corporate governance, both of which are critical for the attainment of the MDGs.

Three priorities, then, are deductible from the acknowledgement of local governments' role in the realisation of the MDGs. They are:

- One, ensuring an across-the-continent conception of local government's central responsibility in projects and programmes to achieve the MDGs;
- Two, legislatively recognising local government as a distinct but subsidiary sphere of government to the higher spheres of government;
- Three, providing for statutory and equitable funding for local government based on its legislative mandate.

### **The Current State of Africa and the Millennium Targets**

I am prepared to say that without some significant move on these three priorities Africa will not achieve the MDGs – certainly not within the target dates, and most probably not beyond. I say this not for a melodramatic purpose but in a context where, with less than ten years before the deadlines of most of the MDGs, the picture we see in Africa is as follows:

- At least 6.5 million people are exposed to starvation, with many millions more without access to proper nutrition;
- Some statistics suggest up to five people die from AIDS every minute;
- The number of people living on less than a dollar a day is increasing;
- The continent is paying 14 billion dollars a year in debt service;
- Our share of world trade is a paltry 2 per cent;
- Both GDP and per capita income growth are in a state of decline, with estimates saying it will take us up to 200 years to reach the nutrition, primary education and child mortality targets – all of which have a bearing on the continent's long-term economic competitiveness;
- Local government expenditure per capita by country can be as low as \$6;

- At least 70 per cent of the urban populations of sub-Saharan Africa live in slums;
- Less than 20 per cent of households in Africa have connections to water pipes.

All these challenges exist in a context of runaway urbanisation, with most cities' infrastructure overcome by waves of rural influx into the urban areas. The unpalatable but inescapable reality, then, is that Africa is in many ways behind schedule with regard to the MDG timetable.

### **Financial, ICT and Skills Priorities**

It would be reassuring if the situation could simply be addressed by attending to the three priorities we have already catalogued. The truth, however, is something else, with other priorities inevitably having to be confronted.

If one concedes that billions of dollars are annually pumped by donor, development and loan agencies into African local governments, but that development is rather slower than the inflow of money, then one has to admit that something, somewhere, is amiss. Our – admittedly basic – research at the UCLGA points to a largely uncoordinated pumping of financial resources into local government on the continent, with subtle geopolitical rivalries seemingly dictating the funding rather than the collective interests of the continent. This often leads to wasteful duplication and inconsistent development.

It is a matter of priority, then, for African local governments to ensure some synchronisation in the deployment of financial resources in the sector. It is necessary, for example, to develop an empirical register of priority needs per village, town or city, per country and per region so that funding can be targeted at real needs consonant with levels of development.

It is important, as well, to recognise that, in an increasingly globalising world, local government is changing too fast for many African countries – most of which are still struggling with entry into modern information technologies, let alone running complex planning, budgeting and billing systems. The resultant priority is the development of a highly sophisticated system of sourcing, exchanging and applying knowledge cost-effectively – a system founded on an unprecedented exploitation of local,

regional continental and world networks, with an emphasis on Africa beginning, first, by searching for successes within itself before venturing outside.

Pursuant to that end, our other priority must be to develop a high-level accurate database which must always point to any skill, funding or other resource required by any local authority in Africa.

I am positing that our capacity to deliver on the MDGs is dependent, as well, on our capacity to effectively harness all the intellectual, human, financial and other resources at our disposal. We have to revise our attitude to knowledge and information, including technologies associated with their generation. This must be accompanied by a readiness to invest more in the technological infrastructure required to produce, maintain, update, access and share all the knowledge and information we have, to develop one another.

### **Learning from African Achievement**

This is the best time to emphasise the fact that Africa is not a story of insurmountable challenges only. Part of the reconstruction of the continent – including with regard to the realisation of the MDGs – is the philosophical challenge of rediscovering our self-confidence. Towards this end it is important to identify, study and emulate African examples of best practice.

Among these is our host Uganda's management of the HIV/AIDS pandemic to a point where infection numbers have been stabilised and the ravages of the scourge reversed. An abiding lesson for the rest of Africa – based on the Ugandan government's and President's practical involvement in the country's war against HIV/AIDS – is how the HIV/AIDS battle requires as much financial investment as political commitment. Also worth studying is the South African government's training of its eye on numbers relating to the country's performance vis-à-vis the MDGs, and its progressive increase of financial allocations to programmes aimed at achieving the MDG targets. The result is that, considered against time elapsed and time outstanding, in quite a few MDGs the country is effectively ahead of current targets.

## Corporate Governance

All my postulations so far assume that we are all mindful of the perception, rightly or wrongly, that our continent is corrupt, and that part of the reason for the slowness of our development agenda is our failure to use local development monies donated to us for that purpose. It would, in my view, be foolhardy to enter into any debate with anybody on this occasion, suffice to say the best proof of our financial integrity can only be a prioritisation, on our part, of the establishment of sound financial and accounting systems. I speak of systems which, in real time, can produce updates of activities and the resources invested in them. I cite this as a priority because it is increasingly becoming a precondition for donor and loan support to African municipalities and, in the context of our discourse on the MDGs, with the target dates and quantification involved, it would be a perfect monitoring and evaluation tool.

A related priority, then, based on the principle that self-accounting is best ensured in a context of external and independent support processes, is the institutionalisation of a peer review system – akin to the African Union’s – even within the local government milieu on the continent. Assuming a developmental rather than a punitive system, this should go a long way towards demonstrating African local governments’ commitment to clean corporate governance as part of the software required to develop the capacity to implement the MDGs, specifically, and to achieve development, more broadly.

While we must, as we have done, review corporate governance fundamentally from a financial perspective, we would do well to include, within its definition, public participation, and therefore categorise this, too, as a priority in the achievement of the MDGs. This becomes particularly clear when we consider the fact that the thrust of our discourse is ‘localising’ the MDGs. Localisation must not be reduced simply to the role of local governments, but should be stretched to include the involvement of communities at the grassroots. Only with people directly involved in decisions and interventions affecting them directly will they be prepared to actively contribute towards their success.

It should be our priority, then, to ensure that maximum public participation processes are developed by African local governments as part of the goal of attaining the MDGs. Consider, for example, a model where public works consciously and as a matter of policy are based on

the maximum use of labour-intensive approaches. Consider the multiple benefits of this both in terms of public involvement and the creation of jobs, poverty reduction and the attendant improvement in the nutrition and health of people, thus in one stroke contributing to the targets of a number of MDGs.

### **Networking and Building Strategic Alliances**

Chairperson, three weeks ago I was a panellist at the 13th Forum on Global Issues in Berlin, Germany. One of the points I made there, and which perhaps is even more relevant for this particular colloquium, is that human, financial, intellectual and technological resources require that African municipalities and local authorities – which are by and large poverty-stricken – enter into strategic networks and alliances to tap into what both sister local authorities and the world have to offer.

Sadly, what the Ghanaian academic W.E. Abraham said in 1962 is still largely as true today as it was then, namely that 'Africa is probably the richest continent in the world. Like the Soviet Union and continental America, it certainly has inside itself all that it could need for its industrial development, barring skill and capital.' It is that acknowledgement, ladies and gentlemen, which makes it necessary for us to build developmental networks and alliances as part of our menu of priorities for our local authorities to be effective.

While, however, it might seem easy to enter into relationships, the reality is that the development of fundable proposals and Memoranda of Co-operation has become more complex. A two-pronged priority, therefore, is the development of the capacity to formulate fundable proposals and the actual creation of developmentally beneficial relationships rather than merely symbolic friendships. The effectiveness of governments, at all levels, in the twenty-first century, is ultimately dependent upon their networking and alliance-exploiting skills. African local government has to prioritise this if it is to achieve the MDGs. That is the rationale behind the UCLGA's consideration of itself as a vehicle to facilitate networks and alliances for and within its members, as well as to capacitate the members to develop and manage them.

The relations the UCLGA is developing with institutions such as NEPAD, the CLGF, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Cities Alliance, UN-HABITAT, the Development Bank of Southern Africa and

the First National Bank of South Africa, among many others, are consistent with that idea, intention and objective.

Of course, where foreign aid is concerned, the operative principle must be that African local government itself sets the agenda in terms of its own priorities. As His Excellency our host President Museveni once cautioned, 'Africa should reject arrogant interference in the internal affairs of the continent'.

### **Conclusion**

On that note, ladies and gentlemen, allow me please to conclude, but not before retracing my steps and reiterating the point that while most of the work is grappling with the question of resources to achieve the MDGs, for most of the local authorities in Africa the priority is still to convince their national governments about their – that is local governments' – centrality towards the achievement of the MDGs, the importance of establishing local governments as distinct spheres, and funding local authorities equitably and in line with their development mandates.

Without these actions, sadly, the journey towards the MDGs will be that much slower and the destination that much further.

I thank you all.

### **3. Address by Dr Anna Tibaijuka, Under Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of UN-HABITAT**

Mr Chairman, Mr John Emily Otekat, the Chairperson of CLGF; Honourable Minister of Local Government, Uganda, Professor Kabwegyere; Your Worship Mr John Ssebaana Kizito, Mayor of Kampala and Chair, Urban Authorities Association of Uganda;

Your Lordship, Father Smangaliso Mkhathshwa, President of United Cities and Local Government, Africa; Honourable Mrs Florence Mugasha, Deputy Secretary-General of the Commonwealth; Mr Carl Wright, Secretary General of CLGF; honourable ministers, excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

It is my honour and privilege to be here today to address this African Regional Symposium on Strengthening Local Democracy and Good Governance: Realising the Millennium Development Goals. I thank the Government of Uganda, the Uganda Local Government Association, the Commonwealth Local Government Forum and the Commonwealth Secretariat for inviting me to share my thoughts with this distinguished gathering.

The symposium comes at a critical juncture in the history of Africa. It is convened at a time when the African continent is rapidly approaching a historic and demographic threshold. Within the next two decades the majority of African people will be living in urban areas. This will engender significant changes in the way we live, where we live, and how we live.

These changes are already evident as we approach this threshold. Of particular relevance to this symposium are the noticeable shifts in the patterns of poverty amongst our societies and the role urban centres are playing in economic growth and social development.

This symposium also takes place six months after the world community took stock of the progress achieved on a major commitment that we made five years ago – the Millennium Declaration. The 2005 World Summit was preceded by a number of other global fora that noted the hurdles confronting Africa in realising the Millennium Development Goals. This symposium provides the proper forum for reflecting on ways and means of overcoming those challenges and accelerating the attainment of the MDGs in Africa.

I should hasten to add that the participants in this conference, namely representatives of local authorities, ministers of local government, representatives of civil society, the private sector and academia, constitute the real custodians of the Millennium Development Goals.

Indeed, local government responsibilities typically include the delivery of key services such as housing, water and sanitation, waste management, primary healthcare and education. How these services are provided has a major impact on attaining the MDGs. A telling example is water, where the majority of African local authorities subsidise the consumption of the rich, leaving the urban poor to pay up to 30 times more for water than those fortunate enough to have piped water supply. Another example can be found where up to 70 per cent of municipal budgets for waste collection and disposal in Africa are spent on collecting the garbage of the wealthiest 30 per cent of the population. Both these services are critical to achieving the MDGs on health, nutrition and the prevention of diseases. They also clearly show that much can be achieved through more effective use of existing resources.

But local governments can no longer be considered simply as service providers. They are increasingly responsible for stimulating local economic development. In a globalised world economy, cities and towns are the engines of economic growth, the centres of production and consumption and the nodes for international trade and commerce. They serve as the critical link between the urban and rural economy, as market places for rural production and as value added service providers. It is our towns and cities that can make globalisation work and thereby create the jobs for combating poverty. Globalisation has to work for the poor.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen: given the dynamics of rapid urbanisation facing Africa the 'rural versus urban' debate is a false and misleading dichotomy. In reality, 'rural' and 'urban' form part of an interconnected system of physical, social, economic and environmental transformation. It is in this regard that the strategic approach of 'sustainable urbanisation' is critical for attaining the MDGs.

Sustainable urbanisation is a dynamic process covering social, economic, institutional and environmental considerations. It embraces relationships between all human settlements, from small rural towns to metropolises. Sustainable urbanisation encompasses a governance frame-

work that promotes participation, accountability and transparency, where local authorities provides a major impetus for fostering social equity, economic dynamism and cultural vitality.

It is in this context of empowering local governments and promoting democracy that I would also like to laud the work of our host and partner organisation, the Commonwealth Local Government Forum. The CLGF's *Aberdeen Agenda* was adopted in Aberdeen in March last year and subsequently endorsed by Commonwealth Heads of Government in Malta last November. It provides a set of principles and standards to help promote healthy local democracy and good governance throughout the Commonwealth, which in turn are essential prerequisites for sustainable urbanisation. We at the UN consider the *Aberdeen Agenda* a very important framework for accelerating work on the MDGs.

Ladies and gentlemen, the African experience demonstrates the inseparable link between the achievement of the MDGs and the human settlements agenda. Close to 70 per cent of Africa's urban population lives in informal or slum settlements. This figure is 46 per cent for Asia and a little over 30 per cent for Latin America and the Caribbean. The vast majority of these slum dwellers have no access to decent shelter, water and sanitation, and health and education. Unless urgent action is taken to improve the living conditions of the urban poor and to prevent the future formation of slums, by 2020 this figure could easily increase to 400 million people on the African continent alone. Globally the number of slum dwellers, which now stands at about 1.2 billion people, will rise to 1.6 billion by the same year. Meeting the MDGs will clearly depend on how we manage our towns and cities.

It is encouraging that many African countries have embarked on a variety of poverty reduction strategies and have adopted long-term development frameworks that are directed towards the achievement of the MDGs. Similarly, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for almost all countries is targeted towards the same goal. The challenge for all of us is to ensure that the issue of sustainable human settlements and its linkage with the achievement of the MDGs features prominently in these strategies.

I urge this august gathering to propose ways of mainstreaming the role of local actors in macroeconomic policy and development strategies, and to underscore the need for an integrated approach to improving human

settlements as a means of attaining the MDGs. We need to work together to ensure that the urban agenda becomes central rather than peripheral to our development priorities. In essence, we have to come to terms with rapid urbanisation. We have to invest our resources where people have chosen to work and live.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, we can realise the Millennium Development Goals in our cities if we make a political resolve. A recent study by UN-HABITAT suggests that many countries in Africa are not on track to meet the slum upgrading and the water and sanitation targets of the MDGs. A few countries are, nonetheless, making good progress. They are doing so through innovation. Several countries, particularly in West Africa, are engaging in slum upgrading programmes. In East Africa, a number of cities have discarded the rigid master planning approach and are developing participatory Strategic Urban Development Plans by fully engaging the urban poor.

I made reference earlier to the importance of capacities and resources at the local level for the attainment of the MDGs. I wish to underscore this dimension, particularly in light of the experience of our host country, Uganda, under the leadership of His Excellency President Museveni. The fate of any nation lies among its people and their institutions. This country has demonstrated the importance of devolving effective power to the local level. Decentralisation not only entails a transfer of functions and responsibilities to the lower levels, but it has also to be accompanied by commensurate capacities and resources.

The empowerment of local authorities is not, however, just a matter of more resources being devolved from central government. It includes the critical issues of governance and capacity building. UN-HABITAT's Global Campaigns on Urban Governance and secure tenure advocate pro-poor inclusive policies and practices. These campaigns are accompanied by a concerted approach to building the capacity of local governments to work with urban poor communities and key urban stakeholders. They are predicated on the principle that inclusive city development promotes growth with equity – a place where everyone, regardless of their economic means, gender, race ethnicity or religion, is fully enabled and empowered to participate in decisions affecting their livelihoods. Our campaigns work to convince national and local governments of the imperative of pro-poor inclusive approaches – at UN-HABITAT we

believe in fighting poverty, but not the poor, fighting squatting, but not the squatters.

UN-HABITAT is fully aware that effective mobilisation of political will requires an integrated approach to advocacy, policy development and finance. At the global level, UN-HABITAT works closely with local government associations to advocate the critical role and contribution of local authorities in sustainable urban development. The Secretary General of the United Nations established the United Nations Advisory Committee on Local Authorities to serve as the interface between local authorities and the United Nations system. UN-HABITAT serves as the secretariat for this committee, which is chaired by Mayor Joan Clos of Barcelona, who is also the President of UCLG.

At the political level, UN-HABITAT has been instrumental in the establishment of the African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development (AMCHUD), which took shape last February when African ministers responsible for housing and urban development met in Durban in South Africa. Chaired by H. E. Minister Sisulu and the Government of South Africa, AMCHUD is rapidly becoming a platform for all governments in Africa to put the issues of housing and sustainable urban development at the centre stage of national policy deliberations. In fact this symposium comes close at the heels of a special session of AMCHUD to discuss 'Achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Africa: Strategies for the realisation of the World Summit Commitments on Slums', which was held in Nairobi earlier this month.

At the financial level, UN-HABITAT currently supports the efforts of 14 countries in Africa to meet the MDG targets for water and sanitation in secondary towns through its Water and Sanitation Trust Fund. The Trust Fund combines technical assistance, capacity building and seed capital to assist African cities and towns to qualify for loans from the African Development Bank to implement 'quick impact' initiatives to realise the water and sanitation targets of the MDGs within a period of three to four years. Last month, UN-HABITAT signed an agreement with the African Development Bank in Mexico to fast-track resources for water and sanitation-related investments in the larger cities of Africa.

Similarly, the slum upgrading facility of UN-HABITAT helps to raise domestic capital to invest in pro-poor housing and urban development, including urban planning. While this facility does not provide loans, it

reduces the risk perceived by domestic financial institutions in investing in slum upgrading through a combination of technical assistance, capacity building, housing loans guarantee, and mobilisation of community based micro-credit.

Last but not least, we have placed HABITAT Programme Managers in 30 African countries to work closely with national governments, the UN system and multilateral agencies to support your efforts towards achieving the MDGs. A key role of the programme managers is to ensure that the urban agenda features prominently in national development priorities.

Excellencies, as the focal point for MDG Goal 7 target 11 on slums, UN-HABITAT has developed the 'Localising MDGs' programme. The key objective of the programme is to mainstream the MDGs in local policy-making and to develop local and national action plans to align existing city development plans and budgets with MDG targets.

In Africa, pilot projects are being finalised in selected cities of Morocco, Senegal, South Africa and Egypt. Our ability to scale up and replicate these initiatives elsewhere in Africa depends on your efforts to mainstream the urban agenda in your respective national development plans and priorities.

Friends, we are gathered today to discuss how to address a common challenge. The challenge is clear – how to make African cities more inclusive, equitable and sustainable. Over the next two days let us discuss, develop and agree on a basic framework of action that reflects our values and principles, but also requires our commitment to action. In concluding, I encourage all of you to seek the best way forward for the women, men and children of Africa.

I trust that the outcome of this meeting will finally translate into practical policies, programmes and projects in your respective countries. UN-HABITAT is committed to work with CLGF and all of you in implementing the recommendations of the symposium.

Finally, let me remind you that the 3rd Session of the World Urban Forum will be held in Vancouver between 19–23 June this year. I look forward to seeing all of you at this forum, where I hope you will share your experience with the rest of the world.

Thank you for your kind attention.

#### **4. The Challenge for the Commonwealth in Promoting Local Democracy, Good Governance and Localising the MDGs**

Keynote address by Florence Mugasha, Deputy Secretary-General of the Commonwealth

Honourable Ministers of Local Government; Honourable Mayors; Dr Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director of UN-HABITAT; Chairman of CLGF, Councillor John Emily Otekat; CLGF Board Members; Mr Carl Wright, Secretary General of the CLGF; your excellencies, ladies and gentlemen:

It is an honour and a pleasure to be with you today, among so many old friends and professional colleagues who are in the frontline of promoting democracy and development at the grass roots.

I bring you warm greetings from the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Rt. Hon. Don McKinnon, who, as you all know, is a staunch supporter of the CLGF and who has always actively participated in your conferences.

On a more personal note, it is also indeed an honour for me to deliver this keynote address in my own home country.

The objective of this symposium is to explore three key issues:

- The importance of effective intergovernmental relations;
- Linkages between local democracy and good governance; and
- Ensuring effective delivery of the Millennium Development Goals at the local level.

These are issues of the moment. Your gathering here therefore is very encouraging because it reinforces the fact that there is now considerable official recognition of the importance of local government in delivering the MDGs, and of the need to strengthen local democracy, good governance and local government capacity.

#### **The Role of the Commonwealth in Delivering the MDGs**

Allow me to begin by painting a picture of the challenges facing the Commonwealth today.

- One third of the Commonwealth's two billion citizens live on less than one dollar a day.

- Almost two-thirds of global HIV/AIDS cases and maternal deaths take place in Commonwealth countries.
- More than half of the world's 115 million children who do not attend primary education live in the Commonwealth.
- A large percentage of young people do not have the opportunity to realise their potential because of unemployment, poverty and illiteracy.
- Women constitute about 70 per cent of those in poverty across the Commonwealth

That is why the Commonwealth not only has an interest in achieving the MDGs, but also has a pressing responsibility in bringing this about.

And this is why we have made the first MDG goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger the foundation of our efforts to support pro-poor policies at the grassroots in our member states.

Progress has been slow, but we are determined to redouble our efforts to achieve the MDGs, particularly here in Africa. At the moment, 11 of our 53 members have recorded significant progress on the MDGs; 31 are striving to meet the target, while some are actually going backwards. It is indeed a daunting challenge.

The link between democracy and development is particularly important in the African context. You will recall that the Abuja CHOGM underscored this fact. It is crucial that democracy is not only entrenched and consolidated, but that it actually delivers tangible socio-economic gains, usually referred to as 'dividends of democracy'. This is essential if the process of building strong democracies is to continue to enjoy widespread popular support.

Our democracy-building activities at all levels are strengthened by a trade policy which aims to increase the competitiveness of Commonwealth member states in international trade. We believe that the most powerful way to combat poverty is to increase trade opportunities for the developing countries.

For example, in 2004 we set up a 'Hubs and Spokes' project financed by the European Commission, whereby regional and national officials work alongside trade policy advisers. Closer to home, a trade policy adviser has been assisting the Uganda Export Promotion Board in implementing an export strategy plan.

Under a comprehensive programme of creating sustainable economic development, we have launched projects which include advising governments on how to attract investment to exploit natural resources. In the petroleum sector, for instance, we helped the government of Namibia negotiate agreements with international oil companies for offshore exploration projects worth over US\$100 million.

The net effects of these initiatives are bound to trickle down and increase the capacity of national governments to better engage with other tiers of government at regional and local levels in a more positive way.

A major area of challenge in our work has been advancing the MDGs in education and health, particularly in Africa. These fall under Millennium Development Goals 2, 4, 5 and 6. On education, the Commonwealth approach has been to support member countries in achieving universal primary education and eliminating gender inequalities in education.

We also provide training programs for teachers in close collaboration with the Association for the Development of Education in Africa and help improve teaching conditions in Commonwealth Africa.

Our health-related MDG focus is on reducing child mortality, improving maternal health and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

Through our Youth Ambassadors for Positive Living Program, we contribute to prevention efforts to halt the spread of HIV/AIDS. This scheme, which started in Zambia, allows young people living with HIV to educate others about AIDS prevention. Nearly 200 Commonwealth Youth Ambassadors are operating in six countries in Africa, the Caribbean and Asia.

One aspect of the millennium goals in which the Commonwealth has made some mark is on Development Goal 3 – the promotion of gender equality. One of the core principles of the Commonwealth is a commitment to human rights through a people-focused, rights-based approach to achieving the MDGs. Gender equality is recognised as a core principle in the Harare Commonwealth Declaration and as being critical to the achievement of the MDGs.

The Commonwealth *Plan of Action for Gender Equity, 2005–2015* recognises that women's empowerment and gender equality are intrinsic to achieving sustainable development and democracy. To this end, the

Commonwealth offers policy advice, capacity building, development of resource materials and technical assistance activities.

I am, of course, aware of successful initiatives undertaken by the CLGF in working towards the attainment of the MDGs. Among these, under the good practice scheme, several projects are directly related to several of the MDGs.

At this point, I wish to highlight a local example right here in Uganda.

Two Ugandan local authorities have undertaken partnership projects under CLGF's Commonwealth Local Government Good Practice Scheme. This entails working with their counterparts in the United Kingdom to help strengthen their service delivery capacity through on-the-job training, staff exchanges and joint working opportunities.

In Uganda, for example, this has involved planning and delivering an improved surface water drainage system, which helped to keep the town accessible and led to marked reduction in the number of mosquitoes.

Through the same scheme the Ugandan Local Government Association is now working with its partner, the National Association of Local Authorities of Ghana. This provides a good platform where they are able to share skills and learn from each other's experiences to improve the services they provide to their members.

Another example I wish to highlight is the City Community Challenge Fund Project (C3), launched in 2000 with funding from DFID and UN-HABITAT. This project was created to step up local government's role in tackling urban poverty.

The programme seeks to improve the livelihoods of the poorest urban groups whilst building the capacity of local authorities to respond to community demands for development. Project C3 provides resources for locally identified projects, such as pro-poor housing and small business enterprise. Council workers and specialist NGOs advise community members on implementing their projects. A process of monitoring and analysis feeds back into public meetings.

For many, the experience of having their Councillor's door open to them has been empowering. This has allowed people to communicate their priorities for their own development.

I am informed that this project, initially piloted in two districts, is now being rolled out to five other districts.

### **The Importance of Local Democracy in Achieving the MDGs**

2005 was indeed a milestone year in highlighting the importance of local government in achieving the targets of the MDGs as demonstrated by the following events.

Firstly, the importance of local governments was acknowledged at the United Cities and Local Governments World Council when it met in Beijing in June 2005. At that meeting, at which many of you here were present, the pledge was made to see that the goals and targets for the MDGs are met.

Secondly, at the UN in September last year, the Heads of State and Government meeting at the Millennium+5 Summit recognised that local government was a partner of the United Nations. Indeed, in the summit outcome document, there was explicit recognition of the important role of local authorities in contributing to the achievement of the United Nations MDGs.

Thirdly, the Commission for Africa report, *Our Common Interest*, which was endorsed by the G8 in July 2006, also highlighted the importance of strengthening local government capacity in Africa in order to realise the MDGs.

Finally, in their Communiqué at the Malta CHOGM held last year, Heads of Government expressed deep concern that many Commonwealth countries were falling behind the MDG targets. They noted that the MDGs were largely linked to poverty reduction, health, education and gender equality targets, and urged member countries to re-commit themselves to human development.

The point that needs to be re-emphasised is that local democracy helps to ensure that people living in poverty can be involved in making decisions that affect their lives, so that solutions are practical, appropriate and effective.

It is equally instructive to note that recent CHOGMs in Coolum, Abuja and Malta have underscored the importance of local government. Indeed, in Malta Heads of Government welcomed the Secretariat's collaboration

with the CLGF and other relevant organisations to promote best democratic practice.

They noted the outcomes of the CLGF conference in 2005, and recognised that the *Aberdeen Agenda* is a unique set of principles to support the development of local democracy and good governance in the Commonwealth.

### **Our Partnership with the CLGF**

Local democracy is indeed flourishing. Since the Coolum CHOGM, the Commonwealth Secretariat and CLGF have worked together to observe elections and to provide technical assistance to strengthen local democracy in several member countries.

The Commonwealth Secretariat and CLGF have also worked together on a workshop on municipal service partnerships in Kuala Lumpur, taking forward the recommendations of the Tshwane conference.

Our partnership has continued to grow from strength to strength. There has also been wider co-operation, for instance on the environment and on urban settlements. We will continue to work with you to identify ways in which we can further strengthen the capacity of local democracy and local government.

### **The Case for Local Democracy**

I want to end by reiterating three key points made by the Commonwealth Secretary-General in his foreword to the Commonwealth Secretariat's local democracy pamphlet *Make it local, Make it democratic*, which was published earlier this year.

His first point was that central and regional governments need to develop a genuine respect for the third tier of government – the local government. One way in which this can be done is through constitutional and legal recognition of local government, as called for by Heads of Government at their Abuja Meeting in 2003. South Africa, India, Ghana, Uganda and several other countries have given that formal recognition in their constitutions. I wish to commend this step to all other Commonwealth countries.

Secondly, local democracy must be genuinely local and democratic. It

must be as close to the people as possible and it must be as accountable, as transparent and as representative as it can be.

Thirdly, while democracy is a valuable end in itself, we need not and must not stop there. A central theme of the Commonwealth's principles and values is that democracy and development can and should be mutually reinforcing.

At all levels, democracy must play its full part in the eradication of poverty, improving the lives of ordinary people and opening up the new possibilities and opportunities for individuals and for entire communities which development brings.

### **Conclusion**

In closing, local democracy, like every other kind of democracy, must deliver. In ensuring that it does deliver in attaining the targets of the MDGs, I would like to emphasise key priorities to strengthen local democracies in achieving that aim:

- Partnership has to be prioritised as a key theme;
- There has to be pro-poor bias; and
- Good practice must be treated as essential guidelines.

When considered in their totality, the Millennium Development Goals are designed to address the basic needs of the people and to improve the delivery of basic services to the poor. This has been at the heart of our activities around the Commonwealth, particularly at the grass-roots level where we are constantly challenged to make a meaningful difference in the lives of our people.

We have found a willing collaborator and a supportive partner in the CLGF and it is my hope that this will continue, even with much more vigour in the future.

I wish you a successful meeting and look forward to the outcome of your deliberations.

I thank you.

## **5. Statement by the Uganda Minister of Local Government, Professor Tarsis Kabwegyere MP**

Honourable ministers and leaders of delegations; the Executive Director, UN-HABITAT; the Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General; the Chairman of the Commonwealth Local Government Forum; distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen:

I warmly welcome you to Uganda to this important symposium on 'Strengthening Local Democracy and Good Governance: Realising the Millennium Development Goals'.

For over a decade, the Government of Uganda has been implementing a decentralisation policy aimed at improving local democracy, effectiveness, increased efficiency and sustainability in the delivery of essential services countrywide. Decentralisation broadens and deepens local democracy, and enhances people's participation in determining their development agenda. However, decentralisation in fact offers more. It is an instrument of socio-economic transformation.

Decentralisation has been implemented as part of good governance. The key reasons for introducing decentralisation include, among others, to:

- Enhance the contribution of the public, private sector, civil society and community-based organisations to national development and modernisation;
- Improve the quality of service, policy formulation and management of service delivery;
- Make efficient and effective use of available resources;
- Reduce the decision load by sharing it with more people and allowing more decisions to be made 'below' instead of concentrating them at the 'overburdened centre';
- Provide opportunities for local popular participation and increased involvement of the people in decisions that directly affect them;
- Promote local ownership and ensure sustainability of projects and programmes.

For local governments to play these strategic roles in socio-economic transformation, they must work to achieve the following:

- Create among the people a common interest in their own development and a common duty to ensure that development is honestly and efficiently administered;
- Transform the local economy by investing in it and training the people to work for modernity;
- Foster the democratic spirit, transparency and political accountability;
- Demonstrate the linkage between the payment of taxes and the provision of services;
- Initiate and execute development projects;
- Supplement government revenue and expenditures by collecting local revenue.

This symposium provides a unique opportunity to policy-makers and local government practitioners to reflect on their respective countries' local governance systems and to identify ways of strengthening local governments so that they become more efficient and effective in improving the quality of living standards of our people.

### **Modernisation and Transformation**

Decentralisation must lead to modernisation and transformation of our societies. The question often asked here is; who will do this? It is I. It is you. All of us must play an active role in the transformation and modernisation of our countries. The central government is a player; local governments are players; civil society is a player; the private sector is a player; the media is a player; not forgetting religious leaders. The bottom line is that we must all know what we want and how to get it, and above all how to benefit from it.

### **Local Democracy and Local Justice**

As we pursue the goal of deepening democracy we must also strengthen systems of local justice. A society without effective conflict resolution mechanisms is bound to develop at a slow rate, if at all. The *Aberdeen Agenda* should, therefore, be expanded to include strengthening the institutions of local justice as part of deepening local democracy. Parliament last week passed the Local Council Courts Bill, 2006, legislation that will bring justice to the doorsteps of the people and provide for people's participation in administering justice in response to their needs.

### **Local Investment**

The issue of investment in local areas must be addressed. There is a tendency to think that economic investments only come from outside our countries. Local government leaders must look at ways of attracting local investments within their areas, which can help transform the rural economies and improve household incomes. This will in turn improve local revenue mobilisation and collection so that we sustain the investments we make. The people must participate directly in the transformation of the rural economy.

### **Accountability**

We cannot strengthen local democracy without accountable, transparent systems that are open to public scrutiny. Our experience in Uganda is that as you transfer more resources to local governments you need to strengthen the institutions that enforce accountability of public resources. We need to have zero tolerance for corruption and misuse of public resources because failure to do so will mean that even the little resources we mobilise through own efforts and borrowing will not reach the targeted people. We must ensure that people are mobilised and sensitised so that they participate in the struggle to protect public resources. It is evident that survival is a collective enterprise.

Please enjoy the Pearl of Africa during your stay. Uganda is gifted by nature.

Thank you for coming to Uganda.

## Annex C

### Symposium Programme

#### Wednesday 16 April

- 9.00–10.00 **Official opening**  
Chair: *Cllr John Emily Otekat*, CLGF Chairperson and President of the Uganda Local Government Association
- Welcome remarks**  
*His Worship John Ssebaana Kizito*, Mayor of Kampala  
*Hon. Prof. Tarsis Kabwegyere*, Minister for Local Government, Uganda
- Keynote addresses:**  
**CLGF's role in strengthening local democracy, good governance and realising the MDGs in Africa**  
*Cllr John Emily Otekat*, CLGF Chairperson and President of ULGA
- Local government priorities for Africa: Realising the MDGs and ensuring good local governance**  
*Mayor Smangaliso Mkhathshwa*, CLGF Board member and President, United Cities and Local Government Africa (UCLGA)
- Sustainable urban development to meet the MDGs and the role of UN-HABITAT**  
*Dr Anna Tibaijuka*, Executive Director, UN-HABITAT
- The challenge for the Commonwealth in promoting local democracy, good governance and localising the MDGs**  
*Mrs Florence Mugasha*, Deputy Secretary-General of the Commonwealth
- 11.00 **Coffee and tea**
- 11.30 **Plenary: The role of local government in meeting the MDGs – objectives of the symposium**  
Chair: *Carl Wright*, Secretary-General, CLGF
- Speakers:  
*Hon. Sydney Mufamadi*, Minister for Provincial and Local Government, South Africa;

*Cllr Joseph A. Akech*, Chairman, Association of Local Government Authorities of Kenya

*Warren Nyamugasira*, Executive Director, Uganda National NGO Forum

#### **Discussion**

13.00

#### **Lunch**

14.00

#### **Effective delivery of local services – good practice and innovations: empowering local government to improve service delivery**

##### **Panel discussion**

Panellists will share examples of good practice from their countries.

##### **Local government response to HIV/AIDS**

*Mayor Matheus K. Shikongo*, Mayor of Windhoek, Namibia

##### **Partnerships with NGOs and the private sector to manage the environment**

*Raphael Magyezi*, Secretary-General, ULGA

##### **The role of local government in local economic development**

*Abraham Dwumah-Odum*, Deputy Minister for Local Government and Rural Development, Ghana

##### **The role of planning in building strong communities**

*Dr Makhosi Khoza*, South African Local Government Association

##### **Effective partnerships with the private sector in supporting infrastructure development**

*Luther Mashaba*, Executive Manager, DBSA

#### **Discussion**

#### **Tea**

15.30

#### **Plenary: The role of local democracy in achieving the MDGs: the *Aberdeen Agenda***

Presentation by senior local government policy-makers and practitioners from different regions of the Commonwealth

- Africa
- The Americas
- Asia-Pacific

18.00

#### **Welcome reception**

## Thursday 27 April

9.00 Introduction to working groups

9.30 Plenary: Realising the MDGs through local government and decentralised co-operation: the Ugandan experience

Launch of the *Commonwealth Local Government Handbook 2006* by H.E. the President of Uganda

Vote of thanks

### Working group sessions

#### A. Localising the MDGs

1. What is the role of local government in eradicating extreme poverty and hunger?
2. What role does local government have in achieving improved educational standards?
3. What role does local government have in creating an environment for a healthier population? (MDG 4/5/6)
4. What role does local government play in promoting gender equality and empowering women in the community? (MDG 3)
5. What role does local government have in promoting environmental sustainability? (MDG 7)
6. What is the role of local government in promoting and engaging in global partnerships – both within Africa and beyond? How can the Commonwealth framework support this? (MDG 8)

#### B. Implementing the *Aberdeen Agenda* in Africa

1. Constitutional and legal recognition of local democracy  
Partnerships between spheres of government  
Defined legislative framework
2. The ability to elect local representatives  
Open local government – accountability
3. Open local government – transparency  
Openness to scrutiny
4. Opportunity to participate in decision-making  
Inclusiveness

**5. Adequate and equitable resource allocation**

**6. Equitable service delivery**

12.00 **Lunch**

13.00 **Study visits**

Visits to projects in and around Kampala: practical examples of how local government is helping to deliver the MDGs

19.30 **Symposium dinner**

**Friday 28 April**

9.00–10.00 **Panel: Measuring success and planning improvements: mechanisms to measure local democracy and good governance**

*Dr Makhosi Khoza, Secretary-General, South African Local Government Association*

**The Urban Governance Index**

*Shipra Narang, UN-HABITAT*

**CLGF international peer reviews**

*Nyasha Simbanegavi, CLGF/UCAZ Governance Officer*

**African Peer Review Mechanism, NEPAD**

10.30 **Coffee and tea**

11.00 **Plenary: A strategy for action**

Session to draw together recommendations for action from discussions in the plenary sessions and working groups and adoption of the *Kampala Agenda*

12.00 **Closing session**

Chair: *Cllr John Emily Otekat, Chairperson, CLGF*

**Keynote addresses:**

**Working with local government as a development partner**

Senior representative of the European Commission

**Working with local government to promote integration and development in East Africa**

*Hon. Nuwe Amanywa-Mushega, Secretary-General, East African Community*

**Working with local government to realise AU objectives**

Senior representative of the African Union

- 13.15 **Presentation on the Commonwealth Local Government Conference 2005, Delivering Development through Local Leadership, to be held in Auckland, New Zealand, 26–28 March 2007**  
*Hon. Mark Burton*, Minister of Local Government, New Zealand and  
*Basil Morrison*, President, Local Government New Zealand
- 13.30 **Close**

## Annex D

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## Annex E

### **The Millennium Development Goals**

By 2015 all 189 United Nations member states pledged to:

#### **Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger**

- Reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day
- Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

#### **Achieve universal primary education**

- Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling

#### **Promote gender equality and empower women**

- Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and all levels by 2015

#### **Reduce child mortality**

- Reduce by two-thirds the mortality rate among children under five

#### **Improve maternal health**

- Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio

#### **Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases**

- Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS
- Halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases

#### **Ensure environmental sustainability**

- Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes; reverse loss of environmental resources
- Reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water

- Achieve significant improvement in lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, by 2020

#### **Develop a global partnership for development**

- Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system
- Address the least developed countries' special needs
- Address the special needs of landlocked countries and small island developing states
- Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems
- In co-operation with the developing countries, develop decent and productive work for youth
- In co-operation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries
- In co-operation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies – especially information and communication technologies

*Source:* <http://www.undp.org/mdg>

## Annex F

### Notes on the Organisers

#### The Commonwealth Secretariat

A voluntary association of sovereign states spread over every continent and ocean, the Commonwealth's approximately 2 billion people make up 30 per cent of the world's population. Emphasising equality, trust and understanding, the Commonwealth facilitates the advancement of democracy, human rights and sustainable economic and social development within its member countries and beyond. The Commonwealth is committed to a set of fundamental values spelt out in the Harare Commonwealth Declaration of 1991, at the core of which is belief in and adherence to democratic principles.

The Commonwealth Secretariat, established by Heads of Government in 1965, is the principal organisation of the Commonwealth implementing the decisions taken by the 53 member governments. The Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation is the means by which the Commonwealth promotes economic and social development and the alleviation of poverty in member countries. It operates on the principle of mutual assistance, with member governments contributing finance on a voluntary basis and obtaining technical assistance as needed.

The Governance and Institutional Development Division (GIDD) of the Commonwealth Secretariat has responsibility for the Secretariat's mandate on public sector development. Its work covers the full spectrum of public sector administration and management as well as issues relating to civil society and private sector institutions with a public responsibility. GIDD's role is to provide advice and technical assistance to Commonwealth member countries in institutional and capacity building towards poverty alleviation and sustainable development. It has in-house expertise in areas such as governance, sub-national government, public sector reform, public expenditure management, human resource management and development, public-private sector partnerships, public sector informatics and anti-money laundering.

GIDD's in-house specialists and advisers work in collaboration with other divisions and external partners in providing assistance across a wide range of development issues to meet the particular needs of

individual member countries in a complex international environment. In sub-national governance, GIDD works closely with the Commonwealth Local Government Forum.

GIDD is also responsible for the Commonwealth Service Abroad Programme (CSAP) which is an innovative volunteer-based programme designed to assist in the development and implementation of people-centred, mass-impact projects that contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Recently, CSAP volunteers were deployed in Maldives and Pakistan, respectively, after the catastrophic tsunami and earthquake.

GIDD's interventions at the sub-national level have added a new dimension to its existing portfolio in public sector development. GIDD has assisted a number of Commonwealth members in advancing their decentralisation policies, has trained various relevant cadres of officials and facilitated the deployment of short- and long-term experts and consultants to fill areas of critical skill shortages.

To find out more about GIDD's programmes and activities, visit online:  
*[www.commonwealthextranet.net](http://www.commonwealthextranet.net)*

To obtain publications on local governance, please e-mail:  
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### **Commonwealth Local Government Forum**

The Commonwealth Local Government Forum was founded in 1995 as a focus for action on local democracy in the Commonwealth and was endorsed by Commonwealth Heads of government that year. The CLGF ensures that local government's voice is heard within the Commonwealth. It works closely with other Commonwealth and international organisations such as the Commonwealth Secretariat and the United Nations, notably UN-HABITAT.

As the organisation concerned with local government in the Commonwealth, CLGF works to promote and strengthen democratic local government across the Commonwealth, and to encourage the exchange of good practice through conferences and events, the Commonwealth Local Government Good Practice Scheme, research and information and working with Commonwealth countries to support the development of democratic values and good governance. The CLGF has been actively involved in encouraging and developing local elections and systems, election monitoring and capacity building support for councillors and councils.

The CLGF has more than 170 members in 40 Commonwealth countries. Members include: local government associations, individual local authorities, and ministries with responsibility for local government. Professional bodies, research institutions and other organisations with an interest in local government are welcomed as associate members.

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Since 2000 he has been Deputy Director, Acting Director, Director and Director General of the Uganda Management Institute, where he provides strategic leadership and is responsible for the Institute's business growth and performance.

Prior to joining the Institute, he was a lecturer at Makerere University, Adjunct Professor at the University of Toronto and a Visiting Professor at Ryerson Polytechnic University, Toronto. He has also advised Uganda's Ministry of Local Government, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics and the Population Secretariat, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

Dr Kiyaga-Nsubuga was team leader in 2003 for the UN-HABITAT consultancy which reviewed the implementation of the 1997 Uganda Local Government Act. He has also acted as team leader in country programmes run by UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP in Uganda, notably to implement Uganda's Poverty Eradication Action Plan goals. In 2002 he advised UNDESA on strategies for promoting poverty reduction through cooperation among local governments across national borders in Africa.

He has been a Member of the Board of Management of the International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration (IASIA) since 2004.

**Dr Munawwar Alam** is an international civil servant currently working for the Governance and Institutional Development Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat as Adviser at its headquarter in London. The Division holds the Secretariat's mandate for public sector development. Prior to this, Dr Alam served in the public service of Pakistan in various

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