

UN HABITAT

FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

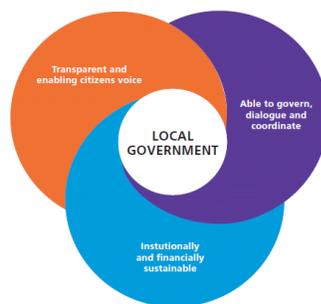


LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND DECENTRALIZATION UNIT REPORT OF RESULTS AND ACTIVITIES 2015

WHAT WE ARE...According to the UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan (2014-2019), the **LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND DECENTRALIZATION UNIT (LGDU)**'s work scope is in line with the objective of achieving: "City, regional and national authorities (that) have put in place effective decentralized governance that fosters equitable sustainable urban development". The LGDU's role is to develop normative and operational frameworks, to share experiences and disseminate best practices on local governance, democracy and access to basic services.

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE... Focusing on local governments' needs, the Unit addresses local management challenges through the development of tailored tools, instruments and methodologies to reinforce the capacities of local government. It also promotes city-to-city cooperation and advocates for the essential role of local governments on a global level. Consequently, it has established three (3) specific areas of work in

order to achieve: Well governed cities and towns, institutionally and financially sustainable local governments and transparent local governments enabling citizen voices.



OUR WORK IN 2015...The present report offers detailed information on the results achieved by the Unit in close collaboration with partners and donors during 2015.

Overall, in 2015 the work proposed was achieved, both at country and at normative level. To address the challenges, LGDU has advanced on creating structured platforms of dialogue between the different administrations and actors, who influence the management of the city (national,

local and territorial governments and their associations) in order to set up mechanisms of multilevel governance able to promote inclusive sustainable urban development. Further, the Unit worked to strengthen the capacity of national, territorial and local governments to develop policies and strategies for inclusive and participatory urban governance by fostering transparent and accountable strategies for local governments and by supporting innovative tools for its institutional and financial sustainability.

LGDU also strengthened its relationships with local and regional governments and its associations to raise awareness on UN-Habitat mandate in urban governance and management and to provide technical assistance to national, regional and local authorities and other institutions responsible for urban governance issues in the formulation, development and implementation of global processes such as the 2030 Development Agenda.

Strengthening decentralized governance

Governance is the enabling environment that requires adequate legal frameworks, efficient political, managerial and administrative processes, as well as mechanisms, guidelines and tools to enable the local government response to the needs of the citizen. To be able to “do their job”, local governments need to be in constant dialogue with all the other local stakeholders. To ensure effective measures and to achieve positive results for the citizens, taxpayers and economic agents, a constant coordinated action is required. Challenges such as urban mobility, employment or environmental protection, among others, extend beyond the realm of local governments and cover various legal-administrative divisions in the territory; hence the need for multi-level dialogue, both horizontal and vertical. The Unit has been working in the development of tools, projects and activities related to:

Urban and decentralized governance mainstreamed in global processes

LGDU kept supporting local and regional governments and their associations worldwide, gathered around the Global Task Force of local and regional governments (www.gtf2016.org). The effort to include local governments' voice in global agenda discussion allowed several joint processes such as the continuous advocacy for the localization of the 2030 Development Agenda, following-up on the successful consultation made in collaboration with UNDP and the Global Task Force and held in 2014. The three institutions have collaborated to advance on the topic by developing a Toolbox on Localization of the SDGs, specifically addressing the needs of local government associations; the instrument is foreseen to be released in 2016.



Additionally, as part of a strategy to advocate for the role of local and regional governments in the 2030 Agenda and the financing of

sustainable urban development, LGDU, in close coordination with the Global Taskforce, facilitated the participation of the Mayors' delegation in the 3rd Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) and reinforced its links with the African Union. Through active support of the delegation and the activities organized, the visibility of the issues related to local financing, critical to make the new global agenda work at local level, was broadly ensured and the decentralized governance approach was widely promoted.

LGDU has also provided technical inputs to the Habitat III background preparation on urban governance (issue paper).

Local governments Associations capacities reinforced and boosted

LGDU established strong alliances and joint activities with Local Governments Associations and City Networks such as UCLG, CLGF, Metropolis, CEMR, Forum for Cities in Transition, Council of governors Kenya, FMDV (besides the specific country projects that have partner with the corresponding Local Governments Association, i.e. Jamaica, Cape Verde, Etc.). This approach has

multiplied the possibility of dissemination within networks and reached the administrations that are normally out of the beaten track.

Furthermore, LGDU contributed to the elaboration of the UCLG IV GOLD report specifically in the issues related to urban governance at the small towns, metropolitan and intermediate scales.

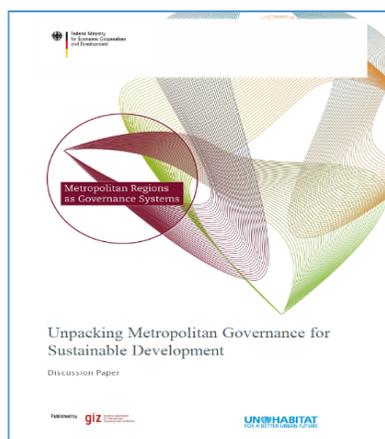
Specific work was also developed with the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF).



The work focused on technical advice in local economic development programming, multi-level governance strategies and decentralization, transparency and accountability in the provision of basic services and systematization of best practices on innovative municipal management in Western Africa through the CLGF antenna at the Ghana Association of Local Authorities, based in Accra.

Metropolitan governance in multi-level and decentralized processes supported

A comprehensive study “Unpacking metropolitan governance for sustainable development” was developed. It analyzes different forms of institutional governance structures at a metropolitan level and presents a set of thematic entry points for governance reforms, as well as mechanisms and instruments for metropolitan management, exemplified by a collection of case studies. This publication feeds the international debate on transforming urbanization and contributed to the development of the New Urban Agenda.



LGDU also analyzed multi-level governance mechanisms through in-depth case studies in order to engage further in advisory services and developing tools for improved coordination and peer-learning services, based on partnerships with Metropolis and FMDV (Global fund for city development).

LGDU also leveraged its expertise in various international events and contributed to the local and regional governments' agenda on metropolitan issues. Specific technical assistance was provided

to requesting partners for tailored programs to deal with the complex management issues arising from the common provision of basic urban services by different political and administrative bodies (Brazil, Colombia, regional network creation in Latin America).

International Guidelines on decentralization and basic services for all championed and mainstreamed

LGDU reinforced capacities by engaging dialogue processes between levels of government in order to reach national understanding and common road map at country level. Follow up was made on adaptation of the International Guidelines on decentralization and access to basic services with regard to decentralization reforms by taking stock on existing policies, engaging consultations on regulatory frameworks reforms (Jamaica, Solomon Islands, Kenya, Cape Verde, Uganda).

The Unit was active in bringing these experiences at the global level, particularly within the International Development Partners Working Group on Decentralization and Local governance (DELOG) where we succeeded in placing urban governance as one of the main stream of work of the group of donors.

Understanding of decentralized governance improved through Urban Governance mapping

LGDU worked closely with LSE Cities and UCLG Committee on Decentralization and Local

Governance to launch a global Urban Governance Survey, an initiative to build a global database on current models of urban governance for public dissemination, comparative policy and research analysis.



Decentralized governance is in this case illustrated thanks to user-friendly website highlighting local governments' challenges in terms of (i) jurisdiction, political representation and government structure, (ii) financial resources, assets and fiscal power, (iii) multi-level governance and decision-making processes, (iv) strategic planning instruments and (v) urban Governance Challenges. Seventy eight (78) cities responded and are taking part into the How cities are Governed initiative that explores new and innovative ways of communicating and mapping decentralized governance. It establishes a platform for individual cities to identify international urban governance cases that are of particular relevance to their specific situations in order to foster dialogue and exchanges of good practices between cities.

Strengthening inclusive urban management

The new complexities of cities of today require a constant and fluid dialogue between institutions, on one side, and between people and institutions, on the other. The relations with non-state actors are increasingly important to ensure a real participatory process and stronger inclusion of all in the city decision-making process. The public should be able to hold institutions accountable for the provision of basic services for all. There is an increasing need for accountability and transparency measures to ensure institutional effectiveness and better service delivery. Additionally, and in order to guarantee to respond to citizens' demands local governments need to be endowed with the necessary legal framework and municipal finance system to be able to do their job. The Unit promotes the use of SMART technologies as a tool to improve service delivery and to increase accessibility and transparency in the provision of basic urban services, leading the transformation of informal services into formal and safer ones. The Unit has been working in the development of tools, projects and activities related to:

Transparent municipal management promoted for improved citizens' inclusion

Several needs assessments regarding transparency and accountability in urban development initiatives were conducted during 2015, including activities at the CLGF Conference in Botswana, Africities in Johannesburg, plus the first participation of the local government constituency at the Anti-Corruption Conference in Putrajaya, where mayors confronted the anticorruption movement identifying challenges and bringing innovative solutions. The result integrated local governments' perspectives and concerns with the tools developed by Transparency International, reinforcing inclusive urban management.



LGDU and Transparency International hosted an expert group meeting to jointly develop and pilot an urban planning education/training module that addresses the issue of corruption and urban development in Africa. Architects, urban planning educators and practitioners, international experts and a dedicated group of anti-corruption practitioners from Kenya, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Uganda actively participated. LGDU provided crosscutting perspectives on Urbanization, Urban Land and Governance in order to help mapping common ground and joint interests between urban planning and anti-corruption experts. The meeting came up with the first outline for the module and implementation plan.

E-Governance and inclusion (youth, slum dwellers)

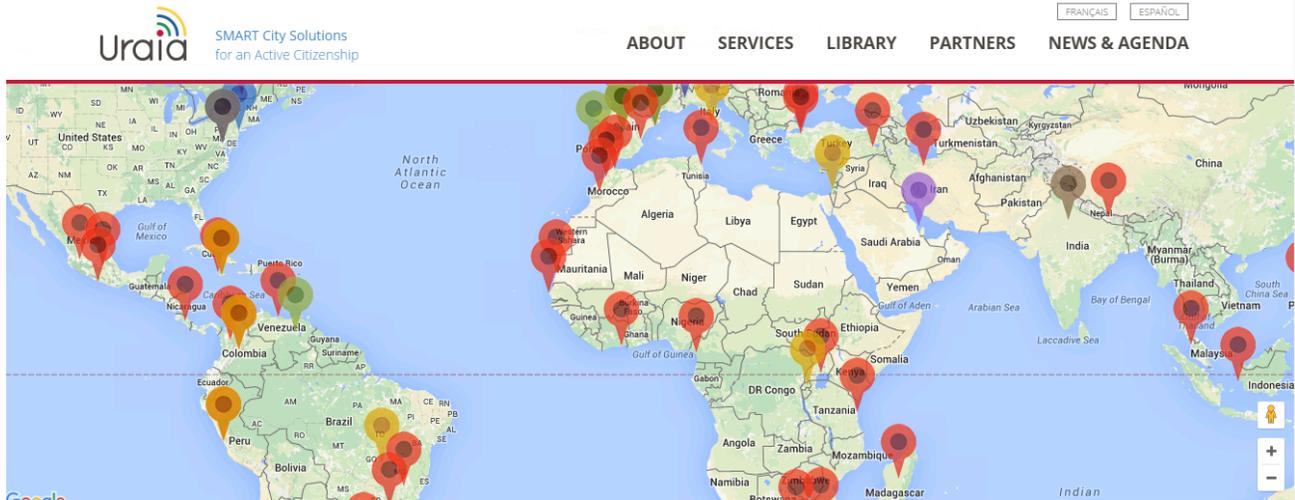
LGDU followed-up on the initiatives started in 2014 to enhance and promote ICT as an instrument to increase the levels of participation of people and the accountability of public policy implementation,

becoming especially relevant amongst the urban poor.

In 2015, LGDU published "E-Governance and urban policy design in developing countries", highlighting how ICT can become a catalyst to improve governance in towns and cities and help increase the levels of participation, efficiency and accountability in public urban policies, provided that the tools are appropriately used, accessible and affordable.

Demonstrative projects have been piloted in Kenya to showcase how ICT can be at the service of a more inclusive urban management

It highlights case studies, tools, methodologies, all reflecting current challenges and potential of e-governance processes in cities. Within the Future Policy Modeling (FUPOL) research consortium, an e-participation tool has been developed in Mtwapa (Kenya) in the field of slum upgrading, bringing together community leaders, the Kenyan Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, and the Kilifi County Council together.



LGDU also developed the Urban Innovation Marketplace project, as a response to the report on ICT urban-governance-and-youth findings. It collaborated with @iLab Africa at Strathmore University, Ericsson and Samsung to develop, test and implement tech innovations together with youth and county governments in Kenya, bridging the gap that has developed between tech savvy urban young people and county governments grappling with devolution.

An Innovation Hack day brought youth and the pilot local governments together based on a supply and demand equation, collaboratively bringing ideas forward to tackle urban challenges and now piloting an e-solution to connect young voices, for meaningful participation.

Enhanced local governance and urban management via SMART technologies

LGDU supported FMDV (Fond Mondial pour le Développement des Villes) in building up the Uraia Platform to respond to the local governments' needs, seeking innovative solutions to respond to the challenges of urbanization and build more resilient and inclusive territories.

Uraia facilitates the transfer of knowledge and expertise amongst local governments and their partners by creating networking opportunities to improve comprehension and allow the meeting between the demands from local governments and the service and technology offer from providers. Example of that was the Workshop on "Public-Private Partnerships Negotiation for SMART City Management" held in 2015 in Oslo, Norway.

The workshop offered the opportunity to discuss the main issues regarding public-private partnership for the introduction of SMART projects to city services. It also offered networking opportunities and contributed to building synergies and bridge gaps between local governments and private sector representatives.



The activity resulted in a set of Guidelines addressed to support local governments to negotiate contracts with the private sector in the implementation of SMART technologies applied to municipal management.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

During 2015, LGDU has developed a framework of strategies, initiatives and activities aimed to help municipalities, cities and central governments to strengthen local institutions and governance procedures and to promote urban governance and inclusive urban management. In this effort, LGDU has achieved, during this period, important advances regarding to:

- ✓ Mobilization of local, national and international partners to amplify the advocacy efforts of UN-Habitat and to promote policies, strategies and programs in issues related to urban governance, transparency and institutionally and financially sustainable local governments.
- ✓ Promotion of public awareness on urban governance and inclusive urban management on the work and mandate of UN-Habitat.
- ✓ Enhancing of networks to enable partners to collaborate on urban governance and inclusive management issues that resulted into the improvement of the collaboration and cooperation between partners worldwide.
- ✓ Enriching of UN-habitat's database of best practices, lessons learnt, case studies, research reports on thematic, regional and local urban issues related to urban governance, transparency and institutionally and financially sustainable local governments.
- ✓ All the activities implemented during the period have served to shape the work of UN- habitat vis-a-vis the 2030 Global Development Agenda in addition to become a basis for knowledge sharing between local and regional governments and other stakeholders, and to achieve a more holistic approach to sustainable urban development.

KEY PARTNERS

During 2015, LGDU increased direct cooperation with all the local government networks, while facilitating the increased work of UN-Habitat Regional Offices and Technical Branches with the local government thematic and regional networks.

Special attention should be given to United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), which includes most national associations, regional sections (UCLG - Eurasia, UCLG - Africa and UCLG - Asia Pacific, Latin America (FLACMA) and Europe (CEMR), plus the metropolitan section Metropolis. UCLG is additionally coordinating the Global Taskforce of local and regional governments for the post 2015 international development agenda, who gathers all the other major networks (www.gtf2016.org) and who has been instrumental in bringing the voice of local governments to the negotiation of the SDGs.

MAIN CHALLENGES

The year 2015 has been particularly challenging in terms of delivery due to the progressive implementation of the Umoja system.

LGDU has been able to respond to the difficulties by planning ahead and by establishing strategic partnerships with local government associations, able to create synergies in the joint implementation of activities while strengthening the technical capacities of associations to serve their members, though creating a multiplicatory effect at country level and being able to reach more secondary cities and those traditionally not participating in the international exchange.

LESSONS LEARNT

The progressive recognition at the global level of the crucial importance of local governments as key stakeholders to implement development agenda, reduce poverty and provide services to citizen is a clear opportunity for UN-Habitat to deliver on its mandate and programme, being the focal point in the UN-system for local governments. Building on the Rio+20 declaration "the world we want", and partnering with the Global Task Force for local and regional governments for the post-2015 agenda has resulted in an extraordinary advocacy work that permits today to talk more confidently about the role of local governments in delivering sustainable urban development. Effective decentralization and democratic practices in decision-making processes, with the related institutional, legal and capacity implications are favored by such a process.