

**SPOTLIGHT ON DECENTRALISATION: STRENGTHENING  
LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS -  
TRANSLATING DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES INTO RESULTS AT LOCAL LEVEL**

**EVENT ORGANISERS**

Practitioners' Network for European Development Cooperation  
Development Partners' Working Group on Decentralisation & Local Governance (DeLoG)

**CONTEXT**

Development strategies do not always adequately reflect the needs of the local population, and often do not sufficiently take into account the implementation challenges that exist at local level. Decentralisation and empowerment of local actors are key to ensure that public services are better targeted to the local needs.

Tackling this problem requires addressing the lack of accountability and transparency of central government, as well as strengthening the capacity of media, civil society and local authorities to participate in policy making processes. Subnational governments play an important role for improving accountability, especially towards citizens and aid beneficiaries. Strengthening of local bodies can contribute to increase the legitimacy of the state and reduce internal conflicts. Decentralised cooperation complements bilateral and multilateral aid by creating sustainable partnerships between sub-national authorities in the north and the south acting as a catalyst for knowledge transfer and the sharing of best practices.

**OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTCOME OF THE EVENT**

- Illustrate how development cooperation can promote participatory policy making
- Discuss how local accountability can be strengthened in a centralised political context
- Highlight the tasks of Parliaments, CSOs, and media in this regard, and existing good practice and innovative approaches in terms of capacity development
- Explain successful approaches in support for decentralisation
- Illustrate the potential of decentralised cooperation/twinning arrangements in that respect
- Discuss how global challenges such as climate change adaptation and natural resource management can be addressed at local level

**KEY ISSUES AND MESSAGES**

**I. Participatory policy-making to foster inclusive ownership**

Involving local authorities and CSOs in policy making is crucial for development effectiveness and inclusive ownership of development strategies. Subnational governments, civil society, the media and Parliaments need to be strengthened to be able to claim increased accountability and transparency from national governments, thus promoting good governance. Effective participation mechanisms need to be established so that the voices of the local population and CSOs are heard in the definition of national and local policies, in local financing and results monitoring.

**II. Making development strategies work on the ground – challenges of supporting effective decentralisation and local governance reforms**

The merits of decentralisation are e.g. better public service delivery, as well as democratisation, improved citizen participation and more transparency and accountability. However, it is not only paramount to get the political, fiscal and administrative framework for decentralisation right: the decentralisation process needs to be embedded coherently into the wider process of public sector reform. Otherwise conflicting reform initiatives, sometimes supported by donors, can have negative impacts on decentralisation and municipal autonomy. Transferring adequate authority, financial resources and administrative capacities to local authorities is a major challenge, as well as translating development priorities into budget spending at local level.

**FORESEEN SPEAKERS**

**Moderator:** Conny CZYMOCH, PHOENIX (TV) Moderator, Journalist, Media Coach

**Keynote speaker:** Dr. Klaus VEIGEL, DeLoG-member KfW Development Bank, Sector Economist, Sector and Policy Division Governance, presenting the lessons learnt of a recent DeLoG study

**Panel speakers:**

- Jean Pierre ELONG MBASSI, Secretary General, United Cities and Local Governments of Africa
- Teresa DEBUQUE, Municipal Mayor Anilao, Philippines, President League of Municipalities of the Philippines-Iloilo
- Dr. Omar Saïp SY, Director of Studies, Forum Civil, the national chapter of Transparency International in Senegal
- François BARY, Director Expertise and Quality, Member of the Management Committee, LuxDev
- Jorge RODRIGUEZ BILBAO, DG DEVCO Civil Society, Local Authorities, European Commission
- Risto ATANASOVSKI, Manager Foundation for Local and IT Development, Municipality of Gevgelija, Macedonia