

Governance Paper

Local Authorities Major Group

Workshop on HLPF and MG system

The Local Authorities Major Group (LAMG) is composed of networks and associations of cities, local and subnational governments. Differently from all other Major Groups, the LAMG represents governmental stakeholders, which have shared responsibilities with their national governments and specific competencies in the design and implementation of sustainable development policies, regulatory and legislative frameworks, in addition to innovative solutions addressing global and local challenges.

Three Organizing Partners (OPs) facilitate the engagement of the LAMG constituency into the UN Sustainable Development agenda, namely ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, nrg4SD – Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development, and UCLG – United Cities and Local Governments.

With thousands of members, including cities, states, regions and their national, regional and global associations, OPs ensure broad coverage in terms of geographical area around the globe. All OPs have different regional structures and representatives to enable the involvement of member governments and associations across Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Eurasia, Middle East and West Asia, Latin America and North America.

Coordination and collaboration in the LAMG

The three OPs regularly cooperate and collaborate for the post-2015 development agenda and others. Whenever possible OPs exchange views and share relevant information, especially when elaborating joint statements and for participation in meetings.

The position papers are based on collectively agreed messages and declarations adopted by each of the OPs membership during institutional meetings taking place regularly throughout the year. Besides, further and timely consultations are pursued in preparation for meetings and key documents, in order to allow further inputs and comments by members.

All three OPs are actively engaged in the Global Taskforce for the Post-2015 Development agenda Towards Habitat III (GTF)¹, pursuant to the invitation by Mayor of Istanbul and President of UCLG, Kadir Topbas, after his nomination for the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons by the UN Secretary General after Rio+20.

Sustainable Development is a cross-cutting issue, relevant to most international processes, especially within the UN system. In this regard, OPs also join efforts in other international agendas, for example within the scope of Local Governments and

¹ <http://www.gtf2016.org/>

Municipal Authorities Constituency at the UNFCCC and through the Local Governments Climate Roadmap since 2007, in the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), more specifically at the Global Partnership for Biodiversity Action, the UNEP's Local Authorities Major Group, the Major Groups' Facilitation Committee, at the preparations of the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction which ended up with the Sendai Framework for DRR in 2015-2030 as well as the 10 Year Framework Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP).

Based on that experience, the LAMG also maintains a fruitful dialogue and coordination with key organizations from different Major Groups. The OWG and SDGs negotiations have brought together different Major Groups, OPs and relevant stakeholders, creating stronger bonds and collaboration methods among the organizations involved. With a view to the thematic cluster approach used by the OWG, multiple initiatives were established to allow technical and knowledge exchange among OPs, Member States and relevant organizations, such as global campaign on UrbanSDG² or projects like the Communitas Coalition³. Thanks to this inclusive approach, a goal on sustainable cities and human settlements have been one of the unique themes that was supported by all the Major Groups in the work of OWG.

Outreach and legitimacy

The OPs each have different internal governance mechanisms to ensure the representativeness of its members, in many cases including mechanisms to elect member representatives that will compose governing bodies, facilitate the exchange of views and best-practices, in addition to reaching common decisions to be taken.⁴

In terms of technical content and cooperation, the organizations follow different thematic programmes of work decided by the mentioned governing bodies. With that in mind, there are several working groups established, with different selections of expert member governments on themes as water, indicators, financing, capacity-building, mobility, climate change and others. These must take into consideration that the LAMG and OPs not only represent an advocacy group, but also a consolidated constituency that engage projects and discussions envisaging to improve public policies and actions by local and subnational levels of government.

It is also noteworthy that a broad outreach to the constituency is ensured through the aforementioned Global Taskforce, which regularly meets to discuss the international agenda and work out joint positions to be delivered to the international community, directly engaging a very large number of networks of local and subnational governments and their partners in the ongoing discussions on the post-2015 development agenda and in the HABITATIII process

² <http://urbansdg.org/>

³ <http://www.communitascoalition.org/>

⁴ For a specific explanation of each OP governance mechanisms, please do not hesitate to representatives directly.

Furthermore, OPs provide direct and detailed information on logistics and accreditation procedures to members. Whenever possible, they provide registration for interested member governments to attend events, offer speaking slots, and even provide financial assistance to South regions.

Regular emails, timely reports and circulars are shared with constituents in order to ensure the LAMG is informed of the different activities that have been undertaken by the MG during those days and their results, also based on outcome reports and analysis from the perspective of local and subnational authorities.

Any organization of international scope that has a membership constituted of cities, local and /or subnational governments can be included in the LAMG.

Conclusions: Challenges and specificities of the LAMG

The LAMG has a very singular nature when compared to other constituencies of the Major Groups and other Stakeholders. As governmental stakeholders, they might rely on innovative and case-by-case solutions when it comes to administrative procedures and mobilization to international meetings, taking into account that most regulations mostly address non-governmental organizations.

Moreover, additional challenges may arise in the mobilization of high-level representatives from local and subnational governments and their associations to attend and speak at UN events, as Mayors and Governors have binding obligations and agendas in their territories. Furthermore, they generally do have specific needs and expectations in relation with their positions.

It is widely agreed that the Post-2015 process success can only be guaranteed if we develop a sense of ownership and accountability at all levels, international, national subnational and local. This will be a key enabler for attaining the required people-centered approach the post-2015 framework should have. Local and subnational governments are keen to play a more active role in the definition, implementation and follow-up of the transformational post-2015 development agenda, especially considering their proximity to citizens and unique legislative and policy-making competencies. Hence, we urge nations to ensure concrete mechanisms and modalities to enable a true collaboration and coordination of all levels of governments.

Further information

The respective OPs website and social media can provide more information on the mechanisms explained above.

LAMG at the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform:

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/majorgroups/localauthorities>

LAMG Homepage: <http://www.gtf2016.org/#!lamg-major-group/c1eyq>

ICLEI - <http://www.iclei.org/>

nrg4SD - <http://www.nrg4sd.org/>

UCLG - <http://www.uclg.org/>

Global Taskforce also has a dedicated website - <http://www.gtf2016.org/>