Workshop Proceedings
Elevating the Debate on Decentralization and Multilevel Governance in Africa

LPSA Sub-Saharan Africa Working Group
Nairobi, Kenya
May 20-22, 2024

LOCAL PUBLIC SECTOR
ALLIANCE

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Emara Ole-Sereni Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya

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The Local Public Sector Alliance—led by LPSA's Working Group on Sub-Saharan Africa and other Africa-based members of the Alliance—brought together leading African experts on decentralization and localization and partner organizations from around the world on how best to advocate for and support more inclusive and effective decentralization and localization in Sub-Saharan Africa. To this effect, LPSA—along with key partner organizations—organized the workshop "Elevating The Debate On Decentralization and Multilevel Governance In Africa" which was held at the Emara Ole-Sereni Hotel, in Nairobi, Kenya, from May 20-22, 2024.

The workshop was hosted by the Local Public Sector Alliance in partnership with the Dullah Omar Institute for Constitutional Law, Governance and Human Rights (University of the Western Cape, South Africa); the East Africa Local Governments Association (EALGA); the Institute for Local Government Studies, Ghana; and the Intergovernmental Relations Technical Committee (IGRTC), Kenya.

A select group of invited participants was able to join the workshop in-person. Other interested colleagues were able to follow the sessions and participate online.

These workshop proceedings summarize and capture key highlights of the three days of presentations, discussion, and nine workshop sessions. Further details and videos of each of the workshop sessions are available online at:

https://decentralization.net/lpsa-workshop-proceedings-nairobi-may2024/

Acknowledgements

Program Summary and Key Take-Aways

In December 2021, the Local Public Sector Alliance convened a series of virtual knowledge sharing events on [Decentralization and Local Development in Sub-Saharan Africa](). Progress on devolution and local governance in the region was found to be uneven, and the extent and pace of decentralization can be described as moderate at best.

A subsequent initial assessment of the [state of local governance institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa]() (LPSA, December 2023) indicates that although some countries have devolved regional or local government institutions, decentralization and localization efforts are in need of strengthening and deepening in countries around the region. This is especially true if we wish subnational governance institutions in Africa to be effective and empowered actors in efforts to localize sustainable development and/or to engage in decentralized development cooperation.

Whereas previous workshops largely focused on assessing the problems and challenges with respect to decentralization and multilevel governance in Africa, the workshop *Elevating the Debate on Decentralization and Multilevel Governance in Africa* aimed to be forward looking. In this context, the key underlying question was not whether countries should decentralize or not, or even what model of decentralization should be followed, but rather *how to improve public sector inclusiveness and effectiveness* by improving the capacity and coordination among stakeholders at different levels of government to increase the efficiency, equity, and sustainability of public spending in the context of a multilevel public sector.

Workshop sessions thus sought to identify realistic policy solutions—taking into account existing institutional and political economy constraints—that empower, capacitate, or incentivize subnational governance institutions in Africa to pursue more effective interventions to localize sustainable development and engage in decentralized development cooperation. In addition, workshop sessions focused on identifying specific mechanisms how bringing together stakeholders from across the continent to engage in knowledge development, knowledge sharing, and evidence-informed policy advocacy could 'elevate the decentralization and localization debate' and promote more inclusive and effective decentralization and localization (which we saw as a critical precondition for resilient, inclusive, sustainable, equitable and efficient development). Insights and answers to these questions were informed by different stakeholders' institutional perspectives as well as by stakeholders' different country contexts.

The following key highlights and take-aways were drawn by bundling key aspects for the way forward following the thematic discussions over the three days of the workshop:

The workshop was first-of-its-kind, building relationships between (national and local) government officials, policy makers, public sector experts and evidence organizations. The workshop brought together central government officials, local government practitioners, scholars, policy makers, civil society actors, and other champions of decentralization and localization from across Africa to discuss and exchange knowledge and experiences on the state of decentralization, localization, and multilevel governance. There is currently no other all-inclusive pan-African platform that brings together such a range of stakeholders in support of decentralization and more inclusive and effective localization in Africa.

Contextualisation of decentralization agenda is critical in understanding the pathway that countries in Africa have adopted. Varied experiences from Anglophone and Francophone Africa as well as different political context and the link to political setting remains critical in determining the interest, influencers, drivers and contours of decentralisation policy and implementation. Understanding and appreciating the conceptual clarity on devolution and decentralisation in Africa is critical in supporting the implementation of decentralisation policies.

The basis for decentralization in African countries may be rooted in post-colonial nation building, resolving conflict, preserving traditional and indigenous mechanisms and/or improving service delivery. While there are complexities in how countries are transitioning on their pathways, decentralisation is viewed as a means, an end and a process affected by many factors and operating within a highly centralised ecosystem. African countries can leverage on the vast experiences to promote contextualised practices and deliver on lower hanging fruits. There was an emphasis on extending local government functions to economy and engaging political ecosystem.

The 2014 African Charter on values and principles of Decentralization, Local Governance and Local Development has the potential to inspire continental action towards localizing development efforts that serve the people. However, its limited ratification is a limiting factor but it can be pivoted to influence national level action on decentralisation. Whereas all countries in Africa proclaim to have local governments, most local governments lack the authority and autonomy to act as "governments of the people, by the people, for the people."

The role of civil society and other non-state actors as well as centering decentralisation around the community is critical to an inclusive and effective approach to deliver on the promise of decentralisation towards service delivery. While community participation is increasingly evident, community-led monitoring and feedback mechanisms could be improved by working with civil society and other partners to develop tools that focus on measuring impact.

There is considerable variation in decentralization practices within Africa, but limited opportunities and insufficient mechanisms for knowledge sharing among actors across

countries. While Kenya and South Africa decentralisation agendas are cited as best practice on the continent, devolution does not necessarily equate to more effective services at the local level. Continued efforts are needed to ensure effective transfer of functions and financing, intergovernmental coordination, inclusive governance, and efficient local service delivery.

More data and analysis are needed to promote the consistent, responsible use of inclusive data and evidence to inform and improve policymaking. It is critical to exploring issues on good data, measurement and diagnostic tools that will elevate the debate on decentralization in Africa. Locally disaggregated data about public sector spending or local development results is rarely (publicly) available, and where such data is available, it is rarely used to analyze the effectiveness of the (local) public sector. This is a major missed opportunity to use evidence-informed decision-making to ensure a more inclusive, responsive and efficient public sector.

LPSA's Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Working Group offers a platform for further convening, coordination and partnerships to unlock the capacity of African experts and evidence organizations. Further convening, coordination and partnerships are required to unlock the capacity of African experts to engage in comparative (peer) reviews of local governance institutions as well as the ability to engage in comparative quantitative assessments of intergovernmental finances within and across countries in the region. The initial discussions of a Pan-African Network on Decentralisation Advocacy (PANDA) took shape with the LPSA's Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Working Group being proposed as a vehicle to generate ongoing policy dialogue among stakeholders andto elevate the debate on decentralization and localization with data, facts, and rigorous analysis.

Program Overview

	Morning Sessions	Afternoon Sessions
Monday May 20, 2024	**08:30 – 9:00 Registration** **9:00 – 10:30 Welcome and opening** *LPSA, co-hosts, and participants* *Opening Remarks by Guest of Honor: Kithinji Kiragu,OGW, MBS (Chair, Kenya IGRTC)* **11:00 – 12:30 Decentralization and localization in Africa: Motivators for disrupting centralized MLG systems** *Ensuring inclusion and deepening democracy: Jaap de Visser, South Africa* *Enhancing economic growth: Nicholas Awortwi, Ghana* *Localizing services and development: Anne Amin* *Session moderator: Jacqueline Muthura*	**13:30 – 14:00 An initial assessment of the state of local governance institutions in Africa** *Nick Travis, LPSA* **14:00 – 15:00 Disrupting and elevating the debate on decentralization and localization in Africa: an overview of LPSA resources** *Jamie Boex and Jacqueline Muthura, LPSA* **15:30 – 17:00 Strengthening decentralization and MLG as an opportunity to inclusive, localized development** *Lessons from CoE/CLRA: Boris Tonhauser, PLATFORMA* *Localizing the SDGs: Martino Miraglia* *Session moderator: Jaap de Visser*
Tuesday May 21, 2024	**9:00 – 10:30 Decentralization in Africa: Perspectives from federal contexts: Ethiopia, Nigeria** *Ethiopia: Ketema Wakjira* *Nigeria: Chris Okeke* *Discussant: Steve Ogutu* **11:00 – 12:30 Decentralization in Africa: Perspectives from Francophone Africa** *Nara Monkam, Univ. of Pretoria* *Rose Vincent, Utrecht University* *Alice Malongte, Strategies!* *Discussant: Gerhard van 't Land* *Session moderator: Paddy Siyanga Knudsen*	**13:30 – 15:00 Decentralization in Africa: Perspectives from countries with emerging devolution reforms** *Zambia: Mukapa Tembo,* *A view from civil society: Freddy Sahinguvu , SNV* *Gertrude Rose Gamwera, EALGA* *Discussant: Tinashe Chigwata* **15:30 – 17:00 Toward a Pan-African Network of Decentralization and MLG Advocates** *Group discussion: Judy Oduma, Jaap de Visser* *Session moderator: Augustine Magolowondo*

Program Overview (continued)

Wednesday, May 22, 2024 (Focus on Kenya)	
Early Morning Panel	**Late Morning Panel**
08:30 – 9:00 Registration **9:00 – 10:30 Devolution in Kenya: how can county governments more effectively promote localized sustainable development outcomes?** *Con Omore Osendo, Fmr. Governance Advisor British High Commission* *Muratha Kinuthia, Social Development Specialist, World Bank* *Anki Dellnas, Senior Governance Advisor, UNDP Kenya* *Session moderator: Judy Oduma*	**11:00 – 12:30 Devolution in Kenya: Initial lessons for decentralization and localization efforts in Africa** *Lady Justice Jacqueline Mogeni, Fmr. CEO CoG* *Sen. Catherine Mumma, Senate Committee on Devolution.* *Mrs. Angeline Hongo, MBS, Member of Intergovernmental Relations Technical Committee(IGRTC)* *Tom Were, CEO, ACT!* **12:30 – 13:00 Kenya takeaways** *Session moderator: Judy Oduma*

The Wednesday morning program is followed by lunch for all participants (13:00 – 14:00).

14:00 – 17:00 LPSA Co-Chairs only: LPSA work planning (2024-25)

Structure of Panel Discussions

For three days in May 2024, the Local Public Sector Alliance —led by LPSA's Working Group on Sub-Saharan Africa and other Africa-based members of the Alliance–engaged with experts and partner organization on how best to support and advocate for more inclusive and effective decentralization and localization in Africa.

For the purpose of the program's discussions, experiences on decentralization and localization in Africa were divided into four sub-groups of experiences: countries with relatively devolved systems (e.g., Kenya; South Africa); populous federal countries with less extensive devolution at the local level (e.g., Ethiopia; Nigeria); and countries with emerging or ongoing devolution reforms (e.g., Cameroon, Malawi, Mozambique, Togo, Zambia). For the purpose of our discussions, the latter group was further divided into discussions on the experiences of Anglophone and Francophone countries.

Each panel session generally lasted 90 minutes, with the time in each session roughly equally divided between panelist remarks and group discussions.

Given that the workshop's participants were senior practitioners and experts with extensive knowledge in the field, this workshop intended to engage in targeted discussions, rather than serving as an opportunity for participants to present academic papers or present a detailed review of the challenges of decentralization reforms in each country. Rather than emphasizing the problems encountered with decentralization reforms, presenters were asked to focus their remarks on adding value around the key topics of the workshop by focusing on (i) possible (and realistic) solutions and/or policy advocacy and (ii) possible inputs that LPSA or a pan-African network on decentralization and localization could provide in support of such solutions. Each panelist was asked to speak for a maximum of 10-15 minutes (preferably without powerpoint presentations: maximum 1 slide!), touching on the following topics:

- As context, in one or two sentences, what is the current driving force or dynamic with respect to the decentralization/ localization policy dialogue (policy reforms or policy reversals) in your country or sub-region?
- At the margin, what specific (realistic) interventions could help strengthen multilevel governance systems and/or empower, capacitate, or incentivize subnational governance institutions to more effectively pursue inclusive and sustainable localized development (and/or engage in decentralized development cooperation)?
- How can knowledge development, knowledge sharing, and evidence-informed policy advocacy through a nascent pan-African network of decentralization and localization advocates 'elevate the decentralization and localization debate' in different countries or

contexts, and promote more effective decentralization and localization as a critical precondition for resilient, inclusive, sustainable, equitable and efficient development?

After the panelists' remarks, the role of the lead discussant was to spend 5-10 minutes to capture the main points made by the panelists and to reflect further on these points in the larger context of the purpose of the workshop, in order to kick off further discussion and conversation.

Setting the Scene: Welcome and Opening

Speakers, panelists, and discussants: Guest of Honor - Kithinji Kiragu,OGW, MBS (Chair, Kenya IGRTC); Jacqueline Muthura (LPSA Project Manager); Judy Oduma (LPSA Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Woring Group Co-Chair); and Jaap de Visser (LPSA Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Woring Group Co-Chair).

Session overview: The workshop was opened by Mr. Kithinji Kiragu, OGW, MBS, Chairman of Kenya's Intergovernmental Relations Technical Committee (IGRTC). In his opening remarks, the Chairman noted the particular alignment of the forward-looking workshop objectives with IGRTC ambitions which aim to consolidate and deepen devolution in Kenya for more harmonise intergovernmental relations. He made emphasis on the thought leadership of LPSA to benefit from the lessons from Kenya's decentralization by devolution, through a "big bang approach", towards promoting decentralized systems of governance in Africa. The IGRTC comes against the backdrop of coordination and consultation among its 47 counties and governments, based on 2012 Statute Act on Intergovernmental Relations, which established the APEX body (President and 47 county governors), IGRTC and national summit. The IGRTC has key role is to monitor the transfer of all devolved functions from central to county governments and accompanied by transfer of resources

Key points raised touched on the necessity of African actors to improve capacity of stakeholders to ensure a multilevel public sector in terms of generating knowledge and localisation in Africa through its experts at country and subregional levels; inseparable elements of Kenya's devolution process to its 2010 constitution that gives the legitimacy for devolution through the counties; the search for transformation-led devolution becoming the national agenda as well as the community engagement at the central level in promoting social and economic development.

In terms of challenges of the devolution process in Kenya, he emphasised that the law and practice is not necessarily the same since the 11 years of devolution as the two levels of government are distinct but interdependent. Further, there are limitations in having adequate political buy-in for the periodic assessment on performance counties by IGRTC;

As an opportunity, the "big bang approach" experience has shown that decentralization is a long process and its devolution process has been complex, with political dynamics and resource challenges. The devolution process actors are also keen to learn from decentralisation experiences from other countries with a need for a network to share state of decentralisation across African countries and contexts. He pointed out that effective partnerships are critical across the spectrum of actors from academics, practitioners and experts.

The co-chairs of the LPSA sub-Saharan Working Group, Judy Oduma and Jaap de Visser welcomed the participants noting the diverse expertise. They also pointed out the changing times (institutional, equity and policy space) which provide an opportune moment to provide home-grown African solutions to improve public sector inclusiveness and focus on realistic policy solutions with pragmatic way to advance the agenda on decentralisation. The workshop was made aware of the link

between the LPSA and the African School of Decentralisation (hosted between Addis University in Ethiopia and Dallar Omar Institute in South Africa). The workshop was a means to sharing best practices, lessons from various country settings and how LPSA as a network can elevate the debate on decentralisation in Africa. The LPSA can be a knowledge broker on evidence, capacity development to support the devolution and decentralisation agenda, towards a pan-African network.

Speakers, panelists, and discussants: Jaap de Visser, South Africa (Ensuring inclusion and deepening democracy); Nick Awortwi, Ghana (Enhancing economic growth); and Anne Amin, UN-Habitat (Localizing services and development).

Panel Framing: As part of its global examination of the state of decentralization and local development around the world, the Local Public Sector Alliance convened a series of virtual knowledge sharing events on Decentralization and Local Development in Sub-Saharan Africa in December 2021. Progress on devolution and local governance in the region was found to be uneven, and the extent and pace of decentralization can be described as moderate at best. This has been a consistent finding for the past two or three decades. This conclusion was once again confirmed by an initial assessment of the state of local governance institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa (LPSA, December 2023) which indicates that although some countries have devolved regional or local government institutions, decentralization and localization efforts are in need of strengthening and deepening in countries around the region. This is especially true if we wish subnational governance institutions in Africa to be effective and empowered actors in efforts to localize sustainable development and/or to engage in decentralized development cooperation.

LPSA believes in the adage that 'decentralization is a means to an end, not a goal in itself'. The argument that local governments are 'the level closest to the people' is not a good-enough reason for decentralization unless we can demonstrate that regional and local governments can meaningfully contribute to the improvement of the wellbeing of their constituents, as well as to the prosperity and success of the nation-states of which they are a constituent part.

Most of us understand that the global challenges that countries face in the 21st century cannot be dealt with by any single government level alone. These challenges include improving access to public services such as education, health, or water, but also access to jobs and economic opportunity; climate change and environmental disasters; urban crowding and congestion; or political polarization and authoritarianism. Inclusive and effective multilevel governance systems are needed to ensure that stakeholders at all levels of society can work together to collectively solve these challenges.

However, exactly 'how' we advocate for—and support—decentralization and localization in Africa will depend on exactly 'why' we advocate for—and support—decentralization and localization. This session will touch on three main potential motivators for disrupting centralized MLG systems—(i) decentralization as a mechanism to promote democracy and inclusive and responsive governance, (ii) decentralization as a way to empower cities and regions as engines of national economic growth, and (iii) the localization of public services and development outcomes as a way to achieve inclusive and effective development—and explore their importance and ability to effect policy change.

Session overview: Jaap De Visser shared on ensuring inclusion and deepening democracy citing examples from South Africa, Ethiopia, Zambia to explain motivators of decentralisation and local authority as drivers of change as well as risks to mitigate.

Other issues related to identifying useful drivers that will shape advocacy and support for devolution; ensuring autonomy of local level is not misused through systems of national level control and oversight of local service delivery; the role LPSA practitioners and experts can play in advocacy of these issues with decisionmakers.

On enhancing economic growth, Nicholas Awortwi positioned that the economy, as part of service delivery of government, needs to be transferred to the local level. Decentralisation focus in different African context has leaned on political and social aspects and much less on fiscal and economic decentralisation.

Decentralisation can be a key for driving local economic development by local government leveraging on its diversity of players, including private sector, to support its economic and productive sector within the local government ecosystem. Local economic development is critical in moving beyond social services and creating employment at the local level. Citing Ghana as an example, it has facilitated manufacturing companies to steer job creation in 19 cities as it pushes for decentralisation, despite the limited capacity of local governments. However, the emphasis has been on training on entrepreneurship but not engaging in investment, which it leaves to the private sector with little motivation which leads to urban migration.

Indeed, grey areas must be explored on the role of public sector in facilitating private sector for development. However, new thinking on local services and local economy is proposed which repositions the economy. This necessitates shifting mindsets of the local governments to embrace this level of decentralisation. It also requires a new model for government to do business moving from "enabling environment" to engaging in business forums, supporting entrepreneurship, business coaching, training, etc. It needs new gear in youth facilitation through grants for engaging youth-led initiatives the transform seed money to products working with partnerships and collaboration with local government and private sector.

On localising services and development, Anne Amin set the scene with UNHABITAT's role as focal point for all urbanization and human settlement matters within the UN system. With the fastest growing urban population, Africa's challenges include ensuring basic service access for its urban residents; addressing the rising informal settlements and need for extensive reforms in governance. Several key issues were raised on what is needed:

- Contextualised policy and strategies (think beyond best practice)
- Fostering principles of people-centred cities and collective actions
- Planning authorities at local level with adequate capacity
- Assignment of mandates that align with local service delivery
- Accountability across public sector
- Implementation of fiscal decentralisation reforms
- Research support (e.g. Niger study on guiding principles on urban and rural development, urban market development in Cameroun)

- Leveraging coordination instruments: ensuring all segments of population are involved in urban planning; include public participation which then increases the likelihood of compliance; explore effective mechanisms for engagement
- Strengthening urban-rural linkages: close the development disparity between urban and rural areas.

The session discussion reflected on country references highlighting motivators and influencers for sustaining the decentralisation agenda, the link beyond service delivery to economic ambitions as well as effective urban planning in a contextualised approach with inclusive approach.

The importance of context was clear in outlining solutions: understanding the different variations of the process of decentralisation (and capacity) within a country and across African countries. Another dimension was critical: different context for Francophone and Anglophone Africa as well as political systems. All these have an impact on local government service delivery and economic growth. Pertinent to the discussion was also the role of voices from civil society and communities, and how we look at motivators moving forward.

The discussion also leaned on fixing the implementation gaps while recognising the commendable developments in constitutional, legislative, policy and planning of decentralisation agenda (e.g. Zambia, Kenya, Ethiopia, among others). The focus on service delivery and enhanced local development is well aligned on paper, with some advancing on citizen participation ambitions. However, the limited bandwidth and unwillingness to transfer real and/or more autonomy to subnational governments by central authorities coupled with transfers of resources (including staff) are evident. There is also lack of sufficient political will to effectively pursue the decentralisation policy implementation and sustain its results.

Panel 2
Elevating and disrupting the debate on decentralization and localization in Africa: An assessment of local governance institutions in Africa / an overview of LPSA resources

Speakers, panelists, and discussants: Nick Travis, Jamie Boex and Jacqueline Muthura (LPSA).

Panel Framing: A recent assessment of subnational governance institutions in selected Sub-Saharan Africa countries—conducted by the Local Public Sector Alliance (LPSA) with support from UNCDF and the Hewlett Foundation—suggests that the ability of subnational officials to respond to the needs of their constituents is often limited by the nature of local governance institutions. Based on the analysis of the subnational governance institutions in Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, South Africa, and Uganda, the study finds that in many African countries, there are considerable limits on the (political, administrative and fiscal) authority and autonomy of subnational governance institutions.

If we view decentralization or (localization) as the process of improving political, administrative, sectoral, and fiscal systems, capacity, and coordination among stakeholders at different levels of government (and the public) to increase efficiency, equity and sustainability of public spending, then it is important to have an objective, evidence-informed view of the state of subnational political, administrative, sectoral, and fiscal empowerment.

When it comes to decentralization, there is a longstanding tradition in Africa for national leaders to "talk the talk", but not to "walk the walk" or to "put one's money where one's mouth is". In order to disrupt and elevate the debate on decentralization and localization in Africa, it is important to assess, identify and acknowledge the political, administrative, sectoral and fiscal obstacle that prevent different government levels from contributing to sustainable development in and inclusive manner. An overview of current LPSA technical resources will be provided, which could serve as inputs into future efforts to support evidence-based decision making on decentralization and localization by provide actionable insights for systems change.

Session overview: Nick Travis presented results of a study by LPSA examining local governance institutions in 7 countries in Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia). With this study, LPSA sought to recognize that different organizations apply different definitions of what it means to be a "local government." Even when a definition is specified, the definition is seldom seriously applied in a way that leads to a consistent global metric based on the institututonal nature of local governance institutions and their degree of empowerment.

Based on a consensus definition of local governments, LPSA's LoGICA framework identifies four categories of local governance institutions: devolved subnational governments with extensive autonomy and authority (e.g., Kenya, South Africa); devolved subnational governments with limited autonomy and authority; hybrid local governance institutions, that combine features of devolution

and deconcentration (Ethiopia, Malawi, Uganda, Tanzania and Zambia); and non-devolved subnational governance institutions.

While local government legislation in most countries declares locl governance institutions to be corporate bodies, the *de jure* and *de facto* limitations placed on local governance institutions often restricts their fiscal decision-making, political autonomy and administrative powers. The lines of alignment have to do with addressing legislative clarity vs practical gaps, local democracy and urbanization, decentralised cooperation and functional scope of LG. The study does not intend to suggest a ranking of countries in their decentralisation process.

Jacqueline Muthura and Jamie Boex provided a background, scope and structure of LPSA (secretariat, advisory board, regional working groups and thematic working groups) as well as shared on its outputs (LPSA diagnostic tools).

Given its cross-disciplinary nature, LPSA can be value addition in the multilevel governance (MLG) ecosystem. The global picture is not encouraging with limited progress and backsliding on the 2015-2023 SDG agenda on localisation. The LPSA diagnostic tools include:

- LoGICA Framework: three distinct but inter-related components, including the LoGICA Intergovernmental Context, the LoGICA Country Profile, the LoGICA Score Card.
- IGP structure
- LPSA's Intergovernmental Fiscal and Expenditure Review (InFER) Framework
- LPSA's MOOD Framework

From a country work program, LPSA's localization in Kenya has focussed on childcare subsector. This is based on the lack of knowledge on decentralisation dynamics, donors support to the central level and civil society with no support to local government as well as the limited scale up efforts and limitations to project approach.

A hindering aspect is the lack of clarity on roles and responsibility between central and local governments. LPSA intends to bring research institutions and stakeholders to engage and broker knowledge in this subsector. LPSA can build models that would impact on childcare funding (private sector/subsidies) and on women's economic empowerment (e.g. country profiles) and learning across counties in Kenya.

The session discussion noted from various African context the deviation from de jure and de facto and resounded the need to explore the implications and how useful this information is.

An important highlight was the 2014 African Charter on values and principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance and Local Development which considered pivotal in terms of providing scope for definition of decentralisation linked to sphere of influence and interest of African governments. Decentralisation is a process to achieve something...which we need to show link to SDGs. Further the issue of conceptual clarity on devolution is not an end goal and its critical to bring forward the undertones while noting measurement issues and data limitations. A clear vision of decentralisation towards service delivery is crucial and requires picking out interest and influencers as well as the role of civil society in assessing the status and impact of decentralisation policy (e.g., Uganda - local government synergy with civil society engagement).

In terms of the influencers for engagement with LPSA WGs, dialogues with central authorities (e.g. Senior officials in Cabinet and LG ministries) as well as a strategy to harness diagnostic tools. It was also noted that women economic empowerment has to be long haul: "...so what after the table?" and in terms of disrupting: what is the target and where is the debate on decentralisation and localisation?

Speakers, panelists, and discussants: Boris Tonhauser (Lessons from CoE/CLRA/CEMR:, PLATFORMA); Martino Miraglia (Localizing the SGDs) and Jaap de Visser (Moderator).

Panel Framing: Despite the fact that political economy forces tend to pull towards the greater centralization of power and resources within the public sector, public sector decentralization and inclusive and effective multilevel governance systems are most likely a key precondition for inclusive, localized sustainable development in Africa. This session aimed to bring together several different experiences and insights on the strengthening of decentralization and multilevel governance systems.

Session overview: On sharing lessons from the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (CLRA) under the Council of Europe, Boris Tonhauser highlighted the work of PLATFORMA as coalition. It's scope of work is linked to the European charter which has been ratification by all member states with about 10 articles (core principles and some are elective). He noted that financial provision was not highly ratified.

In comparison, the African Decentralisation Charter has been signed by 17 countries and ratified by 9 countries and it requires 15 members ratification to come into effect. In Europe, the scope is devolved competence with "adequate" financial resources...that is often is in dispute. Aspects of concrete implementation and monitoring were shared noting that reporting on implementation is mandatory every 5 years, conducted by independent peer review system (including the congress of mayors and councillors) and funded by the Council of Europe.

Martino Miraglia touched on localising the SDGs from UN HABITAT perspective making a case for the distinction between decentralisation and localisation as key in putting SDG into action.

Limited movement is evident as the first resolution on the SDG had no mention to how UN will support decentralisation reforms. The premise of localisation in the SDGs allows more flexibility (translated into targets) to shape the political engagement. SDG localisation country framework stems from data, decision-making nad implementation as the local impact process. MLG has to be based on whole of govt (subnational govts and central linked to coherence, human capacities and resources) and whole of society (based on participation and inclusion from diversity of actors and corned on coordination, ownership and resources). It also relies on sound partnerships and global engagement. References to submissions and agenda of the Summit of the future as pivotal entry point for local public sector engagement.

The discussion centred on the cost-benefit analysis of localisation concept for LPSA work. Examples from Ethiopia argued it would be a narrow space than the broader decentralisation process which touches meso, micro and macro levels. Other aspects such as localisation and urbanisation were more suited. Further, it was argued that decentralisation was initially removed from SDG agenda but with last decade of action, local governments are asked to provide data on SDG implementation. The

UN system was expected to recognise the importance of decentralisation (e.g. UNDP support in decentralisation reforms), which cannot be removed from the development agenda with UNHABITAT playing a role in bringing back the rural sector on their urbanisation agenda. It was also pointed out that the SDGs agenda at country faced limited capacity and socialisation with local governments. In terms of the African Decentralisation Charter, it needs a tie to national devolution policy to attach importance for national interest in charter and also at regional level (e.g. only Burundi has signed in East Africa region). A question remained on benchmarking for determing adequacy for local governments.

Panel 4
Decentralization in Africa:
Perspectives from federal contexts (Ethiopia, Nigeria)

Speakers, panelists, and discussants: Ketema Wakjira (Ethiopia); Chris Okeke (Nigeria), and: Steve Ogutu (discussant).

Panel Framing: Progress on decentralization and efforts to pursue inclusive governance and sustainable development in a localized manner in Sub-Saharan Africa over the past 20-30 years have been found to be uneven at best. While the lack of local administrative capacity and the unavailability of financial resources are often blamed for the lack of progress on decentralization and localization efforts, political economy considerations often play an important role as root causes in the lack of progress on decentralization and localization reforms. Likewise, central and local political economy factors hindered African local governments from emerging as inclusive, results-oriented, developmental institutions. In order to disrupt the status quo and for progress to be achieved on the decentralization and localization agenda in Africa over the next 5-10 years, these obstacles will have to be overcome.

This session brought together several different perspectives and experiences about the state of decentralization and localization from Ethiopia and Nigeria, as examples of populous federal countries in Africa where decentralized or multilevel governance systems have the greatest potential for bringing the pubic sector closer to the people.

Session overview: Ketema Wakjira provided background and scope of Ethiopia's basis for decentralisation (i.e. nationality and identity questions). He highlighted a timeline of key events from 1991 to date touching on ethnic diversity accommodation and self- rule; the establishment of regional states (from 9 to 12) and zonal structures to its focus on district level and local urban management programmes; shift to poverty reduction programmes as a consensus politic policy to align to MDGs; new legislation on local government as well as intergovernmental forum

Critical issues raised included lack of consensus on whether the model of federalism fits with Ethiopia; local governments are still subordinate and national government lacks clear vision; lack of adequate autonomy (mismatch between the law and practice) with high dependence on national state; lack of accountability and rule of law (upward accountability is evident while downward accountability to the people is lacking).

Other considerations include policy oriented, sector specific and MLG decentralisation that goes beyond the focus on education to include other sectors such as decentralisation in land, electricity supply; inclusive approach that moves from territorial structuring of ethnicity which raises problems for urban areas ensuring mutual linkages for urban-rural development; decentralisation/federalism were sought after to resolve conflict but it could have evolved to decentralisation causing conflict and the question lies in the design or inadequate implementation; cultural foundation remains an important element alongside the reforms.

Shedding light on the experience from Nigeria, Chris Okeke pointed out the multi-level federal system in Nigeria with 36 state governments and cascading subnational government structures. Apart from few functions (e.g. collection of taxes), the focus has been continued devolution of power to local governments and the link to service delivery. There has been increased pressure in last 15 years to devolve with 2000-2015 being a period of slow economic growth and recent years with fast growing population putting pressure on poverty levels and food insecurity.

With decentralisation and improvement on service delivery as key drivers, acknowledging that decentralisation is political is key and building coalitions with CSOs and LG associations is a pre-requisite that pushes advocacy leading to action. Examples of the Nigerian Governors forum (NGF) show the need for capable technical associations that are driven by evidence. The NGF was supported on data transparency through building a database for 4 states on critical analysis on national budget and holding SNGs accountable. The tools are now extended to the state governments and now useful for CSOs on expenditure tracking.

Other aspects included pushing for service delivery to be included in constitutional amendments (5 alterations) so the political buy-in is through national assembly where politicians use data for decision making; state peer review mechanism (with NGF and other actors) based on a non-ranking mechanism linked to critical areas. What is needed is an incentive-based performance assessment of LGs: PFM focus with basic data on expenditure and citizen involvement; joint planning board between state and LG on strategic decision making for state and LG implementation.

Steve Ogutu shared on the community perspective centering his reflections on sustainable development that is inclusive of communities and how decentralisation fits in. Engagement of communities in decentralisation is lacking with community-based movement pushing for a systems mindset change by providing Community-led Development assessment tool to train local governments in 10 countries in East Africa and beyond. The social accountability aspect is pertinent with examples from Kenya where the community-led monitoring platforms were setup from village level as well as measuring success from the community perspective. Initiatives such as the school for devolution and CLD have been instrumental in working with county government for Makueni.

Speakers, panelists, and discussants: <<>> Nara Monkam (University of Pretoria), Rose Vincent, (Utrecht University), Alice Malongte (Strategies!) and Gerahrd van 't Land (DEGE Consult, discussant)

Panel Framing: Progress on decentralization and efforts to pursue inclusive governance and sustainable development in a localized manner in Sub-Saharan Africa over the past 20-30 years have been found to be uneven at best. While the lack of local administrative capacity and the unavailability of financial resources are often blamed for the lack of progress on decentralization and localization efforts, political economy considerations often play an important role as root causes in the lack of progress on decentralization and localization reforms. Likewise, central and local political economy factors hindered African local governments from emerging as inclusive, results-oriented, developmental institutions. In order to disrupt the status quo and for progress to be achieved on the decentralization and localization agenda in Africa over the next 5-10 years, these obstacles will have to be overcome. This session brought together several different perspectives and experiences about the state of decentralization and localization from Francophone Africa

Session overview: Nara Monkam focussed on revenue decentralisation in Africa pointing out the raising property taxes and expenditure decentralisation based on IMF data/OECD as well as low tax revenue decentralisation in Africa compared to Asia-Pacific, Caribbean regions. Further, devolution of tax and expenditure has challenges in many African contexts compared to other regions where LGs have more responsibility. There is heavy reliance on subsidies compared to tariff and fees (e.g. East Africa rely predominantly on grants and subsidies compared to other regions).

In Francophone Africa, a 2020 country level analysis shows higher fiscal autonomy (Benin, Madagascar) with few decentralised and governing local taxation. As such significant power remains centralised given the legal framework (Togo).

With reference to decentralisation experience in Cameron, Alice Malongte, provided an outline of motivations from autocracratic context stemming from political consideration (China), service delivery objective (Rwanda) and consolidation of political power (Cameroun).

The Anglophone crisis in Cameroun show the restructuring of municipalities and regions and the role of the central state. While decentralisation is rooted in the Constitution, it took 10 years for legal framework to effective implementation with first transfer of competences in 2010 from ministries to local government. However, no resources to implement the functions with the key obstable being the lack of political will of central government.

Organisations such as Strategis!, have been focussed on pushing decentralisation to be a tool for service delivery in an autocratic state as a means of bringing the state closer to the people. Its work dates to 1998 and has reached across municipalities to support the implementation of decentralisation policy and encourage the inclusion of municipalities. The LPSA could be

instrumental in leveraging information and participation by bringing in more practitioners from council levels to exchange. It can also be a platform for connection to local government associations.

Rose Camille Vincent presented an overview of decentralisation process in francophone West Africa. The adoption of decentralisation is evident in early 1990s in constitutions of Benin, Burkina Faso (1991), Mali (1992), Cote d'Ivoire and Cameroun. The legal policies shape decentralisation agenda of all West African FR countries. The MDGs highlighted the role of local governments in poverty alleviation and later, the agenda on localising the SDGs has pushed by UN system. The period has also seen diversity of programmes that support public sector reforms.

In the discussion, issues were raised including the acknowledgment of the long-term process for decentralisation and the extent to which central government gives way to decentralize with less control from the central (e.g. Burkina Faso reaped the greater benefits from initial decentralisation process but now challenged by resource constraints); challenges of localising development approach at the subnational level with local governance; implementation is largely dependent on the context and country specificities in terms of ways to improve local governance; advocating for decentralisation benefits from lessons but needs to focussed on what works in the context; decentralisation can be a driver for sense of identity – what is the place for LGs. The post shock situation (e.g. Balkans, Central Europe, Latin America, Rwanda..) drove decentralisation. There were questions on the link with democracy: Article 34 of 2007 African Charter on Democracy, elections and governance and the importance of ratification of these related charters.

Other aspects included considering own revenue generation as a way for LG to sustain their budgets and impact on social behavioural change (e.g. groundbreaking study on Kenyan Accountable devolution programme on tax gaps and OSR); challenges of varying land rate policies and uniqueness of local government resources impacting on own source revenue (e.g. Kenya's mara region uniqueness on tourism does not match up with Kisumu); political drive during elections to own source revenue agenda; use of infrastructure bonds (e.g. Kenya's experience has shown that no county government has been able to float infrastructure bonds); lessons from subnational borrowing regimes (e.g. Johannesburg has a better credit rating than sovereign rating and the potential for borrowing, but it needs a central govt oversight); link of decentralisation to greater ambitions for effective implementation of development goals; community voices as empowerment for downward accountability; greater ambitions for adequate implementation of development goals; equalisation model and extent of decentralisation (e.g. Benin saw increases on dependency of local govt and role of central govt); insufficient trained human resource to properly carry out the functions induced by decentralisation as well as the choice of authorities being politically driven which can impact on expertise; funding for decentralisation capacity is critical on various topics including gender mainstreaming (e.g. donors are mainly GIZ, Canada) as well as drawing on citizens as a resource for effective service delivery.

The LPSA can bridge the knowledge gap for stakeholders to see diversity of approaches for their contextualisation and the practical aspects. The platform can possibly explore critical arguments beyond the truism and belief of decentralisation linked to reducing conflict and fragility as a goal of decentralisation. The LPSA working groups in Africa can also centre the debate on the traditional knowledge systems which have worked in decentralized efforts and their integration to modern governance frameworks.

Panel 6
Decentralization in Africa:
Perspectives from countries with emerging devolution reforms

Speakers, panelists, and discussants: Mukapa Tembo (Zambia), Freddy Sahinguvu (a View from Civil Society), Gertrude Rose Gamwera (EALGA), Tinashe Chigwata and Augustine Magolowondo.

Panel Framing: Progress on decentralization and efforts to pursue inclusive governance and sustainable development in a localized manner in Sub-Saharan Africa over the past 20-30 years have been found to be uneven at best. While the lack of local administrative capacity and the unavailability of financial resources are often blamed for the lack of progress on decentralization and localization efforts, political economy considerations often play an important role as root causes in the lack of progress on decentralization and localization reforms. Likewise, central and local political economy factors hindered African local governments from emerging as inclusive, results-oriented, developmental institutions. In order to disrupt the status quo and for progress to be achieved on the decentralization and localization agenda in Africa over the next 5-10 years, these obstacles will have to be overcome. This session brought together several different perspectives and experiences about the state of decentralization and localization from a number of unitary countries in Africa that are either pursuing—or as the case may be, failing to pursue—decentralization reforms and/or more effective multilevel governance arrangements.

Session overview: Mukapa Tembo presented on Zambia's pathway to decentralisation touching on service delivery as the cornerstone for post-independence agenda. Through the 1965 Local Government Act, the asymmetry of powers and differentiation was very useful but there was a move to one-party state. By the 1990s, the fear of democracy was that it would allow proper reversal of devolving powers as the one-party was entrenched in all institutions. In 1991, Local Government Act was revisited but the constitution was silent on decentralisation. The 1996 constitution had a mention on functions but LGs were struggling and capacity derailed. Democratic tendencies affected decentralised in 2001, with the government reviving the decentralisation debate and setting up a committee to work on decentralisation policy but with no implementation. The 2016 Constitution made clear devolution at national, provincial and local level with allocated powers and functions to LG. In 2021, it took a cabinet circular to devolve LG functions to local govt (e.g. primary health, education, pontoons, road safety, etc).

In sharing civil society perspectives of decentralisation in Mali, Freddy Sahinguvu highlighted that decentralisation was the basis for restoring state credibility and dealing with political response for Tuareg rebellion in Mali. In the background has been progress in local democracy. Key issues remain on citizen mobilisation; transparency; citizen accountability and shrinking civil space.

However, there are prospects as the future depends on decentralization process; push for accountable local governance in Mali; youth engagement at heart of local governance; citizen mobilisation; social accountability; mentorship programme for women. The LPSA can play a role in exploring the role of traditional leaders, research on social norms on governance, political impact on governance reforms as well as contributing to evidence-based advocacy in fragile settings.

Gertrude Rose Gamwera Buyinga outlined the scope and role of the East Africa Local Governments Association, established in 2005, has 9 member states with various approaches to decentralisation. Contextual issues lie in the different countries from the "big bang approach" (e.g. Kenya closest to federalism but largely on paper), devolution away (e.g. Burundi – demand for more accountability, democracy), parliament debate (e.g. Uganda – central interference and lack of sense of community for the people, Tanzania has a devolution draft bill), resolving complexities (e.g. Somalia, Ethiopia). The EALGA provides a convening platform for local governments and fosters a strong cities platform that enhances youth engagement.

A call for homegrown solutions was resounded, particularly as the regional partners look at decentralisation as instrumental for countries in EALGA (expect Tanzania, Kenya) to recover from conflict. The EALGA works with other actors that support the exchange of best practices and brokering knowledge for its membership.

The discussion touched on the separation of legislative and administrative functions (e.g. Kenya county assembly has separate functions; Zimbabwe is redesigning the state with not just one set of functions) and the role of constituent assemblies in harnessing results of decentralisation; exploring how national parliaments work in conjunction with subnational governance structure for effective decentralisation; exploring benchmarking for local governments innovation and technology use; local authorities' capacities, competence and motivations – need for monitoring, peer reviews or standard setting; practical measures and role of traditional leaders in councils (e.g. in Zambia - dual administration on land issues); more money into hands of constituents and role of LG in fiscal discipline (e.g. Constituency Development Fund recent increases in Zambia are commendable but lack LG engagement which makes accountability problematic for councils); analysis of the lines of accountability in inclusive governance (e.g. Somalia, Rwanda and South Sudan). In Mali, huge advocacy for 3% women participation) ...need to understand power analysis and handle the barrier well. While in Burundi, lines of accountability are linked to social norms. Overall, it was critical to include civil society in pushing for accountability. EALGA expressed the interest to work with PLATFORMA.

Speakers, panelists, and discussants: Group discussion, led by Judy Oduma and Jaap de Visser

Panel Framing: The challenges that countries face in the 21st century cannot be dealt with by any single government level alone. This include challenges such as improving access to public education, health, or water; but also improving inclusive access to jobs and economic opportunity; combating climate change and environmental disasters; urban crowding and congestion; or preventing political polarization, conflict, and authoritarianism. Instead, inclusive and effective multilevel governance systems are needed to ensure that stakeholders at all levels of society can work together to collectively solve these challenges.

In recognition of this fact, the Local Public Sector Alliance (LPSA) was established in January 2022 as a global professional network of advocates for inclusive and efficient decentralization and localization. In little over two years two years, we have gone from a small group of decentralization enthusiasts to a truly global network of nearly 2000 advocates for inclusive and efficient decentralization and decentralization around the world.

As a global network (and practicing what it preaches), LPSA is itself a decentralized organization, with 7 regional and thematic working groups. LPSA's Africa Working Group is filling an important void in policy dialogues with respect to decentralization and localization in Africa, supplementing ongoing efforts by other stakeholders in the region, including decentralization champions within national governments, local government associations, development partners, and civil society organizations.

How can the synergies brought about by LPSA and its Regional Working Group for Sub-Saharan Africa serve as a possible future Pan-African Network of Decentralization and MLG Advocates? What would LPSA's Africa Working Group (or a nascent pan-African network) actually do—at the country-level and/or (sub-)regionally—to promote and support more inclusive and effective decentralization and localization effort in Africa? Can LPSA (and if so, how) support the disruption of the stagnant state of decentralization and localization in Africa, and support evidence-based decision making on decentralization and localization by providing actionable insights for systems change? Would such interventions provide value-for-money and be fundable?

Session overview: Following some guiding remarks, Judy Oduma and Jaap de Visser moderated a discussion that deaw out key elements and issues that could provide contours for a proposed Pan-African Network on Decentralisation. Topics discussed included:

- Membership / Audience / Who we engage with? : several categories across central, LG, partners, CSOs and individuals. The distinction between the membership and who the network engages as audience (e.g. influencers and decision makers)
- Scope / What to do: Evidence:-based policy analysis and activities at region-wide level (e.g. State of LG institutions in Africa, Data mapping, methodology development - UN

subnational voluntary review methodology) as well as target countries (e.g. peer review of adherence to decentralisation principles, expert papers)

- Strengthening Africa's capacity for evidence-based policy analysis: Annual ASD, build momentum for in-between knowledge exchange with alumni which links to LPSA sub-African migration, specific skills for peer-review of local/MLG systems, strong academic environment in Africa.

The discussion touched on several suggestions in framing the network (see box). In addition, emphasis was made to ensuring participation in national reviews (e.g. Botswana, Kenya, Rwanda) and exploring the subnational voluntary review methodology under PLATFORMA/ULCG training. It was highlighted to temper the ambitions given the interests of the network and limited resources to what we can achieve. Further, the drivers have to be primarily the countries focussing on leverage to win hearts and minds at the national level for decentralisation.

Pan-African Network of Decentralization and MLG Advocates

Scope
− Preamble needs to reflect African Decentralisation Charter making a case for decentralisation and continental economic growth, with clarity on national level action;
− Cross-refence to African charter on democracy, elections and governance;
− Linkage to subregional agenda on economic development and peace-building (e.g. work through EALGA and bring it closer to nations)
− Decentralisation should considered as a means, an end and a process for improved service delivery
− Critical to unbundle inclusiveness and effectiveness in making sure decentralisation is effective
− Include advocacy and strategic decisions for prioritising
− Strategise better on common issues and low hanging fruits (e.g. Subnational voluntary local reviews)
− Build and support the African School of Decentralisation

Positioning
− Carve out a legitimate space for advocacy for African experts and leverage on champions (influencers) within the network;
− Include civil society and traditional leaders in the target audience/influencers
− Role of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) for onboarding and their role as door openers and champions
− Leverage on advocacy element in EALGA to EAC including pushing for observer position within EAC and representation of local govts
− Seek partnership with bilateral and multilateral partners in development cooperation ready with a Pan-African approach (e.g. World Bank, GIZ, ENABEL, African philanthropic organisations)

Role of LPSA
− Link the African focussed elements of LPSA sub-groups as part of thought leadership for the network
− Possible transition of Pan-African network under LPSA sub-Saharan Africa (to be discussed in WG)
− Support situational analysis building on repository of research and studies on decentralisation in Africa

Speakers, panelists, and discussants: Con Omore Osendo (Fmr. Governance Advisor British High Commission), Muratha Kinuthia (World Bank), Anki Dellnas (UNDP Kenya), and Judy Oduma (Moderator).

Panel Framing: Since the introduction of the 2010 Constitution, Kenya is among the most decentralized (devolved) countries in Africa. County governments in Kenya have considerable political, administrative and fiscal authority and autonomy, and are (de jure and de facto) assigned important functional responsibilities. While devolution has brought the public sector in Kenya closer to the people and ended the near-monopoly of central government over public sector power and resources which prevailed during the previous system, continued progress needs to be made in multilevel governance systems for county governments to emerge as inclusive, results-oriented, developmental institutions. On the third day of the program, the workshop participants were joined by a number of Kenyan colleagues, in order to explore how county governments in Kenya can more effectively promote localized sustainable development outcomes.

Session overview: Key highlights shared by Con Omare Osendo, Muratha Kinuthia, Ann-Christine Dellnas:

- Decentralisation has a link to democracy: organising society in order that people have a voice, access to services and participation in their locality (ultimate goal of democracy)
- Role of the state (through various levels): all areas have equitable access to services
- Colonial backgrounds are still very present even within the systems and structures.
- For Kenya, decentralisation was used to resolve political issues and resolve communities live together around power sharing.
- In Kenya, county govts have varied ways in deepening the devolution process to village level. Some sectors have recentralised.
- What is working:
  o In terms of service delivery, expansion in health facilities (ECD) and staff and similar movements for agriculture sector…
  o Improvements in equity
  o Vertical balance on getting counties back on track with separate powers between executive and administrative and accountability mechanisms (e.g. minority chairing council of governors)
- What needs to happen:
  o Address the service delivery issues with norms and standards, which impact on access.
  o Assess the quality of service - are people are happy with services.
  o Ensure that the council of governors have a laid down policy similar to parliament.
  o Enhance decision-making that moves "closer to the people"

- o Prioritisation and planning

The discussion looked at mechanism in place to generate data that will continuously inform the decisions; responsibility for continuous reflection and learning; availability of good data in all sectors; setting standards and norms using data; benefits of devolution on value for money (improved but critical gaps and human resources management is problematic); addressing and institutionalising flexibility with functions as a way to curb out corruption; measuring evidence from devolution (e.g. CDF vs governors); addressing fears on federalism and the role of LPSA and World Bank studies.

Speakers, panelists, and discussants: Lady Justice Jacqueline Mogeni (Fmr. CEO CoG), Ms. Angeline Hongo (Member, IGRTC), Tom Were (CEO, Act Change Transform, ACT!) and Judy Oduma (moderator).

Panel Framing: Despite the imperfections of the devolution process in Kenya and the current state of devolution, Kenya has experienced the most comprehensive decentralization reform in Africa since South Africa's post-apartheid Constitution was agreed in 1996. What (initial) lessons does Kenya's experience hold for decentralization and localization efforts in other African countries — both in terms of managing the decentralization process itself, as well as in terms of the ability of decentralization reforms to achieve a 'dividend' for the people.

Session overview: In highlighting learning from past 10 years of Kenya's devolution process, Lady Justice Jacqueline Mogeni, who was an instrumental member of the team that devolved powers to local (county) governments, highlighted the relevance of the "big bang" approach by Kenya given the political and cultural constraints.

On the importance and process of intergovernmental coordination, Angeline Hongo, shared how best practices were sought from Canada, Australia but realising that Kenya's context needed to address pending issues on service delivery. As such, having a structure for coordination across the two levels of government was critical. The background to local authority transfer fund was long process which required legislative setting to avoid manipulation and deadlines are critical to make sure devolution plan is tracked. Political will and strong institutions have been critical (e.g. IBE, Council of governors and the Summit).

While the transfer functions were to be complete by 2016, IGRTC is now clarifying the fine lines and unbundling the elements of what should be done at national and county level; assets and liabilities; conflict resolution in the transfer functions in clarifying the mandate. Kenya is also sharing experiences with other countries in the region and across (e.g. Nepal...). IGRTC needs the right capacity and needs to housed at higest level (office of Deputy President and summit at Presidents office).

Mr. Tom Were articulated on the effective inclusive of civil society and community participation highlighting the inclusion of marginalised people who are distant from the centre (e.g. women, children) and their critical role in holding leaders accountable on how they invest and prioritise resources.

The discussion touched on governments being inspired to stay grounded in decentralisation process; legislative provisions for mandates and asymmetry; autonomy of counties linked to interpretation of the law (e.g. Kisii boundary issues with first resolution from high court); capacity building role by government; bridging the knowledge gap in judiciary and other government arms on decentralisation along the process; solutions for effective engagement and complaints mechanism; sustaining the

mandate, financing and autonomy of IGRTC and ensuring transparency at the local transfer authority at country level; addressing weaker structures and inequalities through proposals for incentives for good implementation.

On fiscal decentralisation, PFM scope needs not be taken with care as countries cannot base their decentralisation on perfect PFM systems and to appreciate the complexity of powers, functions and resources across 48 governments but delivery as one nation. There is need to ask the role of PFM system in design of constitutional governance and democratisation. It was argued that PFM systems (designed by Treasury) can undermine the implementation. However, the role of the treasury is critical for decentralisation and as such a need to invest in change management in MLG.

Other aspects were the need for deadlines for constitutional adherence; allowing dysfunctional institutions (e.g. parliament with vested interest) to be part of the devolution implementation is problematic; clarity on resolving intergovernmental disputes (summit is the space for disputes as dialogue is the first option and the court is last resort); better communication to public on devolution progress and lessons; acknowledging that ethnicity has been replaced by clannism in resolving community power sharing as such checks and balances on ensuring embodying clannism; addressing clarity on the role of senator, role of governor for the local people is empowering to their feedback as well as issues on bargaining for recentralising devolution.

In terms of monitoring, the discussion highlighted addressing missing standardised indicators; service charters in public spaces which included satisfaction methods; need to reform behavioural change towards responsibility, dialogue and feedback; inclusion of the spectrum of actors from religious leaders, traditional, community as well as the need for indicators to be pushed through.

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[(V)] *Signifies virtual (online) contributions and participation.*

Conference Photos

What does the Local Public Sector Alliance do?

The Local Public Sector Alliance (LPSA) is a global professional network of advocates for decentralization and localization tha seeks to promote inclusive, equitable societies, and sustainable global development by enhancing the understanding of decentralization and localization as complex, cross-cutting and multi-stakeholder reforms.

LPSA supports evidence-informed multilevel governance reforms and elevates the global debate on public sector decentralization and localization, by (1) advancing the state of knowledge on decentralization and localization and supporting policy reforms by engaging in evidence-based policy analysis; (2) ensuring a more informed, interconnected global Community of Practice, where knowledge sharing takes place across countries, disciplines, institutions and sectors; and (3) engaging in convening, outreach and field building to achieve a larger, more empowered global Community of Practice, with country-level champions well-positioned to champion decentralization and localization reforms.

Our programs are geared towards bringing together—and exchanging knowledge with—stakeholders from a range of different institutions and backgrounds, including central government officials, policy makers, local government officials, sector specialists, academics and researchers, civil society organizations, development partners and citizens.