



# Local Public Sector Alliance Annual Report 2024



LOCAL PUBLIC SECTOR  
ALLIANCE

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ALLIANCE**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2024**

## LOCAL PUBLIC SECTOR ALLIANCE

### OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2024



**Jamie Boex**

**Executive Director, Local Public Sector Alliance**

Dr. Jamie Boex is the Executive Director of the Local Public Sector Alliance and chairs the Local Public Sector Alliance Board of Directors. He is a senior public finance expert with experience in decentralization, localization and public sector reforms in over 25 countries around the world.



**Chas Cadwell**

**Director and Secretary, Local Public Sector Alliance**

Chas Cadwell is an Institute Fellow at the Urban Institute in Washington, D.C. and was for many years the Director of the IRIS program at the University of Maryland. His current work targets the political economy of intergovernmental decision-making. Chas is a Director and the Secretary of the Local Public Sector Alliance.



**Astrid Haas**

**Director, Local Public Sector Alliance**

Based in Hong Kong, Astrid is an independent urban economist supporting cities on urbanization strategies. Astrid has worked extensively with city governments across Africa and Asia in diverse roles, including as Policy Director at the International Growth Centre.



**Paul Smoke**

**Director, Local Public Sector Alliance**

Professor Paul Smoke is a Professor of Public Finance and Planning and Director of International Programs at NYU's Wagner School of Public Service, and a leading global expert on decentralization. Paul is a member of the Board of Directors of the Local Public Sector Alliance.



**Rose Camille Vincent**

**Director, Local Public Sector Alliance**

Dr. Rose Camille Vincent is an Assistant Professor of Economics at Utrecht University with expertise in Public Economics and Development Economics. She is a Director of the Local Public Sector Alliance.



**Enid Slack**

**Chair, Local Public Sector Alliance Advisory Board**

Enid Slack is the Director of the Institute on Municipal Finance and Governance (IMFG) at the School of Cities at the University of Toronto. Dr. Slack is the Chair of the Local Public Sector Alliance Board of Advisors.

## LOCAL PUBLIC SECTOR ALLIANCE

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**Isabelle Chatry** Head, Decentralization, Subnat. Finance and Infra. Unit, OECD  
**John Coonrod** Founder and US Chair, Movement for Community-led Dev.  
**Khim Lal Devkota** Former Member of Federal Parliament, Nepal  
**Amy Gill** Team Leader, Core Gov. Functions and Local Governance, UNDP  
**Tom Hart** Senior Research Fellow, ODI  
**David Jackson** Director of Local Dev. Finance, UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)  
**Roy Kelly** Professor, Sanford School of Public Policy, Duke University  
**Gundula Löffler** Research Fellow, ODI  
**Christian Luy** Former Coordinator, DeLoG Secretariat / GIZ  
**Kader Makhoul** Special Advisor to the World Secretariat, UCLG  
**Cecile Meijs** Director, The Hague Academy for Local Governance Institute  
**Francois Vaillancourt** Professor, Université de Montréal  
**Gunjan Veda** Senior Manager, Movement for Community-Led Development  
**Deborah Wetzel** Governance and Public Sector Management Expert  
**Peter Yates** Associate Director, The Asia Foundation

*Note: All LPSA Working Group Co-Chairs are also members of the Board of Advisors. All LPSA Advisory Board Members are associated with the Local Public Sector Alliance in their personal or professional capacity, rather than as representatives of their respective institutions.*

## LOCAL PUBLIC SECTOR ALLIANCE

### REGIONAL AND THEMATIC WORKING GROUP CO-CHAIRS

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#### Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) Regional Working Group

<b>Judy Oduma</b>	Fmr. CEO, Co. Assem. Forum, Kenya
<b>Jaap de Visser</b>	University of Western Cape, RSA
<b>Kah Walla</b>	CEO, Strategies!, Cameroon

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#### Asia Regional Working Group

<b>Madhavi Rajadhyaksha</b>	Senior Director, Abt Global
<b>Rachana Shrestha</b>	Asia Development Bank, Manila
<b>Peter Yates</b>	The Asia Foundation

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#### Europe and Central Asia (ECA) Regional Working Group

<b>Adrian Ionescu</b>	Senior Decentralization Advisor
<b>Gábor Péteri</b>	Consultant
<b>Glendal Wright</b>	Municipal Finance Expert

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#### Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) Regional Working Group

<b>Francisco Vázquez Ahued</b>	PFM Consultant, Mexico
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#### Local Democracy, Inclusive Governance and Community-Led Development

<b>John Coonrad</b>	Founder and US Chair, MCLD
<b>Colin Copus</b>	Prof. of Local Politics, De Montfort University
<b>Augustine Magolowondo</b>	Reg. Dir., Democracy Works Foundation
<b>Giacomo Negrotto</b>	Policy Specialist - Local Governance, UNDP

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#### Subnational Finance and PFM Working Group

<b>Titilola Akindeinde</b>	Executive Director, LOGRI
<b>Gundula Löffler</b>	Research Fellow, ODI
<b>Elton Stafa</b>	Senior Expert, NALAS

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#### Gender Equity and Women's Empowerment Working Group

<b>Hemanthi Goonasekera</b>	CEO, Fed. of Sri Lankan LGAs
<b>Jacqueline Muthura</b>	Program Manager, LPSA
<b>Jacqueline Moustache-Belle</b>	Fmr. Mayor, Victoria, Seychelles

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# LOCAL PUBLIC SECTOR ALLIANCE

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# LOCAL PUBLIC SECTOR ALLIANCE

## ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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

We do so by elevating the global debate on public sector decentralization and localization, by (1) **advancing the state of knowledge** on decentralization and localization; (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.

This annual report summarizes the activities of the Local Public Sector Alliance for 2024. In 2024, LPSA's global membership continued to grow rapidly, reaching close to 2,100 members from 139 countries and territories.

The activities of the Alliance are largely shaped by the commitment and contributions of its members, who volunteer to share their knowledge and enthusiasm about different aspects of decentralization, local governance, and localized development with others in the global Community of Practice. We are grateful for the contributions and support received from our members, advisory board members, working group co-chairs, and partner organizations.

As a result of the volunteer contributions of many, LPSA provides considerable value-for-money to its partners and supporters as a global knowledge sharing platform. The average cost per member for the core knowledge development, knowledge sharing, and outreach activities of the Alliance amounts to less than 30 US dollars per member.

Rather than charging our members—predominantly based in the Global South—a membership fee, the Alliance has been able to make its contents and activities publicly available free of charge as a result of the operating support received from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. This has allowed the Alliance to continue on its trajectory of rapid growth in service to its global Community of Practice, and has allowed the Alliance not only to “elevate the debate” on decentralization and localization, but to leverage its expertise by catalyzing action in localizing women’s economic empowerment and childcare in Africa.

Jamie Boex  
Executive Director, Local Public Sector Alliance  
February 23, 2025





## PROGRAM 1. KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT

The Local Public Sector Alliance seeks to promote inclusive, equitable societies and sustainable global development by enhancing the understanding of decentralization and localization as complex, crosscutting and multi-stakeholder reforms. In line with this mission, where there are gaps in knowledge that the Alliance is well-positioned to fill, the Local Public Sector Alliance aims to elevate the debate on public sector decentralization and localization through knowledge development activities.

### What are we doing?

As a global professional network promoting inclusive multilevel governance and sustainable localized development around the world, LPSA recognizes the importance of stakeholders having a common vocabulary—and a common understanding of core concepts—when discussing issues related to decentralization, multilevel governance, and the local public sector. The need for a shared understanding of concepts and definitions is particularly pertinent given the global diversity and multidisciplinary nature of the global Community of Practice working on different aspects of decentralization and localization. With this in mind, LPSA pursues three sets of knowledge products.

***Primers and general knowledge products.*** The first set of knowledge products prepared by LPSA are general primers and other general knowledge products, which provide an overview of our shared knowledge base as a community of practice of, and provide an entry-point for students and practitioners interested in the topic. These knowledge products (so far) include a glossary of decentralization, multilevel governance, and the local public sector terms; a primer on decentralization and multilevel governance; and a primer on Fiscal Decentralization Primer

***LPSA Assessment tools.*** The second set of knowledge products prepared by LPSA is formed by a series of assessment tools to analyze the multilevel governance structure of a country, along with the subnational institutions and intergovernmental systems that contribute to inclusive governance, effective public service delivery and sustainable localized development. These frameworks include:

- The ***Local Governance Institutions Comparative Assessment (LoGICA) Framework***, which helps assess the main institutional (political, administrative, fiscal and service delivery) dimensions of multilevel governance systems.
- The ***Intergovernmental Fiscal and Expenditure Review (InFER)***, which aims to review the public sector's fiscal patterns across all government levels, analyzing the vertical and horizontal allocation of revenues and expenditures, linking multilevel finances to the spatial distribution of public sector outcomes.
- LPSA's ***Multilevel governance as an Opportunity or Obstacle to Development***, or MOOD Assessment, which guides policy makers, sector specialists and/or policy advocates in assessing the multilevel structure of a particular sector or area of development.

- Finally, **LPSA’s PROMOTE (Promoting Results-Oriented Management for Local Transformation and Efficiency) framework** helps assess whether subnational governments achieving their mission of creating value for its constituents by serving as a platform for collective decision-making and by providing inclusive and efficient public services.

**Specific knowledge products.** The third set of knowledge products pursued by LPSA generate specific knowledge about topics or countries within our wide field of interest. The specific knowledge products may come in the form of working papers, or targeted reports—for instance, applying LPSA assessment tools to specific country contexts.

### What are we learning?

An important lesson that we are learning is that there is still much to learn in the realm of decentralization, localization, and multilevel governance. Despite the volumes of policy analysis and research being conducted around the world, there continue to be extensive gaps in basic knowledge surrounding decentralization, localization and multilevel governance. Our world—along with the role that multilevel governance plays in the world—continues to evolve rapidly.

Some of the most extensive gaps in knowledge deal with the most basic issues. How many regional and local governance institutions are there in each global region? How many of these institutions meet the definitions of being truly devolved regional or local governments in the MENA region? How many local governments in Africa are responsible for the delivery of primary and secondary education—not just by law, but in practice? How many subnational elected representatives are there in each country in Asia? How many of these elected representatives are women? What metrics are available to measure subnational governments’ roles in climate mitigation, adaptation, and environmental protection?

LPSA will continue to work together with policy makers, policy practitioners, scholars, and development practitioners—including those from the World Bank, OECD, UCLG, and others—to pursue filling these knowledge gaps.

### P 1.1 - General Knowledge Products

During 2024, two major additions were made to LPSA’s library of general knowledge products.

First, in partnership with the World Bank, LPSA released ***Fiscal Decentralization, Local Public Sector Finance, and Intergovernmental Fiscal Relations: A Primer on Multilevel Government Finance*** (Boex, Williamson, and Yilmaz 2024). This primer is one of a series to bring together the latest thinking on multilevel governance and intergovernmental finance. It is recommended to read this note together with ***Decentralization, Multilevel Governance and Intergovernmental Relations: A Primer*** (Boex, Williamson, and Yilmaz 2022). These notes complement each other in providing a full picture of multilevel governance and intergovernmental fiscal architecture.

In addition, with the intent to move towards global consensus on a comprehensive and consistent set of definitions related to decentralization, multilevel governance, and local public sector, LPSA **released *Decentralization, Multilevel Governance, and the Local Public Sector: A Glossary*** (LPSA 2024).

Learn More: <https://decentralization.net/resources/primers/>

## P 1.2 - Specific Knowledge Development

In 2024, Mr. Nick Travis continued to lead LPSA's effort in managing the global rollout of the LoGICA framework, with a particular focus on Africa, Asia and Latin America.

More information: <https://decentralization.net/countries/>

State of Local Governance Institutions in Africa. An Initial State of Local Governance Institutions (SOLGI) in Sub-Saharan Africa (LPSA 2024) was finalized in February 2024. The countries included in the first round of LoGICA assessments in Africa include Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda. The LoGICA Intergovernmental Profiles for Zambia was produced in 2024.

State of Local Governance Institutions in Asia. A first set of LoGICA Intergovernmental Profiles for Asian countries was produced in 2023 for Bangladesh, East Timor, and Indonesia. Profiles for Bhutan, India, Japan, Laos, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Vietnam were completed in 2024. The work in Asia is supported by Limabenla Jamir and being undertaken in close partnership with the Asian Development Bank, The Asia Foundation, Oxford Policy Management, and others.

State of Local Governance Institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean. In partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank, LPSA is in the process of preparing an assessment of the state of local governance institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean. This effort is being led by Francisco Vázquez Ahued (LPSA's Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) Regional Working Group), building on the IADB-ECLAC Outlook of Fiscal Relations between Levels of Government in Latin America and the Caribbean (*Panorama de las relaciones fiscales entre niveles de gobierno en países de América Latina y el Caribe*). LoGICA Intergovernmental Profiles were produced in 2024 for Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Suriname and Mexico.

In addition, in 2024, LPSA released a working paper on ***Financing strategies for inclusive urban development: Moving beyond the traditional application of public finance theory to advance inclusive urban finance practices in the Global South***. (Boex 2024).



## **PROGRAM 2. KNOWLEDGE SHARING**

Different types of news, information, and analysis regarding the evolving nature and performance of multilevel governance systems are being produced at an increasing rate of speed by global news outlets, scholars, researchers, and practitioners around the world. However, given the cross-cutting nature of decentralization and localization reforms—and the highly stove-piped nature of institutions and disciplines—information about decentralization and localization is often hard to find. Knowledge sharing is especially hard across different global regions—particularly when language barriers exist among countries or continents.

As a global professional network of advocates for inclusive and efficient decentralization and localization, one of the primary purposes of the Local Public Sector Alliance is therefore to gather and share current and pertinent news, information and research on decentralization, localization and multilevel governance among our global Community of Practice, including the Alliance’s 2,000+ members.

### **What are we doing?**

In addition to the global knowledge sharing that takes place as part of our convening, outreach and field-building efforts (under Program 3), LPSA’s global knowledge sharing efforts involve four main channels. First, LPSA’s website—Decentralization.Net (DNet)—is a leading global platform for sharing knowledge and information on decentralization and localization relevant for policy makers, local government officials, researchers, civil society leaders, and development practitioners. Second, the Alliance’s main direct form of communication is our bi-monthly LPSA Connections newsletter. Third, LPSA hosts webinars and online meetings—both organized by LPSA’s Global Secretariat as well as through its working groups—to facilitate knowledge sharing across regions, countries, institutions, and disciplines. Fourth, our nascent portfolio of online courses allows new entrants in the field to acquire in-depth knowledge in the field of decentralization, localization, and multilevel governance.

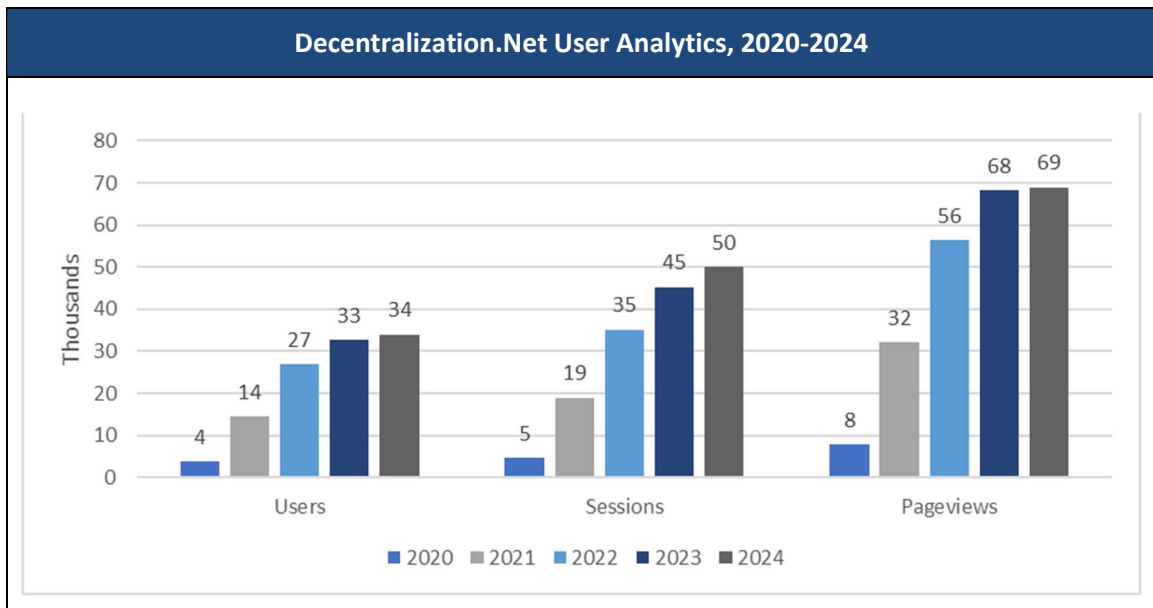
LPSA’s knowledge sharing efforts (Program 2) are closely linked to the Alliance’s convening, outreach and field-building efforts (Program 3). In fact, as reflected further below, LPSA’s most visible knowledge sharing event—the in-person workshop on “Elevating The Debate On Decentralization and Multilevel Governance In Africa” was held at the Emara Ole-Sereni Hotel, in Nairobi, Kenya, from May 20-22, 2024, under the auspices of LPSA’s Working Group on Sub-Saharan Africa and other Africa-based members of the Alliance. This workshop 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.

## What are we learning?

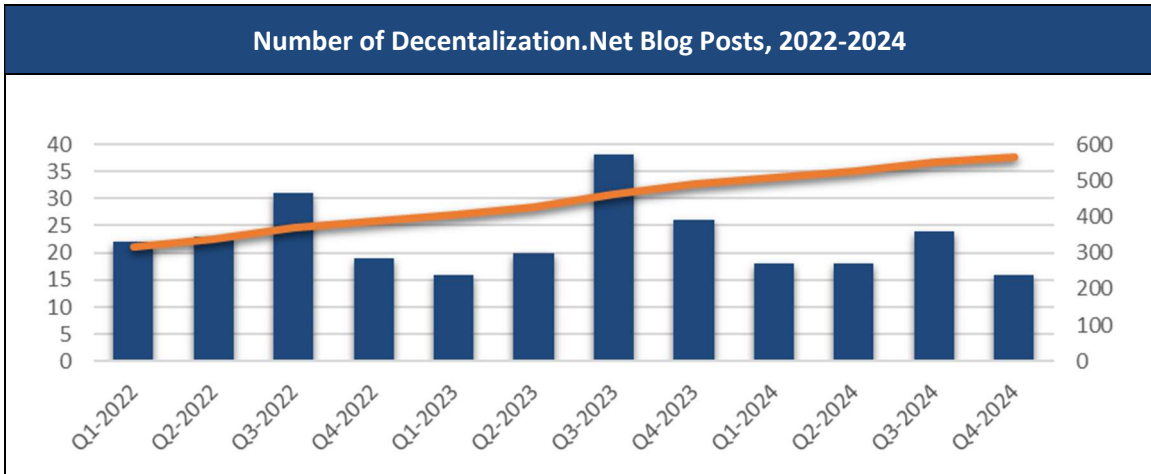
LPSA continues to be evidence-based in monitoring its growth of membership and knowledge sharing efforts. The available metrics suggest a continued widening of our membership and Community of Practice, and continued success in pursuing its mission to “elevate the decentralization and multilevel governance debate”.

### P 2.1 – Decentralization.Net

The Alliance’s online platform, Decentralization.Net (DNet), is the global convening place for policy makers, local government officials, researchers, civil society leaders, and development practitioners interested in decentralization and localization. The platform is managed by Mirna Dave, LPSA’s Director of Communications and Operations. In 2024, DNet served over 69,000 pageviews during 50,000 web sessions, serving 34,000 users around the world. Website visits reflect more than a doubling of LPSA’s knowledge sharing impact over the past three years).



DNet continues to grow steadily as the leading online platform for the decentralization and localization Community of Practice. The LPSA Team posted 76 new blog posts in 2024 (565 total posts on DNet). The LPSA Team also posted about Community of Practice events on the LPSA calendar, including LPSA webinars, partner events, and working group activities.



## P 2.2 – Membership and Newsletter

The Alliance’s main form of communication with its membership is through the LPSA Connections newsletter. The LPSA Team sent six newsletters to the full Community of Practice audience in 2024 (sent bi-monthly) and four Special Announcements (in most off-months).

In 2024, the Alliance increased its membership by nearly 500 new members / subscribers, reflecting continued robust growth in LPSA membership with 2,095 total members/ subscribers by year-end of 2024. This reflects a doubling in over the past two years. Our global membership includes members from 139 countries and territories around the world. Based on email domains, at least 10 percent of our members works for a major development organization (including World Bank, USAID, UNDP, UNICEF, and GIZ).

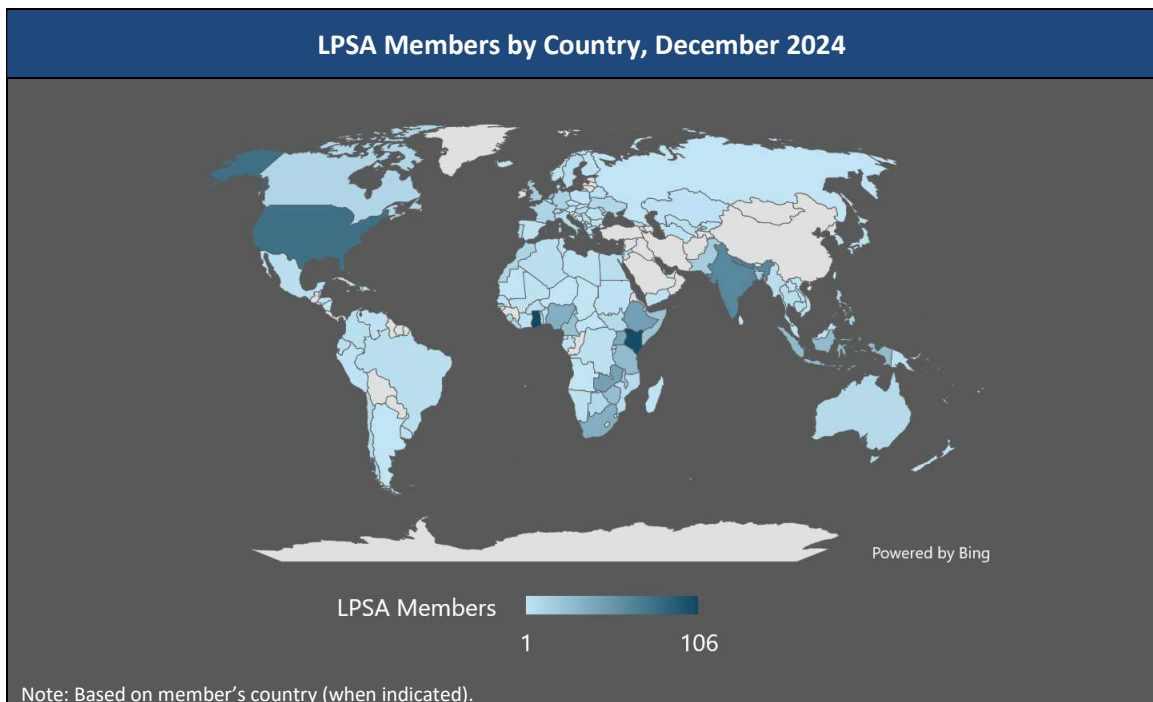


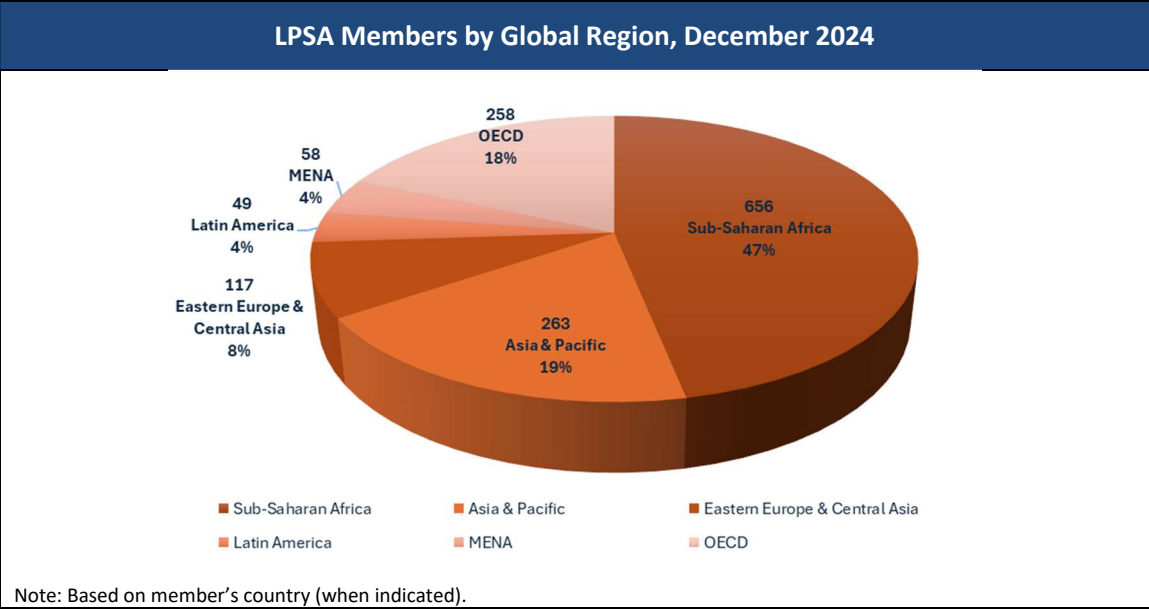


A more detailed analysis of our membership data reflects the truly global nature of the Alliance. Based on members' indication of their country of residence, less than 20% of LPSA's membership is based in OECD countries, while over 80 percent of our membership is based in the Global South (non-OECD). In fact, almost half of LPSA's membership is based in Sub-Saharan Africa. The top-two membership countries for LPSA (Ghana and Kenya) are located in Africa.

LPSA Members by global regions				
	Global Region	Members*	Countries / territories	Percent of members
1	Sub-Saharan Africa	656	40	46.8
2	Asia & Pacific	263	24	18.8
3	Eastern Europe & Central Asia	117	21	8.4
4	Latin America	49	16	3.5
5	MENA	58	14	4.1
6	OECD	258	24	18.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1401</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Based on member's country, as indicated by member (December 1, 2024). About one-third of members did not indicate their country of residence.





### LPSA Members by country (Top 10)

1	Ghana	106
2	Kenya	103
3	United States	78
4	Nepal	67
5	India	63
6	Ethiopia	47
7	Zambia	46
8	Uganda	42
9	South Africa	37
10	Nigeria	37

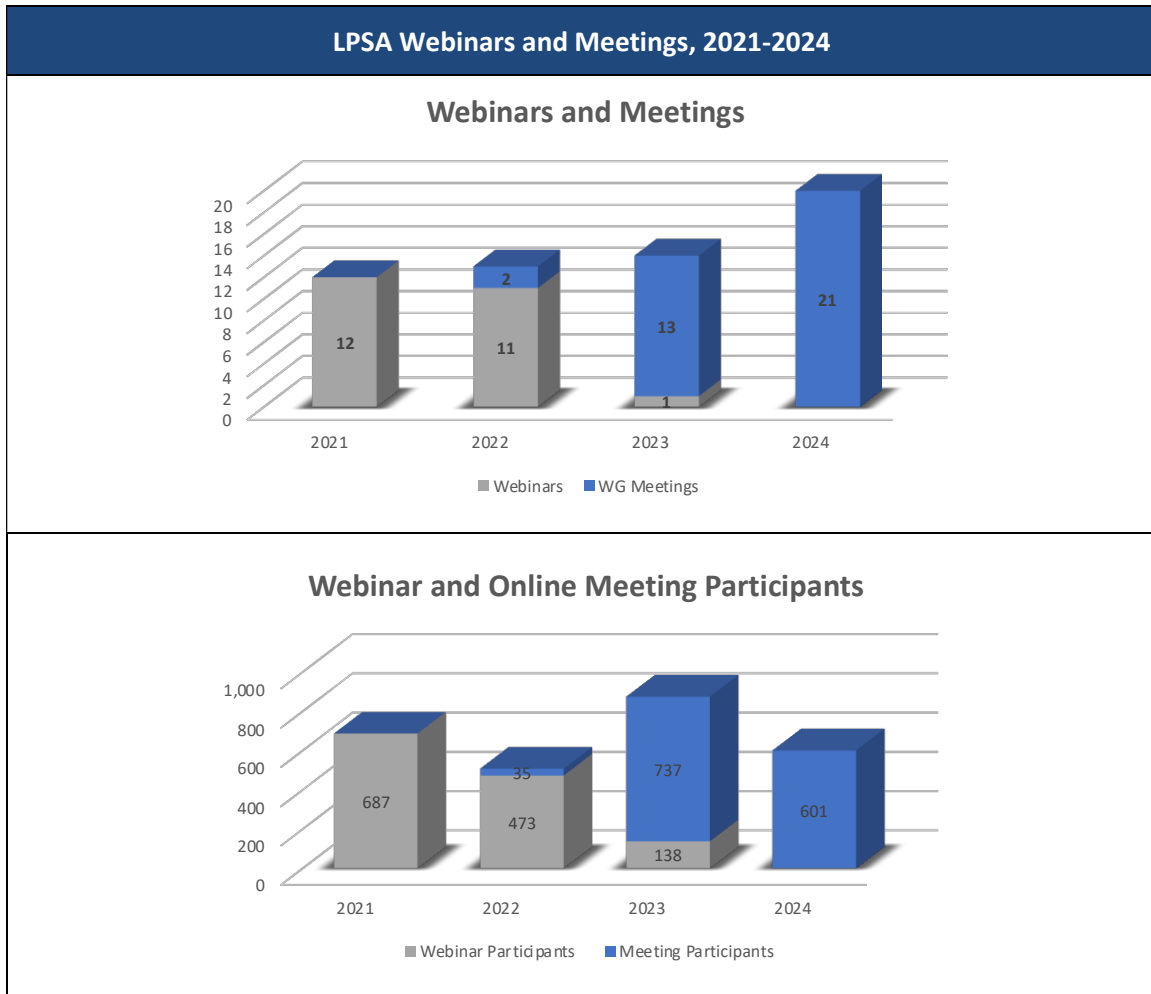
Note: Based on member's country (when indicated). December 2024.

“I read many articles/ blogs [on Decentralization.Net and] in the newsletter on local resource mobilization, women's political empowerment, local level planning, and decentralized service delivery which I found useful to compare to my work and apply some of these in my working context.”

Md. Mozammel Haque  
Project Manager, UNDP Bangladesh

### P 2.3 – Webinars and Meeting Attendance

LPSA emerged as a global professional network during the COVID-19 pandemic, operating fully virtually through webinars and online meetings. In 2023, as the pandemic ended, the Alliance reduced its reliance on global webinars, with regional and thematic working groups increasingly leading knowledge sharing events. In 2024, LPSA hosted over 20 virtual meetings with over 400 unique participants, further advancing its objectives.



LPSA Webinars and Meetings, 2024			
WG	Webinar/meeting topic	Date	Participants
Sub-Saharan Africa	Open Meeting – January 2024	Jan 25	34
	Open Meeting – April 2024	Apr 24	28
	Elevating the Debate on Decentralization and Multilevel Governance in Africa	May 22	N/A
	Advancing Decentralization & Localization in Africa: 2024 Pan-African Workshop	Sep 19	29
	Elevating the Debate and Catalyzing Action: Towards a Pan African Network of Decentralization Advocates	Oct 22	-
	Intergovernmental Supervision and Decentralization in Africa: Assessing Monitoring, Evaluation, Support and Intervention Practices	Dec 10	17
Asia	Open Meeting – January 2024	Jan 16	18
	Open Meeting – April 2024	Apr 9	17
	Elections and Political Shifts in Asia: Implications for Decentralization	Sep 3	36
Europe & Central Asia	Empowering Communities: A Participatory Budgeting Approach to Democratic Decision-Making in Europe	Jun 12	34
	Decentralization and Regional Development: Measuring Impact, Designing Policy Options	Sep 11	31
	E-Governance and Digital Transformation in Delivery of Local Public Services	Dec 11	31
Latin America & the Caribbean	Open Meeting – February 2024	Feb 27	24
	Open Meeting – April 2024	Apr 16	19
Gender Equity & Women’s Empowerment	Open Meeting – February 2024	Feb 28	36
	Women’s Voice and Political Empowerment at the Local Level	Aug 28	59
Local Democracy	Open Meeting – March 2024	Mar 4	25
	Participatory Local Governance: Frameworks, Insights and Strategic Pathways	Nov 7	35
Subnational Finance	Open Meeting – March 2024	Mar 6	41
	Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfers: Rationale and Impact of Different Design Choices	Jun 5	49
	Intergovernmental Transfers and Equalization Systems	Oct 9	38

Note: Based on Zoom meeting records.

## P 2.4 - Online Courses

The online mini-course “Decentralization: Why and What?” – which was prepared in partnership with The Hague Academy of Local Governance – launched in September 2022. So far, 202 participants have registered for the self-guided online course (33 of which in 2024).



**“A fantastically crafted agenda that set the minds off in a frenzy of thoughts and ideas. Looking forward to harvesting these seeds that will hopefully be planted in the garden of the Pan African Network 🙌🙌🙌”**

Gertrude Rose Gamwera, Secretary-General  
East Africa County and Local Governments Association

## PROGRAM 3. CONVENING, OUTREACH AND FIELD-BUILDING

While LPSA hopes to elevate the decentralization and localization debate, we also aim to be a catalyst for real-world reforms and policy action. In order to accomplish real-world policy changes, the Local Public Sector Alliance can't focus exclusively on knowledge development and knowledge sharing: the Local Public Sector Alliance will have to shift the focus of the decentralization debate from the halls of academia and international development agencies towards country-level policy debates, where empowered and well-informed central, local and civil society stakeholders are able to join forces and—through their combined efforts—gradually effect policy change or prepare to take advantage of periods of openness to change.

Unlike existing organizations active in the field, the Local Public Sector Alliance does not see itself as an alliance of institutions, but rather, as a global alliance of policy makers, government officials, development practitioners, scholars, policy researchers, other professionals, civil society representatives, and citizens. As such, the Alliance actively reaches out, brings together, convenes, and empowers global, regional, country-level and local and civil society actors in their quest to achieve inclusive and efficient decentralization and localization.

### What are we doing?

Given the multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral nature of decentralization, localization and multilevel governance, the Alliance's global-level convening efforts focus on partnering and bringing together diverse global voices, including global and regional development organizations and foundations; leading global universities scholars and research organizations; local government organizations; as well as and global actors promoting good (local) governance and community-led development.

***LPSA Regional and Thematic Working Groups.*** As an alliance that advocates for inclusive decentralization and development around the world, the LPSA aims to 'practice what it preaches' by organizing itself in an inclusive, participatory and decentralized manner. With the support of a Hewlett Foundation Organizational Effectiveness / DEI grant in 2023, LPSA Regional and Thematic Working Groups were launched as a critical interface between the Alliance and its growing global membership (Annex 1.1). By the end of 2023, LPSA had established four Regional Working Groups (Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, ECA, and LAC) and three Thematic Working Groups (local democracy, subnational finance, and gender equity and women's empowerment). Additional regional and thematic working groups are expected to be established in the future.

***Elevating The Debate On Decentralization and Multilevel Governance In Africa.*** In addition to the regular activities of LPSA's Working Groups, 2024 saw LPSA's first major in-person convening, outreach, and field-building event, supported by an additional Hewlett Foundation Organizational Effectiveness Grant (Annex 1.2). 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.

The Workshop Proceedings summarize and capture key highlights of the three days of presentations, discussion, and nine workshop sessions. In addition, YouTube videos of each of the workshop sessions are available online:

<https://decentralization.net/2024/10/workshop-proceedings-elevating-the-debate-on-decentralization-and-multilevel-governance-in-africa/>

***Localizing Women’s Economic Empowerment in Africa.*** A third strand of our convening, outreach and field-building efforts has been to catalyze action by applying our knowledge of decentralization and multilevel governance—and our recognition of ineffective multilevel governance as an obstacle to development—to a specific development challenge in an adjacent policy community: namely, women’s economic empowerment.

Initiated in 2024 by LPSA’s Board of Directors with support from the Hewlett Foundation, the core objective of the Localizing Women’s Economic Empowerment in Africa (LWEEA) Project is to promote the adoption, funding, and implementation of intergovernmental policy solutions for women’s economic empowerment in Africa—especially in Kenya and Ghana—as a gender-responsive macro-level (or multilevel) economic policy response that supports all women’s opportunities, access to resources, well-being, and agency. As part of the project, LPSA set out to work with women’s rights advocates and childcare organizations, county/local government associations, think-tanks, development partners, and other policy champions to advocate for (and guide the effective pursuit of) local-level WEE interventions through improved MLG policymaking and implementation.

### **What are we learning?**

Through our interactions within our own global community of practice, and in our interactions with our adjacent communities of practice (such as the women’s empowerment community, but also the wider PFM community, the democratic governance community, and stakeholders working on the localization of services and development), we are learning of the critical need for the kind of convening, outreach, and field-building efforts that LPSA pursues.

In doing so, we are exposing ourselves to—and grappling with the challenges of—pursuing knowledge development and knowledge sharing in a complex, crosscutting and multi-stakeholder

policy environment, which requires us to bring together stakeholders across countries, disciplines, institutions and sectors in what otherwise continues to be a highly stove-piped or siloed institutional environment. Attracting broader funding support to strengthen the knowledge foundation for complex, crosscutting and multi-stakeholder policy reforms is difficult in a world where funding (largely) continues to be funneled through thematic, stove-piped donor and funding programs.

**Box. Why is the local public sector important?**

The Local Public Sector Alliance’s niche does not solve any one of society’s grand challenges—whether it is fighting disease, ensuring sustainable development, alleviating poverty, fighting for women’s right, or combating climate change—but rather, recognizes that there are common obstacles within the public sector that contribute to all of these global challenges.

The complex role that the local public sector and multilevel governance play means that the Local Public Sector Alliance doesn’t necessarily have one target audience that needs to understand that the local public sector is critically important. Instead, the local public sector is important for (at least) four different reasons, and for four different audiences.

The local public sector is the cornerstone of inclusive and participatory governance, ensuring that democracy thrives not only at the national level but in the very communities where people live. By enhancing public sector efficiency and effectively managing resources, it drives the delivery of crucial services that directly impact lives. Moreover, the local public sector plays a pivotal role in tackling the multifaceted challenges of global development, working in concert with all levels of government to create resilient, inclusive, and sustainable societies. As such, recognizing and strengthening the local public sector is essential for achieving a holistic, effective, and accountable governance system that meets the needs of all citizens.

We are further learning that more data and analysis are needed to promote the consistent, responsible use of inclusive data and evidence to inform and improve policymaking. The availability of policy-relevant data and diagnostic tools would elevate the debate on decentralization and localization around the world, as evidenced—for instance—by the increasing analysis coming out of Europe that shows a strong territorial link between local economic decline and the threat of increased authoritarianism (e.g., Rodríguez-Pose, Terrero-Dávila and Lee 2023; Rodríguez-Pose 2024). Similar lessons—about the need for more and better-quality subnational data—are coming out of our work with The Asia Foundation on the subnational role in subnational climate action. Locally disaggregated data for 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.



### **P 3.1 - Global / General Outreach**

In 2024, LPSA generally opted to favor specific and country-level outreach and engagements, rather than pursuing global dialogues and conferences, such as the World Urban Forum. While such global dialogues are important, due to the nature of such dialogues, the potential value-add for LPSA to “elevate the decentralization debate” as part of such global dialogues is limited.

LPSA’s Secretariat contributed to a number of general outreach efforts in 2024, including a presentation on decentralization and multilevel governance to high-level Nepali government officials organized by the National Administrative Staff College (March 2024); participation in the Zambia Decentralization Conference (March 2024); and participation in a side-event organized by UN-Habitat at the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) at UNHQ in New York on *Urban Finance for Social Impact: Financing Strategies for SDGs Localization* (July 2024). LPSA’s Executive Director was also invited to contribute to a discussion on urban finances in India as part of a conference organized by India’s Sixteenth Finance Commission and the Asian Development Bank (December 2024).

### **P 3.2 - Research and Academic Outreach**

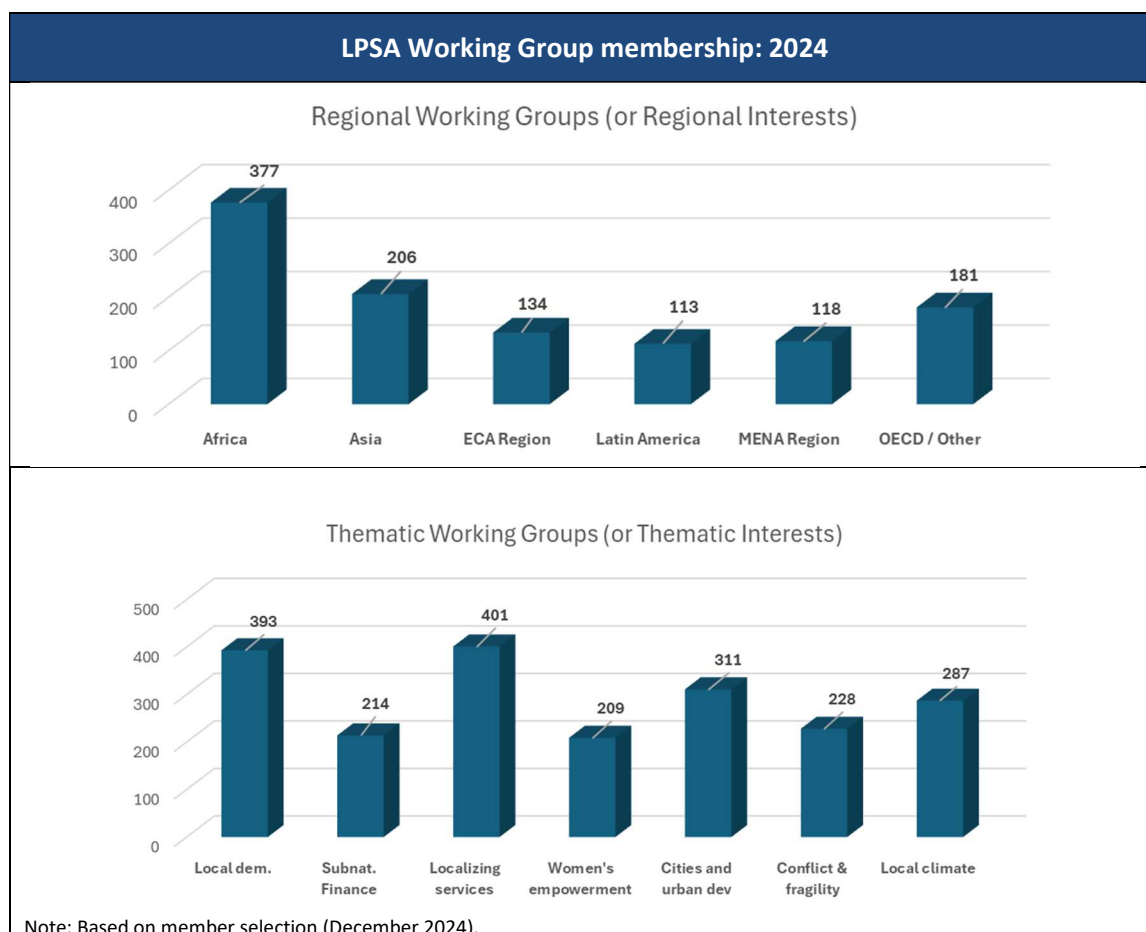
The Alliance aims to pursue more active outreach within the research and academic community. Through the guidance of the Advisory Board led by Dr. Enid Slack (Director of the Institute on Municipal Finance and Governance (IMFG) at the School of Cities at the University of Toronto), LPSA aims to renew its efforts to engage more systematically with academics and researchers.

### **P 3.3 – Regional and Technical Working Groups**

LPSA Regional and Thematic Working Groups consist of practitioners and scholars who bring together skills and expertise in a specific sub-topic or cross-cutting issues within the field of decentralization and localization. Each working group seeks to assess, advance, and share the state of global knowledge within their topic area or region, with the objective of providing the global community with best-practice conceptual and operational knowledge to address development challenges on that particular topic.

Each of LPSA’s working groups is typically led by 2-4 enthusiastic volunteer co-chairs, who—as leading practitioners, scholars, or civil society representatives—want to “elevate the global debate on decentralization and localization” by engaging with colleagues from different countries, institutions, and disciplines. Generally, LPSA’s working groups host 3-4 meetings per year, which are free and open to all LPSA members and non-members alike. Supported by an Hewlett Foundation organization effectiveness grant in 2023-24, each working group is further supported by a part-time working group coordinator. Working groups were further provided with a small budget for ‘elevating the debate’ within their region or thematic area (knowledge development, knowledge sharing and outreach).

About a quarter of LPSA’s membership has registered as a member of one or more regional and/or thematic working groups. As discussed above (under Program 2.3), working group-led online knowledge sharing meetings are generally well-attended.



LPSA’s Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Working Group has been extremely active as a platform for convening, coordination and partnerships, including in the organization of the workshop on *Elevating the Debate on Decentralization and Localization in Africa* in May 2024. Given the current institutional vacuum in the region, the working group sees itself well-positioned 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 Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Working Group is contemplating whether its role as a Pan-African Network of Decentralization and Localization Advocates (PANDA) could be formalized in a way that would position itself better as a vehicle to generate ongoing policy dialogue among stakeholders and to elevate the debate on decentralization and localization with data, facts, and rigorous analysis in Africa.

### **P 3.4 – Specific Outreach – Localizing Women’s Economic Empowerment**

Beyond convening, outreach and field-building within the core Community of Practice, LPSA aims to contribute its knowledge to ‘adjacent practice communities’ where the Alliance’s knowledge about multilevel governance provides added-value in solving development challenges. In 2023, LPSA identified the lack of effective intergovernmental systems as an obstacle to the ability of the public sector to support women’s (economic) empowerment efforts, including the public sector’s ability to supporting the provision of affordable, safe, well-regulated childcare. On the basis of the concept note prepared in 2023, LPSA launched the *Localizing Women’s Economic Empowerment in Africa* (LWEEA) project in March 2024.

The core objective of the Localizing Women’s Economic Empowerment in Africa (LWEEA) Project is to promote the adoption, funding, and implementation of intergovernmental policy solutions for women’s economic empowerment in Africa—especially in Kenya and Ghana—as a gender-responsive macro-level (or multilevel) economic policy response that supports all women’s opportunities, access to resources, well-being, and agency. LPSA set out to work with women’s rights advocates and childcare organizations, county/local government associations, think-tanks, development partners, and other policy champions to advocate effectively for local-level WEE interventions through improved MLG policymaking and implementation.

Considerable progress was made in 2024 with regard to the project’s objectives. Key stakeholders were brought together in Kenya and Ghana; the project supported the Collaborative Action for Childcare Conference 2024 in Kenya, facilitating learning, knowledge sharing and advocacy. Considerable progress was made on collaborative assessment of Multi-Level Governance Obstacles to Development (MOOD) to identify barriers to affordable and quality childcare provision in Kenya. The project engaged CREAM to lead a study of county government programs, activities, and spending on childcare as an avenue for women’s economic empowerment in Kenya. A regional learning and exchange program was organized in Nairobi, bringing together multi-sectoral experts from Kenya, Ghana, and Seychelles to share insights on women’s economic empowerment and childcare initiatives. Development of a Kenya childcare portal was initiated to support formalization and regulation of childcare providers. Intercountry learning was facilitated between Kenya, Ghana, and South Africa, leveraging the LPSA network. Additionally, training sessions were organized for stakeholders, including childcare and women’s rights advocates, on multi-level governance, role of public sector and political economy analysis (PEA) for intergovernmental systems, thereby enhancing the capacity of stakeholders to addressing women’s economic empowerment challenges in multi-level government contexts.

Given the scope of the project, LPSA has prepared a separate progress report which documents the project’s efforts in 2024. The progress report—along with addition project information—can be found at:

<https://decentralization.net/projects/localizing-womens-economic-empowerment-in-africa/>



### **P 3.3.01 – LPSA Regional Working Group: Sub-Saharan Africa**

#### **Summary**

LPSA's Expert Working Group on Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) brings together government officials, policy practitioners, scholars, civil society organizations, and citizens who share an interest and expertise on decentralization, multilevel governance, intergovernmental relations, local governance and local development in the Sub-Saharan Africa region. The SSA Working Group seeks to assess, share the state of knowledge, and advance the state of practice, with respect to decentralization, multilevel governance, intergovernmental relations, local governance, localization, and local development in Sub-Saharan Africa. The LPSA Expert Working Group on Africa is jointly co-chaired by Judy Oduma, Jaap de Visser, and Kah Walla. Over the last year, there was a shift in coordinators for the Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Working Group from Limabenla Jamir to Jacqueline Muthura in May 2024.

#### **What are we doing?**

Key activities in 2024 included five working group meetings held between January and December, including two hybrid events: the May Nairobi workshop and the African School of Decentralization 2024. Online sessions attracted between 15 to 90 participants. The May Workshop, themed "Elevating the Debate on Decentralization and Multilevel Governance in Africa," gathered leading experts in decentralization from around the region. Online sessions covered topics such as outcomes from the May workshop and key steps for adoption, moderated by Paddy Siyanga and Judy Oduma; crises and democracy, discussed by Jaap de Visser, Judy Oduma, and Jamie Boex (LPSA Executive Director); LWEEA Project updates by Jacqueline Muthura; and Intergovernmental Monitoring and Supervision Practices in Africa, led by Jaap de Visser, Judy Oduma, and guest speakers Prof. Tinashe Chigwata and Sacramento Gildas. The October ASD 2024 webinar focused on building momentum for a pan-African network of decentralization advocates. As an offshoot of the ASD 2024, a blog series called Local Government in Africa was created, inviting short overview contributions of local governments in countries on the continent. The articles will be published in the online Local Government Bulletin of the University of the Western Cape and cross-posted across LPSA channels.

#### **What are we learning?**

The LOGICA assessment revealed that African countries have hybrid local governance systems with limited autonomy, emphasizing the need to contextualize decentralization practices across Anglophone and Francophone regions. Discussions highlighted the importance of robust platforms for knowledge exchange and peer learning, leading to the proposal of a Pan-African Network of Decentralization and Localization Advocates (PANDA). The working group stressed the need for improved data and analysis to inform policymaking, suggesting partnerships with organizations like EACLGA, SALGA, OECD and UCLG to enhance the availability of data. Emphasis

was placed on understanding central-local relationships as key indicators of progress in decentralization. While the working group effectively utilized online language interpretation to promote inclusion, the need for greater collaboration between Anglophone and Francophone countries was identified as an area for growth, recognizing that despite differing modes and histories of decentralization, challenges and solutions are often similar across the continent.

## P 3.3.02 – LPSA Regional Working Group: Asia

### Summary

The LPSA Asia Expert Working Group (Asia EWG) advances LPSA’s vision by facilitating the exchange of global best practices and regional innovations in governance and decentralization. Co-chaired by Madhavi Rajadhyaksha (Abt Global), Rachana Shrestha (ADB), and Peter Yates (The Asia Foundation), with coordination by Limabenla Jamir, the Asia EWG connects policymakers, academics, and civil society through research, policy dialogues, and knowledge-sharing activities.

### What are we doing?

In 2024, the group hosted three flagship events: a January discussion on COP28 outcomes and local climate action, an April session on India’s urban governance challenges in partnership with Janaagraha, and a September panel on elections and decentralization in Asia, featuring experts on governance shifts in Bangladesh, Myanmar, Pakistan, and India. Activities also include regional trend analysis, webinars, and contributions to Decentralization.Net. This year’s blogs have examined critical themes, including [advancing Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\) at Cambodia’s subnational levels](#), potential of [Nepal’s new Federal Civil Service Bill](#) to unlock federalism’s promise, and challenges faced [by local government institutions under authoritarian rule in Bangladesh](#) and alignment of [SDGs at the subnational level in Indonesia](#), shedding light on governance innovations and challenges. These contributions reflect the group’s commitment to enhancing governance practices and fostering regional development.

### What are we learning?

- Local climate adaptation tools, such as UNCDF’s LoCAL mechanism, play an important role in effectively integrating local and national priorities for climate resilience. The UNCDF’s LoCAL mechanism has been implemented in over 38 countries. In countries like Bhutan, Cambodia, and Mozambique, LoCAL has reached Phase 3, which marks national rollouts and full institutionalization. This phase integrates local climate resilience initiatives into national frameworks, aligning with and strengthening countries’ decentralization and governance systems.
- Improved risk-informed investments and data systems are essential for scaling climate adaptation efforts.
- Comprehensive reforms in urban planning, legal frameworks, and financial management are critical to address systemic issues in urban governance in Indian cities, emphasizing the need for comprehensive reforms in urban planning, legal frameworks, and financial management.
- Political transitions can either strengthen or undermine decentralization, depending on leadership, fiscal policies, and grassroots mobilization. The rise of youth-led movements

in countries like Bangladesh and hybrid governance models in Pakistan and Myanmar further illustrated the region's governance diversity and challenges.

The Asia RWG remains committed to fostering a collaborative environment where members can exchange ideas, learn from global good practice, and drive impactful governance reforms across Asia through knowledge sharing, interactions, and dialogues. The Asia Working Group's upcoming knowledge-sharing meetings will focus on urban governance, led by Rachana Shrestha in January 2025, and subnational climate governance, led by Peter Yates in March 2025. In the coming year, the group aims to deepen engagement with regional organizations like ASEAN, SAARC, and UNESCAP to amplify dissemination of research and insights. Expanding collaborations with academic institutions and think tanks are also planned.

Recognizing the dynamic nature of governance and decentralization in Asia, the EWG seeks to address emerging trends and challenges by leveraging its collective expertise in identifying critical issues, fostering dialogue, and contributing to meaningful solutions that advance governance and development across the region.



### P 3.3.03 – LPSA Regional Working Group: Europe & Central Asia

#### Summary

The LPSA Expert Working Group on Europe and Central Asia (ECA) is dedicated to assessing, advancing, and sharing global knowledge on decentralization, multilevel governance, intergovernmental relations, local governance, and local regional development. This group promotes collaboration and learning among government officials, policy practitioners, scholars, civil society organizations, and citizens. Its activities include meetings, research, knowledge-sharing, and capacity-building initiatives, all focusing on topics such as inclusive governance, local democracy, fiscal decentralization, localizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), urbanization, and subnational climate action. The working group is co-chaired by Adrian Ionescu, Gábor Péteri, and Glendal Wright, who are recognized experts in decentralization and local governance in the region and the group is coordinated by Marina Jandrevska.

#### What are we doing?

In 2024, the ECA Working Group held three meetings on decentralization and local governance. On June 12<sup>th</sup>, 34 participants gathered to discuss *Empowering Communities: A Participatory Budgeting Approach to Democratic Decision-Making in Europe*, exploring participatory budgeting as a tool for enhancing citizen engagement and democratic decision-making. On September 11<sup>th</sup>, 31 attendees focused on *Decentralization and Regional Development: Measuring Impact, Designing Policy Options*, examining methodologies for assessing decentralization's impact on regional development and creating effective policy interventions, while on December 11<sup>th</sup>, 31 participants addressed *E-Governance and Digital Transformation in Delivery of Local Public Services*, highlighting the role of e-governance in improving the efficiency, transparency, and accessibility of local public services.

The ECA Working Group contributed to the broader LPSA Community of Practice by preparing and publishing the following blogs:

- [Fiscal Decentralization and the Efficiency of Local Governments in Central and Eastern Europe](#)
- [Overview of Balanced Regional Development and Fiscal Decentralization](#)
- [Kutaisi Fourth International Forum: Beyond the Horizon/Empowering Second-Tier, Medium-Size, and Small-Size Cities](#)
- [Local Government in Albania: A Status Report for 2023](#)
- [Fiscal Decentralization Indicators for South-East Europe](#)
- [Property Taxes versus PIT Sharing](#)

## What are we learning?

**Empowering Communities: A Participatory Budgeting Approach to Democratic Decision-Making in Europe:** The open meeting on participatory budgeting featured experts from Poland, Hungary, Georgia, North Macedonia, and Bulgaria. Poland was recognized for its leadership, with Dr. Adam Polko discussing the evolution of participatory vs. civil budgeting. Mátyás Sain highlighted Budapest's inclusive approach for residents 14+, while Sára Tóth contrasted its wealth redistribution focus with other cities. Giorgi Tsakadze shared challenges in 11 Georgian municipalities, such as low awareness and resource shortages. Kristina Hadji-Vasileva introduced North Macedonia's Community Forums, and Emilia Lissichkova emphasized Bulgaria's support structures. Brygida Klemens presented Poland's Green Participatory Budgeting for urban and environmental development. Key takeaways include innovative approaches like green budgeting and community forums, with growth areas identified in public knowledge and institutional capacity.

**Decentralization and Regional Development: Measuring Impact, Designing Policy Options.** The meeting on decentralization and regional development focused on fiscal decentralization in policy-making. Marjan Nikolov's research on North Macedonia revealed that ethnic fragmentation does not affect regional convergence, while increased local revenues reduce inequalities, recommending targeted policies for underdeveloped areas. Marjan Petreski reinforced these findings. Experts from Italy and Lithuania shared fiscal equalization methodologies: Vieri Ceriani discussed Italy's expenditure assessment model, and Francesco Porcelli and Dr. Natalija Kazlauskienė highlighted Lithuania's data-driven approach for better municipal resource allocation. Key trends include advanced tools for equitable resource distribution. Growth areas involve overcoming technical and organizational challenges in decentralized policy implementation.

**E-Governance and Digital Transformation in Delivery of Local Public Services:** The LPSA ECA Working Group discussed e-governance and digital transformation challenges in Eastern Europe. Glen Wright highlighted Estonia's leadership in digital services, using blockchain and AI. Dr. Nicolae Urs presented Romania's urban innovation through the quadruple helix model. Dr. Steven Nõmmik noted AI's potential in Estonia's public sector, despite funding and organizational hurdles. Silvia Rucinska and Ondrej Kusnirik explored Slovakia's disinformation struggles, while Barbora Kovacova emphasized municipalities' role in combating it. Yuri Krivorotko discussed Belarus's low fiscal transparency and digital reform opportunities. Key trends include Estonia's blockchain and AI model. Growth areas focus on transparent communication and combating disinformation in local governance.

### **P 3.3.04 – LPSA Regional Working Group: Latin America and the Caribbean**

#### **Summary**

The LPSA Regional Working Group on Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) brings together government officials, policy practitioners, scholars, civil society organizations, and citizens with a shared interest in decentralization, multilevel governance, local governance, and local development in the region. Co-chairmanship of the working group transitioned from Matilda Fresa to Francisco Vázquez Ahued in 2024, as the group aims to foster dialogue and share insights to enhance governance structures across LAC.

#### **What are we doing?**

The group focuses on advancing the understanding of decentralization and local governance in LAC through various activities:

- **Quarterly Meetings:** Members share updates on decentralization reforms, public sector projects, and key topics of mutual interest.
- **Knowledge Advancement:** The group applies frameworks like LoGICA and InFER to assess local governance and decentralization efforts in the region.
- **Research & Collaboration:** The group conducts research on issues like local democracy, inclusive governance, subnational finances, and urban development. Collaborative efforts are made to address these topics and share findings.
- **Knowledge Sharing:** Members stay informed through Decentralization.Net and webinars, ensuring the wider community is updated on trends and reforms.

#### **What are we learning?**

The first public meeting highlighted the complexities of local and national development, with Julio Portieles stressing the importance of focusing on common interests in multilevel governance. Enrique Gallicchio advocated for a territorial approach to development, emphasizing the autonomy and responsibility of local authorities. Future discussions will explore strengthening local capacities, political will for structural change, and responding to crises.

The second meeting focused on local governance in crisis and fragile settings. Giacomo Negrotto discussed the adaptability of local governance structures, while Lurdes Gomez and Hala Rizk presented case studies from Colombia and Syria, illustrating the effectiveness of area-based approaches in conflict zones. The meeting reinforced the need for context-specific strategies to ensure stability and essential services during crises, contributing to the strengthening of local governance frameworks across LAC.

### **P 3.3.11 – LPSA Thematic Working Group: Local Democracy, Inclusive Governance and Community-Led Development**

#### **Summary**

The Local Democracy, Inclusive Governance, and Community-led Development Working Group of the Local Public Sector Alliance (LPSA) focuses on advancing and sharing global knowledge in these essential areas. Aligned with LPSA's vision, this thematic working group serves as a collaborative platform for government officials, policy practitioners, scholars, civil society organizations, and citizens to exchange insights and foster innovation in governance and community development.

The Working Group is co-chaired by Augustine Magolowondo, Regional Director at Democracy Works Foundation; John Coonrod, Strategic Advisor at The Hunger Project; Colin Copus, Emeritus Professor of Local Politics at De Montfort University; and Giacomo Negrotto, Policy Specialist-Local Governance, United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Limabenla Jamir serves as the working group's coordinator.

#### **What are we doing?**

In 2024, the working group convened two highly engaging and well-attended meetings. The first meeting, held in March, focused on "Diverse Perspectives and Shared Experiences on Local Democracy and Inclusive Governance," drawing insights from various stakeholders. The second, organized in November, saw an increased attendance and centered on "Participatory Local Governance: Frameworks, Insights, and Strategic Pathways." These sessions highlighted the growing interest and engagement within the group's focus areas, fostering rich discussions and generating actionable insights.

The working group has made steady progress in advancing the discourse on local democracy, community led development and inclusive governance through a series of insightful blogs. These publications have explored a diverse range of topics, including [decentralized participatory governance in Karnataka's cities](#), [the impact of local autonomy on democratic legitimacy based on evidence from 57 countries](#), a review of [40 years of decentralization in Latin America](#), and the [role of decentralization in countering electoral autocrats, with evidence from Tanzania](#). These contributions have enriched the understanding of decentralization's role in fostering effective and inclusive governance.

#### **What are we learning?**

During the March working group meeting, Prof. Colin Copus critiqued England's centralized governance model, highlighting its lack of fiscal and political autonomy for local governments. He warned against replicating this system elsewhere and instead advocated for more democratic decentralization. Esteban Szmulewicz discussed Chile's progress in citizen participation but noted

challenges such as legal-implementation gaps, territorial inequalities, and weak gender representation. Nicholas Travis introduced LPSA's LOGICA framework for analyzing governance in Sub-Saharan Africa, emphasizing the need to balance local autonomy and functional responsibilities to improve service delivery.

The November session built on these discussions with real-world examples of participatory governance. Joy Elamon showcased Kerala's People's Plan Campaign, which empowered local governments to tackle poverty and crises through micro-planning. Zipporah Wambua highlighted Makueni County's participatory budgeting in Kenya, where 20% of the county budget was locally managed, improving healthcare, water access, and transparency. Cécile Roth from UCLG emphasized local governments' role in gender equality and climate action, citing Mexico City's "Utopias" initiative as a model for social inclusion. Looking ahead, the working group will continue advancing LPSA's mission by curating global insights, fostering collaboration, and promoting cross-regional learning to enhance decentralization and governance practices worldwide.

**"Decentralization is foundational to African democracy and development! Opportunities to learn, share and promote decentralization enable all the categories of actors to move forward on these key points. Congratulations to us all at LPSA! Onward!"**

Kah Walla  
CEO at STRATEGIES! Cameroon

### P 3.3.12 – LPSA Thematic Working Group: Subnational Finance

#### Summary

The LPSA Thematic Working Group on Subnational Finance brings together government officials, policy practitioners, scholars, civil society organizations, and citizens who are interested in and knowledgeable about fiscal decentralization, multilevel government finance, intergovernmental fiscal relations, and subnational financial management. The group is co-chaired by Titilola Akindeinde (Executive Director, LOGRI), Gundula Löffler (Research Fellow, ODI), and Elton Stafa (Programme Director, NALAS). Marina Jandrevska serves as the coordinator for the LPSA Working Group on Subnational Finance.

The primary objective of the LPSA Thematic Working Group on Subnational Finance is to discuss, advance, and disseminate current global knowledge concerning fiscal decentralization, multilevel government finance, intergovernmental fiscal relations, and subnational financial management. Ultimately, this working group aims to enhance the global dialogue on decentralized finance and localized expenditures in various countries.

#### What are we doing?

In 2024, the Subnational Working Group convened three meetings focused on fiscal decentralization and local governance. On March 6<sup>th</sup>, a total of 41 participants gathered to discuss innovative strategies, challenges, and tools for enhancing property tax systems in low-income countries, aiming to improve revenue generation and local government financial autonomy. On June 5<sup>th</sup>, 49 attendees joined a discussion concentrating on the design, implementation, and challenges of intergovernmental fiscal transfer systems that promote equitable resource distribution, decentralization, and local government accountability. In the last meeting, on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 38 participants examined the critical role of intergovernmental transfers and equalization systems in ensuring the financial sustainability of local governments. This discussion highlighted disparities in local government revenues and fiscal autonomy, particularly in Southeast Europe.

The Working Group contributed to the broader LPSA Community of Practice by preparing and publishing the following blogs:

- [The Political Economy of Redistribution in Indonesia.](#)
- [Intergovernmental Grants Impact on Tax Policy, Fiscal Stability and Political Economy](#)
- [Navigating conflict and fostering cooperation in fiscal federalism](#)
- [Adapting intergovernmental fiscal transfers for the future](#)
- [Strengthening evidence and data on subnational government finance and public employment](#)
- [How does intergovernmental coordination strengthen local governance?](#)

## **What are we learning?**

The LPSA Subnational Working Group meetings explored key topics in governance and fiscal policy.

On **property tax reform**, Dr. Wilson Prichard advocated for "Good Enough" approaches that prioritize administrability, equity, and accountability in low-income countries. Evan Trowbridge highlighted Sierra Leone's success in using a simplified valuation system to expand the tax register and improve compliance. Dr. Colette Nyirakamana contrasted this with Senegal's slower "Cadaster-First" approach, noting the advantages of simplified methods. Discussions also covered IT-enabled valuation, intergovernmental collaboration, and boosting taxpayer engagement through transparency.

Regarding **intergovernmental fiscal transfers (IGFT)**, Manuel Lago Rodriguez outlined grant design principles and their impact on fiscal autonomy. John Muheirwoha presented Uganda's earmarked IGFT system, while Con Omoro Osendo discussed Kenya's largely unconditional transfer model, highlighting both successes and challenges. Francois Vaillancourt emphasized IT solutions to enhance revenue generation. The session underscored the need to adapt IGFTs to socio-economic shifts and strengthen links with own-source revenue for fiscal independence.

On **fiscal equalization**, Elton Stafa stressed the importance of reforming decentralization and equalization systems in Southeast Europe. Aleksandar Marinković examined Serbia's income tax-based model, while Thomas Prorok warned of declining local fiscal autonomy in Europe and called for simpler, more transparent equalization mechanisms. Discussions emphasized improving data quality, refining equalization formulas, and fostering cross-country collaboration to enhance fiscal governance.

### **P 3.3.13 – LPSA Regional Working Group: Gender Equity and Women’s Empowerment**

#### **Summary**

LPSA’s Thematic Working Group on Gender Equity and Women’s Empowerment (GE/WE) brings together government officials, policy practitioners, scholars, civil society organizations, and citizens who share an interest and expertise at the intersection of decentralization/localization with gender equity and inclusive governance, including local women’s empowerment. The Working Group seeks to assess, advance, and share the state of global knowledge on the role of multilevel governance and subnational governance on gender equality and inclusive governance. The LPSA Thematic Working Group on Gender Equity and Women's Empowerment is co-chaired by Hemanthi Goonasekera, Jacqueline Moustache-Belle, and Jacqueline Muthura. Over the last year, the working group was privileged to gain additional core members, including Paddy Siyanga Knudsen (International Development Practitioner) and Dikshya Thapa (Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Advisor, Tetra Tech).

#### **What are we doing?**

The Gender Equity & Women's Empowerment Thematic Working Group held two open meetings in 2024, both moderated by Jacqueline Muthura. The first meeting on February 28 discussed gender-responsive subnational services, women's political participation, and localizing women's empowerment, featuring speakers Finn Speulman and Hadeel Khaswaneh from UCLG CIB, Esraa Mahidin from Karak Castle Center, and Hon. Gladys Otae-Addo Osei, former NALAG Women's Caucus Representative. The second meeting on August 28, co-moderated with Paddy Siyanga-Knudsen, focused on Women's Voice and Political Empowerment at the Local Level, with speakers Monika Kosaqi and Artan Binaku from UN Women, Gertrude Rose Gamwera Buyinga from the East African County & Local Government Association, and María Eugenia Rojas Valverde, a consultant for FCM in Bolivia. Additionally, the working group published a blog sharing lessons from LPSA's Localizing Women's Economic Empowerment in Africa Project in Kenya.

#### **What are we learning?**

While progress has been made in women's participation in local politics, challenges persist, including electoral and digital violence, harmful cultural norms, and economic constraints. Strategies to address these issues include enforcing gender quotas and proportional representation, enabling access to funding for female candidates, providing leadership training, and engaging men as allies. The UCLG CIB Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit offers comprehensive guidance for Local Government Associations (LGAs) in addressing gender mainstreaming. However, there is a notable gap in the implementation and documentation of local government initiatives in gender equity and women's empowerment, particularly beyond women's political participation and gender-responsive budgeting. Subnational governments play a crucial role in



addressing gender inequalities due to their proximity to communities, but their contributions are often overlooked or underutilized. The working group aims to contribute to addressing this gap in 2025 by elevating the debate on the role of subnational governments in gender equity, documenting local government efforts, and facilitating learning on practical actions that subnational governments can take to address gender inequalities. Planned sessions will focus on local government action in addressing gender-based violence, advancing women and youth careers in local administration, and gender-responsive sub-national finance.



## PROGRAM 4. LPSA ADVISORY SERVICES

In addition to our role supporting our global community of practice with knowledge development and knowledge sharing, we leverage the expertise of our network—and the unique insights we have gained—to support governments organizations, local governments and other local actors, development partners, international foundations, sectoral projects, and civil society organizations through project activities.

Our technical assistance activities focus on helping clients and partners understand the obstacles and opportunities that arise from pursuing development in a multilevel public sector. We help them navigate the political economy complexity of multilevel governance systems; engage in evidence-based policy analysis of multilevel governance systems; and strengthen the capacity of stakeholders at all levels to engage in evidence-informed decision making in the context of a multilevel public sector. As such, LPSA’s technical assistance activities:

- support evidence-based decision making and the use of evidence to generate actionable insights for policy reforms that result in more inclusive governance and more sustainable development;
- are globally relevant and locally applicable, by applying our global understanding of multilevel governance, administration and finance, and refining them fit specific country contexts; and
- are pioneering, as LPSA seeks to disrupt the centralizing tendency of the public sector to address the binding constraints to public sector effectiveness left by more traditional development organizations.

### What are we doing?

In 2024, LPSA engaged in two funded advisory services. First, building on its LoGICA framework and its insights in intergovernmental finance in Asia, an LPSA team is working with The Asia Foundation to better understand the role of subnational governments in climate action in Asia. The analysis explores in detail how subnational governments’ climate roles vary from country to country in Asia, with a particular emphasis on examples of subnational climate action in Indonesia, Mongolia, and Nepal.

Second, LPSA is working to support SALAR International (part of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions) as part of the Inclusive Local Governance Programme (INLOG) for local government actors in the MENA Region. The program is designed and implemented by the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) to enhance regional and local governance practice in the MENA region and provide support to overcome the challenges that municipalities and regions have to face, such as local and regional development, service delivery, citizens participation, digitalization and climate adaptation.

LPSA further contributed to a number of other project proposals (e.g., in Nepal and Kenya), where the LPSA's consortium was either not successful in securing a project award, or where the project award is still pending. LPSA is further exploring project opportunities in support of intergovernmental reforms in Somalia.

### **What are we learning?**

As a global network of decentralization and localization advocates and professionals, our advisory work confirms that real-world decentralization and localization reforms require wide-ranging consensus, as decentralization reforms must be supported by a broad coalition of stakeholders in order to be successful. This means that we must engage not only with local government officials and development practitioners, but with all stakeholders—including policymakers, central government officials, sectoral colleagues, policy analysts, consultants, scholars and researchers; civil society organizations, and citizens—who recognize that the empowerment of people, and the achievement of inclusive and sustainable development, requires the empowerment of regional and local governance institutions.

Given the stove-piped nature of development agencies and funding partners, this will require LPSA to engage not only within the traditional realm of local governance and democratic governance, but also in adjacent policy areas, such as public financial management, gender, climate, and sectoral efforts (e.g., in health and water) to localize services and development.



LOCAL PUBLIC SECTOR  
ALLIANCE

Elevating  
Global Development  
Public  
Decision  
and

## **PROGRAM 0. INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE OF THE ALLIANCE**

The Local Public Sector Alliance (LPSA) 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.

The Alliance is governed by its Board of Directors and is supported by an extensive and experienced Board of Advisors. The efforts of LPSA's Working Groups is supported by LPSA's Global Secretariat.

### **What are we doing?**

Launch in June 2021, and formally established as a non-profit organization in January 2022, our two initial years of operations included extensive virtual engagement with our global community of practice, resulting in rapid growth in our membership and organizational expansion. This growth was accompanied by the restructuring of our organization—with our Regional and Thematic Working Groups becoming the main interface with our members—to ensure that our efforts are led by our diverse global Community of Practice in an inclusive manner. While LPSA's Working Groups continue to lead, the Alliance experienced a considerable increase in project operations and in-person activities in 2024. As a result, our administrative efforts in 2024 have focused on the consolidation, maturation, and strengthening our operational systems, including contract management, financial management, and travel processes and procedures.

### **P 0.1 - Board of Directors and Officers**

Based on LPSA's Articles of Incorporation and its Bylaws, LPSA's Board of Directors is formed by five Directors: Jamie Boex, Charles Cadwell, Astrid Haas, Paul Smoke and Rose Vincent. In January 2024, the Board renewed Jamie Boex's appointment as the Alliance's Executive Director/Treasurer, and retained Chas Cadwell in the position as Corporate Secretary. The Board expects to expand the Board further in the future to ensure a globally inclusive, highly expert, and active Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors ensures the efficient and transparent operation of the Alliance, guided by its mission, vision, principles and policies. Based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, our work reflects our respect for fundamental human rights, the dignity and worth of all people, equal rights of men and women, and respect for all cultures. We believe that every person has a right to be safe and a right to a sense of belonging—and a voice—in the local community where they live and work. The Alliance aims to achieve a similarly inclusive organizational culture for itself.

As LPSA's engages in a broader set of in-person non-virtual activities, LPSA's corporate policies and practices continue to mature. Our organizational principles and policies were updated in 2024 to formally incorporate an anti-terrorist financing policy, an anti-human trafficking policy; a child

protection policy; and a policy on the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. LPSA's Corporate policies and procedures were further amended to recognize the principles incorporated in the UN Global Compact, and LPSA adopted an environmental policy to recognize our organizational responsibilities with respect to the environment and climate change.

LPSA's policies are available online at: <https://decentralization.net/about-the-local-public-sector-alliance/policies/>

## **P 0.2 - Advisory Board**

The Local Public Sector Alliance is pleased to have an active Advisory Board that includes some of the most experienced practitioners and renowned scholars of decentralization and localization from around the world. The LPSA Advisory Board was formally established in February 2022 by LPSA's Board of Directors as a mechanism for receiving regular input from the global Community of Practice on decentralization and localization.

In October 2023, LPSA's Board of Directors welcomed Dr. Enid Slack as its new Advisory Board Chair. Dr. Slack is the Director of the Institute on Municipal Finance and Governance (IMFG) at the School of Cities at the University of Toronto. The Advisory Board meets on a semi-annual basis to ensure regular feedback on the Alliance's programs and activities.

More information about the Advisory Board and its activities is available online at: <https://decentralization.net/advisory-board/>

## **P 0.3 - Core Administration**

LPSA's core administration is led by its Global Secretariat. Alongside the Executive Director, Ms. Mirna Dave functions as LPSA's Director of Communication and Operations. In this role, Ms. Dave manages all aspects of LPSA's administration and operation. In addition, she manages, oversees, and backstops the LPSA's global team of working group coordinators, including Marina Jandrevska, based in Skopje, North Macedonia (ECA Region and Subnational Finance Working Groups); Limabenla Jamir, based in Nagaland, India (Asia and Local Democracy Working Groups); and Jacqueline Muthura based in Nairobi, Kenya (Sub-Saharan Africa and Gender Equity and Women's Empowerment Working Group). Jacqueline Muthura also serves as Project Manager for the *Localizing Women's Economic Empowerment in Africa Project*. Lynn Njura provides communications support to LPSA from Nairobi, Kenya.

## **P 0.4 - Fundraising**

We are further deeply grateful to the Hewlett Foundation for their continued operating support. In 2024, the Local Public Sector Alliance secured a general operating grant for 2024-2025, as well as an organizational effectiveness grant from the Hewlett Foundation's Gender Equity and

Governance Program. In addition to this core support, project funding was received from The Asia Foundation and SALAR International (Sweden) in 2024.

Given the rapidly changing environment in the global context for official development assistance—particularly in the area of inclusive governance—it is likely that 2025 will prove to be an inflection point for LPSA. The need for a global network like ours is increasingly obvious in a funding environment that is sharply contracting. As was noted by one of our members: “At a time like this when democratic spaces are shrinking the world over, Local Public Sector Alliance is convening experts and an ecosystem of actors to share insights on how to strengthen local democracies through inclusive governance.” As such, the challenge for LPSA will be to revisit its organizational strategy and diversify its revenue sources to achieve long-term financial sustainability.



# LOCAL PUBLIC SECTOR ALLIANCE

## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY BY PROGRAM

January - December 2024

	Total Program 0 Overhead/Admin istration	Total Program 1 Knowledge Development	Total Program 2 Knowledge Sharing	Total Program 3 Outreach and Fieldbuilding	Total Program 4 LPESA Advisory Services	TOTAL
<b>Revenue</b>						
Contributed income	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Corporate & foundation grants	240,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	240,000.00
<b>Total Contributed income</b>	<b>\$ 240,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 240,000.00</b>
Interest income	720.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	720.13
Program Service Revenue	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	23,808.60	23,808.60
Technical assistance revenue	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,016.00	2,016.00
<b>Total Program Service Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 25,824.60</b>	<b>\$ 25,824.60</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 240,720.13</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 25,824.60</b>	<b>\$ 266,544.73</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>\$ 240,720.13</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 25,824.60</b>	<b>\$ 266,544.73</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>						
Advertising & marketing	0.00	0.00	18.50	69.27	0.00	87.77
Conferences and meetings	0.00	0.00	0.00	52,449.63	0.00	52,449.63
Insurance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Directors & officers insurance	709.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	709.00
<b>Total Insurance</b>	<b>\$ 709.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 709.00</b>
Occupancy	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Rent	1,200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,200.00
<b>Total Occupancy</b>	<b>\$ 1,200.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,200.00</b>
Office and operating expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bank fees & service charges	2,992.98	0.00	9.98	569.93	0.00	3,572.89
Computer and internet services	1,437.50	0.00	6,301.63	269.00	0.00	8,008.13
Federal / Virginia government fees and charges	245.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	245.00
Office supplies	66.85	0.00	0.00	1,672.43	0.00	1,739.28
<b>Total Office and operating expenses</b>	<b>\$ 4,742.33</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 6,311.61</b>	<b>\$ 2,511.36</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 13,565.30</b>
Printing, publications, postage, and shipping	4.28	0.00	0.00	514.61	0.00	518.89
Professional fees and contractors	0.00	0.00	1,120.00	2,106.00	0.00	3,226.00
Accounting fees	1,545.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,545.50
IT and Support	64.75	120.35	1,106.30	1,313.77	0.00	2,605.17
Program management	0.00	1,000.00	10,880.00	50,430.00	0.00	62,310.00
Research and technical support	1,000.00	16,500.00	0.00	5,756.00	8,500.00	31,756.00
<b>Total Professional fees and contractors</b>	<b>\$ 2,610.25</b>	<b>\$ 17,620.35</b>	<b>\$ 13,106.30</b>	<b>\$ 59,605.77</b>	<b>\$ 8,500.00</b>	<b>\$ 101,442.67</b>
Salaries and payroll	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
FICA tax (Employer)	429.78	143.26	0.00	3,366.74	0.00	3,939.78
Salaries & wages	5,618.22	1,872.74	0.00	44,009.39	0.00	51,500.35
<b>Total Salaries and payroll</b>	<b>\$ 6,048.00</b>	<b>\$ 2,016.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 47,376.13</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 55,440.13</b>
Travel	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,188.08	0.00	4,188.08
Airfare	0.00	0.00	0.00	24,075.04	0.00	24,075.04
Hotels	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,463.53	0.00	6,463.53
M&IE	0.00	0.00	0.00	7,146.15	0.00	7,146.15
Other Travel	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,050.14	0.00	2,050.14
<b>Total Travel</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 43,922.94</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 43,922.94</b>
Uncategorized Expense	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 15,313.86</b>	<b>\$ 19,636.35</b>	<b>\$ 19,436.41</b>	<b>\$ 206,449.71</b>	<b>\$ 8,500.00</b>	<b>\$ 269,336.33</b>
<b>Net Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 225,406.27</b>	<b>-\$ 19,636.35</b>	<b>-\$ 19,436.41</b>	<b>-\$ 206,449.71</b>	<b>\$ 17,324.60</b>	<b>-\$ 2,791.60</b>
<b>Net Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 225,406.27</b>	<b>-\$ 19,636.35</b>	<b>-\$ 19,436.41</b>	<b>-\$ 206,449.71</b>	<b>\$ 17,324.60</b>	<b>-\$ 2,791.60</b>

## ANNEXES

### **Annex 1: Ensuring that LPSA serves its globally diverse Community of Practice in an inclusive, equitable and responsive manner (Hewlett Foundation DEI/ Organizational Effectiveness Grant 2023)**

While LPSA's strategic vision foresaw the gradual development of 'chapters' or working groups, we initially expected this transformation to be a gradual five-year process. Both due to our phenomenal growth in membership as well as based on feedback received from the Community of Practice, we felt the need to move much more quickly to become a more globally decentralized organization in order for the Alliance to serve our globally diverse Community of Practice in an inclusive, equitable and responsive manner (rather than as a centralized, Global North-led organization).

A Hewlett Foundation DEI/OE Grant enabled the Alliance to transition to a more decentralized organizational structure in a way that is more inclusive and equitable and in a way that reflects the diversity of our global community of practice, including by:

- Strengthening Board of Directors leadership and oversight over LPSA's global diversity and inclusion efforts, including ensuring appropriate integration of diversity/inclusion policies into LPSA's corporate policies, as well as the development of programs at the intersection of multilevel governance and women's empowerment;
- Enhancing the ability of LPSA to engage in convening, outreach and field-building in an inclusive and responsive manner by supporting the establishment of Regional and Thematic Working Groups, in a way that reflects the diversity of LPSA's global Community of Practice;
- Strengthening LPSA's core administration Team in support to Regional and Thematic Working Groups by attracting and retaining working group coordinators. LPSA's Working Group Coordinators facilitate the operations of the working groups, thereby leveraging the volunteer-efforts of leading thinkers and scholar-practitioners in the field of decentralization and localization in support of LPSA's mission;
- Supporting LPSA's Expert Working Groups. During 2023, each newly formed working group was offered a one-time US\$ 5,000 allocation to support its establishment and initial efforts.

The Asia and LAC Regional Working Groups allocated some of these resources to support preparation of Intergovernmental Profiles in their respective regions, whereas the Africa Working Group opted to use the funds to support a partnership with the African School on Decentralisation (ASD) at the University of the Western Cape. Some working groups also used part of their allotted funds for interpretation services.

Due to the gradual establishment of working groups (and the gradual onboarding of Working Group Coordinators), absorption of the Organizational Effectiveness funds was slower than initially projected and budgeted. In addition, not all working groups opted to use their start-up allocation. As a result, a no-cost extension was provided by Hewlett, allowing LPSA to re-program the remaining DEI/Organizational Effectiveness Grant (2023) resources until December 2024.

These carried-forward resources were included in the CY 2024 LPSA Budget and allocated for the continued support in developing and strengthening LPSA's working groups in LPSA's newly decentralized organization structure; providing continued support for working group coordinators until the end of CY 2024; and continued proposal development support (allowing LPSA to seek external funding for working group-led activities).

## Annex 2. Elevating The Debate On Decentralization And Multilevel Governance In Africa (Hewlett Foundation Organizational Effectiveness Grant 2024)

Building on the organizational effectiveness transformation started in 2023, LPSA requested and received additional organizational effectiveness (OE) support in 2024 with the ambition to strengthen LPSA's Regional Working Group for Sub-Saharan Africa in terms of (a) strategic planning (development of strategic plan and organizational priorities for the working group); (b) organizational planning (by considering a trajectory where the LPSA Africa working group could form a stand-alone LPSA-aligned, Africa-based and African-led Pan-African Network for Decentralization and Localization Advocates); and (c) collaboration (exploration of collaboration/partnership opportunities, especially with the African School on Decentralisation based at the University of the Western Cape, Ghana's Institute for Local Government Studies, and other African decentralization institutions such as (sub-)regional local government associations).

The OE funds have allowed LPSA to pursue three specific activities, which were completed by the end of CY 2024:

1. Supplement LPSA's core budget to **support LPSA's Working Group Coordinators**, with the specific mandate for the Working Group Coordinators to develop and implement a communication and outreach strategy for each LPSA Working Group in order to reach a larger audience within their respective global region and/or thematic area.
2. Convene an **in-person meeting / mini-conference for LPSA's Regional Working Group for Sub-Saharan Africa**. The meeting—which took place in May 2024—allowed the working group co-chairs along with key allies (including the Africa School on Decentralisation) and experts to discuss the state of decentralization and local governance in Africa in person. The in-person working group meeting would also allow us to have an in-person discussion about the possibility of gradually transforming LPSA's Africa Working Group into a formal Pan-African Network of Decentralization and MLG Advocates.
3. Provide further support to the Africa Working Group's initial steps to gradually transform itself into a formal Pan-African Network of Decentralization and MLG Advocates ("PANDA"), building on the ongoing efforts of the African School on Decentralisation (ASD). **A partnership with African School on Decentralisation (ASD)** was seen to be an effective vehicle for developing a pan-African network of decentralization champions aligned with the LPSA Sub-Saharan Africa Working Group. As such, a jointly supported ASD-LPSA program on decentralization and human rights in Africa was organized in Cape Town in October 2024, bringing together 25 leading decentralization advocates from across the Africa continent, including East and West Africa.

The workshop proceedings were made publicly available. Based on the conclusions of the workshop, LPSA will continue to support efforts to gradually transform its Africa Working Group into a more autonomous Pan-African Network that promotes increasingly evidence-informed policy discussions on decentralization and multilevel governance in Africa.