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DeLoG Parallel Session 4th UCLG World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders

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During the 4th UCLG World Summit, which took place at the beginning of October in Rabat/ Morocco, DeLoG hosted a parallel session on Developmental Local Governance and the Post-2015 Development Agenda. With approximately 70 participants the session was well attended.

The session kicked off with introductory remarks by Josep Roig, Secretary General of UCLG. On behalf of the Global Task Force, he gave an introduction to the Post-2015 process.

This introduction was complemented by a presentation by Paula Ravanelli Losada, special advisor to the Undersecretariat for Federative Affairs of the Presidency of Brazil. She presented Brazil's initiative to monitor MDG achievements in a disaggregated manner as well as incentives related to this approach. To support their municipalities in achieving MDGs, the Brazilian central government developed indicators for the municipal level that are adapted to the skills and capacity of local governments. It is then up to the territorial entities to decide which of these fields they wish to focus on, which is linked to additional support from the national level.

Although participation in the program is voluntary and development priorities are self-selected, they are binding in retrospect for the respective governments. Statistics on the achievement of objectives are available online on a user-friendly interface. In addition, prizes are awarded to the best performers as incentive for municipal governments to aim high.

Following this presentation, representatives of DeLoG member organizations, government and civil society engaged in a panel discussion on the session topic. The panel was moderated by Alioune Badiane (Director of Projects, UN-HABITAT) and Jochen Mattern (Coordinator, DeLoG Secretariat). The panelists were

- Mr. Antonio Vigilante, UN Resident Representative, Europe
- Mr. Marc Trouyet, Head of department for democratic governance, MAE, France
- Mr. Akwasi Opongfosu , Minister for Decentralisation , Ghana
- Mr. Joel Bolnick , Manager of Shack / Slum Dwellers International (SDI).

The following is a short summary of the main points of discussion:

- With regard to the post-2015 agenda, the participants agreed that indicators must be disaggregated so that territorial differences in achievement can be identified and support from higher government levels and international actors can be targeted accordingly. Furthermore, it was considered important that local will be able to identify their development priorities themselves and that national support structures are developed to help them along the way. Despite these demands, the panel notes that choosing indicators will need to be done thoughtfully: Often tasks are shared between government levels. Hence it is difficult to identify indicators that one single level is responsible for and that do not exceed the election term of local authorities. Only if this is the case, LGs can truly be held accountable for their actions.
- A second point that was discussed was the meaning of the term “developmental local governments”. Antonio Vigilante (UNDP) proposed a definition, stating the “truly developmental governments are those that try to fully fill the space their legal mandate offers”. This implies to go beyond service delivery and include more complex tasks such as ensuring the respect of cultural diversity, inclusion of marginalized groups, creating jobs and attracting investments. The demands of citizens are becoming more political towards local governments and the latter need to offer responses.
- A last point that was discussed with respect to ensuring participation, accountability and transparency, was the need for publicly available information on local government plans, budgets and finances (for instance through web-based systems) so that citizens, civil society, the private sector and other government actors can hold LGs accountable.

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