

The background of the slide is a collage of various Commonwealth flags, including the Union Jack, the flag of Malaysia, the flag of Singapore, the flag of Sri Lanka, and the flag of South Africa, among others. The flags are arranged in a way that they appear to be flying on poles.

Local Governments in the Commonwealth

**Existing Practices and Emerging Trends –
Diversity at its Bloom!**

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Scheme

- A brief introduction of the Commonwealth.
- An overview of decentralisation in Commonwealth.
- Common and regional issues.
- Emerging trends.
- Selected country cases including small states
- Capacity development issues in the context of decentralisation.
- Questions and answers.

Commonwealth Local Government Forum



- Accredited Commonwealth organisation
- About 200 members across the Commonwealth
- Aberdeen Agenda
- Commonwealth Biennial Conference
- 2015: Botswana: June 16-19

State of Decentralisation

- ❑ Commonwealth is a diverse group of 53 member states.
- ❑ Similarly, state of local democracy in member countries is also varied.
- ❑ Globally, in the past three decades about 75 countries have attempted decentralisation. However reasons vary from country to country.



No Local Government

Particularly in small states in the Pacific and the Caribbean

- Antigua
- Brunei Darussalam
- Grenada
- Nauru
- Singapore (City-state)
- St. Kitts & Nevis
- St. Vincent & Grenadines



Singapore (Asia)
Pop – 5.0 m (2010)

Nauru (Pacific)
Pop'n – 10,000 (2006)

Limited Local Government

Country

Remarks

■ Barbados

No elected LG. Councillors are appointed.

■ St. Lucia

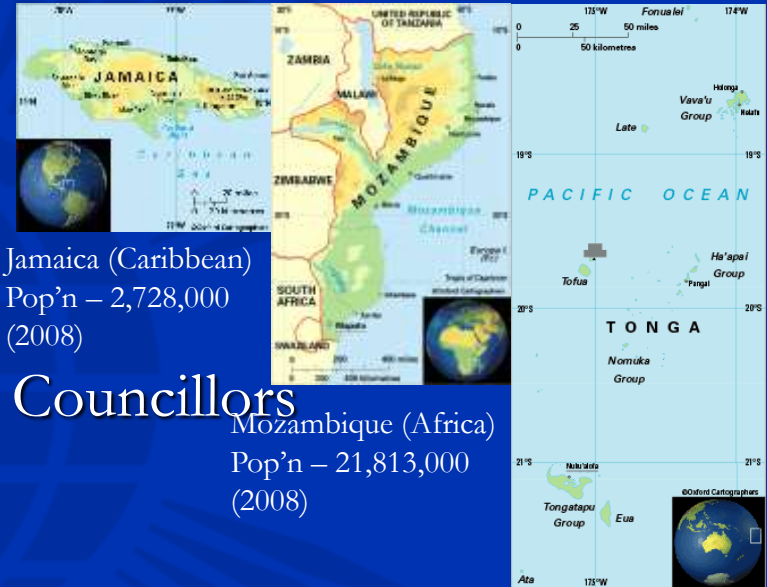
Local Government suspended since 1979.

■ Mozambique

LGs limited to urban areas.

■ Tonga

Very limited functions and powers



Jamaica (Caribbean)
Pop'n – 2,728,000
(2008)

Mozambique (Africa)
Pop'n – 21,813,000
(2008)

Tonga (Pacific)
Pop'n – 101,000 (2008)



Reasons of Decentralisation –

Vary from country to country

- To pacify separatist tendencies - e.g. Sri Lanka, and Nigeria.
- National reconstruction - e.g. Uganda, South Africa and Sri Lanka.
- In post-conflict scenarios – e.g. Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka and Kenya.
- By military regimes – perhaps to create legitimacy at grass-roots level (e.g. Pakistan, Ghana, The Gambia)
- Pressure from the World Bank, IMF and other donors – Structural Adjustment Programme .

Recent Cases of Decentralisation

Africa:

- Ghana
- Lesotho
- Kenya
- Namibia
- Sierra Leone
- Swaziland
- Tanzania
- The Gambia
- Uganda
- Seychelles



Recent Cases of Decentralisation

Pacific:

Fiji Islands

Tonga

Cook Islands

Caribbean:

Trinidad and Tobago

Jamaica

Asia:

Maldives

Sri Lanka



Common Issues

- Financial Decentralisation
- Central – local government relations
- Local Government capacity
- Staffing
- Role of traditional leaders – Pacific and Africa
- Devolution in federations
- Awareness amongst citizens
- Urbanisation

Regional Issues - Asia

Governance of mega-cities. Of 19 mega-cities (population more than 10 million) in the world, 6 are in the Commonwealth; of these 5 are in Asia (Mumbai, Kolkata, Dhaka, Karachi and Delhi).

- Urban Poverty
- Public health
- Slums
- Urban infrastructure
- Marginalisation of disadvantaged groups – Inclusive cities!



Regional Issues - Africa

- Inter-governmental relations.
- Fiscal decentralisation: States/ sub-national governments.
- Co-existence with the Traditional Leaders: Gambia, Ghana, Swaziland
- Democratic element: Mayors are appointed by the President in Ghana.
- Urbanisation: Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ghana, South Africa

Regional Issues -Pacific

The Pacific Island Countries have peculiar circumstances and vulnerabilities:

- Small size
- Less resources
- Limited international trade
- Long distances – from capital and goods markets
- Exposure to natural and environmental disasters



Regional Issues - Caribbean

- In many countries - *The Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica , and Trinidad and Tobago* there are developed forms of local government(in relation to elected local government). In others the electoral element is not working properly.



In St. Lucia, Local government has been administered in past three decades by interim councils appointed by the Minister Local Government.



Issues in Federal Systems

- Australia, Canada, India, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, St. Kitts & Nevis, and South Africa.
- Makes 75% of Commonwealth population.
- Out of 4 developed Commonwealth countries, 2 are federal.
- Two have intermittent military rules.
- LG is recognised in the constitution – Mostly.
- Each state/province has its own LG law.

Issues in Federal Systems

- All have established LG systems.
- Highly urbanised. Especial treatment with metropolitan cities.
- Unity in diversity OR diversity in unity---
Relationships are more important than structure!
- Fiscal federalism. (including natural resources)
- Indigenous communities.
- Municipal governance of federal capitals.

Emerging Trends

Constitutional Protection

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| ■ Ghana | ■ Namibia |
| ■ India | ■ Pakistan |
| ■ Kenya | ■ Rwanda |
| ■ Maldives | ■ South Africa |
| ■ Mozambique | ■ Swaziland |

Local Government Service Commission

- Ghana
- Jamaica
- Lesotho
- Mauritius
- Nigeria
- Sierra Leone
- Swaziland
- The Gambia
- Uganda



Compulsory Voting

(Local Government Elections)

- Australia – 4 states
- Cyprus

PPPs at Local Level

- Fiji Islands (separate enabling legislation)
- Maldives (Councils can engage in business ventures)
- Pakistan (incorporated in 2001 local government law)
- Sri Lanka (incorporated in National Policy on LG)
- South Africa
- India



Inter-governmental Forum

Relationship between central and local government has always been an issue in decentralisation.

New Zealand: In 2002 the Government established a formal forum headed by Prime Minister. LGNZ is also represented.

Malaysia:

- Constitution provides for establishment of a National Council for Local Governments (NCLG).
- Local Authority Consultative Council (*Jawatankuasa Perundingan PBT*)
- Central Government pays salaries of staff seconded to local government.

Inter-governmental Forum

Kenya:

Inter-governmental Relations Act 2012 provides for :

- National and County Governments Coordinating Summit
- Inter-governmental Relations Technical Committee
- Council of County Governors

Rwanda:

- Mechanism similar to Malaysia but less formal
- Annual Dialogue Meetings and quarterly meetings with the Prime Minister, Governors and LG leaders.

Women Participation

Certain Commonwealth countries have made good progress.

Reserved quota for women :

- Indian (33%)
- Pakistan (33%)
- Uganda (33% approx.)
- Tanzania (1/3 of ward members and MPs combined)
- Rwanda (30%)



Organised Local Government

- A number of Commonwealth countries with local government system have organised local government associations.
- Provide policy support and advocacy on behalf of their members.
- Serve as inter-governmental forum and in many countries like New Zealand and Malaysia it is formalised.
- CLGF has a large number of LGAs as members.

Financial Decentralisation

Generally the approach is to:

- Maximise own-source revenue
- Enhance loan-raising capability
- IGTs: Despite trend of fiscal decentralisation, IGTs makes about 60% of sub-national expenditure in developing countries.

Inter-governmental Transfer

Percentage of Transfer

% Countries

0 – 25 %

25%

26 – 50%

11%

51 – 75%

21%

76 – 100%

43%

Financial Decentralisation – Innovative Practices from the Commonwealth

Kenya: Local Authorities Transfer Fund (LATF).

- Transfer of 5% of national income tax to LAs.
- LATF allocation is formula based.
- LAs allocation comprises of two parts – 60% service delivery and 40% performance component.
- Service delivery component requires at least 50% to be earmarked for capital projects.
- Not more than 60% should be spent on recurrent expenditure.

Financial Decentralisation – Innovative Practices from the Commonwealth

Ghana: District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF).

- 7.5% of national revenue is earmarked for capital projects by District Assemblies.
- Disbursement formula of DACF is approved by Parliament.
- 10% of DACF is reserved centrally, half of which is allocated to MPs for development projects in their constituencies.

Financial Decentralisation – Innovative Practices from the Commonwealth

Pakistan: Citizen Community Board – *now defunct.*

- Every local government by law required to reserve 25 % of development budget for utilization exclusively through CCBs.
- This was non-lapsable.
- A CCB could receive a matching grant from LG up to 80% of the budgeted amount.

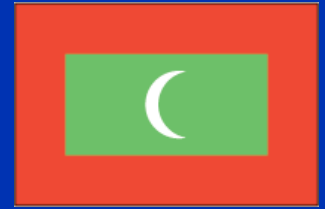
Financial Decentralisation – Innovative Practices from the Commonwealth

Cameroon:

- There is a 10% levy on certain categories on national taxation specifically for LGs.
- 40% of forestry royalty is redistributed to LGs on per capita basis.

New Zealand: A proportion of tax on petrol and vehicle registration is transferred to LGs for maintenance of roads.

New Initiatives - Maldives



- The Republic of Maldives (population approx. 350,000) lies in the Indian Ocean, divided into 20 administrative units called atolls.
- The constitutional reform process started in 2004 towards multi-party political system.
- In 2008 the country promulgated new constitution that contains elaborate provisions on decentralisation .
- The pioneering local government elections were held in February 2011.
- A new department: Local Government Authority has been established.

Pakistan



- Big-bang devolution in 2001
- Decentralisation and military regimes synonymous (1960, 1979 and 2001).
- 2001 reform was different: multi-strand programme including civil service and police reforms.
- 2008: Starts reversal
- 2015: No elected LGs (election in only one province).

New Initiatives - Tonga



- Tonga is a small island state with a population of approximately 100,000. The Kingdom is divided into districts which are divided into towns but there is no local government system as such.
- The Government seeks to amend the constitution to allow creation of local authorities and create a town council in the capital city of Nuku'alofa. This first local council in Nuku'alofa to serve as a pilot project for the development of local councils and community laws throughout the kingdom.

New Initiatives - Kenya



- Election riots of 2008 led local government reforms.
- New Constitution 2010 provides:
 1. Introduction of 47 County Governments
 2. Revenue raised nationally to be shared between national and county governments
 3. In addition County Governments also receive grants through LATF

New Initiatives - Swaziland



- Decentralisation officially dates back to 2005 with the adoption of the Decentralisation Policy.
- Traditional structures side by side elected local representatives.
- New Local Government Act being drafted

New Initiatives - Seychelles



- There is no LG as such. De-concentrated offices of line ministries are present in districts and work under district administration.
- The President has pronounced his vision of establishing LGs in the country as National Development Agenda – Vision 2020. (Social Renaissance Initiative).
- Draft Decentralisation Policy and Local Government Act are being written.

Learning from Commonwealth Experiences

Capacity Development

- **Definition, typology and perception.**

A broad concept. Includes all sorts of intervention in the development . For instance: advisory services to governments, technical assistance projects, training programmes, policy and action research, knowledge creation and dissemination and so on and so forth.

- For clients.
- For donors.

Capacity Development

- Is it only about public sector?

- A political process?

If change processes are not owned and self-led it might not be sustainable. We should not forget that we are dealing with developing countries, and **technical interventions are good entry points.**

- Change from within. “All is well” attitude.

- Responsiveness in the key

Capacity Development

- Build up trust.

Spending more time in the early stages. Appreciating complexities.

- Incentives are necessary.

- South-South or North-South?

- Issues of perception. Foreign or local experts/facilitators?

Capacity Development

- Stakeholders and legitimacy issue.
- Training programmes are still relevant.
 - Criticised for being expensive but not achieving desired results. Small interventions such as a training workshop are still relevant. We should not be too ambitious about the outcomes.
 - Fragile and conflict environments: Careful approach. Short-term priorities (such as building confidence) and long-term capacity (to build stable and legitimate states).

Capacity Development



- Avoid underestimating existing capacities.
- Flexibility.
- Small grants, small projects also make impact.
- Political economy analysis or “Politically smart”.

A vibrant display of numerous national flags from various countries, including the United Kingdom, European Union, and others, waving on tall poles. The flags are arranged in a dense, overlapping fashion, creating a colorful mosaic of international symbols. A semi-transparent blue banner with the text "Thank You" is centered over the middle of the image.

Thank You