



7-CASES OF SUCCESSFUL LOBBYING

1. Involvement of LGAZ in national consultations in Zambia

Case summary

This case study illustrates the important role that a national local government association can play in ensuring that local level development priorities are incorporated into, and aligned with, country level development programming. It also highlights the essential support and coordinating role that regional local government networks play in ensuring that local governments access development funding and opportunities.

In early 2006, local governments were advised by the African Caribbean Pacific (ACP) Local Government Platform to establish contacts with the Delegation of the European Commission in their country in order to participate in the dialogue on strategies and programmes of ACP-EU cooperation 2008-2013.

Despite the fact that the framework for international cooperation recognises local governments as key development actors that should participate in all aspects of the process, the efforts of the Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ) to get involved in the process were initially rejected. Both the Platform and LGAZ worked with the ACP EU institution headquarters and the EC delegation to rectify the situation, which resulted in the formal invitation for LGAZ to participate in a meeting with the EC delegation. The LGAZ is now fully involved in all meetings related to the ACP-EU cooperation 2008-2013. Its comments on the Country Strategy Paper have been taken into account in the finalisation of the document, and provisions have been made for local government priorities that are aligned with the strategy.

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Background

The Cotonou Agreement, signed between the African Caribbean Pacific (ACP) states and the European Union in 2005, provides a framework for international cooperation between the parties. The European Development Fund (EDF) is the financial instrument of ACP-EU cooperation within the Cotonou Agreement framework. Each EDF covers a period of 5 or 6 years. The 10th EDF was under preparation until the end 2007 and will cover the 2008-2013 period. The preparation process started with the programming phase, in the course of 2006 and early 2007, which consisted of defining the strategies and programmes of ACP-EU



cooperation in each ACP country. The programming phase is followed by the formulation, implementation and evaluation phases.

The revised text in the Cotonou Agreement clearly recognises local governments as key actors of development that should participate in all aspects of development cooperation, i.e. programming, formulation, implementation and evaluation of the ACP-EU cooperation programmes and policies.

Issue

The ACP Local Government Platform (ACPLGP) is an umbrella organisation established in 2001 by mayors and representatives of existing local government associations across the ACP countries. Its mission is to promote ACP local government's role in the cooperation strategies and programmes supported under the Cotonou Agreement. The Platform plays three major roles for its members: representation and advocacy; information and network services; and technical support. Through its quarterly newsletter the Platform keeps ACP local governments informed of the evolution of the 10th EDF exercise and of any other opportunities for participation under other EU instruments.

In early 2006, at the beginning of the 10th EDF programming exercise, the ACP Local Government Platform (ACPLGP) advised ACP local governments to establish contacts with the National Authorising Officer (NAO) and the Delegation of the European Commission (EC) of their country in order to participate in the dialogue taking place in each ACP country, regarding the strategies and programmes of ACP-EU cooperation under the 10th EDF (2008-2013). Following this Platform instruction, the Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ) sent a first letter to the NAO informing of their desire to participate in the programming process. They received a negative response explaining that despite the recognition of local governments as important actors in development, there existed no provision for them in the EDF.

LGAZ informed the ACP LG Platform about these developments. In its supporting role, the Platform contacted the EC headquarters (DG-Development and EuropeAid) and the ACP Secretariat, and took issue with the fact that although local governments are encouraged to be involved in the cooperation process, in practice they were being excluded from the process. The Platform then requested that the official parties instruct the NAOs/EC Delegations on the new provisions for local governments and send a strong political signal to the latter to change the situation. The Zambian case rapidly became "the ACP LG case" and served as an example to other national associations of local governments to encourage them to undertake similar initiatives. While the Platform was dealing with the ACP-EU institution headquarters, the LGAZ sent a formal letter to the EC Delegation.

The fruit of the Platform's and LGAZ's efforts came a few weeks later when the LGAZ was formally invited by the EC Delegation to a first meeting with high level representatives of the NAO and the Delegation. Various points were agreed upon during the meeting, of which the most important were: i) LGAZ will be involved in all future meetings of the 10th EDF programming; ii) consideration will be given to extending EDF support to local governments through the focal areas relating to district infrastructure and through the non focal sectors



agriculture and food security; iii) consideration will also be given to support selected urban local governments with respect to appropriate planning and upgrading of road infrastructure; iv) the EC will support good governance and in particular decentralisation and lastly, v) both parties agreed that the LGAZ will be supported in lobbying for increased allocation of budget resources to local government funds out of EU direct budget support.

Results and Lessons Learned

The LGAZ is now fully involved in all meetings related to the 10th EDF exercise. Its comments on the Country Strategy Paper have been taken into account in the finalisation of the document, and provisions have been made for local government priorities that are aligned with the strategy.

The LGAZ has been invited to another meeting with the Delegation to discuss possible specific areas of assistance they could benefit from in the decentralisation implementation process. The LGAZ case has served as stimulus to other ACP LG national associations, which contacted the Platform in order to receive similar support. Some of them have started the process and are making progress in achieving similar results. For those national local government associations wishing to be involved in the ACP-EC cooperation processes, it is never too late to enter into contact with their respective NAO/Delegation.

Key factors

- LGAZ developed a sound lobby case: (i) using a rights-based approach, in line with the provisions for engagement outlined in the Cotonou agreement, and; (ii) using available channels to effectively influence the decision-makers at national level (i.e. ACP LG Platform and EC headquarters).
- The experience “set jurisprudence” and was used as a source of inspiration for other national LG associations in ACP countries, also struggling to be involved in the consultations for the programming of EDF assistance.
- The experience is also viewed as a good practice by the European Commission itself. In its 10th EDF consultations, the EC refers to this case as a good practice on consultation in the programming of EDF assistance.

Prepared by the ACP Platform in the framework of the UCLG Policy Paper on Aid Effectiveness and Local Government, 2009.



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2. STRENGTHENING THE POLICY RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY ROLE OF LGAs: The League of Cities of the Philippines (LCP)

Case summary

The League of Cities of the Philippines (LCP) has risen up to the challenge of the time by becoming more proactive in policy formulation and advocacy work on various issues affecting cities. In May 2005, LCP created a Policy Unit, making it the first LGA in the Philippines to create a unit solely devoted to policy development and advocacy.¹ This paradigm shift fuelled the League's commitment to tackle a new approach in local governance.

Through lessons learned from capacity building support provided by FCM and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM), Canada, LCP ran a successful campaign to reverse 16 cityhood bills passed in the Philippines House of Representatives, which were deemed unfavourable to LCP member cities. The success of its advocacy work has crystallized for LCP the importance of undertaking strong, unified and highly participatory policy development and advocacy work to advance the interests of its members.

Background

Prior to the enactment of the Local Government Code, which gave birth to the autonomy of local government units (LGUs) in the Philippines, it was Executive Order No. 262 signed by former President Corazon Aquino on July 25, 1987 that created the League of City Mayors of the Philippines. However, this new framework inadequately devolved national government functions and allotment of corresponding funds to the local level, leading the LGUs — provinces, cities, municipalities and barangays — and Local Chief Executives (LCEs), to clamour for genuine reforms that would empower the LGUs.

After years of hard advocacy work, Congress, on October 10, 1991, passed the Republic Act 7160, also known as the Local Government Code (LGC) of 1991. The Code became the "Bible" to Philippine LGUs. Section 499 of the Code institutionalized the League of Cities for the primary purpose of ventilating, articulating and crystallizing issues affecting city government administration.

The change in classification transformed the character of LCP from an organization of political personalities to a membership based institution for which the cities — and not their political leaders — serve as the responsible entities. The LCP has a General Assembly, which is the highest decision-making body and a National Executive Board, which is the policy-making body. The National Executive Board is comprised of 42 members elected by the General Assembly and the LCP National Secretariat, and is jointly supervised by the



president and the secretary general. Over the years, the League's services have evolved from administrative to policy, technical and program support.

Issue

The passage of several laws resulted in the creation of additional unfunded mandates and the unwarranted conversion of municipalities to cities.² These events led the LCP National Executive Board to adopt a Policy Development and Advocacy Plan in 2005, which sought to address the critical gap in LCP's efforts to make a strong presence in the arena of crafting and advocating for legislative and executive policies, both at the national and local levels of government. This in turn led to the creation of the Policy and Advocacy Unit within the LCP Secretariat.

The primary purpose of the Policy and Advocacy Unit is to promote the interest and welfare of member cities through policy studies and advocacy work. This is done under the general framework of engendering genuine local autonomy and development, and providing a cohesive force that embodies the sentiments and aspirations of member cities. The end goal is to promote decentralized urban governance through appropriate policy legislation and supportive policy implementation mechanisms. The Unit also serves as a policy forum and feedback mechanism on policy and legislation and supports policy development in member cities.

In March 2005, the LCP, together with the League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP),³ entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with FCM and UBCM to build the capacity of the Unit. Capacity-building seminars and workshops were (and are currently) provided to the Unit's staff as part of this process. Through the MOU, a series of technical exchange missions were conducted, including missions involving UBCM officials and key policy staff who visited the Philippines to assess the League's current policy development and advocacy capacity, and who eventually provided the Policy Unit with the needed technical assistance. Another technical mission was a three-week internship program that involved one policy staff of LCP and one city mayor. They took part in the UBCM annual convention to gain insight into how to organize a conference, address resolutions and policy, and interact with members.

In January 2007, the League held its first ever National Convention of Cities, modeled after the annual UBCM Convention. Eager to learn more, LCP has continued to reinvent and develop itself. Along with the training provided by FCM and UBCM, LCP staff also undertook a series of policy workshops with support from the Local Government Support Program (LGSP), a bilateral program funded by the Canadian International Development Agency set up to strengthen local governance in the Philippines.

The workshops sought to improve the capacity of the staff in the areas of policy development and advocacy. The lessons culled from the FCM partnership and continuous capacity building programs have given LCP the edge in proactively advancing the interests of its members, in particular in articulating the issues that affect LGUs, especially cities.



In early 2005, 16 cityhood bills were passed in the Philippines House of Representatives without complying with the requirements of the Local Government Code. The bills were transmitted to the Senate for approval. This went unnoticed by LCP and the impending approval of the bill caught LCP officials by surprise. LCP's Policy and Advocacy Unit then launched a campaign against the bills, successfully applying what it learned through its partnership with FCM and UBCM, as well as the various capacity-building activities it has undertaken with different partners.

The first order of the day was to block the passage of the cityhood bills. The initial step taken was to mobilize all LCP member cities to call for the outright rejection of the bill. LCP also called on member cities to pass a city council resolution opposing the bills. A total of 96 city council resolutions were passed and were forwarded to the Senate. The huge response from member cities was unprecedented in the history of LCP.

The Unit also mobilized the city mayors to attend the Senate committee hearing. During the hearing, the League president made known its members' vehement opposition to the bills. He was accompanied by 80 city mayors who also individually lobbied the Senators. The Unit was also responsible for preparing LCP's position paper, advocacy and communication materials and presentations, as well as for coordinating media relations. Across the Philippines, cities revved up their information drive to their constituents regarding the perceived long-term effects of the undue creation of unqualified cities. Localized banners and streamers were posted in conspicuous areas in the city proper showing their indignation. Both local and national media gave full coverage of the issue. City officials and employees wore black arm bands during their Monday flag raising ceremonies.

Despite these efforts, the cityhood bills were approved and forwarded to the Office of the President. LCP made a final lobbying effort with the President to veto the bills. The president did not sign the bills, but they nonetheless became law after 30 days. LCP took a last resort and filed a case before the Supreme Court to declare the cityhood laws unconstitutional. In May 2009, the Supreme Court declared with finality the unconstitutionality of the cityhood laws.

With support from LCP's Policy and Advocacy Unit, LCP has also undertaken advocacy in other areas quite successfully. A couple of examples are outlined below.

Executive Order 646

As part of its revenue mobilization efforts, LCP also intensified its advocacy with the Department of Finance and Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) for improved information sharing between the BIR and LGUs. This paved the way for the issuance of Executive Order 646, which was signed by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in August of 2007. EO 646 mandated the sharing or exchange of taxpayers' information between the BIR and LGUs, vital to the effective collection of taxes. The issuance of EO 646 helped both the BIR and the LGUs in their collection efforts through access to correct information that they have on record with regards to their respective taxpayers. As a result, both the BIR and LGUs were



able to ascertain and assess the correct tax returns and evaluate taxpayers' compliance with existing tax laws.

Executive Order 809

LCP also lobbied for the possibility of developing a facility that would lend to LGUs without sovereign guarantee. The League initiated discussions on this issue with the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). All three agencies have established facilities for sub-national lending.

The efforts of LCP paid off in 2009, when President Arroyo issued EO 809 providing for a LGU financing Policy Framework in the Philippines. The Framework enables LGUs to have greater access to development financing, whereby lower income LGUs have greater access to Municipal Development

Fund financing, moderately creditworthy LGUs have greater access to government financial institution financing, and first tier LGUs (most creditworthy) have direct access to domestic or international commercial or other financing. Previously, local governments could not borrow directly from multilateral financing institutions and instead applications were channeled through the national government. Under the new financing framework, LGUs have been given the authority to directly contract loans not only with various government financial institutions but with other multilateral financial institutions as well, like the ADB and the World Bank. The financial flexibility accorded to LGUs through EO 809 has been crucial in accessing additional sources of revenue for the continued implementation of local programs and projects in the light of the global financial crisis, which forced the national government to reallocate and prioritize its resources.

The successful campaign against the 16 cityhood laws was a hard earned victory for LCP. LCP now realizes that to achieve its vision and mission, it needs to undertake strong, unified and highly participatory policy development and advocacy work.

Following the establishment of its Policy and Advocacy Unit, LCP has gone from being a passive organization upon its inception in 2005 to becoming an institution with a strong voice in the national policy arena, one that champions the issues affecting cities. With the unwavering support and cooperation of its member cities, LCP has truly become more proactive in the pursuit of its mission "to ventilate, articulate, and crystallize issues affecting cities."

LCP is now known for its successful advocacy and involvement in policy formulation and legislation in the country, and is being tapped by different national government agencies, development partners and international organizations as a resource institution on various issues concerning local government and urban governance.

Key factors

- To achieve its vision and mission and engage substantially in the policy processes, LCP needed to undertake unified and participatory policy development and





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advocacy.

- Establishing and investing in developing the capacity of a Policy and Advocacy Unit, capable of understanding the nuts and bolts of the policy processes and of collecting and assessing relevant evidence, has helped LCP become an institution with a strong voice in the national policy arena, which champions the issues affecting cities.
- LCP uses a strategic combination of activities and tools to raise awareness (e.g. sensitization and mobilization of city mayors, information to the public through sound media engagement and the use of banners and streamers, etc), reach out to the relevant decision makers (even at Presidential level) and maximize its chances to eventually influence the legal and institutional framework.
- The continuous support and active engagement of its member cities (and majors) has enabled LCP to become more proactive in the articulation and defence of the city interest and national level.

*Prepared by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and VNG International as part of the publication *Strengthening Local Governance and Decentralization: Lessons and Experiences from Local Government Associations in Asia, 2010**





7 CASES OF SUCCESSFUL LOBBYING

CALGA's position on the EU and local authorities in development

Case summary

The European Commission was in the process of reconsidering its policy in support of local authorities in partner countries.

Through its network of members in the region, the Caribbean Association of Local Government Authorities (CALGA) was able to inform its members about the changes and opportunities, and consult them to develop a position paper to put to the EU to influence its communication on Local authorities in Development.

Background

Membership of CALGA is voluntary and open to all countries in the Caribbean, including the LGAs in: The Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. Where there are no national LGAs, CALGA engages with ministries responsible for local government in: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname.

The first meeting of local government practitioners in the Caribbean took place in Port of Spain November 1991 attended by several Caribbean LGAs and with the assistance of the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Local Government Authorities (TTALGA). A key purpose of the meetings was to explore the idea of forming a Caribbean local government association. CALGA acts as a support mechanism for different organisations of local government in the region. In undertaking this role, CALGA has taken the lead in helping LGAs in the region to understand European policy and funding and lobby for changes to make it easier to access funding directly.

Issue

Up to the end of 2011, the EU institutions have dealt with non-state actors (NSAs) and local authorities as one group, exemplified by the thematic programme and aid instrument for Non-State Actors and Local Authorities (NSA-LA). Since then, the European Commission has been redefining its policy on the future involvement of local government in development projects. This is of great importance for the local governments in developing countries, as it may provide better opportunities to access EU funding directly. At the end of 2011 the European Commission announced that it intended to deal with local authorities in a separate Communication, which it planned to publish in early 2013. Local governments and their representative institutions in developing countries needed to be informed and consulted on the content of the communication and its implications.



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With support from the EU-funded ARIAL programme, CALGA has undertaken a number of initiatives to inform LGAs in the region about the institutions of the EU and how it works and the current funding arrangements. In the light of the proposed changes to the EU policy on local authorities in development, it initiated a series of consultations to formulate a position paper and encourage other LGAs to also put in submissions to influence the final EU Communication.

Activities included:

- A regional training workshop in 2011 with follow-up technical advice in 2012 enabled LGAs in the region to learn more about European development policy, in particular the ways in which local government could be a more proactive partner in helping to influence how development finance is spent in their countries, and to understand better how to directly access resources which are available. This training provided LGAs with project writing skills and the necessary knowledge on how to get involved in the dialogue on development policies with national institutions and development partners (especially the EU);
- The local government associations learned about the basic roles of these organisations, as well as the content of the existing policies/ projects and upcoming programming concerning local governments;
- An issue paper was formulated by CALGA and distributed to its members so that they could take this on individually in their countries. The Issue Paper was sent to the EU as part of the local government consultation process. It recommended a series of strategic interventions and programmes where the EU can support local governance/democracy.
- The ARIAL project reinforced its capacity development efforts with action planning support to CALGA and the national associations, enabling them to identify projects which are poised for development support in the Local Government sector.

ARIAL's support in strengthening CALGA has allowed it to unify LGAs in the region and provide a unified voice on this and other issues. CALGA was able to put together a regional policy for its submission to the EU, having much stronger impact than individual LGAs in its recommendations on how the EU can better relate to local authorities in its development work. The process of putting together the position paper helped CALGA to further build its relationships and be seen as the voice for local government in the region, and an important focal point for the relationship between local authorities in the region and the EU.

Results and Lessons Learned

- Enhancing the capacity of the regional association will have a knock-on effect on individual LGAs in the region as it can bring them together on wider issues for training and lobbying, such as Local Economic Development;
- There is strength in numbers. A united regional position will have more impact on institutions such as the EU than an individual voice;



- Planning and support for initiatives and communication between LGAs can be lengthy when working across a number of countries, made more difficult by lack of resources and miscommunication of messages. These limitations can be curbed by proper planning, establishment of rules, hierarchy, ethical considerations and proper communication;
- There is no easy solution to problems when communication across countries. Constant involvement and a regional institution which seeks to integrate LGAs is a good starting point.

Key factors

- Constant and updated Information to members. Trustful to its member-service commitment, CALGA has regularly kept its members informed about new policies and developments that could affect the way they work or their access to funding.
- Development of a regional position, by consulting with the LGAs in the region who are affected or have an interest in the policy or issue on which you are developing a position. Through consultations, CALGA succeeded in finding the common ground to reach an agreed position. It must be underlined that the more backing the stronger the case in putting a position to institutions such as the EU.
- Pro-activeness in communicating the position. Once the position was formulated, it was widely publicised amongst members and other stakeholders so that they could support the position when the opportunity arise and speak as one voice.
- Reinforcement of lobbying with competency development: an emphasis on knowledge among political functionaries; and investing in knowledge, skills and abilities among staff.

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