



**United
Nations**

Department of
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Social Affairs



APRM
African Peer Review
Mechanism

Multi-level Government and SDGs: An African perspective

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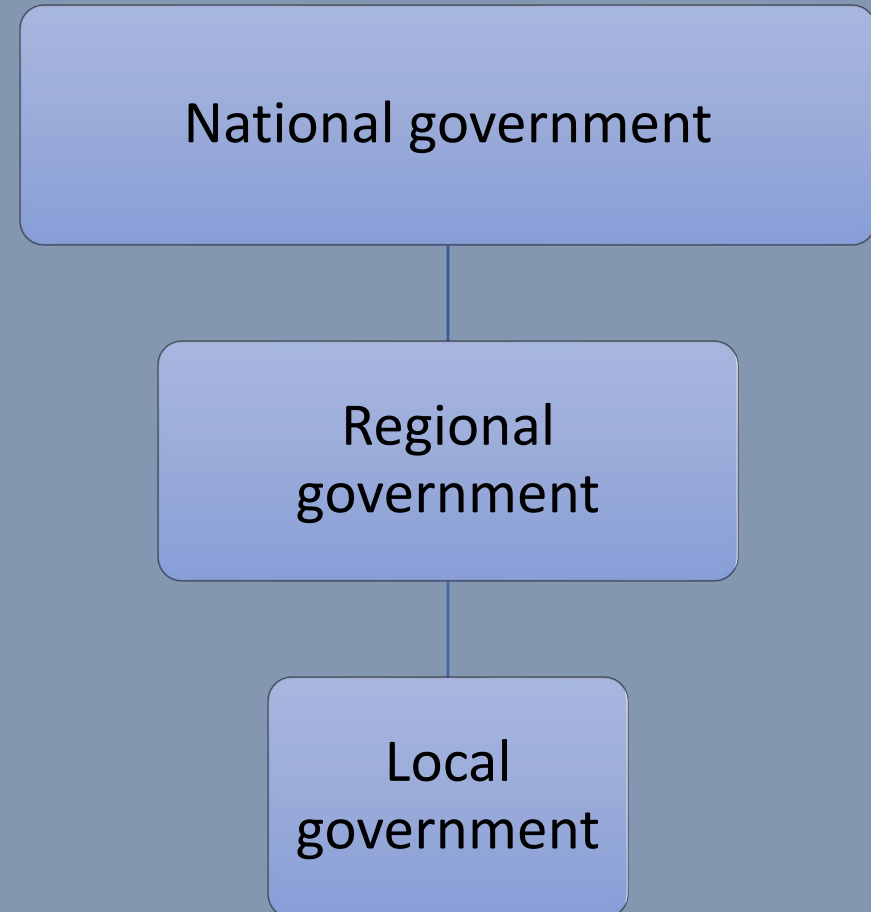


Guiding questions

- What is multilevel government (MLG)?
- Does Sierra Leone has an MLG system and if so, what form does it take?
- What are the main obstacles and opportunities for
 - effective multilevel governance in Sierra Leone?
 - localization of SDGs?
 - Integration of SGD in local plans

What is multilevel government?

- Government at different levels
- Relations between levels of government
- Non-centralism
 - take the form of federalism, devolution, decentralisation, or autonomous regions
 - Political, administrative and fiscal dimensions of dispersing power and authority
 - Principle of subsidiarity



African Charter on Decentralisation (2014)

- Article 6 on subsidiarity:
 - “Central government shall create enabling conditions for **decision-making, policy and programme initiation, adoption and implementation** to take place at **lower levels** of government where local governments or local authorities offer a better guarantee of pertinence and efficacy.”
 - “Central governments shall create enabling conditions for cooperation and coordination between national and all sub-national levels of government and shall **empower local governments or local authorities** to discharge their duties and responsibilities.”
 - “Local governments or local authorities shall **cooperate** with central governments and other local actors to achieve increased efficiency and effectiveness in public action for the delivery of public services.”
- Are there equivalent subsidiarity provisions in your own law?

Multiple centres of decision-making

- Strike a balance between autonomy, cooperation and supervision
- SGD- require combined effort from all levels of government
- 3Cs: Cooperation, Consultation and coordination
 - Policy coherence and integration



Why multilevel government or non-centralism?

- Underdevelopment / skewed development
- Abuse of centralized decision-making
- Democracy far removed from the people
- Many deeply divided societies (race, language, ethnicity, religion) are mired in conflict
 - Conflicts often have a territorial base, but not always
- MLG is often adopted as a territorial solution to these challenges
 - Deepen democracy, realize development and promote national integration

MLG as a (territorial) solution

Africa

- Ethiopia 1995 - federation
- Nigeria 1999 - federation
- Comoros 2001 - federation
- Sudan 2005 – federation (since 2019 again on agenda)
- Democratic Republic of Congo 2006 – decentralisation
- Kenya 2010 - devolution
- South Sudan 2011 / 2020 – decentralised (federation on agenda since 2018)
- Somalia 2012 – federation
- Zimbabwe 2013 – devolution
- Zambia 2016 - devolution

Europe

- Spain - 1978
- Belgium – 1970-1993
- UK (Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland)
- Bosnia- Herzegovina 1995

Asia

- India 1947
- Pakistan 1947
- Nepal 2015
- Philippines – Bonsamoro 2019
- Indonesia – Aceh 2001

MLG and SDG localization

UN (2024) “The universal, integrated, and transformative nature of the 2030 Agenda requires governments to work across policy domains and governance levels, and to cooperate with diverse stakeholders. **Multilevel governance is an accelerator of SDG localization**, strengthening cohesive leadership, vertical policy coherence, and horizontal coordination for improved service delivery by and among all spheres of governance.”

UN-Habitat (2022) “adapting global and aspirational strategies to local conditions and priorities requires an **integrated territorial approach** to the implementation of the SDGs, which is critical to see them succeed holistically”.

“...bottom up approach to the implementation of SDGs.”



UN (2024)

“SDG localization is the process of **adapting and customizing the SDGs** and translating them into **local development plans** and strategies that fit the needs, context, and priorities of a particular region or locality, in coherence with national frameworks.”

Inter-Agency Policy Brief:

Accelerating SDG Localization to deliver on the promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



The place and role of local governments

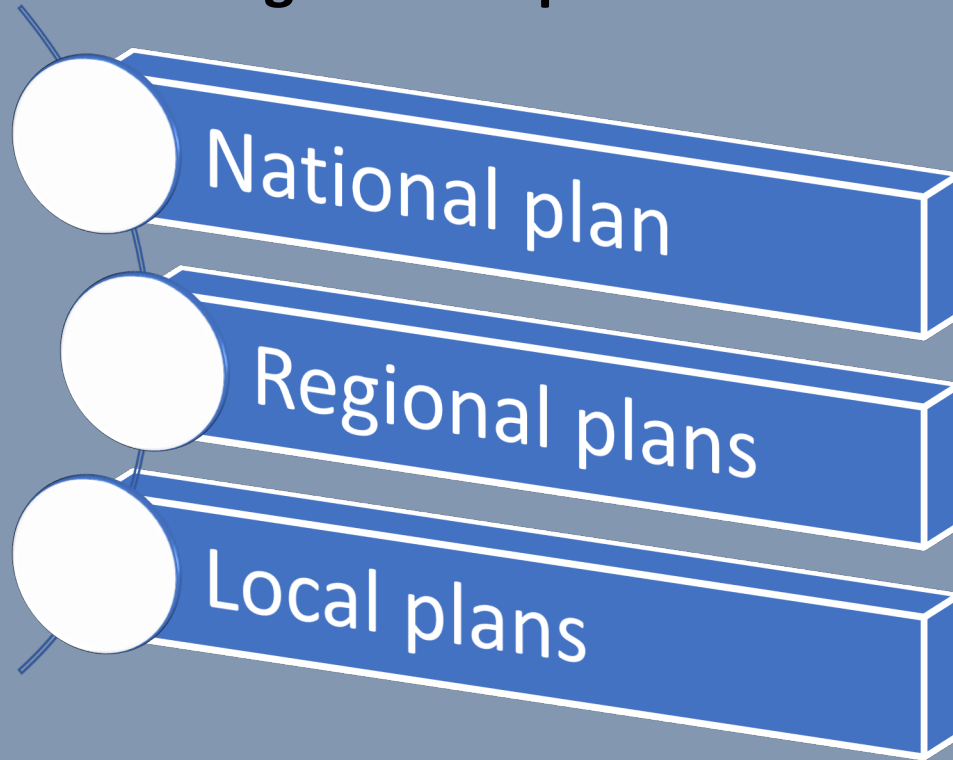
- UN (2024) “As the tier of government closest to local communities, **local and regional governments** (LRGs) are **best positioned** to recognize and deliver on local needs and priorities and to craft people-centered policies in keeping with the principles of leaving no one behind”.
- African Charter on Decentralisation –article 11 –state parties shall ensure:
 - (a) Local governments or local authorities promote and improve the livelihoods and environment of local communities.
 - (b) Local governments or local authorities, in the spirit of good local and central government relations, involve all relevant national, sub-national, private sector and civil society actors in the development and implementation of local development plans and programmes, and ensure consistency with national, regional or continental development policies.



**AFRICAN CHARTER ON THE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES
OF DECENTRALISATION, LOCAL GOVERNANCE
AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT**

Integration of SDGS in plans

Vertical integration of plans



Horizontal integration



Challenges for MGL and SDG localization

Local autonomy	Cooperation	Coordination and Integration	Resources
• Decentralization frameworks that do not advance local autonomy • Differences between the <i>de facto</i> and <i>de jure</i> • Unwillingness of local governments to fully exploit their autonomy	• No culture of cooperation, consultation and engagement • Stakeholder participation in the development of local plans is weak	• Vertical integration of national, provincial and local plans is weak • Integration of SDGs in plans not always there • Limited connection between local plans and budgets	• Limited financial resources • Limited technical capacity to deliver • Misuse of resources

How to make MLG Work (OECD, 2019)

- Guideline 1: Clarify the responsibilities assigned to different government levels
- Guideline 2: Ensure that all responsibilities are sufficiently funded
- Guideline 3: Strengthen subnational fiscal autonomy to enhance accountability
- Guideline 4: Support subnational capacity building
- Guideline 5: Build adequate co-ordination mechanisms among levels of government
- Guideline 6: Support cross-jurisdictional co-operation
- Guideline 7: Strengthen innovative and experimental governance, and promote citizen engagement
- Guideline 8: Allow for and make the most of asymmetric decentralization arrangements
- Guideline 9: Consistently improve transparency, enhance data collection and strengthen performance monitoring
- Guideline 10: Strengthen national regional development policies and equalization systems

Conclusion

- MLG presents significant opportunities for localizing SDGs
 - We have not fully exploited the potential of MLG
 - Non-centralism: A call to move from rhetoric to reality
- Enable local governments not just to implement national policies but also fully participate in setting and monitoring national, regional and global agendas
- Integration of SDGs in national and local plans
 - Ensure there is a closer link between the plan and budget
- The importance of intergovernmental and intra-governmental cooperation and coordination; stakeholder participation:
 - policy integration and coherence