

U The Framework is the
Key: Local Governance
and Political and legal
challenges.



Philip Amis at SEF Bonn Symposium November 28th 2013

Chair Research Advisory Group

Commonwealth Local Government Forum

International Development Department University of Birmingham, UK

MDGs : Where are we now?

- Consultation process leading to UN Vote on MDGs in 2014/2015
- Two key documents
 - UN led World we Want 2012
 - High level Panel report 2013
- Now all locked into intergovernmental negotiations at the UN
- Unclear on the outcomes but MDG2 are likely and it is clear that there must be a collective agreement
- Tension between vision and political compromise

MDGs and Local Government

- Changes in terms of urbanization, climate change, diversity and democracy all are making LG more important
- UN World we Want largely ignores or sees LG as invisible
 - Hardly mentioned in many task force papers
- HLP is much more positive
 - Recognised importance of LG in delivering the MDGs
 - Desire to disaggregate targets (12 illustrative replace original 8 in the MDGs) of these nearly 60% of the indicators will be disaggregated

MDGs and the framework

- LG matter but do we need a higher role than just implementation
 - Tendency to ignore LG autonomy and assume it is just a junior partner of National government
- LG mandated to provide a lot of the MDGs but is the problem the legal and administrative framework or the capacity and LG finance*
 - In a lot of systems it is that the resources capital and human do not match the mandate
 - Is the problem a technical one or is it really about political support

MDGs and the framework (2)

- Do we need a MDG target for Support to LG
 - Strengthen the framework in which LG operates
 - But can we find an appropriate indicator
 - May run up against Sovereignty Question
- Within this framework there are some new opportunities
 - Remember the importance of LG doing what it is supposed/mandated to do
 - Context of North-South collaboration
 - Share experience of CLGF*

Potential ways forward/promising approaches for LG

- If we want to work with Civil society groups then LG is the key interlocutor
 - Idea that Civil Society organizations best at addressing urban poverty
 - Key intermediate agency between donor and poor groups
- If we want to make govt responsive and address the issue of voice and participation then LG should be the starting place
 - LG nearest to the people

Potential ways forward/promising approaches for LG (2)

- If we want to address climate change then LG then LG is the key regulatory agency
 - Energy efficiency in transport and housing
- If we want to rebuild fragile and post conflict states LG is potentially a key agent
 - Sometimes easier to rebuild from base
- In Disasters LG crucial for disasters can
 - building the prevention measures
 - Picking up the pieces