African Journal of Public Affairs

Table of Contents

MANUSCRIPT SPECIFICATIONS

1. The preferred length of articles is about 5000 words.
2. Articles are to be submitted ready for the press: finally edited, stylistically polished and carefully proofread. Readability, fluency of style and clarity of exposition are essential.
3. The article should represent an original contribution to the current knowledge in the subject field AND/OR provide a comprehensive review of the current body of knowledge.
4. The article should contain a relevant and suitable summary (abstract) in English of between 150 and 200 words.
5. The Chief Editor reserves the right to make language alterations as he/she sees fit to accommodate the style and presentation of articles to the house style. Where major changes are necessary, the text may be returned to the author for correction or approval. Copyright is transferred to **AJPA** on acceptance for publication.
6. Relevant **key words** should be provided.
7. Composition
   - **Introduction**: a short, concise synopsis of the current knowledge in the field must be provided. The introduction should also serve to provide a rationale for the rest of the article.
   - **Methodology/research process**: an adequate, clear description of the methodology employed and/or the research process followed should be provided.
   - **Discussion**: a comprehensive discussion of the major/primary findings should be provided. The discussion must be relevant in the context of the research methodology/ process described in point 6. Furthermore, it should be adequate in terms of the depth and scope.
   - **Conclusion**: conclusions drawn in the article should be appropriate and justifiable in the light of the research process/methodology.
   - **References**: the list of references must contain sources that are recent and relevant to the research described. All sources must be listed alphabetically by authors' surnames, in the following format:
   - Kamanga, H.J. 1977. Leadership, Governance and Public Policy in Africa. *AJPA* 27(3):1736.
   - Ero-Phillips (ed.) 1986. *Local Government Policy in South Africa*. 2nd ed. Pretoria: KUKURUKU.
8. Source references in the text should be in the Harvard style, using the authors surname only, e.g. (Kamanga 1986:234–45).
9. Only genuine footnotes should be used, i.e. notes containing relevant elucidation of the text. Footnotes should be kept to a minimum. Numbered footnotes should appear at the bottom of the page. The position of the note should be indicated in the text in superscript Arabic figures without brackets.
10. Abbreviations and acronyms should be avoided (except where an acronym, e.g. is current parlance). When an acronym is to be used, it must be written in full when used for the first time with the acronym in brackets. e.g. National Council of Provinces (NCOP)
11. Italics should not be over used for emphasis. Latin phrases such as *per se* must be italicized. Words in languages other than that of the manuscript should be given in quotation marks.

12. Statistical and other tables should be labelled. Tables, as well as mathematical or similar symbols and expressions should be kept to a minimum.
13. Diagrams, sketches and graphs must be submitted in print-ready high resolution JPEG format as separate files (i.e. not copied into Word). Each diagram must have a short explanatory label.
14. If applicable, full details of the origin of the article must be provided (e.g. a paper delivered at a congress).
15. Refereeing is always anonymous.
16. Articles will only be refereed if accompanied by a declaration that the text has not been published or submitted for publication elsewhere.
17. The author of a published article will receive one free copy of the relevant issue of the journal.
18. Page fees of R300 per page and graphics at R150 per graph are payable by authors.

Note: Plagiarism is a serious offence and could result in actions against the author.

Editorial

This edition of the *African Journal of Public Affairs* (AJPA) is a joint effort of the journal, universities and associations in Africa and includes articles of researchers in South Africa, Uganda, Ghana and Rwanda. One of the AJPA's strategic intents is to promote Pan-Africanism by partnering with organisations beyond South Africa. In line with this, the aim is to promote closer collaboration and synergy between academia and industry in terms of knowledge, research and curriculum that focuses on dismantling economic, social and governance structures that create and perpetuate extreme inequality and poverty, to enhance social welfare and to accelerate progress towards national, regional and global developmental goals. Yet another strategic intent is to develop strategies to co-create and co-brand excellence in order to learn from African counterparts with similar contextual challenges and problems, to share experiences, to share and create knowledge and to find applied research-based solutions of high impact and quality for global public sector management, governance and leadership problems.

The publication aims to influence the search for intelligent solutions to the challenges of the African continent through academic investigation and a multidisciplinary approach to research of African scholars in the fields of methodology, good governance, development, leadership, monitoring and evaluation, E-Governance, privatisation, waste management, small-scale gold mining, food security, decentralisation and reasons for the emergence of Boko Haram. These research articles focus on developing solutions that address political, institutional and socio-economic challenges on the African continent to reap the benefits. Therefore, it is crucial to publish research that tackles the complicated challenges of service delivery to the populace. All these factors work together to ensure successful outcomes to the fundamental social, environmental and economic challenges that sustainable development and good governance present.

These multifaceted challenges require the pooled efforts of experts, whose interdisciplinary collaborations and research into the applications of research, practical techniques, technologies, planning solutions, and policy implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation, contribute towards understanding the complex role of sustainable management. Their findings will contribute towards the transformation of developing countries in Africa.

This will strengthen Africa's efforts to facilitate lasting value through research that will bolster transformative progress within society for the benefit of future generations on the African continent. In our industry, people's passion must strike the correct balance between teaching and research; between planning and action; and an empathetic attitude towards multiculturalism to promote regionally relevant sustainable human development for everyone in Africa. These are the essential features for Pan-African leaders to hone their leadership qualities, knowledge and global awareness, in order to be more effective and efficient in leading the continent towards global competitiveness.

According to Christelle Auriacombe in the article titled, 'Towards the construction of unobtrusive research techniques: Critical considerations when conducting a literature analysis', researchers, academics and consultants are required, in many different contexts, to engage in research and to provide decision-makers in society and government with valid

results on which various decisions can be based. Auriacombe states that a central purpose of any academic activity is to engage in constructing knowledge. "This is achieved by developing new ways of making sense of the world…While disciplines vary in the domain of knowledge seeking to create as well as the means to create knowledge, questioning knowledge and proposing new understanding and explanation are common to all academic and scholarly activities" (Boell and Cecez-Kecmanovic 2014 in Auriacombe 2016).

One facet of creating new knowledge is by interpreting research undertaken by others and existing knowledge through understanding, examining, questioning and critically assessing published writings by other scholars to advance scholarship. Therefore, "the quality and success of scholarly research depends in a large measure on the quality of the analysis and interpretation of the literature" according to the author.

This article focuses on specific dimensions and processes when applying unobtrusive research techniques. According to Auriacombe, unobtrusive research techniques can be both quantitative and qualitative in nature. Importantly, these research techniques are used to study social behavior in order to eliminate bias and promote conceptual and contextual analysis. Auriacombe advances an understanding of unobtrusive research techniques and extends guidelines on their uses to contribute to a better conceptual understanding of how unobtrusive research techniques can be intertwined creatively with other qualitative and quantitative research methods to advance scholarship.

"Social scientists rely mostly on reactive research methods, as opposed to unobtrusive research measurements. In other words, in many social science research projects, the researched person is aware of being studied and reacts to stimuli or questions presented by the researcher," according to the author. In this article, different aspects and types of unobtrusive research techniques are clarified and conceptual analysis, content analysis and historical/comparative analysis are explained as research techniques. Similar to all other research methods, they have their own strengths, but also their own weaknesses.

The article does not assume that correct or ultimate understanding can be achieved in terms of triangulating these techniques with other research methods, but instead is interested in the process of developing a general understanding of other methodological approaches to improve theoretical foundations of scholarly work.

Intellectuals from Africa and the broader international community have advanced many reasons for poverty and underdevelopment on the continent. In **'Exploring the relationship between good governance and development in sub-Saharan Africa: Lessons from South America'**, Damian Ukwandu and Vain Jarbandhan argue that poor governance is the main developmental obstacle in sub-Saharan Africa. They believe that good governance is the core catalyst to facilitate development. "Without good governance, it would be difficult for the region to move beyond poverty and underdevelopment," state the authors.

The article commences with a brief description of possible reasons for sub-Saharan Africa's (SSA) slow growth rate, as well as how good governance can help remedy the situation. To provide a theoretical framework, both governance and development are described. Hereafter, the article looks at the intrinsic link between good governance and development, as well as the vital role good governance plays in stimulating development.

To create a contextual framework, the article provides examples of cases where poor governance continues to hamper development in Africa. Citing Ayittey (2005:133) and Ukwandu (2014:220), the authors state that poor governance stunts agricultural growth

and production, and also hampers job creation and poverty alleviation. As such, poor governance influences investment, climate, economic growth and overall development in SSA (Ukwandu 2014:300). As a possible point of departure to jump-start economic growth and development, the authors draw from experiences of South American countries that have managed to bridge the poverty gap.

The authors conclude that, unless sub-Saharan Africa adopts this type of good governance approach, the dream of development may continue to be elusive. As such, they provide vital recommendations that could bolster economic transformation and change in SSA.

There is a perception that firm-hand-style leadership (command-and-control, authoritarian leadership or dictatorship) has served as a catalyst for economic development in certain Asian Tiger countries. In Africa, Rwanda and Ethiopia have also adopted this approach.

In **'Leadership and the impact of the emerging concept of firm-hand leadership on economic growth and democracy in Africa'**, Dominique Uwizeyimana states that, "Western donors and international financial institutions (IFIs) are now arguing that the rest of Africa should replicate the East-Asian Tigers' Developmental State model to achieve economic development". However, literature on leadership styles rejects firm-hand leadership as a "debilitating style" (Weir 2011:1). According to the author, this contradictory state of affairs leads to an important question: What did previous African 'firm-hand' leaders in Rwanda and Ethiopia do, or fail to do, compared to their counterparts' current initiatives to achieve the same economic growth? As such, the article explores and contextualises the concept of firm-hand leadership within the broader leadership framework. In addition, the author seeks to uncover and report on contemporary firm-hand leaders in Africa's approach to develop their countries' economies.

The article starts by discussing the conceptual and theoretical intricacies surrounding the concept of leadership. It then proceeds to explore and contextualise the concept of firm-hand leadership within the broader leadership framework. Hereafter, the notion is postulated that Africa has had 'firm' or authoritarian leaders for many years without experiencing economic growth. The article explores how authoritarian leaders of post-independence African states have destabilised their countries' economies. The author provides examples of current African firm-hand leaders who follow a different direction to grow their economies.

The article concludes by delineating certain critical success factors for this type of leadership to succeed within an African context. "One of the main findings of this research is that both the current and post-independence firm-hand leadership styles are authoritarian and undemocratic and are exclusively based on one-party state systems," notes Uwizeyimana. While the article rejects the notion of democracy as a prerequisite for Africa's economic growth, it also warns of the negative consequences firm-hand leadership may have on democracy in Africa.

The global domination of Western approaches to programme evaluation is increasingly questioned within non-Western contexts. In **'Developing an Africa-rooted programme evaluation approach'**, Fanie Cloete argues that numerous evaluation principles, norms, practices and evaluation methods of developed countries are unsuitable for less-developed, non-Western cultural contexts. Nonetheless, the author states that these Western approaches still dominate non-Western contexts, as practices and institutions fail to compete effectively with developed countries' established evaluation systems.

According to Cloete, "The African Evaluation Association (AfrEA) made a conceptual breakthrough with the adoption of the Bellagio Report, which promotes the development of an Africa-rooted evaluation approach". As such, the article summarises and assesses the implications of the Bellagio Report (2013). "This report is the most concrete input so far in this debate, but it needs to be concretised better in order to be implemented successfully," states the author.

The article builds on the findings and conclusions of Cloete, Rabie and De Coning (2014) on why the envisaged Africa-rooted evaluation approach should not substitute its current Western counterpart. Instead, the author argues that it should be refined, adapted and customised to suit the African development paradigm. "In this customisation process, it is crucial that African evaluators, both scholars and practitioners, obtain clarity about exactly what needs to change in the current evaluation model, and how to do it," states the author. In conclusion, Cloete proposes a dedicated project management effort under the auspices of AfrEA and its member Voluntary Organisation of Professional Educators (VOPE) associations.

The demand for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) capacity in Africa sharply exceeds its supply. This has placed increased pressure on universities to produce the needed M&E expertise. While some commendable progress has been made, significant gaps remain to produce the needed human resources with the required expertise, competencies, skills and tools in the field. In **'Blended-learning approaches and the teaching of monitoring and evaluation programmes in African universities: Unmasking the UTAMU approach'**, Benon Basheka, Jude Lubega and Rehema Baguma contextualise M&E capacity development in Africa. The authors provide background to, and a rationale for, a blended-learning approach to teaching of M&E in Africa. The authors are of the opinion that this approach will help accommodate students across a range of disciplines, faculties, countries and levels to study in the same classroom environment.

To accommodate learners from a range of disciplines, the authors discuss key e-learning trends and explain blended-learning as a concept and approach. Furthermore, they provide insight into Uganda Technology and Management University's (UTAMU) hybrid teaching approach to M&E. UTAMU's block-release model is explained, while the authors provide credence to why this model could be used in Africa.

In conclusion, the article highlights critical success factors for implementation in terms of policy, resources, planning and scheduling. The authors agree with Collins (2001:162), who states that great institutions respond with "thoughtfulness and creativity, driven by a compulsion to turn unrealised potential into results; mediocre companies react and lurch about, motivated by fear of being left behind".

In addition, the authors refer to Tarsilla (2014:6), who provides insight into successes and failures with regard to ECD in Africa. One of Tarsilla's conclusions is that short-term training initiatives that target individuals are no longer effective, unless they are combined with other activities that form part of systemic processes.

As such, the authors propose a systematic, blended-learning approach to teaching M&E in Africa. "With the blended approach, students across a variety of disciplines, faculties, countries and levels can study in the same classroom environment". The UTAMU e-learning model is advanced as a possible blueprint for a blended-learning approach.

In **'Influence of sector wide monitoring and evaluation (M&E) on the performance of Justice, Law and Order in Uganda'**, Herbert Arinaitwe and Elizabeth Asiimwe analyse the

influence of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) on the Justice, Law and Order Sector's (JLOS) performance as a case study of Sector Wide Approaches (SWAPs).

The research is grounded in the institutional theory and focuses on sector performance indicators and their influence on attaining the goals of the JLOS. It also examines how JLOS's structural arrangements surrounding M&E influence sector performance. The article provides a background and rationale to contextualise the study and discusses the evolution of SWAPs. The research design, findings, conclusion, policy implications and recommendations are also provided.

The findings reveal that recasting, planning and provision of feedback were required. "However, there is increased concentration on output indicators. M&E structural arrangements were not very well developed and there was lack of an integrated M&E system and weak linkages between institutional M&E and sector schedules," state the authors. The study findings further highlight that, although the sector has an M&E communication framework, there is limited consideration of M&E findings. In addition, the majority of respondents stated that M&E funding was inadequate, which presented a challenge in terms of implementation.

Qualitative research findings indicate that, although M&E findings are available, they are based on activities and some achievements are not brought out clearly. Some of the information-sharing activities, especially annual reviews, lacked in-depth data.

Furthermore, research findings indicate that JLOS does not have a fully functional M&E system. It only has a framework that is characterised by limited implementation and coverage. "The limited implementation of the existing framework hinders the integration of policy, development of comprehensive indicators and overall performance measurement".

In conclusion, the authors state that, "Although there is a structural M&E framework system with qualified staff to manage it, the system is grossly under-resourced, not well integrated in all sectors and underutilised". Therefore, the article recommends that the M&E system be upgraded and localised at institutional level. "Data management systems should also be improved and integrated across JLOS institutions and create demand and use of M&E findings," state the authors.

Local government is often the first point of contact between an individual and a government institution. Therefore, it is often argued that local government is the form of government closest to the people (Thornhill 2008:491). As such, local government has an important role to play in improving communities' lives, by providing and delivering basic services, such as access to potable water, proper sanitation, a sustainable electricity supply and regular waste removal.

In 'Challenges in implementing monitoring and evaluation (M&E): The case of the Mfolozi Municipality' R M Mthethwa and N N Jili discuss key findings of a case study on challenges that hamper the successful implementation of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in the Mfolozi Municipality, which forms part of the King Cetshwayo District Municipality in the KwaZulu-Natal Province. The case study was conducted against a background of continuous service delivery protests across South Africa. "Since the inception of South Africa's democratic dispensation in 1994, local government has not achieved the goals set for the country by the ruling party, to overcome inequalities that are a legacy of the apartheid government's discriminatory system, based on race and gender, leaving a dysfunctional local government system with ineffective service delivery in many communities," state the authors

In line with this, the case study found that the shortage of skills and lack of financial resources contribute to the ineffectiveness of M&E in the Mfolozi Municipality. According to the authors, "To improve service delivery, municipalities must design and implement comprehensive M&E systems to facilitate continuous assessment, monitoring and evaluation of municipal structures, systems and processes..." Importantly, the article highlights that these systems should be in line with municipalities' integrated development plans (IDPs), service delivery outcomes and operational plans to implement their budgets.

In conclusion, the authors recommend remedial actions to address the identified challenges the Mfolozi Municipality. This includes employing and retaining highly skilled workers from an increasingly diverse and mobile labour market. In addition, the municipality should involve the local community in the planning and execution of projects to ensure their success. "To adhere to its statutory and regulatory obligations, the local sphere of government in South Africa must develop a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system," state the authors. Although developing such a comprehensive system is without challenges, the authors highlight that municipalities should consider key elements that should be incorporated in their particular systems.

The emergence of the 'networked' or 'knowledge' society has transformed governance approaches on a global scale, as new forms of collaboration and exchange between society and government have been created. In **'Towards an E-Governance competency framework for public service managers: The South African experiment'**, Gerrit van der Waldt states that, "These trends are congruent with the reinventing, New Public Management (NPM), and network governance paradigms leading to the blurring of lines between the public and private sectors".

Government institutions and agencies have had to respond to this new trend by optimising information and communication technology (ICT) to facilitate e-governance applications to improve interactions with society. However, the author points out that, "there seems to be general consensus that civil service managers, as the custodians and administrative leaders of e-governance endeavours, generally lack the necessary competencies to adequately cope with these new realities and to adequately adjust functional operations for e-governance imperatives".

In line with this, the author argues that a skilled, competent workforce is needed to implement appropriate e-governance technologies. "Various general training models for capacity-building of civil service managers exist, but a comprehensive competency framework for their e-readiness as far as e-governance applications are concerned, is largely absent," states the author.

The article outlines contextual perspectives regarding the utilisation of ICT to promote e-governance in general. This includes an analysis of the seemingly insufficient alignment between government's operational demands and the e-readiness (competencies) of civil service managers. In addition, the article explores the South African Government's initiatives to promote e-governance competencies within its civil service.

In conclusion, the article proposes a comprehensive competency framework for civil service managers based on a comparative analysis of various models and best practice around the Globe. "This framework should further be refined through empirical investigation and be adjusted to fit the particular circumstances of a country," concludes the author.

In **'First count the cost: Privatising urban waste management services in sub-Saharan Africa'**, Alex Osei-Kojo argues that, while privatisation has its benefits, it should

be approached with caution. In line with this, Stoker (1996) states: "Despite the benefits of privatisation, application of private sector strategies to the public sector deserves more concern as there are evidences of corruption, incompetence and poor service delivery in the private sector".

Critiquing the New Public Management (NPM) paradigm, the article presents critical issues that should be considered before privatising public enterprises. Urban sanitation services in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) are used as an example. The researcher applied qualitative methods to present possible scenarios for privatising urban waste management in SSA, while purposive sampling was done to organise relevant literature.

In addition, secondary data from journal articles, government reports and documents were analysed. The results indicate key considerations, such as the possibility of a market of failure, corruption within the private sector, poor service delivery and a prevalence of inefficiency.

The author concludes that the private sector and NPM do not have the magic bullet to solve privatisation-related challenges. He goes on to state that, "even though privatising urban sanitation services in SSA has some benefits, it also comes with serious costs which cannot be ignored".

The policy implications of these findings are significant. City managers and planners in SSA should ensure that customer satisfaction forms part of contractual arrangements with private entities. In addition, the author highlights the importance of anti-corruption policies in relation to the private sector. In conclusion, the author states that "broader macro-economic policies should direct the 'invisible hand' against market failure".

As in most developing countries, artisanal gold mining in Uganda remains largely informal and unregulated. As a poverty-driven activity, small-scale miners rely heavily on inexpensive, outdated and polluting technologies and chemicals, such as mercury. In **'Artisanal and small-scale gold mining and food security: An ecological perspective'**, Herbert Nabaasa states that, "Given the ecological and socio-economic challenges that characterise the artisanal mining sector, several questions have been raised regarding its capacity to meet the miners' economic needs, such as food security".

The author follows an exploratory-descriptive cross-sectional study design using qualitative and quantitative methods to gain a deeper understanding of how artisanal and small-scale gold mining influences food security in Uganda. A total of 384 respondents were selected from a pool of artisans, minining-rights holders and local leaders. Data was collected using observation checklists, survey questionnaires and interview guides.

Specific variables of interest were subjected to bivariate analysis, where respondents were included in the analysis after a log likelihood ratio test. The results showed that 96% of the dependent variables were well displayed by the variables in the model, with a sensitivity of 93.2% and a specificity of 91.6%.

The findings indicate that the majority of the artisanal and small-scale miners (71%) who had changed from other livelihood enterprises, such as agriculture, have less food security and lower incomes to support their economic needs. Factors such as the involvement of women in ASGM, changes in land use, the use of chemicals, and physical hazards were found to affect the different levels of food production, availability and access.

In conclusion, strategies that seek to mitigate these challenges should help to maximise the economic benefits of mining and improve miners' livelihoods."To improve food security

and income in mining communities, government and other sector players should prioritise strategies, such as formalisation, legalisation and awareness," states the author. The author highlights that, "strategies should include creating awareness among the miners, legalising and formalising artisanal mining operations, as well as developing guidelines that can help standardise the marketing, pricing and mining processes".

Decentralisation is considered as one of the most effective ways to ensure good local governance. This is despite the fact that the process has been unsuccessful in a number of countries. In **'The interface between the role and significance of the Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA) and Rwanda's decentralisation mandate'**, Faustin Serubanza aims to contextualise the decentralisation process in Rwanda. The methodology entails a desktop analysis of literature and official documents to conceptualise the area of investigation.

The article discusses the role of local government associations in general before singling out the case of the Rwandese Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA). To provide insight, RALGA's origin, evolution, functioning and significance in facilitating the decentralisation process in Rwanda is explored.

Furthermore, the article explores the interface between RALGA's role and decentralisation mandate within the Rwandan local governance context. It contextualises the decentralisation process in Rwanda and discusses the role of local government associations in general, and RALGA in particular.

The article highlights RALGA's positive contribution to implementing Rwanda's decentralisation process. According to the author, "RALGA has initiated concrete interventions – especially in the areas of advocacy and capacity building – to fulfill its mandate and to facilitate a strong support network for its members and partners that are based on a high level of ownership, trust and credibility".

However, the association has admitted that much still needs to be done to further sustain the decentralisation process according to generally accepted decentralisation theories. "Further improvement is still needed to streamline sectoral decentralisation, increase technical competence, provide the required tools, as well as to strengthen fiscal decentralisation and financial autonomy to execute the assigned functions effectively," states the author. As such, the article proposes a review of the interface between the role and significance of RALGA and Rwandan decentralisation.

The article has certain limitations, and, as such, the author calls for additional systematic empirical research with regard to streamlining sectoral decentralisation, increasing technical competencies, providing the needed tools, as well as strengthening fiscal decentralisation and financial autonomy to execute the assigned functions effectively.

The narrative of hatred and anger towards Western education is deeply embedded in Northern Nigeria's political and religious culture. In **'The relationship between indirect rule and Quranic education: Considerations for the emergence of Boko Haram terrorism in Northern Nigeria'**, Damian Ukwandu traces the historical legacy the British colonial policy of indirect rule has contributed to the rise of Boko Haram terrorism.

The author asserts that the policy of indirect rule and the official preference for the Islamic faith has facilitated the rise of Islam, Quranic education and Boko Haram terrorism in Northern Nigeria. According to the author, the official apathy towards Islamic education in Northern Nigeria has led to this rise of unregulated and unreformed fundamentalist Quranic schools in the region.

To provide insight into the link between indirect rule and Boko Haram terrorism, the article is divided into five parts. Firstly, the author provides insight into the root causes of Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria. Thereafter, recommendations are made on how to solve the crisis in Northern Nigeria. Here, the author traces the colonial root of indirect rule and Islamic education and the ripple effect it has had on post-colonial Nigeria's politics. The second part of the article conceptualises key terms such as terrorism, indirect rule and education, where after the author reflects on the link between, and effects of indirect rule, Quranic education and Boko Haram terrorism in Northern Nigeria. Lastly, the article focuses on key conclusions and provides recommendations on possible ways to solve the problem of Boko Haram terrorism in Northern Nigeria

The article suggests that efforts to combat Boko Haram terrorism in Northern Nigeria should involve policies to reform and regulate the thousands of Quranic schools in the region. According to the author, "These schools target desperately poor, unemployed and unemployable young men and women, who are recruited easily as foot soldiers by Boko Haram leaders".

In line with this, the author states that Nigerian authorities should persuade religious teachers in the region to be at the forefront of the intellectual war against Boko Haram's false teachings and ideologies. In addition, "there must be a concerted effort to train and retrain the youth in small-scale farming and artisan work, while jobs and opportunities for poverty alleviation and food production should be directed towards the youths of the region," according to the author. Despite its shortcomings, the author believes that the military campaign against Boko Haram remains an integral part of the effort to solve the problem.

Prof J O Kuye
Chief Editor

The interface between the role and significance of the Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA) and Rwanda's decentralisation mandate

F Serubanza*
Strategic Planning Unit
Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA)
Rwanda

ABSTRACT

Decentralisation is considered as one of the most effective ways to ensure good local governance. This is despite the fact that the process has been unsuccessful in a number of countries. National associations of local authorities have claimed to play a role in facilitating decentralisation processes. This article aims to contextualise the decentralisation process in Rwanda. It discusses the role of local government associations in general before singling out the case of the Rwandese Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA), in particular. To provide insight, its origin, evolution, functioning and significance in facilitating the decentralisation process in Rwanda is explored. The article concludes that RALGA has played a positive role in the effective implementation of Rwanda's decentralisation process The association has played a key role in creating a conducive environment for its members to accomplish their responsibilities towards the decentralisation mandate. According to the mandate, local authorities are accountable to the state and the local communities they serve. In conclusion, the article proposes a review of the interface between the role and significance of RALGA and Rwandan decentralisation.

INTRODUCTION

Globally, many countries have embraced decentralisation, According to Manor (1999:1) it "has quietly become a fashion of our time". However, the author points out that the pace of implementing the required reforms has not led to the expected increased efficiency, effective community participation and private sector contribution (Manor 1999:1).

Although the decentralisation process involves a variety of stakeholders, local authorities are key actors and beneficiaries to a certain extent. Local authorities often operate within a complex, fragmented broader governmental framework. As such, they need to create a well-coordinated, inclusive channel to express their views. For this purpose, local authorities in many countries have set up national associations as platforms to facilitate inter-authority communication, but mostly to speak as a uniform voice. RALGA was established within this context.

RALGA has initiated concrete interventions – especially in the areas of advocacy and capacity building – to fulfill its mandate and to facilitate a strong support network for its members and partners based on a high level of ownership, trust and credibility. However, the association has admitted that much still needs to be done to further sustain the decentralisation process according to generally accepted decentralisation theories. Further improvement is still needed to streamline sectoral decentralisation, increase technical competence, provide the required tools, as well as to strengthen fiscal decentralisation and financial autonomy to execute the assigned functions effectively.

This article explores the interface between RALGA's role and decentralisation mandate within the Rwandan local governance context. Furthermore, it contextualises the decentralisation process in Rwanda and discusses the role of local government associations (LGA) in general, and RALGA in particular. RALGA's origin, evolution, functioning and significance in facilitating the decentralisation process in Rwanda are also discussed.

The methodology entails a desktop analysis of literature and official documents to conceptualise the area of investigation. For Babbie and Mouton (2005 in Auriacombe 2006:632), conceptualisation refers to "the process of specifying the vague and mental imagery of our concepts (and) sorting out the kinds of observations and measurements that will be appropriate for our research". At this level, the focus is shifted from a conceptual paradigm to earmarking different variables and indicators (Auriacombe 2006:632). A variable refers to descriptive or analytical attributes that can take on various values under different conditions. In turn, an indicator provides a concrete, measurable, indirect value to an otherwise immeasurable concept (Auriacombe 2006:632).

The article has certain limitations, and, as such, additional systematic empirical research needs to be conducted with regard to streamlining sectoral decentralisation, increasing technical competencies, providing the needed tools, as well as strengthening fiscal decentralisation and financial autonomy to execute the assigned functions effectively.

CONTEXTUALISING THE DECENTRALISATION PROCESS IN RWANDA

After the genocide against the Tutsis in 1994, Rwanda's transitional government carried out extensive consultations with citizens, all categories of development stakeholders including society opinion leaders and experts. The aim was to understand the reasons for the genocide against the Tutsis, as well as how this page could be turned permanently. Poor governance was identified as one of the root causes. Subsequently, it was decided that decentralisation would be the best way to instil good governance, as it would give Rwandans full control of their destiny.

This resulted in the country's Decentralisation Policy, which was formulated in May 2000. The aim was to make the districts and City of Kigali autonomous local governments with their own set functions. Furthermore, the policy aimed to delegate as many functions as possible to the lowest administrative entities. In 2003, this was entrenched in the Rwandan Constitution under Article 167 (Government of Rwanda 2003:167).

The first pillar of Rwanda's Vision 2020 titled "Good governance and a capable state" highlights that the state is responsible for ensuring good governance. Notably, this includes accountability, transparency and efficiency in deploying scarce resources. According to Vision 2020, the state should also respect democratic structures and processes, adhere to the rule of law and protect human rights. Grassroots-level participation will continue to be promoted through the decentralisation process. Through their involvement in the decision-making process, local communities are able to address the issues that affect them (Government of Rwanda 2012:10).

The revised National Decentralisation Policy states that, "Rwanda's Decentralisation Policy was inspired by the fundamental principles of human rights, dignity, freedom and development that had been violated until 1994" (Ministry of Local Government 2012:10). This focus on fundamental human rights is enshrined in the National Constitution of 2003 (as amended to date) and operationalised through national legislation and several policies. Key aspects include:

- respect for, and upholding of human rights and equality;
- spearheading a spirit of national unity and reconciliation;
- eliminating all forms of discrimination;
- upholding individuals' right to participate in government and development through community involvement and democratic, free and fair elections and adhering to the rule of law;
- seeking solutions to all problems through dialogue and consensus; and
- upholding and promoting positive traditional values of the Rwandan society (Ministry of Local Government 2012:10).

The national Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2 (EDPRS 2), discusses decentralisation under "Foundational and Cross-cutting Issues" (Rwanda Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning 2012:89). According to the strategy, the decentralisation process resulted in the creation of districts. Subsequently, districts are responsible for a range of services and they have committed to ensuring quality services. Through their involvement, these districts will continue to play an integral role in Rwanda's development process moving forward. Furthermore, districts play a key role in deepening and sustaining grassroots-based democratic governance and promoting equitable local development (Rwanda Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning 2012:89).

The EDPRS 2 stresses that, "This will be done by enhancing citizen participation and strengthening the local government system, while maintaining effective functional and mutually accountable linkages between central and local government entities, thereby forming an important element of Accountable Governance" (Rwanda Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning 2012:89). As such, the EDPRS 2 focuses on the following strategic areas:

- implementing local economic development (LED) strategies to ensure that municipalities are financially strong;

- focusing on participatory, democratic and accountable local governance systems;
- building capacity to facilitate effective local service delivery;
- ensuring efficient services delivery through further sectoral decentralisation;
- leveraging regional integration to expand opportunities, local economic empowerment, as well as cross-border trade and security;
- facilitating national unity, cohesion and peace through well-planned and successfully implemented local systems
- using information and communication technology (ICT) to deliver efficient and effective services;
- empowering citizens through participation; and
- promoting transparency and accountability (Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning 2013:89).

As the decentralisation process continued to focus on empowering its citizens, it has proved to be the most effective mechanism for improving Rwanda's status quo. According to the Rwandan government, decentralisation is an appropriate platform to mobilise citizens, nurture leadership and eradicate poverty. The government hopes to use decentralisation as an avenue to transform Rwanda into a wealthier, healthier and happier nation. Furthermore, it is seen as a tool to facilitate unity and social cohesion. Importantly, decentralisation is used to bolster socio-economic transformation, as envisaged in Vision 2020 and beyond, by mobilising its citizens to use their own potential, as well as the natural and socio-cultural resources that are at their disposal (MINALOC 2012:23).

Rwanda adopted a phased approach process to implement its decentralisation policy. The first phase focused on ensuring democratic leadership and creating a platform to nurture leaders, including women, the youth and previously marginalised groups.

The second phase focused on strengthening local government structures by implementing both minor tweaks and major reforms, such as the 2006 territorial reforms. This focus on continuous improvements provided an opportunity to create accountable service delivery structures – especially for the poor and vulnerable. The roles and responsibilities at all levels were streamlined, especially with regard to local governments (districts, sectors, cells), while more adequate financing and staffing arrangements were operationalised (Ministry of Local (MINALOC) Government 2006:1–2).

The third phase concentrated on sustaining the momentum and ensuring sustainable development. This phase also focused on creating stronger, more autonomous local governments that are capable of sustaining the democratisation process and fast-tracking socio-economic transformation. During this phase, there was a strong focus on harnessing people's creative potential and optimising resources. The structures, systems and mechanisms put in place were reinforced further, as Rwanda had not yet achieved the level of citizen empowerment that was envisaged. Undeniably, citizen involvement still needs to be improved in many regions, while new challenges emerge on a continuous basis.

Firstly, the strategic plan for Rwanda's decentralisation (Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC) 2012:24) needs to be used as a framework to promote good governance and service delivery. The higher-level echelons of government have a subsidiary function. As such, it only performs tasks that cannot be undertaken effectively at the lower level. Secondly, there is a strong focus on respecting, preserving and upholding the principle of

national unity and equitable development to avoid discriminative development at a national level. The aforementioned principle is linked to a focus on promoting, adhering to and respecting the separation of power between political and administrative/technical authority. Importantly, this should be reflected in the structures and functional linkages. With regard to roles and responsibilities, actors should help avoid duplication, overlaps and conflicts that undermine good governance and development. Rwanda's Decentralisation Strategic Plan has the following objectives:

- To enhance and sustain citizens' participation in initiating, making, implementing, monitoring and evaluating decisions and plans that affect them by transferring power, authority and resources from central to local government and lower levels. This entails ensuring that all levels have adequate capacity and are motivated to promote genuine participation.
- To promote and entrench a culture of accountability and transparency in governance and service delivery. This includes strengthening national and local accountability mechanisms to make them more relevant, credible, conducive, supportive/attractive to all citizens, leaders and non-state entities.
- To fast-track and sustain equitable LED in order to improve fiscal autonomy and employment levels, as well as reduce poverty, by empowering local communities and governments to explore and utilise local potentials, prioritise and proactively engage in economic transformation activities at local, national and regional levels, as well as ensure fiscal discipline.
- To enhance effectiveness in the planning, monitoring, and delivery of services by promoting joint development planning between central and local governments. In addition, to ensure that lowest levels possible are responsible for service delivery and corresponding public expenditure.
- To consolidate national unity and identity (*Ubunyarwanda*) by fostering, enhancing and sustaining the spirit of reconciliation, social cohesion and common belonging as a nation. Hence, to ensure lasting peace and security as well as a purpose-driven community.
- To build a spirit of volunteering, community work and self-reliance that is based on cultural and other values of collective responsibility, personal worth and productive involvement.
- To fast-track the regional integration agenda into a politically and economically meaningful endeavour.
- To build and consolidate volunteerism, community work and self-reliance based on cultural and other values, such as collective responsibility, personal worth and productive involvement.
- To fast-track and translate the regional integration agenda into a politically meaningful, economically fruitful venture for Rwandans from all corners of the country, and as an anchor for national stability, peace and unity (Ministry of Local Government 2013:23–24).

The next principle focuses on local autonomy, which goes hand-in-hand with local identity, interests and diversity. This focus helps ensure that decentralisation champions community participation to identify local needs and interests, seeking solutions for problems, mobilising resources and committing to implementing plans. In addition, the aforementioned principle helps ensure that the government system is maintained as a single entity. As such,

decentralisation does not imply fragmentation. Rather, central and local governments have clearly defined roles and support each other where needed. Importantly, there is no such thing as a 'one size fits all' approach. Therefore, different sectors approach decentralisation in different ways, depending on their structures and the services they provide.

Every country has limitations in implementing its decentralisation policy. According to the United Nations Central Development Fund (UNCDF) (1999:167), "There is no simple one-dimensional, quantifiable index of the degree of decentralisation in a given country. Similarly, the devolution and deconcentration distinction is too blunt to be helpful – almost every country exhibits some sort of mix at each level". As such, it is difficult to assess a country's political commitment to decentralisation objectively, as the formal institutional setup and the policy differences within government are not measured (UNCDF 1999:167). Subsequently, Rwanda has opted to implement all forms of decentralisation concurrently, from 'deconcentration' to delegation and devolution of responsibilities depending on the nature, sensitivity and complexity of the function. With this approach, Rwanda succeeded in developing a fairly strong local governance system with capable local leadership, functioning district councils and well-equipped administrative structures (MINALOC 2012:12–20).

However, the policy shows that sectoral decentralisation is undertaken differently depending on the sector and specific service or function. Some sectoral agencies, such as education, health, agriculture and infrastructure, have established a direct presence at provincial and district levels. However, many sectoral service functions are parallel and have not integrated with local government systems. Nonetheless, they recognise the importance of local government, as well as its ability to deliver services – especially through *Imihigo* (MINALOC 2012:12–20). Therefore, sector-based ministries need to receive sufficient guidance on decentralisation. More specifically, they need viable information on how to become part of the local government system to ensure more cost-effective service delivery.

In a bid to develop the capacity for local governments to deliver decentralised services and responsibilities, Rwanda has undertaken a range of policy and institutional reforms to bridge any potential gap, as well as to cope with the changing internal and external environment. Such changes are articulated in the recently formulated Local Government Capacity Development Strategy.

THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATIONS IN GENERAL

According to the Council of Europe (CoE), LGAs play a crucial role in building a strong local government system. LGAs focus on developing good governance by promoting decentralisation. This is done by strengthening local authorities and building well-functioning local government institutions. However, in many countries, LGAs do not have the capacity to provide comprehensive support to their local authorities and the local government system at large (Council of Europe www.coe.int/t/dgap/localdemocracy/centre_expertise/tools/ Strength). These institutions are non-governmental organisations (NGOs), yet they have public authority. As such, it is important to understand how hybrid institutions function, and to what extent they contribute to the decentralisation process. To answer these questions, some examples are provided below.

Firstly, the United Kingdom Local Government Association (UKLGA) defines itself as a "national voice of local government, working with councils to support, promote and improve local government". The UKLGA is defined as a cross-party organisation that represents local councils to ensure local government has a strong, credible voice within national government. The UKLGA aspires to "influence and set the political agenda on the issues that matter to councils so they are able to deliver local solutions to national problems". As such, their vision is to enhance the quality of life for everyone in the UK by rejuvenating democracy and enabling citizens to participate in community matters (Local Government Association. www.local.gov. uk/about).

Secondly, the South African Local Government Association's (SALGA) role consists of six components. This includes representing, promoting and protecting local government's interests; transforming local government, so that it is able to fulfill its developmental role; raising local government's profile; ensuring that women participate fully in local government; perform its role as an employer body; and developing capacity within municipalities.

SALGA has four key tasks, namely to provide advice and support in terms of policy analysis, research and monitoring, knowledge exchange and support to members; to ensure representation, which includes stakeholder engagement and lobbying on behalf of local government with regard to national policies and legislation; to act as an employer body, which entails collective bargaining on behalf of the members and capacity building; and strategically building the profile and image of local government locally and internationally (SALGA: www.salga.org.za/pages/About-SALGA/Welcome-to-SALGA).

The third example is the Association of Local Authorities of Tanzania (ALAT). It was established in 1984 as the Association of Local Government Authorities in Tanzania, in accordance with the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania Act 15 of 1984. Members include chairpersons of district and town councils, mayors of city and municipal councils, directors of urban councils and districts, members of parliament and the secretary-general, who is secretary of the annual general assembly.

ALAT is responsible for representing the interests, demands, expectations of local government authorities; negotiating and facilitating local government authorities in any law-setting procedure; enabling and strengthening local government authorities' service delivering capacity; as well as collecting, analysing and disseminating information to members and other stakeholders. The organisation has a dual role, as it provides members with services and represents them with regard to local government issues (ALATwww.alat.or.tz/StrategicPlan.pdf).

According to its constitution, ALAT aims: "(a) To act as a forum for exchanging views and experiences among its members (b) To lobby and advocate for policies and legislative matters which are likely to affect local government authorities (c) To disseminate information and expert advice to its members (d) To represent Local Government Authorities and their views in international forums" (Sida 2013:10).

THE RWANDA ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES (RALGA)

RALGA is a registered non-profit organisation (NPO), which was established legally in 2003. The association was founded after Rwanda adopted its decentralisation policy in 2000,

whereafter autonomous districts were entrusted with new responsibilities. The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda, of 4 June 2003, with specific reference to Articles 35 and 167, laid the foundation for LGAs such as RALGA. Later on, Law No 08/2006 of 24/02/2006, with specific reference to Articles 158 and 159, determined the organisation and functioning of districts. Law No 10/2006 of 03/03/2006, with specific reference to Article 247, determined the structure, organisation and functioning of the City of Kigali. In turn, Law No 04/2012 of 17/02/2012 governs the organisation and functioning of national NGOs, which constitutes the legal basis for the existence of RALGA.

According to RALGA's articles of association, or statutes, the association is a "national non-governmental organisation with the objective of promoting local government entities". In turn, its vision is to facilitate "efficient local government entities where people and stakeholders are involved in development, by assisting these entities in achieving their mission, complying with principles of good governance and decentralisation" (RALGA 2013:3).

Origin and development of RALGA

RALGA's origin can be traced back to a meeting that Rwanda's MINALOC and the Ministry of Justice organised. After the local elections in March 2001, all district and town mayors were called in for a meeting in July 2001. Although this item was not on the agenda, participants talked about establishing a platform that would facilitate local authorities to come together, discuss common challenges, share experiences and convey their opinions as a single voice. Subsequently, an ad hoc committee consisting of 24 members was formed with the mandate to carry out consultations with concerned institutions and come up with a proposal on the nature, constitution and functioning of such a platform.

The ad hoc committee toured the country to meet the major stakeholders at local level, and drafted statutes to be proposed to the General Assembly. In addition, the committee also mobilised partners to gain both moral support and resources to establish a representative organisation. The task was concluded in May 2002 and the ad hoc committee reported back to the General Assembly on 29 July 2002. On this day, draft statutes were discussed and adopted, and the first executive committee was elected. The committee consisted of five members of the bureau, seven commissioners, as well as three members of the control committee.

On 27 March 2003, RALGA was legalised formally and registered as an NPO by Ministerial Decree No 34/11. All 92 districts, 14 municipalities, as well as the City of Kigali had become members of the association. RALGA was officially launched on 21 May 2003.

Thanks to MINALOC's support, RALGA received financial funding from Sida through the Swedish Association of Local Authorities' (SALA-IDA) cooperation arm, and received regular consultations from VNG international, the International Cooperation Agency of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities. One of the issues debated was whether there should be two associations: one for urban entities (towns and the City of Kigali) and another for rural districts. The other debate was on whether it should be an association of mayors or an association of districts. Ultimately, it was decided that there would be only one association representing local governments (the districts and the City of Kigali).

By 31 December 2005, RALGA had 107 members, which included 92 rural districts, 14 towns and the City of Kigali. Since 2006 the number of the members of RALGA decreased

after the administrative reform. Currently, RALGA consists of 30 districts and the City of Kigali. Membership is voluntary and any member can pull out if so decided by their council. The current articles of association stipulate that each district has eight representatives to RALGA's General Assembly, while the City of Kigali has four. All representatives were chosen and mandated by their respective councils.

RALGA was restructured after administrative and territorial reforms that took place in Rwanda in 2005. Thereafter the number of the executive committee members was reduced to three members of the bureau and four commissioners. During this restructuring, the member representation changed from one person (the mayor) to 8 delegates. As the chief executive of the association, the secretary-general is responsible for the daily management and functioning of the Secretariat, executing decisions made by the General Assembly under the guidance of the Executive Committee.

From the legal perspective, Law No 04/2001 of 13/01/2001 stipulates the organisation and functioning of districts and makes provision for associations such as RALGA in Articles 149 and 150. This law was modified by Law No 08/2006 of 24/02/2006, which established the organisation and functioning of districts. Articles 158 and 159 make provision for these associations. On 11 September 2013, Law No 87/2013 was ratified, which outlines the organisation and functioning of decentralised administrative entities. Articles 41 and 42 enable local governments to enter into mutual partnerships, as highlighted in Article 41: "The City of Kigali and the Districts have the right to engage in partnership and pull together their resources for the conduct of activities of common interest. For this objective to be achieved, the administrative entities provided under paragraph one of this article may establish joint institutions and departments" (Law No 87/2013 of 11 September 2013).

In addition, provision has been made for specific partnerships between districts. Upon mutual consultation, various Councils of the City of Kigali or districts decide to engage in a partnership to establish, organise or supervise activities of common interest. These partnerships are referred to as 'associations'. As these associations are legally binding, they are governed by an Order of the Minister in charge of local government. In accordance with Article 42, council members who wish to form an association can approve associations by specifying activities to be carried out, as well as each party's rights and obligations (Law No 87/2013 of 11 September 2013).

As it is an NPO, RALGA is subject to Law No 20/2000 of 26/07/2000. As such, its functions and structures had to be renewed in 2013 to conform to Law No 04/2012 of 17/02/2012, which governs the organisation and functioning of national NGOs.

RALGA's stakeholders

Local authorities

After the decentralisation process was set in motion, representatives of the created districts would have meetings organised by government institutions. These discussions led to the ad hoc committee that investigated the possibility of a representative body, as discussed earlier in the article. In addition, the ad hoc committee was responsible for a constitution after reflecting on the nature, vision, mission and mandate of such a body, as well as discussing a possible structure, identifying potential stakeholders and investigating financing opportunities.

The Ministry of Local Government

MINALOC played a paramount role in creating RALGA by supporting the initiative, advising and even inspiring the ad hoc committee. Above all, the ministry facilitated the first financial support, which formed part of a project to support decentralisation under the funding of SALA-IDA. Recognising the body's importance, the ministry prompted other stakeholders to follow suit, which added more credibility and subsequent trust that had lacked at the beginning. Also, necessary administrative requirements were granted as it had not gained legal status yet.

The Ministry of Justice

Importantly, the ministry provided the needed guidance so that RALGA could obtain a legal personality.

Development partners

RALGA's performance required considerable mobilisation of resources at different stages. After its inception, SALA-IDA provided considerable support while other donors also played a role by assisting in supportive projects. In 2006, a basket fund was used to initiate the organisation's first strategic plan. Three donors; the Canadian International Cooperation Agency (CIDA), the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN), jointly funded the strategic plan. Through lobbying and advocacy, RALGA gradually gained new partnerships, such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the Intrahealth/ Twubakane Programme, Women Waging Peace, the German development organisations, DED/GTZ, and later the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SADC), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Global Fund, Africa Local Government Action Forum (ALGAF), the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) and the Eastern African Community Secretariat, etc. RALGA was technically coached by VNG-International in its initial years by Mr Jacques Jobin, consultant, who used to visit the association regularly for back stopping assignments.

RALGA's roles and functions

RALGA's roles and functions are outlined in the statutes that define its vision, mission and goals. Article 4 of the association's current statutes states that its vision "is to have efficient local government entities where people and stakeholders are involved in development". Article 5 states that its objective "is to assist local government entities in achieving their mission, complying with principles of good governance and decentralisation". Article 6 makes this vision and objective more concrete by highlighting RALGA's responsibilities as "representing local government entities, ensuring advocacy and capacity building with regard to capacity building, ensuring that local government entities receive adequate financing, facilitating LED, increasing social welfare, as well as strengthening collaboration between Rwanda's local government entities and foreign governments" (RALGA 2013:3–4).

Organisation and structural functional framework

RALGA's organisation and functioning are delineated in Chapter 4 of its statutes, and Article 9 specifies its organs, namely the general assembly and secretariat, as well as the control

Figure 1: RALGA's organisational structure

Key
IT   Information Technology
LG   Local Government
LED Local Economic Development
LGI Local Government Institution
CB   Capacity Building

LG Consult is a fully owned
subsiduiary company of RALGA

Organisational structure boxes:
- General Assembly
- Control Committee
- Commissions (4)
- Internal Auditor
- Conflict Resolution Committee
- Executive Committee
- Secretary General (SG)
- Deputy Secretary General (DSG)
- Policy Analysis Manager
  - Decentralisation Officer
  - LG Finance Officer
  - LED Officer
  - Social Affairs Officer
- LGI Manager
  - Recruitment Officer
  - CB Officer
  - LGI Service Officer
- LG Consult Manager
  - Accountant
  - Administration Officer
- Strategic Planning Manager
  - Communication Officer
  - IT Officer
- Finance and Admin Manager
  - Accountant
  - Administration Officer
  - Drivers (2)

and conflict resolution committees. The office bearers are elected for a term of office of five years, renewable only once. Leaving functions in local government automatically leads to losing the post occupied in RALGA organs.

In terms of responsibilities the General Assembly mostly makes decisions on the organisation's functions and general direction, while the Executive Committee is responsible for decisions regarding execution. In turn, the General Secretariat assists the Executive Committee in the implementing of programmes from a technical and practical perspective. The Executive Committee is assisted by four commissions that are in charge of decentralisation, local government entities' finances, LED and social welfare development. Each commission comprises of a head, who is a member of the Executive Committee, as well as four additional members.

RALGA's General Assembly ensures that different levels and organs of Rwandan Local Government are represented. This includes both politicians and technicians from district to village level. The idea is to build an opinion based on the varied dimensions and perspectives within local government. Although all of them constitute the same system, each organ and category of employee has specific concerns, challenges and opinions. Through the composition of the delegation that represents a member (District) to the General Assembly, RALGA's statutes address these different realities.

The eight delegates from each member district include the mayor who represents the Executive Committee, the chairperson of the District Council that represents the councillors and the Executive Secretary that represents the technical arm. Each Sector and Cell Council is represented by one of their chairpersons. A similar formula applies for the Sector and Cell Executive Secretaries. On *Umudugudu* (village) level, which is the lowest level of administration, one village head per district represents their peers. The City of Kigali is represented by its Mayor, the Council chair and the executive secretary.

Challenges while establishing RALGA

Some of the major challenges RALGA had to address during the process were:

- As Rwanda was new to the concept of decentralisation, it was not understood clearly.
- Rwandans who were not familiar with the philosophy behind a local government association confused it with a union, which raised suspicion and poor cooperation.
- It was challenging to be recognised and become relevant within a national context.
- Confusing the association as a platform to protect personal interests. This was especially the case with mayors who represented districts at the start of the process.
- It took time to build RALGA's institutional capacity, values and culture.
- There was poor knowledge and inadequate skills with regard to lobby techniques.
- It was difficult to demarcate RALGA's role in capacity building in general.
- Members and development partners had a low level of trust and confidence in the fledgling organisation, and as such they did not take ownership.

RALGA succeeded in overcoming or mitigating these challenges through various measures. Some challenges necessitated appropriate strategies to engage key stakeholders. Others were dealt with through lobbying and advocacy, achieving tangible results, or showing resilience over time. The aim was to highlight RALGA's relevance and added value through its role and functions.

RALGA's role as facilitator in the decentralisation process

Decentralisation implies two major relationships: between the central government and local governments, as well as local government and local communities (Barnett, Minis and Van Sant 1997). As an LGA RALGA plays a key role in the decentralisation process. Firstly, the relationship between its members and Central Government calls for advocacy with regard to local governments. Secondly, the relationship between local authorities and citizens necessitates needs to be built and strengthened. Building the capacity of districts, subsidiary entities (sector, cell and village), as well as other actors helps ensure quality service delivery. To facilitate decentralisation, RALGA has a three-fold mandate: to advocate and represent local governments while also building their capacity.

Advocacy and representation

Undeniably, advocacy and representation are linked. Advocacy involves promoting local governments' interests within the broader governmental institutional framework to improve their position. Furthermore, its actions broaden local government's influence with regard to political decision-making processes. Common challenges that members encounter are identified, analysed and advocated within the broader national framework.

RALGA's advocacy role is either on an ad hoc basis or structured. In both cases, the process and role-players are outlined in an advocacy and partnerships strategy. This important tool serves as a guideline for the complex and sensitive nature of advocacy. Notably, RALGA only commits to evidence-based advocacy. In addition, the process needs to be participatory and collaborative, not adversarial.

The strategy underlines a set of guiding principles and values that must be followed when advocating a specific cause. This includes autonomy, partnership, legitimacy, credibility, pro-activeness, confidentiality, advocacy as everyone's business and accountability. Regarding the levels and roles of engagement, RALGA distinguishes between technical and political advocacy. Importantly, there is a distinction between personal views and RALGA's official opinion. The advocacy work has to be well coordinated across planning, implementation, feedback and evaluating results. Advocacy issues are identified from various sources. This includes mailing lists, specialised forums, official meetings, and informal interactions, such as phone calls, individual or group discussions and public opinion.

A set of agreed-upon mechanisms helps identify whether the subject warrants this specific course of action. Thus, it is important to prioritise and group advocacy issues. Importantly, the following factors need to be considered: availability of expertise; time and resources (both human and financial); nature of the issue, such as its degree of complexity and sensitivity; and the prevailing environment. The grouping usually follows the four thematic areas, as specified in the statutes and corresponding commissions.

After the grouping process a research-based situation analysis is conducted to gather evidence on the background, evolution, root cause, intended and unintended consequences of the issue, as well as the desirable solution or change. Hereafter, stakeholder analysis earmarks role-players who can help facilitate this change. This analysis focuses on the stakeholders' power relationships, influence and importance, interest in the issue, as well as support or opposition to the issue.

The next phase focuses on developing an evidence-based advocacy message. Tailor-made messages are formulated that convey how the issue affects local governments and what can be done to create a sustainable solution. After this, a mode of conveying the message

has to be selected. This strategic choice needs to ensure credibility, clarity and empathy with regard to both the issue at hand and the advocacy message that is presented to the target audience. When communicating the advocacy message, various communication media/ tools can be used. This includes interpersonal communication, print media and electronic platforms. The process can vary from lobbying, negotiation, representation, accompaniment or mediation. Lastly, a monitoring system needs to be implemented that measures progress against pre-defined implementation-based indicators. As such, there is a strong focus on whether planned activities achieve the desired outcomes of the specific advocacy strategy.

Capacity building

After its inception, RALGA wrongly considered itself as a service provider to facilitate capacity building within local governments. Stakeholders also misunderstood RALGA's role. Fortunately, its first strategic plan (2006–2009) mitigated this danger by focusing on RALGA's brokering role, while remaining involved in specific interventions in areas that require better expertise, or where other institutions are not engaged. This is the case with newly elected grassroots leaders, where RALGA facilitates experience sharing through benchmarking, study visits, innovation, competition, and specialised forums. Today, RALGA has a clearly defined role, which is to facilitate capacity building within local governments. The association has established its role as broker between the needs expressed by members and service provision. In addition, RALGA has started coordinating and harmonising all initiatives that focus on capacity building within local governments.

With regard to decentralised governance, the national Five-Year Capacity Building Strategy for Local Governments 2011–2015 confirms that capacity building initiatives have benefited local administrations. However, the strategy points out that it remains difficult to establish the quality of the products delivered, as well as their impact and consistency with regard to both national orientations and local needs. This situation can be ascribed to weak monitoring, coordination and harmonisation.

According to the strategy, "Most capacity-building interventions have been delivered in an un-coordinated manner, supply driven, reactive and sometimes not in line with the recipients' needs. Cases are apparent where one capacity-building intervention is delivered, and within a week, another provider comes to a district to deliver a capacity-building package that is not very different from the one delivered in a week gone by" (MINALOC 2010:iii). In addition, the strategy highlights that most capacity building interventions have been based on the opinions of service providers, such as central institutions, NGOs and projects. Another negative consequence is that different service providers' training initiatives in the same field do not necessarily send the same message. The strategy ascribes this to a lack of minimum standards for preparing modules and training sessions. In addition there are no guidelines available for selecting capable, qualified trainers (MINALOC 2010:11).

Individual districts often organise training, but few have the capacity to produce training modules and training instruments. In addition, they do not report on training initiatives, and therefore it goes unnoticed. As such, insufficient coordination and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) leads to a misappropriation of resources (funds, time and energy), as people receive repeated training on the same issues. Training is seen as 'everyone's business' but no one takes responsibility or is held accountable. Human resource (HR) officers are usually charged with so many activities to the extent that CB is given only little consideration (MINALOC 2010:9).

The Local Governance Institute (LGI) was formed to address these challenges. Importantly, it is dedicated to building capacity within local government. The LGI addresses the need for a coordinated approach to capacity building after the National Local Government Capacity Building Strategy conducted a needs assessment and implemented plans that contribute to the National Decentralisation Sector strategic plan's outcomes.

RALGA was at the forefront of conceptualising this strategy as a mechanism to fulfil its mandate of building the capacity of its members. On 10 December 2011, RALGA's General Assembly meeting first formally approved the mandate of building the capacity of local leaders, staff and councillors in a coordinated manner through training, research, consulting services, coaching, etc. Since then, RALGA has played a central role in establishing the LGI. This was in collaboration with MINALOC, Rwanda Governance Board, the University of Rwanda, the National Capacity Building Secretariat and GIZ. The LGI is not only expected to build the capacity of employees serving within local governments, but also as a mechanism to retain employees and prevent the high turnover observed, and to serve as a documentation and research centre with regard to local governance and decentralisation in Rwanda.

The LGI aspires to be a legally accredited higher learning institute that offers postgraduate and master's programmes, short-courses and various organisational and institutional services to local government and to the nation and the region in general. Meanwhile, the institute has started master's programmes in local governance studies, in collaboration with the University of Rwanda. It also seeks research collaboration with other universities and research institutions.

The short-courses' content will come from master's programme modules, which are already in use for the Master's Programme in Local Governance Studies. Given the nature of local governments, LGI hopes to create continuous, flexible conditions to accommodate work responsibilities and to integrate training into an awards-based programme. The LGI is also expected to encourage innovation in the area of local governance, with a specific focus on creating home-grown local governance solutions within the Rwandan context. In addition, the LGI aims to play an important role in research, disseminating information and providing training with regard to these unique products.

The learning approach will combine class attendance and distance learning to reach employees who work in remote areas. LGI will also combine theory and practice, so that experienced practitioners from local government can become lecturers in their respective fields of expertise. This will allow students to obtain first-hand experience and information on best practice.

RALGA's role in Rwanda's decentralisation process

RALGA's strategic plan for 2015–2020 makes it clear that the organisation seeks to protect the local authorities' interests through advocacy and representation. In addition, the strategy aims to improve local authorities' position within the country's overall institutional framework by influencing decision-making processes that affect these entities. There is also a renewed focus advocacy. As such, data on members' challenges is collected, analysed and packaged as advocacy-based information. "This ability to formulate a common opinion on behalf of the members, coupled with the independence character of the association underpins RALGA's uniqueness in serving as a single voice for local authorities to express their opinion" (RALGA 2014:7).

RALGA has contributed significantly to specific areas, such as strengthening local governments' capacity and advocating on behalf of these entities. As such, RALGA plays a significant role in the decentralisation process, as well as towards attaining the country's objectives. RALGA aims to address the challenge of creating an incentive-based decentralisation process that will hold each entity accountable for its responsibilities, as well as facilitating institutional relations between each entity (Litvack, Junaid and Bird 1999:85–89).

RALGA's role in promoting decentralisation and local governance is recognised in the Governance and Decentralisation Sector Strategic Plan 2013–2018. It states that, "RALGA promotes development and good governance of districts and towns including [the] City of Kigali. The association promotes transparency, accountability and democracy, which are all central to sustainable development" (MINECOFIN 2013:22) Therefore, the strategic plan for decentralisation reinforces RALGA's mandate to implement programmes to mobilise communities in developing and supporting activities that focus on good governance.

RALGA sits on different steering committees and sector working groups, especially those involved in governance and fiscal decentralisation. RALGA works with the ministries of finance, labour, agriculture, infrastructure, education, health, trade and industry, as well as civil society organisations, development partners and the private sector. In addition, RALGA is an active member of the Decentralisation Programme Steering Committee, which oversees and supervises the implementation of the decentralisation plan. This plan is implemented under MINALOC's chairmanship and is supported by the Rwanda Governance Board, the department in charge of decentralisation (MINECOFIN 2013:55).

The members' annual subscription finances 45% of RALGA's total budget. It covers the organisation's core functions, which include statutory meetings, advocacy activities and costly staff recruitment on behalf of the districts. Thanks to its research-based advocacy strategy and its good relationship with key partners, RALGA also manages to play a key role in various laws and policies. In addition, RALGA also was at the forefront of establishing an LGI revamping the *Association pour l'Execution des Travaux d;Interet Public* (ASSETIP) to ensure the design of effective infrastructure projects, supervising and evaluating initiatives related to promoting LED.

CONCLUSION

Today, RALGA is held in high regard by its members and partners. This is thanks to its achievements in fulfilling its mandate and facilitating decentralisation. As such, it continues to become more involved in members' activities. Members' sense of ownership is reflected in the USD30 000 membership fee they pay annually, which is among the highest in Africa. Strong, transparent financial management is reflected in clean audit reports, which ensures trust and credibility among members and partners.

However, RALGA and the country in general still have a considerable task ahead of them to instill a culture of decentralisation and implementing the theories that were discussed in the article. For instance, the sectoral assignment of functions across different levels of government still needs to be clarified to ensure that each level is not only aware of its task, but also has the technical competencies and tools to execute the assigned functions effectively. Importantly, there is a need to indicate what is decentralised to a specific level and what

is retained by the central government across all sectors. In addition, fiscal decentralisation needs to be strengthened, as the income from local sources is still marginal. A number of districts generate less than 20% of their budgets. As such, districts need to be empowered to mobilise their own resources to ensure fiscal and financial autonomy. Undeniably, this will require considerable input, given the districts' low tax base.

NOTE

* Faustin Serubanza is a Research Facilitator at the Centre for Public Management and Governance at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Association of Local Government of Tanzania. *Strategic Plan 2012–2017.* Available at: www.alat.or.tz/downloads/StrategicPlan.pdf. (Accessed on 7 June 2016).

Auriacombe, C.J. 2006. Understanding and planning measurement. *Journal of Public Administration.* October 2006. 41(3.1):631–645.

Barnett, C.C., Minis, H.P. and Van Sant, J. 1997. *Democratic Decentralization.* Washington: Research Triangle Institute.

Council of Europe. *Strengthening the Capacity of Local Government Associations Toolkit.* Available at: www.coe.int/t/dgap/localdemocracy/centre_expertise/tools/Strength. (Accessed on 25 July 2016).

Government of Rwanda. 2012. *Vision 2020 Revised.* Available at: http://www.rdb.rw/uploads/tx_sbdownloader/Vision_2020_Booklet.pdf (Accessed on 14 June 2016).

Law No 20/2000 of 26/07/2000 relating to Non-Profit Making Organisations. Rwanda, Kigali: Official Gazette of the Republic of Rwanda n° 7 of 01/04/2001. Available at: lip.alfa-xp.com/lip/AmategekoDB.aspx?Mode=r&pid=7343&iid=819&rid=3069590 (Accessed on 31 October 2016).

Law No 04/2012 of 17/02/2012 governing the Organisation and the Functioning of National Non-Governmental Organisations. Rwanda,Kigali: Official Gazette of the Republic of Rwanda n° 15 of 09/04/2012. Available at: www.rgb.rw/fileadmin/Key_documents/Law_Governing_Organization___Functioning_of_NGOs.pdf (Accessed on 31 October 2016).

Law No 87/2013 of 11 September 2013 determining the Organisation and Functioning of Decentralized Administrative Entities. Rwanda,Kigali:Official Gazette of the Republic of Rwanda n° special 30/10/2013 . Available at: www.minaloc.gov.rw/fileadmin/documents/Minaloc_Documents/Official_Gazette_INZEGO_Z_IBANZE_2013.pdf (Accessed on 31 October 2016).

Litvack, J., Junaid, A., and Bird, R. 1999. *Rethinking Decentralization – A Discussion Paper.* Washington: The World Bank.

Local Government Association (UK). *About the LGI.* Available at: www.local.gov.uk/about. (Accessed on 17 June 2016).

Manor. J. *1999. The Political Economy of Democratic Decentralization.* Washington: The World Bank.

MINALOC and MINECOFIN. 2006. Fiscal and Financial Decentralisation Policy 2006. Available at: www.minecofin.gov.rw.

RALGA. 2015. *Operational Procedures Manual.* Kigali: RALGA.

RALGA. 2014. *Strategic Plan 2015–2020.* Kigali: RALGA.

RALGA. 2013. *Articles of Association of Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA).* Available at: http://www.ralgarwanda.org/fileadmin/templates/pdf/Statuts_RALGA.pdf. (Accessed on 14 June 2016).

Sida. 2013. *Mid-Term Review of the Institutional Strengthening Support to the Association of Local Authorities of Tanzania – ALAT.* Available at: http://www.sida.se/contentassets/9a14ecd1a60942a997e031a9db7e1744/mid-term-review-of-the-institutional-strengthening-support-to-the-association-of-local-authorities-of-tanzania—alat_3434.pdf. (Accessed on 14 October 2016).

SALGA. Available at: www.salga.org.za/pages/About-SALGA/Welcome-to-SALGA. (Accessed on 2 October 2016).

The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda of 2003. Rwanda, Kigali: Available at: lip.alfa-xp.com/lip/AmategekoDB.aspx?Mode=r&pid=7796&iid=1434. (Accessed on 31 October 2016).

UNCDF. 1999. *Taking Risks: Background Papers* New York: UNCDF.

AUTHOR'S CONTACT DETAILS

Faustin Serubanza
Strategic Planning Unit Manager
Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities
Masaka Sector, Kicukiro District, City of Kigali
PO Box 7249
Kigali
Email: fserubanza@ralgarwanda.org (work) and serubanza@yahoo.fr (personal)
Cell: +250 788309480