



THE COMMONWEALTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT FORUM

Promoting democratic
local government

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Public ownership of democracy

- ✓ Local elections – democracy at the grassroots
- ✓ Scrutiny of local govt – participatory democracy
- ✓ Barriers to democracy
 - ✓ systemic exclusion and violence
 - ✓ limited opportunity for new candidates
- ✓ Public oversight of democracy institutions e.g. ECs
- ✓ Local oversight of local administration

The Commonwealth Local Government Forum



- ✓ **The Commonwealth family**
- ✓ **CLGF – core and associate members**
- ✓ **Advocacy, research & knowledge sharing**
- ✓ **Elections observation**
- ✓ **Cwth Women in Local Govt Network**
- ✓ **Programmes**
 - ✓ Localising the SDGs
 - ✓ Local economic development
 - ✓ Programmes in Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh and India: Maharashtra and Madya Pradesh

Aberdeen Agenda: Commonwealth principles on good practice for democracy and good governance

local



Adopted in 2005 principles provide a set of standards to promote healthy local democracy and good governance and have now been incorporated into the [Commonwealth Charter](#).

***Principle 2:
The ability to elect local representatives***

Principle 9: Inclusiveness



2: The ability to elect local representatives:
citizens should be able to elect their local representatives in conditions of political freedom.

‘It is important for local representatives to reflect the views and needs of the community they serve. We believe that this is best achieved through regular/timely local elections which are both open and inclusive. Whatever the means or processes of local democracy, the results should reflect the wishes of the electorate’



9. *Inclusiveness*: the process of local decision-making must reflect the social, economic, environmental & cultural needs of the entire community.

'Decisions should be taken at the level closest to the community to which they relate. Consultation is essential to ensure the needs of the whole community are met, especially with disadvantaged groups including women, youth, minority groups and people with disabilities, whose voices are often neglected. The Commonwealth and the CLGF are committed to a target of **no less than 30 percent** of women in decision-making in the political, public and private sectors, and to developing strategies for increasing their active participation. Commitment to downward accountability is critical to citizen engagement. Participatory planning is a tool to ensure inclusive and equitable planning'

CLGF and the Maharashtra Election Commission



Proposed areas of cooperation and collaboration:

- (i) share ideas, knowledge and best practices
- (ii) develop strategies for tackling emerging challenges
- (iii) create International platform for ideas exchange
- (iv) create system for training of election managers
- (v) develop system of Election Observers for local govt
- (vi) to conduct collaborative research

What CLGF would like to see from this meeting



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- ✓ A clearer appreciation of the importance of local democracy and local elections
 - ✓ An exploration of what local councils can do to support an inclusive local democratic process
 - ✓ A commitment of what ECs can do to enhance local autonomy



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Thank you
