

## Call for Expressions of Interest

for support to

### Emerging national Local Government Associations

In Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP countries)

*“Strengthening of, and Support to Local Government Associations” (ARIAL) Programme (2010-2013)*

1. We invite emerging national Local Government Associations (LGAs) to express their interest in receiving support for their **establishment and institutional development**.
2. **Emerging national Local Government Associations** are represented by Local Government Association advocates from local government bodies, wishing to create a new LGA or to develop their LGA institution. LGA advocates can be defined as informal or formalised groupings and committees of local government politicians and or officials actively seeking to start an LGA in their country or to develop<sup>1</sup> their institution from a basic to developing level of performance.
3. **An Expression of Interest** is a motivation letter written by emerging LGA representatives endorsed by a representative number of local governments in the country. The endorsement is to demonstrate that a need for a new LGA or the strengthening of the basically developed LGA has been identified by key stakeholders in the country, and that there is a core group of stakeholders who are committed to take the initiative forward. The Expression of Interest contains descriptions of:
  - The need for a new LGA or the stage of development of the existing LGA in the proposed country
  - Who the representatives are, how they have come together and how they are committed
  - The vision for the LGA and their objectives
  - How the ARIAL Programme can support the representatives in achieving their objective effectively and achieving sustainability
  - What commitment, support and level of engagement the representatives have with potential stakeholders and members at local and national government level

The ARIAL management only deals with Expressions of Interest submitted signed and dated by the official representation of the LGA establishment initiative. Please, consider whether your initiative complies with the objective of the ARIAL Programme before expressing interest. Only initiatives in countries of the ACP Group of States are eligible.

4. Expressions of Interest can be sent by post, email or fax to: VNG International, attn. Elisabeth Wunderle, P.O. Box 30435, 2500 GK The Hague, The Netherlands, E-mail: [Elisabeth.wunderle@vng.nl](mailto:Elisabeth.wunderle@vng.nl), Fax: + 31 (0) 70 373 86 60 ([www.arial-programme.eu](http://www.arial-programme.eu))

<sup>1</sup> The ARIAL programme works with a Local Government Association assessment tool containing 10 excellence factors and 37 indicators to measure the institutional development. Four stages of development are identified: basic, developing, performing, excellence.

## An introduction to the ARIAL programme

### *Local government and the ACP region*

Local government is increasingly recognized as an important actor in the development of countries. Local government bodies represent a tier of government that is closest to the people and local government is the level where many basic services are provided. Local government is responsible for implementing centrally determined policies as well as working with residents to determine local priorities and then developing and delivering services to meet those needs autonomously.

The importance of the role of local governments in the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) region development has been recognized by the European Union and led to a revision of the Cotonou Agreement which among others governs the development relation between the EU and its ACP partners. The revised agreement explicitly recognises local government bodies as actors in, and partners of development, in their own right. The Agreement stipulates that international cooperation should concentrate on institutional development, amongst other things, to build the capacity of local government institutions to implement decentralisation policies and to the increase citizen participation in the development process.

### *Local Government Associations (LGAs)*

Local Government Associations are traditionally established to enable local government in a specific country to come together to develop a single voice for local government. They are normally membership organizations, providing a number of services to their members. In order to play their role as a representative organization, LGAs are run on a non-party political basis, and in many cases LGAs develop ways of representing the diverse needs of different types of councils within their governance structures so that they can be as inclusive as possible. It is also important that LGAs look to maintain a level of independence from central government so that they can discharge their lobbying and advocacy role effectively.

### *The ARIAL Programme*

To strengthen the role of local government representative institutions, the European Union, together with the ACP group of states, created a framework programme entitled “Strengthening of, and Support to Local Government Associations” (ARIAL). ARIAL aims at supporting local governments in the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) in the decentralisation process by reinforcing their representative associations at the national, regional and continental level, making them more able to participate in the political dialogue concerning development policies with civil society, private sector, central administration, and donors. The ARIAL programme is implemented by VNG, CLGF and its regional implementing partners: MDP, PDM, UWI and FSPI. [www.arial-programme.eu](http://www.arial-programme.eu)

## Support for Emerging national Local Government Associations

The existence of effective and efficient Local Government Associations on a national level is important for the effective representation of Local Governments on a national, regional or international level. LGAs are not however present or active in all ACP countries, limiting the potential for participation of local government bodies in contributing to the development of the ACP region. The ARIAL programme therefore specifically aims to support initiatives to create LGAs in countries where they do not yet exist and to support associations with a basic development level.

The main deliverable of the support will be the establishment of a new LGA in the project applicant’s country or the institutional development of an LGA from a basic to developed level of performance.



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Based on the received motivation letter, the Programme will assign an LGA expert to identify, together with the emerging LGA representatives, the unique needs of the emerging LGA, in line with the roles of LGAs, which can for example be:

- Consulting with stakeholders and potential members to secure engagement and support
- The LGA being formally constituted by its members and registered to operate as an entity
- Creating the institutional environment of the LGA
- Building support for the LGA's work and organisation
- The (financial) planning, monitoring and evaluation of the LGA (strategic planning, operational planning, reporting, information management)
- Advocacy and lobbying on behalf of members' needs with central government and other stakeholders
- Provision of a network for councils to share experiences and learn from each other
- Provision of information, policy advice and guidance to members
- Provision of or facilitation of training and capacity building for members
- The delivery of services, such as procurement and or central purchasing activities
- Move towards sustainability of the institution

Based on the needs, an intervention activity plan is then designed, which covers the support given to the LGA in the period till the end of the Programme. Support, if identified necessary, could consist of:

- Technical assistance and mentoring
- Provision of temporary staff
- Financing of basic office equipment
- Financing of costs for LGA member visits and meetings

All support costs will be paid for directly by the ARIAL Programme.



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