

Inclusive Local Governance Programme in the MENA region

Inclusive Local Governance Programme (INLOG) is a programme that provides an opportunity to enhance capacity and be part of a 'Community of practice' on local governance and local development in the MENA region. The programme is implemented by the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) and financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

About the programme

Inclusive Local Governance * (INLOG) is a programme designed by the Swedish Association of Municipalities and Regions (SALAR) to enhance regional and local governance practice in the MENA region and provide support to overcome the challenges that municipalities and regions have to face, such as, local and regional development, service delivery, citizens participation, digitalization and climate adaptation.

The programme is **financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), based on the Swedish government's strategy for regional development cooperation in the MENA region.** The programme will bring together local and national government practitioners such as public servants at local, regional and/or national level, participants from academia, think tanks and civil society organisations (CSOs). The programme is aimed for **Algeria, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, and Syria.**

SALAR will engage highly specialised Swedish and international expertise with practical examples from the Swedish local governance model. Regional experts with knowledge of best practices from the MENA region will also be engaged. The programme will bring together local governance practitioners from key institutions, organisations, universities and think-thanks working in local governments or with local governance issues. Together, they will be part of a regional 'Community of Practice' where international, regional and national best practices can be discussed and shared. The aim is to support the capacity development of practitioners and policy makers who can contribute to improved local practices as well as policy dialogue on local governance in their respective countries, and in addition the MENA region through dialogue, joint work and knowledge enhancement with the support and mentoring of experts.

*Local governance refers to both local as well as regional level in this document

The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR)

SALAR* is a member organisation for all of Sweden's municipalities and regions. It is a long-standing strong representative of Swedish municipalities and regions, strengthening local governments and the development of regional and local institutions, which makes it a credible and trusted partner towards partners and decision makers.

It has existed for over 100 years and is a well-known actor in the international arena of local governments. It is active in the global organisation for municipalities; United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), its European branch the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) and as secretariat for the Swedish delegations to the EU Committee of Regions and the Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities.

SALAR and its members have a unique understanding of decentralisation, local governance, and the relationship between different levels of government.

As an expert organisation, SALAR facilitates the exchange of good practices between Swedish local and regional governments.

*In international development cooperation, SALAR International is the extended operational arm of SALAR

**At present, Sweden has 290 municipalities and 21 regions.

Programme structure

The programme will involve approximately 50 strategically selected practitioners and reform advocates from Algeria, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, and Syria. A country working group for each included country will engage in a process of collaborative policy analysis as part of their capacity building. International and regional experts as well as mentors will be assigned to facilitate discussions and coach the national working groups that will be conformed in each country. The experts will be engaged to provide advice and in-depth knowledge on good local governance and local development practice with focus on common challenges and issues that are relevant to the participants in their respective countries as well as regionally in MENA. The programme will be mostly implemented on-line, but also include two on-site regional workshops in which all the participants will meet and discuss experiences. The programme is relevant to already active and dedicated public servants from local, regional and/or national level, as well as participants from academia, think tanks and CSOs.

The programme will contribute to enhanced knowledge and skills, and strengthened policy advocacy capacities. The participants should be willing to collaborate nationally and in the MENA region or a subregion to improve local government development.

Upon completion of the programme the participants will be certified from SALAR International and form part of a gradually developing regional community of practice for good local governance.

The illustration above provides an overview of the programme process. The dates should be seen as preliminary indications.

Indicative dates for the first INLOG program cycle



The pedagogical approach of the programme will be a blended learning approach with a mix of digital meetings, face-to face peer-learning meetings, reading assignments, seminars, group work assignments, and mentoring sessions. There will be a digital kick off meeting, two regional workshops gathering all the participants, on-line seminars and workshops with international and regional experts as well as with on-line mentor sessions. Furthermore, work will be carried out in the participant's country working group.

The participants will be engaged in collaborative work, meaning that all participants from one country will work together on 1-2 prioritised thematic issues within the country. The participants will be engaged in action learning initiatives on policy issues carried out by the country working groups (e.g. researching, defining policy options) or practical application of gained knowledge (e.g. initiating organisational changes, testing a method in one's community or institution).

There will be exchange of experiences by sharing and systematizing the good examples of the participating countries as well exposure to international best practice both on-line and on-site through two meetings in the region. Within the framework of the programme, the participants will benefit from individual and collective mentoring sessions as well as technical input to relevant policy reform.

Programme modules

The INLOG programme will be implemented over a period of 12-13 months with two different start dates. The first group will start the last week of June 2024 with a digital launch-seminar and the second group will start the last week of August 2024 with another digital launch seminar. The content of the programme is formed around a Decentralization & Local Governance-module (Module 1), a Leadership-module (Module 2), and two in-depth tracks (each participant choose one of the tracks). Module 1 focus on decentralisation, local governance and local development that include, amongst others, keys to effective decentralisation reform, inter-governmental relations and collaborative governance, inclusive and responsible local decision-making, climate change and local governance, the role of Local Government Associations, digitalization, and equality & inclusion mechanisms in local governance and service delivery.

Module 2 aims to enhance leaderships skills, and the participants will get insight and tools that can contribute to strengthen their capacity. Both modules are mandatory, and all selected participants will take part of the modules 1 and 2.

In November 2024 there will be a regional meeting for all the 50 participants and there, the second part of the programme will be defined. The participants will here select the area to focus on during the rest of the programme.



There will be two tracks of selective in-depth areas and the participants will choose the one that goes in line with their work in planning and policy advocacy. One of the optional tracks is called “Local Government Revenue and Local Finances”. Here the participants can focus on relevant issues to work on such as: models for fiscal equalisation and intergovernmental transfers, local revenue mobilisation, local taxes and data & statistics for effective planning & budgeting. The other optional track is “Local Sustainable Development and Recovery” with subtopics relating to: local economic development, sustainable urban development and recovery, participatory planning processes, community engagement models, climate change mitigation and adaptation and addressing root causes of migration & managing migration at local level.



Module 1

Core subject areas: Decentralisation, local governance, local development

- Keys to effective decentralisation reform
- Inter-governmental relations and collaborative governance
- Inclusive and responsible local decision-making
- Transparency and accountability in local governance
- Digitalization at local level
- Fighting corruption at local level
- Climate change and local governance
- Equality and inclusion mechanisms (including gender equality) in local governance and /service delivery
- The role of Local Government Associations

Module 2

Core subject areas: Leadership skills

- Strategic leadership
- Change management
- Policy advocacy
- Negotiation skills
- Communication

Selective in-depth track A Selective in-depth track B

Local government revenue and local finances

- Keys to effective fiscal decentralisation
- Models for fiscal equalisation and intergovernmental transfers
- Local revenue mobilisation, local taxes
- Data & statistics for effective planning& budgeting

Fostering sustainable local development and recovery

- Local economic development
- Sustainable urban development and recovery
- Participatory planning processes
- Community engagement models
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation at local level
- Addressing root causes of migration& managing migration at local level

Application process and criteria for selection

The programme will accept applications from relevant institutions and organisations. They will be reviewed by a Selection Committee in order to guarantee transparency. The participants are all required to have good internet connection to be able to participate in the meetings, mentoring sessions and seminars.

Furthermore, participants will have to fulfil the following criteria:

- Be active in the area of local governance and local development working in key institutions, organisations, universities or think-tanks and engaged with the thematic relevant to this programme;
- Have the potential to influence policy at national, regional or local level, both from a short- and long-term perspective, and contribute to strategic decision-making;
- Have the mandate to implement changes within their organisation;
- Have a strong national network;
- Have strong integrity and a level of political neutrality;
- Be willing to work in teams with others;

The INLOG programme strongly encourages the participation of women.

After the programme participants will:

- Have increased knowledge in areas of local governance, local public service delivery, and local development, as well as change management and policy development;
- Have strengthened capacity on decentralisation-related practices and better understanding of good national, regional, and international examples;
- Have better insight into experiences from the region;
- Have strengthened capacity in constructively reviewing and analysing current decentralisation related policies and programmes, and enhanced motivation and capacity to constructively contribute to a variety of reform areas related to local governance, service delivery, and local development;
- Have received expert input regarding relevant areas in the participant's country in relation to local governance and decentralisation;
- Have acquired in-depth knowledge about the Swedish system of local governance and the work of SALAR;
- Be part of a regional 'community of practice' of dedicated key national and local stakeholders.

Costs covered by the programme:

Travel costs to participate in the two regional seminars (excluding local travel to the international airport)
Food and lodging during the regional workshops (single room accommodation)
Insurance for participants when travelling outside the home country when participating in program activities
Visa costs when relevant

Applications and deadline:

To participate in the programme, interested individuals are invited to download the application form from the SALAR International website at: www.salarinternational.se* or in this [link](#). She or he shall make sure that all criteria's are met and proceed to filling in the form, signing and scanning it. The scanned application should be sent by email to INLOG@salarinternational.se.

The participant shall specify an area to focus on during the programme within track A ("Local Government Revenue and Local Finances") or track B ("Local Sustainable Development and Recovery"), both which are presented above. The selected topic shall be motivated in the application (maximum 1 page).

Interested individuals are also required to provide a recommendation letter from their management or organisational board in order to verify the organisation's support and approval together with their application (when possible).

Deadline for submitting applications is 15 May 2024 to start the programme the last week of June 2024.

For more information you can contact INLOG@salarinternational.se

* Click on Countries and then select INLOG MENA