

## **IDEAL Programme VNG International**

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### **Case-study Mali**

Mali continues to be characterized by governance fragility, failing state institutions and social unrest. There is general discontent with the central government due to its incapacity to install peace in the country. Access to and control over natural resources is at the heart of local conflicts. In 2002 water management became the responsibility of municipalities in Mali. These municipalities struggle to fulfill this mandate due to low technical expertise and limited resources. Because governments cannot address this challenge, the citizens lose their trust in the local government. In its IDEAL program, VNG International assists communes in Mali to improve local water governance and involve their communities who are reliant upon sustainable water management. In order to achieve satisfaction of the population with the integrated water resource management (IWRM) service delivery, services must be effective and responsive to their needs. Five communes are assisted to develop an IWRM plan taking into account the needs of all water users. At the same time, it is important that decision-making processes are more participatory and inclusive. Thereto, VNG International seeks to support communes in organizing village meetings to discuss the role of water in enabling local development.

The aim is for Malian municipalities to experience increased capacity to cope with risks. Also, the social contract between citizens and municipalities should be enhanced. These efforts contribute to the achievement of peaceful and inclusive societies and effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at local level.

### **Case-study Rwanda**

More and more Rwandans are moving to urban areas. Due to this rapid urbanization, local governments of cities feel overwhelmed and are struggling to address the issues that arise from urbanization. At the same time responding to the needs of the citizens is vital in ensuring continued stability in the country. Due to a lack of capacity, large urbanizing districts are managed as rural districts potentially hindering the development of effective and accountable institutions. In its IDEAL program, VNG International supports secondary city districts to become more effective and responsive in managing the urbanization process. In order to do so, the staff of these districts are assisted by designing, implementing and monitoring pro-poor urban development plans. Additionally, Local Economic Development Plans that advance the distinct economic ambitions of the districts are developed and local social welfare strategies are improved. Lastly, decision-making processes must be responsive and participatory at all levels. Efforts are aimed at supporting secondary city districts, by facilitating exchange mechanisms, in involving citizens in local governance. In order to strengthen the representation of female needs and women's voices in the districts, efforts are made to set up a network of female role models in local governance. In all these efforts the aim is to increase capacity of the Rwandese city districts to cope with risks as well as to enhance the social contract between citizens and local government. These efforts contribute to the achievement of peaceful and inclusive societies and effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at local level.

## **VNG International, Ukraine**

Since 2016 VNG International has been working in East Ukraine with local authorities and civil society on social cohesion, strengthening common national identity and increased trust of citizens in local and national governments. This will contribute to more inclusive decision making, peaceful recovery and development of the region.

In the past years Eastern Ukraine has been struggling with an ongoing armed conflict, large amount of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and severely damaged economic and social infrastructure of the region. Despite the difficult context, local governments, civil society, IDPs and citizens in Donetsk and Luhansk regions are very active in establishing participatory initiatives, working closely with local and regional authorities to support reintegration of IDPs and to rebuild the social infrastructure and connections between cities in the region.

With SDG 16 in mind, VNG International's contributed to this process by working with actors on the local level on strengthening government transparency and accountability, and building the capacity of civil society through training and access to information. Through the Eastern Ukraine State Building and Accountability project (EUSTAB), VNG International provided selected local authorities and CSOs with trust and financial means to design and implement local pilot initiatives that addressed specific needs of their city. Pilot initiatives varied from public art and library space to revitalise the dialogue between local residents and IDP's and to help overcome tensions between the two groups, to capacity building of existing CSOs and active young leaders that transform citizens of their cities into engaged and socially active communities.