



Local Administration Forum

Decentralization and Empowerment of the Governorates
Prospects for Comprehensive and Sustainable Development



"Our emphasis on the development of the governorates and the reinforcement of the decentralization principle have been realized through the enactment of the System of Governorates and the Law of Municipal Councils. This strategy aligns with our vision for locally administered governance based on decentralization principles. It also dovetails with our objectives to empower local communities in managing their affairs and actively participating in the nation-building process. We assert that the role of municipal councils transcends local municipal affairs; these bodies are vested with extensive powers, duties and a broad spectrum of tasks. We urge members of municipal councils to fully utilise the authority and resources at their disposal, innovating in ways that substantially enhance the well-being and welfare of our citizens.



His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik

His Majesty's speech 14th of November 2023



Foundation for Selecting the Forum Title

The Royal Speech of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik — may God protect and preserve him

- **Decentralization:** The speech underscores Oman's commitment to decentralization in planning and implementation, establishing it as a core pillar of governorate-level development.
- **Empowering the Governorates:** It highlights the importance of developing the governorates and enabling communities to manage their own affairs, placing governorates at the center of national development efforts.
- **Comprehensive Development Prospects:** The speech affirms that decentralization supports comprehensive economic and social progress and reflects a forward-looking vision to expand its application across multiple sectors to achieve integrated, sustainable development.

Strategic Objectives of the “Governorates and Sustainable Cities Development” Priority in Oman Vision 2040

- Empowered communities that shape their own social, economic, and environmental priorities and operate within a framework of administrative and economic decentralization.
- Balanced and equitable development that enhances the comparative and competitive advantages of cities and governorates.
- Urban and rural areas, and natural and cultural heritage sites with high resilience and strong capacity to adapt to climate change.

Smart, sustainable, and vibrant cities and a dynamic rural environment offering high-quality urban living, working, and leisure conditions..

- Diverse, accessible transportation systems, integrated with well-guided urban development and supported by world-class, sustainable infrastructure.



Forum Objectives

Strengthening the foundations of decentralization and exploring ways to enhance them, ensuring comprehensive and integrated development across the governorates

Enhancing economic and social development to achieve comprehensive and sustainable local development across the government.

Activating the role of the governorates in generating job opportunities by leveraging enablers, competitive advantages , and the strength of the local economy

Emphasizing the role of municipalities in local governance

Empowering talent and enhancing capacities in the governorates.

Conducting specialized workshops and systematic discussion sessions on topics aligned with the forum's focus areas



Forum Themes

Theme 1: Administrative and Economic Decentralization in the Governorates (Opportunities and Challenges)

- This theme focuses on reviewing the achievements in implementing administrative and economic decentralization in the governorates, discussing the challenges and mechanisms for evaluating the decentralization experience, and exploring ways to develop and enhance decentralization to enable the governorates to achieve their development objectives.

Theme 2: Mechanisms for Achieving Local Economic Development in the Governorates

- This theme highlights ways to achieve local economic development in the governorates by leveraging comparative advantages, attracting investment, supporting entrepreneurship, and developing small and medium-sized enterprises. It also addresses achieving social development through enhancing community participation and improving the quality of services.

Theme 3: The Role of Entrepreneurship in Economic Development and Job Creation in the Governorates

- This theme addresses how to leverage local enablers, develop the local economy, and attract investments to create job opportunities for citizens across various sectors. It also covers mechanisms to support small and medium-sized enterprises, entrepreneurship, and self-employment opportunities, as well as aligning educational outcomes with labor market needs.

Theme 4: The Role of Municipalities in Local Governance

- This theme focuses on the role of municipalities in strengthening local governance and highlights their ongoing projects.



Target Audience:

- Their Highnesses and Excellencies the Governors, as well as the Presidents of Muscat and Dhofar Municipalities
- Excellencies from sectors related to the forum themes, including: (Office of the Secretary-General, Ministry of Interior, Deputy Head of the Oman 2040 Vision Follow-up and Implementation Unit, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Labor, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, Chairperson of the SME Development Authority, Chairperson of the Public Authority for Projects, Tenders, and Local Content, Oman Investment Authority, Capital Market Authority, Chairperson of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Ministry of Economy)
- Their Excellencies the Walis
- Members of municipal councils in the governorates
- Directors-General of municipalities, and administrative, financial, planning, and investment departments in the governorates
- Directors of planning and investment departments and Oman 2040 Vision follow-up offices in the governorates and municipalities



Total Expected Number of Participants: 150



Forum Venue:

- Muscat Governorate (Royal Academy of Management) on 7-8 December 2025, according to the scheduled timetable



وزارة الداخلية



الأكاديمية السلطانية للإدارة
ROYAL ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT

The Forum Agenda (1st Day)

	Themes and Topics of the Forum	Time
	Reception of Guests and Forum Participants	8:00-8:45
	Royal Anthem	9:00-9:05
	Speech of the Royal Academy of Management	9:05-9:10
	Introductory Video	9:15-9:20
	Speech of the Ministry of Interior Affairs	9:20-9:25
	Break	9:30-9:50
Intercity Hotel Hall	Administrative and Economic Decentralization in the Governorates (Opportunities and Challenges)	10:00-10:50
	1st Global Experience: Trends of Decentralization Around the World (Lessons Learned)	10:55-11:25
	Dialogue Session 2: Mechanisms for Achieving Local Economic Development in the Governorates	11:25 – 12:15
	2nd Global Experience: Economic Development and Job Creation	12:15-12:45
	Lunch	12:45-1:30
RAM Halls	Workshop Sessions	1:30-2:30

The Forum Agenda (2nd Day)

	Themes and Topics of the Forum	Time
	Dialogue Session 3: The Role of Entrepreneurship in Economic Development and Job Creation in the Governorates	9:00-9:50
	3rd Global Experience: The Role of Business and Public-Private Partnerships in Promoting Innovation	9:55-10:25
Intercity Hotel Hall	break	10:30-11:00
	Dialogue Session 4: The Role of Municipalities in Local Governance	11:00-11:50
Ram Halls	4th: Global Experience: Empowering Competencies and Strengthening Capacities in Governorates	11:55-12:25
	Recommendations & closing	12:30-12:35
	Workshop sessions	12:40 – 1:40
	lunch	1:50



Speakers in the Forum Dialogue and the global experience

(1st Day)

Dialogue sessions 1 50 min

Administrative and Economic Decentralization in the Governorates
(Opportunities and Challenges)

Speakers

- H.E Seyyid Dr. Hamed Ahmed Al Busaidi - Governor of Al Buraimi
- H.E Eng. Masoud Said Al Hashmi - Governor of South Al Batinah
- H.E Seyyid Dr. Munther Hilal Al Busaidi - Deputy Head of the Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit
- Mr. Said Rashid Al Qatabi - Director General of Social Sectors in Ministry of Economy

Session moderator

- H.H Dr. Adham Turki Al Said - Sultan Qaboos University

1st Global Experience 30 min

Trends of Decentralization Around the World (Lessons learned)

Speakers

- Nicholas You
- Executive Director of the Guangzhou Institute for Urban Innovation

Speakers in the Forum Dialogue and the global experience

(1st Day)

Dialogue sessions 2 50 min

Mechanisms for Achieving Local Economic Development in the Governorates

Speakers

- H.E Mohammed Sulaiman Al Kindi - Governor of Al Batina North
- H.E Azzan Qasim Al Busaidi – Undersecretary of Tourism
- H.E Eng. Bader Salim Al Mamari – Chairman of the Projects, Tenders and Local Content Authority
- Mr. Ahmed Ali Al Mamari – Vice Executive President of the Financial Services Authority

Session moderator

- Eng. Mohammed Said Al Amri - Director General of Governorate Affairs (Ministry of Interior)

2nd Global Experience 30 min

Economic Development and Job Creation

Speakers

- Carles Llorens
- Secretary General, United Regions Organization



| Speakers in the Forum Dialogue and the global experience

(2nd Day)

Dialogue sessions 3 50 min

The Role of Entrepreneurship in Economic Development and Job Creation in the Governorates

Speakers

- ♦ H.E Sheikh Hilal Said Al Hajri - Governor of Al Dakhiliyah
- ♦ H.E. Halima Rashid Al Zari – Chairman of SME Development Authority
- ♦ H.E Khalid Salim Al Ghammari - Undersecretary of the Ministry of Labor for Labor
- ♦ H.E Faisal Abdullah Al Rawas - Chairman of the Board of Directors at OCCI
- ♦ Mr. AlMutassim Said Al Sariri – Director Genral of ICV at OIA

Session moderator

- ♦ Dr. Rahma Khamis Al Balushi - Royal Academy of Management

3rd Global Experience 30 min

The Role of Business and Public-Private Partnerships in Promoting Innovation

Speakers

- ♦ Professor Jos Pieterse
- ♦ Professor and Researcher at Fontys University



Speakers in the Forum Dialogue and the global experience

(2nd Day)

Dialogue sessions 4 50 min

The Role of Municipalities in Local Governance

Speakers

- H.E Ahmed Mohammed Al Humaidi – President of Muscat Municipality
- H.E Dr. Ahmed Muhsin AL Ghassani – President of Al Dhofar Municipality
- Dr. Majed Mustafa -Advisor & Academic, King Saud University (KSU)
- Mr. Mounir Laymouri – Mayor of Tangier and President of the Moroccan Association of Presidents of Municipalities
- Eng. Naser Humaid Al Hosni – DG in Al Mussandam Municipality

Session moderator

- Dr. Neila Akrimi - Fellow at the Royal Academy of Management

4th Global Experience 30 min

Empowering Competencies and Strengthening Capacities in Governorates

Speakers

- Laura Hagg
- Director of Capacity Development and Governance at the International City/County Management Association (ICMA)



Comprehensive Workshop Portfolio

The Forum features six specialised workshops designed to translate high-level dialogue into actionable strategies. Each workshop combines international best practices with local context, facilitated by renowned experts.

01 Models and Strategies for Local Economic Advancement Based on Competitive Advantages

Facilitators: Carles Llorens, Laura Hagg, Souad Zaidi

This workshop examines proven frameworks for identifying and leveraging unique local assets to drive economic growth. Participants will explore case studies demonstrating how regions have successfully transformed comparative advantages into sustainable competitive positions, creating prosperity and employment opportunities.

02 Municipal Asset Governance and Local Investment Strategies

Facilitators: Carlos de Freitas, Lance Joel, Rasikh Sagitov, Dr Majed Mohammed

Focusing on optimising municipal resources and attracting strategic investment, this workshop addresses critical challenges in asset management, financial sustainability, and creating enabling environments for private sector engagement. Participants will develop practical tools for improving fiscal governance

03 Regional Competitiveness and Investment Attraction in Cities

Facilitators: HE Mounir Al Limouri, Annemarie Poorterman, Nicholas You

This workshop explores strategies cities employ to enhance their competitive positioning and attract quality investment. Through interactive sessions, participants will examine marketing approaches, investor engagement tactics, and policy frameworks that create vibrant, attractive urban environments.

Comprehensive Workshop Portfolio

04 From Citizen to Partner: Community Participation Mechanisms in Local Governance

Facilitators: Souad Zaidi, Annemarie Poorterman, Laura Hagg, Lance Joel

Examining innovative approaches to civic engagement, this workshop demonstrates how municipalities can transform residents from passive recipients to active partners in governance. Participants will explore digital tools, consultation frameworks, and co-creation methodologies that strengthen democratic participation.

05 Green Economy: Local Opportunities for Growth and Employment

Facilitators: Carlos de Freitas, Dr Majed Mohammed, Nicholas You

This forward-looking workshop identifies opportunities within the green transition for local economic development and job creation. Participants will examine renewable energy projects, circular economy initiatives, and sustainable tourism models that generate prosperity whilst protecting environmental assets.

06 From Triple to Quadruple Helix: Innovation and Local Cooperation Models

Facilitators: : Prof. Jos Pieterse, Carles Llorens, Rasikh Sagitov

Exploring advanced collaboration frameworks, this workshop examines how governments, academia, industry, and civil society can work together to drive innovation. Participants will discover how quadruple helix models foster entrepreneurship, accelerate knowledge transfer, and create dynamic innovation ecosystems.



Day One Workshop Themes

Models and Strategies for Advancing Local Economies Based on Competitive Advantages

Carles Llorens, Laura Hagg, Souad Zaidi

Municipal Asset Governance and Local Investment Strategies

Carlos de Freitas, Lance Joel, Rasikh Sagitov, dr. Majed Mohamed

Regional Competitiveness and Investment Attraction in Cities

H.E. Mounir al Limouri, Annemarie Poorterman, Nicholas You

Day Two Workshop Themes

From Citizen to Partner: Community Participation Mechanisms in Local Governance

Souad Zaidi, Annemarie Poorterman, Laura Hagg, Lance Joel

Green Economy: Local Opportunities for Growth and Employment

Carlos de Freitas, dr. Majed Mohamed, Nicholas You

From Triple to Quadruple Helix: Innovation and Local Cooperation Models

Prof. Jos Pieterse, Carles Llorens, Rasikh Sagitov

Statistic

Total Days

2 days (12 hrs. as total)

Number of Session Moderators

4 moderators

Total numbers of participants

150 participants

Number of global experience

4 global experiences

Number of Forum Sessions

4 sessions

Number of Parallel Workshops with the Forum

6 Workshops sessions

Number of Speakers in the Forum Sessions

18 speakers

