



United Cities and
Local Governments
Asia-Pacific



CITIES
AND
LOCAL
GOVERNMENTS
INSTITUTE

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS' INNOVATION AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

E-Newsletter

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A Word from the Secretary General of UCLG ASPAC: Strengthening Cities Through Knowledge, Collaboration, and Innovation



Local governments today stand at the frontlines of the world's most pressing challenges, from climate pressures and social inequality to rapid urbanisation and economic uncertainty. Our region's diversity is a source of strength, but it also demands leadership that is agile, informed, and deeply grounded in community realities. At United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific (UCLG ASPAC), we remain committed to supporting cities and local governments as they navigate this shifting landscape, ensuring they have the knowledge, partnerships, and political leverage needed to lead with confidence.

The launch of the Cities and Local Governments Institute (CLGI) Asia-Pacific's first e-newsletter marks an important milestone in strengthening our collective learning ecosystem. Governance innovation is no longer optional, but it is essential for cities seeking resilience and competitiveness. By bridging research, practice, and capacity-building, CLGI Asia-Pacific plays a pivotal role in equipping local governments to accelerate innovation and community empowerment. The Institute enhances our ability to translate ideas into real systems change, from improving local governments' sustainable innovation to strengthening citizen participation and building inclusive urban futures.

As we look ahead, our mission is clear: amplify the voices of local governments, deepen cooperation across borders, and advance a development agenda that places people at the center. I invite all our members and partners to actively participate in cross-city collaboration, share insights, and contribute to shaping the next generation of governance leadership in the Asia Pacific. Together, we accelerate progress. Together, we build the cities of tomorrow.

A Word from The Dean: CLGI Asia-Pacific's Vision for Governance Innovation and Communities Empowerment



Our region is changing fast, and the old ways of governing simply can't keep up. At the Cities and Local Governments Institute (CLGI) Asia-Pacific, we see this momentum as an opportunity to rethink how institutions serve people and how communities shape their own futures. Urban challenges today are too complex for isolated efforts; they demand collaboration across sectors, disciplines, and borders. As the research arm of United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific (UCLG ASPAC), we cultivate leaders and practitioners who operate in real systems, where evidence matters, decisions carry weight, and public trust must be earned.

Innovation in governance is not about jargon, but it is about redesigning systems so they actually deliver. The pandemic proved how quickly circumstances can shift, forcing cities worldwide to reassess their priorities. In our region, local governments confront congestion, flooding, pollution, and the pressures of informal settlements. These issues reflect tensions between rapid economic growth and the lived experience of urban life. At the Institute, we treat these challenges not as limits, but as the foundation of a living laboratory, driving the rigorous, forward-looking work the Asia Pacific needs and deserves.

Building cities that move with clarity and purpose requires breaking silos, aligning institutions, and strengthening collective intelligence. When systems work together, daily life improves: mobility becomes smoother, services become more reliable, and communities become healthier. None of this is sustainable without people at the center. Community empowerment is the engine of this structural change.

This first edition of our e-newsletter launches a platform to connect ideas, highlight breakthroughs, and amplify the work of our members across the region. Together, we are shaping a future where innovating governance and empowering communities become non-negotiable drivers of sustainable urban transformation. Welcome to the journey.

Meet CLGI Asia-Pacific's Newly Appointed Executive Leadership Team



Dr. S. Ipoeng Poernomo, M.Si, IPR, ATU

Executive Director

S. Ipoeng Poernomo is a senior transport and infrastructure specialist with 40+ years directing major airport, toll road, and urban mobility projects across Indonesia and Timor-Leste, previously leading Egis International Indonesia and now advising on high-value PPP and public sector initiatives.



Prof. DSc (HC) Ir. Mohammed Ali Berawi, M.Eng.Sc., Ph.D.

Chief Research and Innovation

Mohammed Ali Berawi is a Professor of Civil Engineering at Universitas Indonesia (UI). He leads the Center for Sustainable Infrastructure Development (CSID) at UI and has served as Deputy for Green & Digital Transformation at Indonesia's New Capital Authority. Prof. Berawi is listed among the Top 2% of the World's Best Scientists by Elsevier and Stanford University for five consecutive years (2021–2025).



Christopher I. Morries, BSc, MSc

Chief Community Development

Chris Morris is a civil-engineer and development professional with 40+ years across water resources, NGO engagement, and regional development. He led the NGO and Civil Society Center at the Asian Development Bank for a decade and now works as a consultant in Southeast Asia. He currently serves as Director and Chair of the Performance Excellence Committee for Special Olympics Asia Pacific.



Sari Wooster, MA

Chief Environment and Social Safeguard

Sari Wooster is a former senior development specialist with more than 30 years of experience in social safeguards, gender policy, civil society engagement, and rural development across Asia. She spent over 15 years at the Asian Development Bank, where she advised governments on social-impact and safeguard systems for large energy projects. Her earlier roles at GIZ, Plan International, and CIDA built her expertise in gender advocacy, community development, decentralised planning, and NGO capacity-building.



Rusmin Lawin, SH, MH, CN, Firecs

Chief International Partnership

Rusmin Lawin is a real estate entrepreneur and investment consultant with over 25 years of experience, currently serving as Global Ambassador of the Real Estate Indonesia Developers Association, President of FIABCI Asia Pacific, and FIABCI Representative to ECOSOC. He previously served in Indonesia's New Capital City (Nusantara) development under the Nusantara Capital Authority.

About Cities and Local Governments Institute Asia-Pacific

Vision

A future where local governments are empowered by evidence-based policies and practices to create vibrant and equitable communities.

Mission

- ❑ To generate cutting-edge applied research and evidence-based knowledge that addresses emerging and critical challenges faced by local governments.
- ❑ To translate research into practical insights, innovative tools, and approaches that support improved policy design and problem-solving.
- ❑ To foster collaborative learning and knowledge exchange with academia, practitioners, and development partners to encourage informed and forward-looking local governance.



United Cities and
Local Governments
Asia-Pacific



Key Activity



Applied Research
and Policy
Studies



Monitoring &
Evaluation
(Research-Oriented)



Knowledge
Products and
Publications



Learning Materials
Based on
Research Outputs

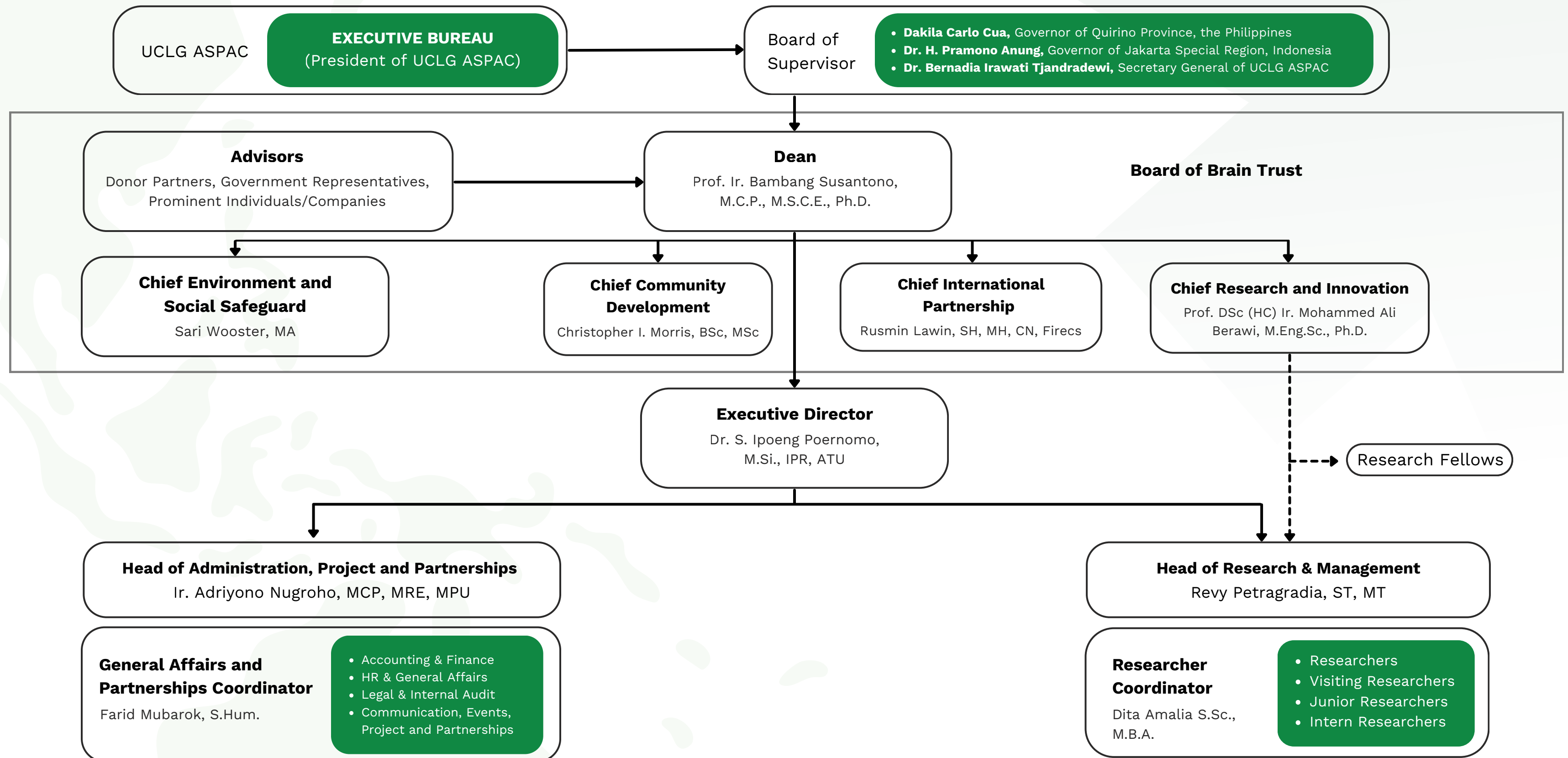


Collaborative
Research
Partnerships



Technical Insights
and Foresight

Organisation Structure



New Chapter: Cities and Local Governments Institute Asia-Pacific Officially Launched in Goyang



United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific (UCLG ASPAC) held its biennial Congress from September 24th to 26th, 2025 in KINTEX, hosted by Goyang Special City in the Republic of Korea. The UCLG ASPAC Congress allows local governments, policymakers and experts in the Asia-Pacific region to participate in forums addressing urban challenges and local governance issues. Focusing on “Sustainable Global Self-Sufficient Cities and Regions for the Future”, this year’s theme highlighted the urgent need for cities to obtain tools and development opportunities in partnerships, technical assistance and international funding mechanisms to become more self-sufficient, sustainable, and competitive in regional and global stage.

As part of UCLG ASPAC’s commitment to strengthening knowledge and evidence in local governance, the launch of Cities and Local Governments Institute (CLGI) Asia-Pacific in Goyang marks the beginning of its role in generating applied research, developing practical insights, and fostering collaborative learning among cities in the region. Through this new research-oriented platform, CLGI Asia-Pacific will contribute to supporting local governments in navigating emerging challenges and pursuing innovation for more resilient and sustainable urban futures.

Book Launching "Building Forward Better" by Dean Bambang Susantono in UN RCO Jakarta



"This is why We don't just **build back better** and We must build forward better."

UNRCO in Indonesia, in collaboration with CLG-Institute, hosted the launch of Prof. Bambang Susantono latest book, "Building Forward Better". Held at Menara Thamrin in Central Jakarta, the event showcased UNRCO's support for issues discussed in the book, aligned with its mission to advance and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Attended by participants with diverse backgrounds, including representatives from local government, academia, non-governmental organisations, research institutions and the private sector, this event provided a knowledge-sharing forum enriched by a wide range of perspectives.

The collaboration during the book launch reflects CLGI Asia-Pacific's emerging role in facilitating dialogue and knowledge exchange on key policy issues relevant to local governance. By engaging diverse stakeholders in conversations on resilience, innovation, and future-ready cities, CLGI Asia-Pacific continues to strengthen its position as a research platform that brings evidence-based perspectives into regional discussions on sustainable development.



Shaping the Future of Cities: **CLGI Asia-Pacific Develops Smart City Guidelines for Asia Pacific**

The Smart City Guidelines for the Asia-Pacific initiative aims to establish a comprehensive framework that supports cities in adopting sustainable, inclusive, and data-driven development practices. This research focuses on identifying shared regional challenges, such as rapid urbanizationurbanisation, infrastructure gaps, climate vulnerability, and digital inequality, while highlighting opportunities for innovation through technology, governance reform, and community participation.

The project proposes a multi-phase methodology involving literature review, case study analysis, stakeholder interviews, and cross-country benchmarking. Its primary objective is to produce practical, scalable guidelines that local governments, planners, and development agencies can easily adopt. These guidelines will integrate global best practices while remaining sensitive to the region's diverse socio-economic and cultural contexts.



Local Gold Standard : **CLGI Asia-Pacific Highlights Jakarta's Benjamin S. Award for Inclusive Neighbourhoods**

Paving the road for Jakarta to be a Top 20 Global City by 2045, the Jakarta Provincial Government launched “Benjamin S. Award” to represent sub-districts and acknowledge as best practice models for the Bersih (Clean), Nyaman (Comfortable), Indah (Beautiful) and Sejahtera (Prosperous) categories. Aiming to encourage neighbourhood development that encompasses inclusivity and sustainability, heads of Jakarta sub-districts are evaluated by their leadership in ongoing programmes, tangible results, and future innovations for the local development of the community and their livelihood.

Collaborating with various experts on urban development—with Prof. Bambang Susantono representing CLGI Asia-Pacific in the making to the final ceremony—the Jakarta Provincial Government named three sub-districts as the winners of its respective categories: Slipi sub-district in West Jakarta (Nyaman); Setu sub-district in East Jakarta (Indah); and Glodok sub-district in West Jakarta (Sejahtera). Finishing the first step towards a better Jakarta, Benjamin S. Award sets to be the guideline for region-wide development driven from the smallest scale to weave the greater good through its community and local governments' empowerment.



Economic Impacts of the MRT East–West Expansion

The study focuses on how Jakarta's MRT expansion, the East-West line, will transform the city's economic and transportation landscape. Jakarta is the primary employment hub for Jabodetabek, with more than half of daily commuters coming from nearby municipalities such as Bekasi, Depok, and Bogor. This large flow demonstrates the economy's great reliance on capital, as well as high congestion and extended transit times. The MRT attempts to address these inefficiencies by creating a rapid, dependable, and integrated public transportation system that connects significant industrial and residential areas.

Economically, the MRT is expected to reduce travel costs, boost labour productivity, and attract new investment along transit routes via Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). Our analysis of commuting and spatial data reveals that the Bekasi-Jakarta-Tangerang and Depok-Bogor-Jakarta corridor will become a high-value economic axis, promoting business growth and commuters. The analysis also suggests as peripheral cities acquire access, employment is likely to decentralise, resulting in a more polycentric and balanced metropolitan economy. In the long run, the MRT boosts regional competitiveness, lowers car dependency, and encourages sustainable, inclusive urban growth throughout Jakarta Metropolitan.



Current Undertaking as Knowledge Partner in Jakarta ASEAN Hub International Design Competition

The Jakarta ASEAN Hub International Design Competition is an initiative of the Provincial Government of Jakarta, in collaboration with the ASEAN Secretariat, to transform the 800-meter district surrounding the Secretariat into a premier diplomatic and cultural hub for Southeast Asia. Positioned in Kebayoran Baru, the area is envisioned as a walkable, transit-integrated, and globally recognisable urban precinct that reflects ASEAN's identity while elevating Jakarta's role as a regional center for cooperation, innovation, and community life.

The competition invites international designers, planners, and multidisciplinary teams to propose bold, future-ready concepts that enhance mobility, strengthen public space, highlight cultural heritage, and establish a coherent urban vision for this strategic zone.

As the knowledge partner, the CLGI Asia-Pacific ensures the competition is grounded in solid urban development insights and clear analytical foundations.



Research on Urban Air Mobility

The Asia-Pacific region is rapidly becoming a global hub for Urban Air Mobility (UAM) innovation. Across Japan, South Korea, Singapore, China, Australia, and Indonesia, major programs are underway to introduce electric Vertical Take-Off and Landing (eVTOL) systems for sustainable and connected urban transport. Commercial operations are expected to begin between 2026 and 2028.

Core Challenges

- Harmonising regulations and certification across Asia-Pacific nations
- Integrating UAM traffic management (UTM) and communication systems
- Addressing social acceptance issues such as noise, privacy, and safety
- Developing energy-efficient flight paths and infrastructure readiness

Trial Area

By 2035, Urban Air Mobility will redefine regional connectivity and transform how people move across Asia-Pacific’s smart cities.”

Regional Progress & Trial Area

Country	Structure	Control System	Vehicle Type
Japan	Layered air corridors connecting key city hubs	GPS + 5G + Digital ATC (SkyDrive/ANA network)	Joby Aviation
South Korea	Dedicated UAM lanes and multi-altitude corridors	GNSS + LTE/5G + K-UAM Integrated Control Center	Volocopter, PLANA & hyundai
Singapore	Vertiport network & urban flight paths	GPS + 5G + Smart Traffic Management	Volocopter
Australia	Layered air corridors & airport linkage zones	GPS + LTE/5G + CASA UAM monitoring system	Joby Aviation
China	Urban flight lanes integrated with vertiports	BeiDou + 5G + AI flight control (EHang network)	EHang (EH216 series), Xpeng
Indonesia	corridors & vertiport test zones	GPS + 4G/5G + Local ATC integration	EHang / Prestige Aviation

Airspace Framework Snapshot

Country	Trial Area	Operational Target	Key Progress
Japan	Passenger trials in Osaka & Tokyo	2028	Joby test flights and pilot certification, Regulations
South Korea	Passenger & cargo trials (K-UAM)	2028	Smart city air integration & Regulations
Singapore	Marina Bay Volocopter	2026	Asia’s first vertiport and automation system & Regulations
Australia	Joby trials in Sydney & Brisbane	2032 (Brisbane Olympic)	Regional tourism network setup & Regulations
China	EHang in Shenzhen & Beijing, Xpeng	2028	Passenger logistics and regulatory alignment
Indonesia	East Kalimantan, Ibu Kota Nusantara, Jakarta & Bali	2028	Infrastructure planning and Regulations

Jakarta's Governor Pramono Anung Wibowo Officiated CLGI Asia-Pacific Secretariat Launch

Jakarta's Governor and Co-President of UCLG ASPAC, Pramono Anung Wibowo, officially inaugurated the Cities and Local Governments Institute (CLGI) Asia-Pacific Secretariat located in Building H of the Jakarta Provincial Government Complex on Friday, 12 December 2025. The launch marks a significant milestone in strengthening research collaboration on local governance across the Asia-Pacific, while reinforcing the role of CLGI Asia-Pacific as a strategic hub for transforming research into policies, applied research's knowledge exchange, and its capacity building.

CLGI Asia-Pacific operates under UCLG ASPAC as an integral part of its institutional framework, supporting the Organisation's strategic direction in advancing local governance excellence across the region. In line with UCLG ASPAC's mandate, the Institute focuses on knowledge management, regional capacity development, and policy innovation, contributing to the implementation of the UCLG ASPAC Manifesto 2026–2030. This institutional position affirms the CLGI Asia-Pacific as a core instrument of UCLG ASPAC in promoting evidence-based policymaking and collaborative learning on applied research among member local governments.

The CLGI Asia-Pacific Secretariat will facilitate coordination on research, support joint initiatives, and strengthen engagement towards evidence-based policies with regional and global partners across the Asia-Pacific.



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