

Cities Alliance Steering Committee
MEETING REPORT
15 April 2007
UN-Habitat HQ, Nairobi, Kenya

The Steering Committee met on 15 April 2007 in conjunction with the 21st session of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat. In attendance: I. Bjork-Klevby, D. Biau (UN-Habitat); L. Hannah (World Bank); E. Saiz, JP Elong Mbassi (UCLG); E. Berg (Norway); L. Fabbri (Brazil); JP Marcelli (France); and W. Cobbett, K. Milroy (Secretariat).

The outcomes of each of the agenda items are summarized below. The agenda and documentation sent to the SC prior to the meeting are posted on the members page of the CA website.

1. Cities Alliance Medium Term Strategic Plan

William Cobbett made a report on progress in drafting the MTSP, as had been agreed at the 30 November 2006 meeting of the Consultative Group. The presentation focused on the main goal and four primary objectives proposed for the MTSP:

GOAL: to increase the Cities Alliance's contribution to systemic change at scale.

Objective 1: Systematically increase ownership and leaders of cities and counties

Objective 2: Raise profile of cities and slums

Objective 3: Increase depth and breadth of CA members involvement

Objective 4: Continually improve management of CA work programme

The SC generally supported the overall thrust of the strategy, and provided feedback on the activities proposed for the implementation plan. The SC encouraged the Secretariat to build teamwork for the MTSP in-house; cautioned not to be overly ambitious and to prioritize, linked to resource requirements; to maintain a strong poverty focus; and show where the CA fits in with the broader international architecture.

Next Steps: The Secretariat briefed the SC on the invitations made to each of the CG members to provide input into the MTSP, with a requested deadline for feedback of 7 May. A draft MTSP will be circulated to the full CG by the end of June 2007, with a comment period of one month. SC members committed themselves to react on this draft during July.

The MTSP will include some activities (and related budget) that may not require CG endorsement, or will be presented to the SC as part of the Secretariat's proposed FY08 budget. The balance of the activities, however, including any with significant cost implications, will be submitted for discussion by the CG at its November 2007 meeting.

Staffing / Personnel Matters

The SC approved the Terms of Reference and the nomination of a secondment from Germany to the CA Secretariat, Mr. Günter Meinert, to serve as Sr. Programme Officer. His appointment is expected to take effect during July-August 2007.

Mr. Meinert will lead the Secretariat's efforts to strengthen and enhance the CA's monitoring and evaluation system, in response to the findings and recommendations of the 2006 Independent Evaluation of the Cities Alliance, and serve as a key member of the City Development Strategy team. He currently serves as Head of GTZ's Decentralization, Regional and Local Governance unit. He has extensive field experience in the LAC region.

The SC was also briefed about the prospects for the secondment of Mr. Thierry Paulais from France. The Secretariat will consult with the SC as and when the offer of this possible secondment is confirmed.

The SC noted the strong representation of seconded Secretariat staff from donor countries, and noted the need for more staff representation from developing countries (including junior officers). The risks of Secretariat's strong reliance on seconded (non-core funded) staff was also discussed, and it was noted that the CA may need to consider more Core-funded staff.

3. Membership Update

The Secretariat briefed members on the status of prospective new members that were in various stages of committing to join the CA CG. This includes Chile, the Philippines and European Commission (which would be represented through the ACP secretariat). Recent expressions of interest have also been received from the African Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, and Denmark.

SC members discussed the need to develop criteria for admitting new members to the CA, and ways to strengthen the participation of developing countries in the CA.

4. Review of Funding Proposals

No large proposals were ready for SC review.

The Secretariat noted that there were currently 21 proposals received and in process as of the meeting date, including a large number of proposals for LDCs and other low income countries.

5. Other Business

The Secretariat briefed the SC on plans for the April 2007 meeting of the Policy Advisory Board, to be held in Tunis and hosted by the African Development Bank; and, on planning for the November 2007 CG meeting to be held in Manila (November 5-9).