



Independent External Evaluation of the Cities Alliance, 2011

Presentation of preliminary findings and recommendations

COWI A/S

COWI is a leading, international consultancy company with operations worldwide within engineering, environmental science and economics.

We carry out evaluations within various sectors, but our main focus is on energy, urban development, transport, environment and health.

During the past 5 years we have carried out more than 40 evaluations



Objectives

Key objective:

- *"...Assess the overall relevance and effectiveness of the CA and to what extent the program's objectives has been achieved" (TOR, P.3)*

Other objectives:

- *Assessment of the CA in the context of the global architecture of international cooperation within urban development*
- *Main outputs and outcomes in the past 5 years*
- *Main changes in approaches, instruments, structures and processes of the CA*
- *Evolving new policies for global programmes*
- *Recommendations to further refine the reform process*

Data

- Desk review:
 - Sample of 10 CA project completion reports
 - All field evaluation reports from 2007-2011
 - Uganda and Ghana CPP
 - CA website
 - All strategic documents; annual reports; and CG and ExCo deliberations
 - Previous evaluations of the CA
- Interviews:
 - Almost all CA members and selected project partners
 - Former members and other donors
 - Selected cities and national city associations
 - Stakeholders involved in Uganda CPP

Evaluation criteria

- Relevance
- Efficacy (effectiveness)
- Cost-effectiveness
- Governance and management
- Resource mobilization
- Sustainability



Although individually successful the potential for creating wider impacts from the entire project portfolio seems limited

- Projects generally implemented planned activities and achieved expected outputs/results. Increased awareness with direct stakeholders.
- Projects (esp. CDS) "upstream" and there is limited knowledge on their ability to leverage resources for ensuing investment. Review of CDS projects (2008) indicated disappointing results and several members have voiced concerns
- Knowledge of the degree to which projects were replicated was limited. Many positive examples at country level and some examples at international level.
- 2007 evaluation: Middle income developing countries have set in motion policies and activities that could stabilise or even reduce slums.
- These lessons are increasingly used in low income countries

Efficacy Projects II

Project approach yielded only limited results in terms of coherence of efforts

- Examples of successful projects, but too many "single-donor" projects.
- The new business model/BP with four clear business lines – and especially CPP – designed to overcome deficiencies of project approach



Overall findings

The reform process starting with the adoption of the MTS has strengthened the CAs work and the organization considerably

- Improved the coherence of effort among members and other partners
- As the cornerstone in the new business model, the CPP concept has very promising potentials in establishing new ways of organizing urban development cooperation by:
 - increasing ownership and leadership of cities and countries
 - multi-donor/partner programming
 - involving slum dwellers and urban poor
 - focusing on longer term support
- Established clearer governance structure

Demand-side relevance

The overarching objectives of the CA are highly relevant.

The overarching objectives are:

- To strengthen and promote the role of cities in poverty reduction, and in sustainable development;
- To capture and strengthen the synergies between and among members and partners; and
- To improve the quality of urban development cooperation and lending.



Supply-side relevance

The CA is unique in creating an international platform, focused exclusively on urban issues

- The strength is that it brings donors, ministries and international organizations together
- With the MTS and the BP new concepts of delivering urban development assistance have been developed.

Few undesirable overlaps between CA activities and the activities of other multi- and bilateral development programmes, but knowledge activities need attention

- Most members do not find any undesirable overlaps, however, a few members find that the CA knowledge activities to some extent overlap with the knowledge activities carried out by the WB and the UN-Habitat

Relevance of the design of the programme

Relevance has improved with the new business model

- Previously the programme was characterized by ad hoc support to isolated and short-term projects
- Now more focused on systemic changes, especially through CPPs
- Now better internal logic in the programme. The four service lines defined in the charter are (to some extent) unfolded in the draft business plan, and results will be reported in relation to each of them in the future

Efficacy

Country programmes/partnerships

Plans and objectives of the MTS and BP are being pursued. Preliminary indications of positive results but still early days

- CPAs/WPs established although not all of the originally intended.
- Concept for CPPs established in BP and CPPs being established in selected countries – a major achievement
- Members positive and expect much of CPPs but feel it is too early to determine whether CPPs are delivering results
- Review of the Uganda CPP shows:
 - Important achievements already made despite delays
 - Large potential for scaling up through WB programme
 - Challenges due to complexity of programme

Efficacy

Knowledge and learning

Increasing focus on K&L after MTS but not all planned targets achieved

- A number of JWPs implemented: Appreciated by members and contribute to knowledge generation and coherence of efforts. Dissemination not yet sufficiently in focus.
- CA organisation/participation in global/regional events etc. increased
- But: Sec. still spent 80% of the time on OGF administration (MTS review 2010)
- Expanded/structured programme of knowledge products (as prioritised in MTS) need to be fully implemented
- M&E strategy based on impact chains (as prioritized in MTS) not materialized, but results-based management indicators established in BP.

Efficacy

Advocacy and communication

Increasing attention to A&C after last evaluation/MTS, but unclear strategic intent and limited outreach beyond the CA sphere

- Concerted communication and advocacy approach (MTS) not materialised although actions have been taken by Sec.
- Limited extent of advocacy activities at fora and events outside the CA i.e. less focus on non-members and high-level political decision-makers
- The role of PAF – not clear in BP.

Need for stronger focus on A&C

- Most members regard advocacy as the most important task of the CA, but members' level of satisfaction with CA advocacy varies considerably (1/3 of members highly dissatisfied)
- Some members feel strongly that advocacy in Europe needs stepping up, but need to be resourced

Cost-effectiveness

Overhead costs are reasonable, but grant processing time needs to be brought down

- Calculated overhead costs in line with previous evaluations – at reasonable levels
- Members consider the CA to function efficiently overall
- Increase in grant administration efficiency expected with new business model
- Issues due to cumbersome WB procedures. Negotiations ongoing.

Governance and management - legitimacy

The programme has a high degree of legitimacy

- The broad composition of the Consultative Group ensures legitimacy
- Ongoing discussion about representation of cities in CG
 - An alliance for cities not an alliance of cities
 - Cities represented through UCLG and metropolis
 - Consider more national associations of cities as members
- CPPs ensure, if successfully implemented, a high degree of legitimacy at the operational level by including all relevant stakeholders.

Governance and management - accountability

With the new charter, the roles and responsibilities of the different governing bodies are more clearly defined

Strategies for the service lines are unclear, leaving a large room to interpret what to be done (for the Sec./members)

- Some members find that the secretariat plays too dominant a role and that the CA is too much identified with the secretariat. However, it is the responsibility of the members to take the lead.

The lack of an effective M&E system has been recognized as a problem for the accountability of the programme

Governance and management - Transparency

The programme is not very transparent for stakeholders who are not members

- Restricted access to the documents in the members area harms the transparency
- Information organized according to meetings makes it difficult to find relevant information for existing members



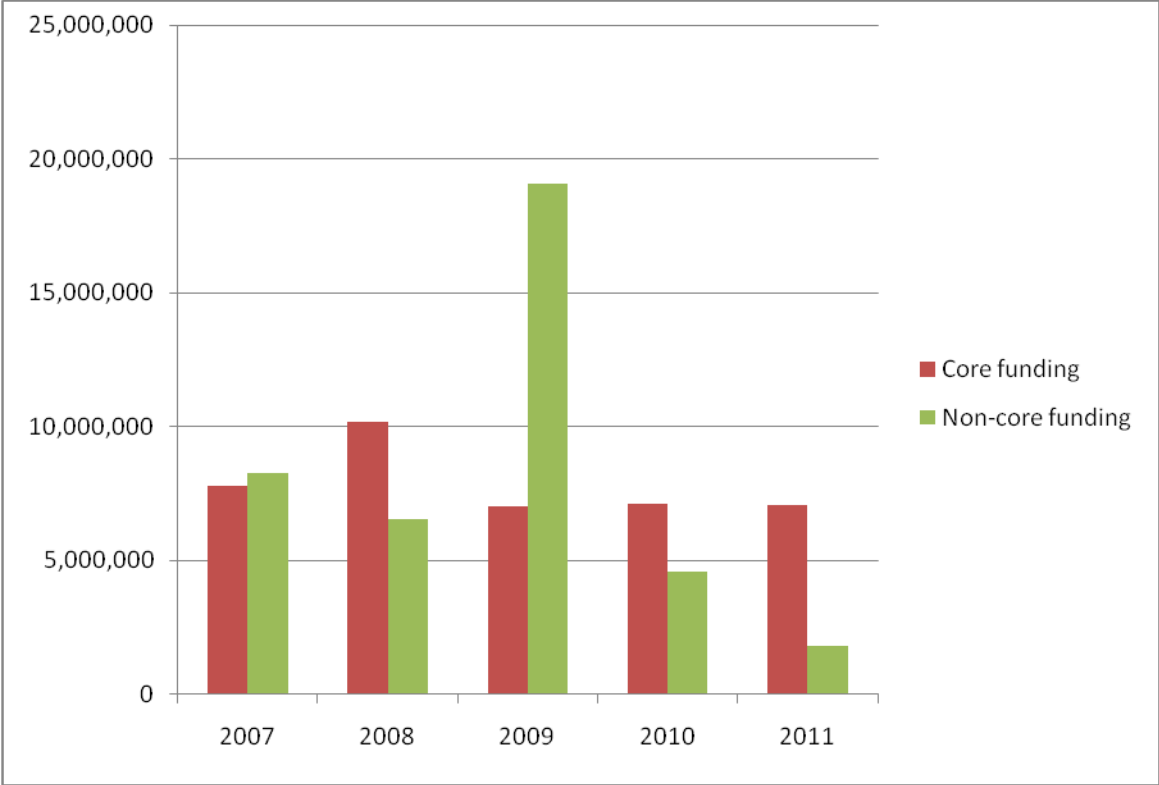
Governance and management – World Bank hosting of the CA

Both pros and cons in relation to WB hosting:

- Pros:
 - Benefit from the professional reputation of the WB
 - A number of members find that it facilitates their ability to get in contact with relevant bank staff
 - Opportunity to exert influence on the WB and its operations within the area of slum upgrading
- Cons:
 - WB policies and procedures threaten the efficiency of the CA, but are being addressed
 - Some members find that the WB is too dominant
 - Might blur the profile of the CA

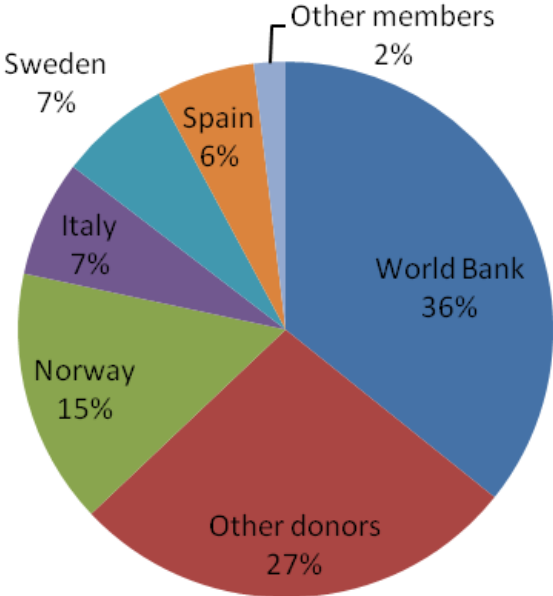
Resource mobilization and sustainability

CA is vulnerable in relation to resource mobilization

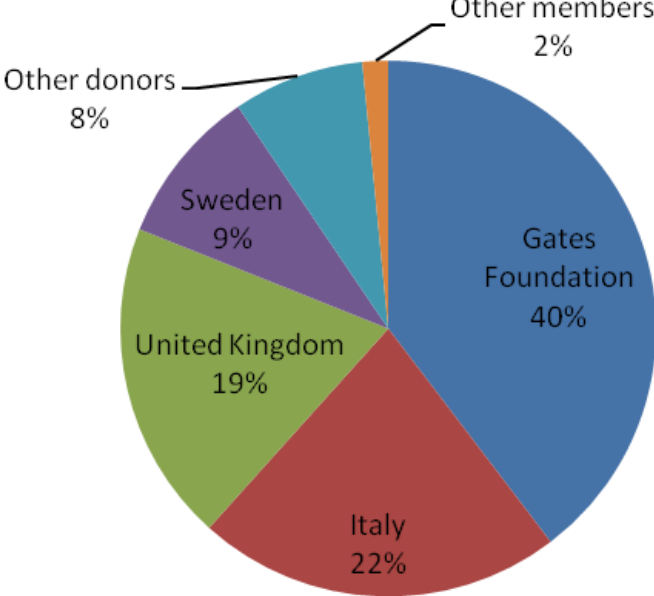


Recourse mobilization and sustainability

Core funding FY 2007-2011



Non-core funding FY 2007-2011



Recommendations - preliminary

- Increase focus on attracting new funding
- Elaborate clear and concise strategic framework with three layers
 - Overall strategy, 5-10 years
 - Medium-term strategy/business plan, 2-3 years
 - Annual work plans
- Incorporate strategies for each business line (incl. K&L and A&C) into this framework
- K&L and A&C strategies to be clear on objectives, target groups, messages, themes, channels and means/activities (both will require in-depth analysis of target groups)
- K&L strategy should place the CA within the framework of K&L strategies/activities of members/partners/key actors
- Overall strategy should provide clear directions for selection of countries and themes for CPPs and JWPs

Recommendations – preliminary 2

- Review performance in relation to this framework and the four business lines (esp. CPPs) in 2-3 years
- Develop M&E system reflecting strategic framework / intervention logics
- Think M&E system into programme documents / grant agreements for CPPs/CAT.fund projects / JWPs and the reporting requirements
- Use scoring systems/traffic lights/KPIs
- Increase focus on impact evaluation, in particular for CPPs
- Make the full website publicly accessible to enhance transparency
- Rethink the website in the perspective of K&L and A&C strategies
- Attract more national local government associations to enhance legitimacy and client focus