Cities Alliance
Cities Without Slums

Knowledge Resources/Joint Work Programmes
Information Sheet
Executive Committee Meeting
Accra, Ghana
11 July 2011

Agenda Item No. 3:   Cities Alliance Business Plan

Support Document: Knowledge and Learning Briefing Note

Background:

Since its foundation more than ten years ago, the Cities Alliance has supported more than 200 projects, mostly for Cities Development Strategies (CDSs) and Slum Upgrading (SU). The ongoing country programmes, joint work programmes and projects from the catalytic Fund continue generating how-to-knowledge, based on experiences on the ground. This wealth of experiences puts the Cities Alliance in a unique position to provide coherent and field tested approaches, methodologies and experiences to urban practitioners as well as to policy makers. Over the years, the Cities Alliance has invested significant resources in knowledge generation, which need to be matched with the necessary resources for processing and effective dissemination.

Given the current budget situation, priorities will need to be made balancing requests for capitalizing the knowledge potential from ongoing or recently completed projects, for the extension of existing joint work programmes and for new joint work programmes.

Recommended Action:

The Secretariat seeks ExCo's Guidance

- on capitalizing the knowledge potential from the legacy portfolio,
- on potential member's contribution to Joint Work Programmes, and
- on thematic and/or geographic priorities.

1. **Legacy Portfolio of the Open Grant facility**

As part of its knowledge and learning activities, the Secretariat has systematically reviewed and classified 77 projects from the period 2006-2008, resulting in the identification of some 700 outputs. The Secretariat is now continuing this work by examining project outputs from 2009 onwards.

Unsurprisingly, there is a significant variation in the quality of these outputs, and of their wider relevance beyond their specific project context. From the 2006-2008 project batch, we have identified some 70 outputs are knowledge resources worthy of wider dissemination. These outputs can be grouped into following clusters:

- Cluster 1: Learning Resources/Toolkits/Training Material (12)
  Themes: CDS (3); Upgrading (1); Land Regularization (4); Financial Management (3); Urban Renewal (1)
- Cluster 2: Project outputs with Potential for thematic Case Studies (52)
  Themes: Cities – CDS(14) , Cities' Network (2), Intermediate Cities (1); Capital Investment and Finance (3), Municipal Management and Finance (3); Local Economic Development (3); Upgrading Strategy (12); Financing Upgrading Strategy (5); Urban Environment (2); National Policy (7)
- Cluster 3: Research and Data Related Outputs (5)

The Cities Alliance has invested significant resources in this knowledge generation, which now needs to be matched with equally significant resources for processing, and for effective dissemination. The challenge currently confronting the secretariat is how to mobilize the necessary resources to maximise the value of this knowledge, and ensure its availability and use in the daily work routines of urban practitioners, and to contribute to better-informed policy making.

Given the current budget situation, the Secretariat can contribute some seed funding and secretarial functions. However, to really achieve the potential of this body of work, and contribute to the Cities Alliance as a partnership, we believe that additional staff time and resources are needed from members, possibly as a knowledge-focused Joint Work Programme. This would allow interested CA members to agree on priority themes, and to jointly establish the approaches, methodologies and tools or to transform these outputs into learning material for professional associations of planners and engineers, as well as universities for training the next generation of urban professionals. Ideally, this Joint Work Programme would also lead to the establishment of a community of practitioners.

Building on the insights and agreements reached through joint work, well-prepared policy dialogues could leverage the knowledge to increase the impact on urban policies of both, partner countries and CA member corporate polices.

The Secretariat seeks guidance from ExCo,
- on further steps with respect to the proposed approach,
- on the identification of interested members; and,
- and on a preliminary selection of thematic or geographic priorities.

2. Joint work programmes

By the end of FY 2011, several joint work programmes were operationally active, namely
- Cities and Climate Change (Grant recipient: WB, UNEP, UN-Habitat)
- Climate Change, Disaster Risk and the Urban Poor (WB),
- Mainstreaming the Environment in CDS (UNEP),
- ECO2 Programme (WB),
- Municipal Finance (UCLG),
- National Slum Upgrading Approaches (WB),
- Supporting Africa's Urban Transition (WB)
- CDS framework (no grants, GIZ, UNH, UCLG, UNEP).

These joint work programmes were budgeted in previous years. The grant agreement will expire during FY 2012. Given the current budget situation, priorities will have to be defined for any follow up agreements, also balancing budget requests for new joint work programmes and for processing the knowledge from the legacy portfolio (see 1) above).

The Secretariat seeks guidance from ExCo,
- on the potential contribution from CA members to a jwp, as described under 1.) above,
- on thematic and/or geographic priorities,
- on the steps to take to prioritize joint work programmes for the FY 2012 budget.