

Eleventh Regional Consultative Meeting on Good Urban Governance

ADB Headquarters, Manila, The Philippines
15 November 2007

Minutes

AGENDA	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Opening2. Adoption of the agenda3. Brief self-introduction by agencies4. Review of the preparations for the Fourth World Urban Forum.<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Revision of the initiatives agreed on the previous meeting and presentation of new proposals.b) Proposals for the organization of networking events and exhibitionsc) Modalities of work among partners in the group5. Briefing by participating agencies:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. ESCAP: preparations for the State of the Asian Cities Report6. Any other business7. Next meeting8. Closing
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Introduction

The Regional Consultative Meeting was convened on 15 November 2007 using the opportunity of the presence of several of the Asia-Pacific partners at the 23rd Executive Committee Meeting of Citynet in Manila, The Philippines. Representatives from 9 organizations attended the meeting (see list of participants attached).

The meeting started with a round of presentations by each participant, stating the nature of their work and highlighting their future activities and the opportunities for partnership with others.

Preparations for the World Urban Forum 4

The main item in the agenda was the preparations for the World Urban Forum IV (WUF4), to be held in Nanjing, China on 13-17 October 2008. The previous edition of this consultative meeting, held in Mumbai, India on 3 November 2006, also discussed preparations for WUF4. On that occasion it was noted that the presence of agencies and cities from Asia and the Pacific at the previous World Urban Forum

(WUF3) was rather weak and a coordinated effort among some of these organizations would be pertinent for WUF4¹.

The representative from ESCAP briefed other participants on the recent communications with the organizers of WUF4, in particular regarding the organization of networking events at the Forum. The deadline for submission of applications to these events is 10th December and the main criteria for acceptance were: relation to one of the sub-themes of the forum, target audience, sponsorship of participants from least developed countries, funding requirements and the organizations involved. Partnerships among several organizations were particularly encouraged.

Participants discussed the rationale of joining together for a regional networking event and agreed on submitting a joint proposal under ESCAP's coordination, in which each agency will contribute in areas of their specific interest. This will be irrespective of other events that these agencies may organize on their own or with other partners at WUF4.

Each agency presented the issues in which their organization would be more interested in contributed. ESCAP suggested the topics of housing, solid waste management, water and sanitation and rural-urban linkages. UNITAR showed interest in sanitation, HIV/AIDS and climate change. AIT-UEM mentioned solid waste management, water and sanitation, air pollution and collaboration of local governments with civil society organizations for urban environmental management.

Habitat for Humanity expressed their interest in joining the regional consortium, irrespective of the events that this organization will organize at a global level, with shelter as a broad topic. Citynet would like to present their Sanitation Data Book at the Forum. Other issues of interest to this organization were HIV/AIDS and local governments and city-to-city cooperation in addressing climate change.

UN-Habitat's coordinator in The Philippines mentioned localization of MDGs, integrated solid waste management and shelter as a topic in which her office would be interested in. The representatives from Makati city suggested housing, solid waste management, water and sanitation and heritage conservation. The representative from the Huairou Commission informed the group on their intention to organize an event previous to the forum, and to use the conclusions from it to do advocacy at the forum itself, as they have done in the past.

The format of the session was discussed and it was agreed that the joint event should move beyond the dissemination of practices and ideas to the preparation and submission of conclusions, including a plan of action. Since the session will cover different topics, it was suggested to group two or three presentations at the beginning of the session and then allow break-out groups to discuss the ideas and submit conclusions.

The group was reminded that networking events usually last no more than two hours. Because the proposed event will involve a number of agencies and cover different

¹ For minutes of this meeting see <http://www.unescap.org/pdd/calendar/rcmzg/good-govern.asp>

topics, ESCAP will request ample time to the organizers, which can be later divided into appropriate slots.

The possibility of extending this partnership to the organization of an exhibition at WUF4 was briefly discussed. The call for proposals in this area has not opened, so the terms and conditions are not yet known. As a preliminary idea ESCAP suggested to claim an area under the term “Asian Innovations”, where different organizations can showcase their projects and activities.

Other issues

ESCAP briefed other agencies on the preparation of the State of Asian Cities Report, which will be presented at WUF4, as well as on the possibility of a preparatory conference for Asia and the Pacific towards WUF4, which would be held in India in the first half of 2008. In the event of such a conference taking place, ESCAP will contact the members of the group to participate in it.

The possibility of changing the name of these series of meetings was also discussed briefly without any conclusion. It is acknowledged that the meetings deal not only with governance but with urban issues in general.

Recommendations and Follow-up

It was noted that water and sanitation, solid waste management, housing and the effects of climate change were topics on which many of the agencies showed an interest. The participants agreed that ESCAP should prepare a proposal under the sub-theme Environmentally Harmonious Cities and circulate it among members of the group as soon as possible. Each agency is requested to express the specific topic under which they would like to participate, and their expected contribution to it. ESCAP will compile these proposals into one submission. Especially important would be to encourage members of the group that could not attend this session to express their views and potential support for the initiative.

Regarding exhibitions, ESCAP will send a similar suggestion to the other agencies once the call for proposals is open. As the exhibition space will be rented, availability of funds from each agency may become a constraint.

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