

Summary of the meeting on Thursday, April, 30th of the task force for the policy paper developed by the UCLG committee on strategic planning

Objectives

- First meeting of the task force
- Review of the first draft of the policy paper
- Presentation of the work already started, especially the work on experiences
- Draw an agenda and the role of each one for the following work.

Presents:

Sara Hoeflich	UCLG Project Manager
Sergio Barrios	City of Rosario Director general de relaciones internacionales/ General Director of international relations/foreign affairs
Monica Bifarello	Province of Santa Fe Secretaria de Regiones, Municipios y Comunas de la Provincia de Santa Fe/ General Secretary of the office of Regions, Cities and Towns of the Province of Santa Fe.
Claire Danon	Province of Santa Fe Pasante/ Intern
Sogen Moodley	City of Durban, South Africa Responsable de la planificación estratégica/ Senior Planning Manager
Francisco Mabjaia	National Association of Municipalities of Mozambique, ANNAM Secretariado General/ Secretary General
Mel Sarmiento	City of Calbayog, Phillipines Intendente/ Mayor League of cities of Phillipines, Secretariado General/General Secretary
Claudio Sule	Association Ciudad Sur, Chile Secretario ejecutivo/Executive Secretary
Rodrigo Perpetuo	City of Belo Horizonte, Brazil Secretariado municipal adjunto relaciones internacionales/ General Secretary of International Relations/Foreign Affairs
Juan Manuel Higueta Palacio	City of Medellin, Colombia Consultor de la Agencia de Cooperación e inversión de Medellín y el área Metropolitana/ Agency of Cooperation and Investment of Medellín and the Metropolitan Area, consultant
Carlos H. Jaramillo Arango	City of Medellin, Colombia Director del departamento administrativo de Planeación de la Alcaldía de Medellín/ Head manager of the Planning office of the municipality of Medellin
Natalia Carnovale (tarde)	City of Rosario Coordinadora técnica Plan estratégico Rosario Metropolitano/ Coordinator of the Metropolitan Strategic Plan of Rosario

Miguel Lifschitz (tarde)	City of Rosario, Argentina Intendente President of the strategic planning commission of UCLG
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Sequence of the meeting:

- Presentation by Sergio Barrios, Sara Hoeflich and Monica Bifarello
- Presentation of each participant
 - + Presentation of its city/organisation/own problematic
 - + First comments/suggestions/ideas on the work.
- Presentation and reflection on the plan for the policy paper
- Exchange of ideas on elements which would have to appear in the policy paper
- Presentation of the questionnaire and the work already done on the experiences
- Presentation of a synthesis of the European experiences
- Exchange of ideas based on that presentation
- Presentation of the draft of the policy paper (in presence of the mayor of Rosario, M. Lifschitz)
- Presentation of a synthesis/analysis of the African experiences
- Exchange of ideas based on that presentation
- Focus on the next steps of the work with designation of a responsible for each task

Presentation of the work-Objectives of the policy paper

- When Rosario became president of the UCGL Urban Strategic Planning (USP) Committee, the decision was first to elaborate a document to get common understanding and reflect needs and challenges of local government.
- This collective document is an unprecedented project, as for the first time, cities take global position on the topic of planning.
UCLG is a unique voice for/from the LGs, a space of universal dimension to exchange experiences + debate points to reach/build a message.
- The document will enable the Local Governments (LGs) to take part in the international agenda and to share their own experiences in their specific context before applying lessons and improving performance. In this context, UCLG can transmit a message at the international scale and to partners for international cooperation. For example, Cities Alliance acts at the international scale and works close with UCLG.
The policy paper is thus an instrument of diffusion.
- Members can build further on this policy orientation. For example, the association of Mozambique wants to use the document as a basis to develop a position of LGs on strategic planning in the country.
- The document/paper would not only be a report of good practices but a document which combine three aspects:
 - Concepts on strategic planning/city development strategies (CDS)
 - Account/report of experiences (territorial balance; at different scales of cities)
 - A declaration
- We need to ask ourselves why the LGs need strategic planning.

Problems/current issues faced by LG

- - **Relevance of the topic:** Until now, UCLG has been working on a policy paper on local finance, an urgent matter/subject for the LGs and especially to support lobbying activities of Local Government Associations.
-However, associations of some countries, for example, in Germany, insist on the two pillars of capacity for local politicians: local finance and planning, both considered as central topics in the debates of local parliaments.
- **USP as an important tool for effective decentralization:** Processes of decentralization are occurring in many places of the world and represent an important step ahead for the LGs. However, sometimes, there are also processes of re-centralization because the decentralization did not work out due to a lack of information, communication. The competences delegated to local governments must be operative and equipped with correspondent finance. The problem exists, for example, in the Philippines. The most important way is to show the potential of local governments in anticipating demand, and therefore address crucial issues through strategic planning.
- Urbanization is increasingly challenging in small and medium cities, as capital and large cities are getting to a critical point of absorbing more growth. Small and medium sized cities need to reinforce capacities and tools to prepare for more sustainable growth. What is planned today is more sustainable tomorrow.
- Problems of political changes (for example changes of mayor) and of the continuity of local programs. Many local government leaders govern in very short terms, as they cannot be reelected, for example in Colombia. The political change is less problematic if the strategies are widely shared and leaders will continue strategic programs. It is important to equip plans with monitoring in order to increase transparency and avoid fall into personal business.
- Involve regional and national governments since the beginning is very important, as they are essential partners to provide resources, but it should not be a condition to start a plan.

Reflections on USP and LGs

- CDS is a flexible tool to be adapted to any context and place. The CDS scheme (social, spatial, governance, economic) takes up the essential topics LGs are addressing now.
- A specific challenge is the integration/ relation of the city into the surrounding region.
- 2 ways to establish CDS: by municipality or by private public association. There are different institutional models which depend on the need of change in each place. For the private sector, CDS is an attractive space to propose project ideas and initiatives for Local Economic development.
- The role of the mayor is very important, as he/she is the driver for change → the leader also needs tools to improve leadership (the mayor won't only focus on "his" project).

Questionnaire-Policy Paper: comments/ideas

- The questionnaire which was built is a format of a preliminary document to start collecting experiences and is approved as useful.

We count on 10 substantial answers and we are waiting for 3 more responses

- It is important to have the representation of each region in the policy paper.
- Not necessary useful to fix a number of city but make sure that we have small, medium and big cities from each region.

When sending, emphasize on the benefits, why the city should respond and give precise insights of its strategy.

=> At this stage, only LGs will be involved because UCLG is the representative of the LGs and the document will emphasize on local governments perspective and vision.

- Verification/evaluation of the plan => Insist with some more questions in the questionnaire, and try to get inputs of self-evaluation.
- The problem of the indicators is important to mention. As the plans are so different, how could the indicators be agreed upon? Is there a necessary adaptation?

Different type of plan

The understanding of planning differs between the regions. Problematic of the land, the use and the property of the land

- While land use planning is a very strong element for planning in Europe and Latin America, in Africa there is a certain rejection of “master planning”, associated with tools of colonial times. The land is mainly publicly owned and like many other cities internationally, the risks of corruption always present.
- In the Philippines, land use planning is delivered by law and master plans published. CDS, on the other hand, are for managing and promote change and to attract investments.
- Latin America provides many Examples: in Argentina: PE + Urban plan/ Brazil: Director Plan, Global Specific Plan/ Colombia: 1997: Territorial planning. The main innovation has been introduced by Participative budgeting. This way of planning is empowering social components.
- In the policy paper, focus on the differences North-South and between regions. For example, the countries of the South rely much more on foreign funds in order to realise their projects. The speed of growth is higher and accelerates urban economies. Will South-South cooperation be useful, in the case of Africa for example?

MDGs

- Document: present conclusion-recommendations and analyse achievements along the MDGs
- Breaking down the achievements of the MDGs at the local level requires careful revision of common language and specific definition.

Intervention of the mayor Sarmiento, Philippines

- Problems of relationship between national level and local level
- CDS have been very useful/ helpful for cities in the Philippines especially improving the structure of finance and economic growth and on restructuring governance systems
- Indicator: transfer was increased, communication was improved and mayors gained political recognition and power against the senator structure, that was centralizing the investments to the regions before. The League is taking path in decentralization policies to avoid the investment bypass of LGs. 45 mayor run for the congress right now.
- Problem with the difference of norms in the different cities legal framework is tackled thanks to CDS experiences and the League uniformed business policies.
- Processes of strategic plan are not generating participation as we saw in the presentation of the metropolitan strategic plan of Rosario
- Decentralization is more complicated in smaller and medium municipalities which have “generals without soldiers”. They cannot fulfil the new competences, for example on health and agriculture production without funding. Now LGs start to control revenues and the situation is improving.
- Urbanization in Philippines is moving very fast. One of the questions is: What can be done with the migration from small cities to big metropolis? For example, Calbayog is contributing with work force to Metro Manila and retired people can come back to be active in agriculture. Can complementary system be designed?
- In 1997-1998, a very severe economic crisis struck Asia. United States should have learned from that crisis in order to face today a smaller one. Nowadays, Asiatic countries are affected by the global crisis but less than lot of other countries because they learned from the previous crisis. Therefore, it is very important to share experiences.
- The expectation of mayor Sarmiento: “the policy paper can open the minds of our leaders”

Intervention of Ciudad Sur

- The CDS is a term, it is important to look for the different contents, it is a tool.
- Chile is a centralistic country. The decentralization is theoretically installed but the reality looks different. LGs are this year further weakened because of the economic crises. “In Chile, the Local Governments are more like local administrations” as decision are taken at the central level. LGs have to react to make decentralization efficient and construct decentralization using a “bottom-up” approach.
- CDS should give content to successful decentralization and be transversal, intergovernmental and redefine planning with the community.
- CDS should also be in line with other tools of management.
- -Institutionalize participation: ensure the angel of “social subjectivity”
 - Resolve intergovernmental management and mobilize answers from all levels, especially from national government
 - Resolve information management: system of information should be located in local governments and easy to access.

Construction of CDS: clearly express the annual management in relation to long term vision, especially to fight poverty and achieve the MDGs.

Intervention of the responsible of the strategic planning in the city of Durban

- Nowadays, we faced main problems linked with the environment and the global economic crisis. Planning has to offer answer to that.
- It is necessary to build a document accessible, simple, something that each public officer could use.
- Focus on lessons learnt is more useful than guidelines. Emphasize on the lived experiences. Do not say: “this is like that and that’s it.”
- Insist on the pre-conditions that are necessary to establish a CDS. What has to be done before establishing a CDS? Elements which are necessary to put in place before starting the process.

Intervention of the consultant from the Agency of cooperation of Medellin

CDS: not only which city do we want? But also which citizen do we want to build?

Similar to the Philippines, also Columbia has “deeply rooted habits of politicians to take decisions on an individual base without considering citizens or contexts”.

That could be tackled by more performance monitoring of local governments to close the doors of corruption.

- Priorities:
- Urban development mobility(public transport) housing and related services
- Immigration and refugees: Medellin grows by 20.000 displaced people per year
- Environment and disaster prevention
- Local economic development
- Metropolis of Medellin: 9 municipalities around Medellin →work at the level of the metropolitan area . Articulate with metropolitan spheres and avoid duplication of functions, construct a “one government= public response”
- Expose public management and install international “overseeing” to avoid a fall back into practices of corruption

The essential values of planification: “The axe is the human being, not infrastructures”

Agenda

July 2009: Mercociudades: Rosario will invite more cities to respond to the questionnaire and will hold a site meeting on the policy paper to advance a Latin American chapter

September 2009: LCP (League of cities of Philippines) meeting. The League with support of UCLG world secretariat will invite more Asian cities to cooperate and respond to the questionnaire and will advance to an Asian chapter

December 2009: Africities: in case of assisting, this can be a point of debate between Africa (especially west and east where cities need to be interviewed), Europe (Spain and France)

November 2009: UCLG meeting in Guangzhou – the committee will hold a meeting during the UCLG council meeting in Guangzhou, China

2010: meeting Mexico: document ready for approval

Following of the work

- Go on with the draft of the document
 - Questionnaires: find new questionnaires
Which methodology?
Improve the regional reports
 - Meetings of the work group
- Idea for the regional reports: Make the regional reports with the same shape, presentation as the one of the questionnaire. That means complete a “regional questionnaire” from the experiences of each city of the region. It will enable us to have a standardization of each regional report and to transmit information as close as possible of the information collected in each questionnaire. =>Approved?
- *Sara Hoeflich*: Report Asia + Africa + add cities (for the Asian region with the help of the *Mayor Sarmiento*)
 - *Sogen Moodley*: responsible for the report on Africa (work with Sara)
 - *Sara Hoeflich y Fabien Clavier*: responsible for the report on Europe
 - *Natalia Carnovale*: responsible for the report on Latin-America
 - *Mónica Bifarello*: responsible of the followed work on the draft
- Instrument chosen to communicate: mailing list