UCLG Committee on Urban Strategic Planning

Comisión de *Ciudades Digitales y del Conocimiento*
Committee of *Digital and Knowledge-Based Cities*
Commission des *Villes Numériques et de la Connaissance*

MEETING REPORT
"Cities learning: ideas, methodologies and case of success"

Date:	**1 of October 2013**
Place:	**Sofitel Hotel, Rabat (Morocco)**
Time:	**14:00 – 18:30**

Co-Chair: **Ms. Ibone Bengoetxea,** Deputy Mayor of Bilbao and President of the Basque Association of Municipalities (EUDEL) and President of the Committee of Digital and Knowledge-based Cities

Co-Chair: **Mr. James Nxumalo,** Mayor of eThekwini –Durban and President of the Committee on Urban Strategic Planning

On the occasion of the IV UCLG World Congress, on October 1st 2013 took place for **the second time in the City of Rabat (Morocco) a joint meeting** between the Committee of Digital and Knowledge-based Cities and the Committee on Strategic Urban Planning.

The meeting was co-chaired by **Mr. James Nxumalo**, Mayor of the eThekwini Metro Council, in Durban, South Africa and **Ms. Ibone Bengotxea**, Vice mayor of Bilbao. The meeting was **attended by more than 60 representatives** from cities, associations of local authorities and organizations from all over the world.

On this occasion, the meeting had as main objective to strengthen the "**Cities learning Program**" among the committees and to establish the basis of the directions the program should take, specially taking in consideration the learning priorities and needs of cities.

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Mr. James Nxumalo and **Ms. Ibone Bengotxea** opened the meeting, by welcoming all participants and tabling the agenda for the meeting. The mayor of Durban acknowledged the role of the outgoing Chairperson, ex-mayor of Rosario, **Mr. Miguel Lifschitz** and introduced the incoming Co-chair role in the Committee on Urban Strategic Planning, **Mr. José Fortunati** from Mayor of Porto Alegre, Brazil.

Mayor Fortunati was excited on the prospect of playing a leadership and in his opening address spoke about his **city's experiences in creating participatory budgets** and focusing on **citizen's participation** and on **using appropriate technology to promote everyday lives of citizens**.

After these addresses, the first part of the meeting was dedicated for the presentation of the **committees' reports of activities** for noting and discussion.

The **City of Bilbao** delivered the report of activities of the Committee on Digital and Knowledge-based Cities. As the "**Smart Cities Study**" which includes a "holistic" vision of being a Smart City bringing together 6 key Areas of performance that affect the development of cities: economy, governance, people, mobility, environment and living. In 2013 a working meeting centered on the debate and exchanges on "smart economy" axis took place in Bordeaux and in 2014 will take place in the City of Bilbao the second thematic working meeting centered on "Smart Governance". See full report of activities.

Some key highlights from the Committee on Urban Strategic Planning reported on in brief **by Ms. Sara Hoeflich**, which built on the input by the previous Mayor of Rosario, included the development of the USP policy paper, the use of the policy paper case studies to help build up the learning agenda for cities of the network. The role of the Cities Alliance in supporting the learning and mentoring agenda in USP was also acknowledged. The coherence of contents, methods and joint meetings of the USP committee and the Committee on Digital and knowledge based cities also highlighted as an important item.

On the intermediary cities report, **Ms. Jaquie Subban** explained why eThekwini Municipality was playing a role in this area, highlighting both its role as co-chair and the learning role as "facilitator" of its Municipal Institute of Learning (MILE). The key outcomes of the two learning sessions at Kwadukuza in Kwazulu Natal, South Africa and Lerida, Spain were summarized before presenting the key recommendations of the intermediary cities Frame document. Ms. Subban urged all members to give active feedback and comment on this key document.

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The committee members had the opportunity of listening to an important input from **Mr. Barcello**, from the UN-HABITAT, on an exciting new project to develop a set of international planning guidelines. These guidelines must be general enough to cover the differences in contexts, but must be sufficiently detailed to inform the responsible of decision-making. He outlined the process and roadmap, which included the establishment of an Expert Group Meeting to advise the Secretariat. Some key ideas for structuring the guidelines included also to build on the Committee outcomes (policy paper). The guidelines will be focus on the area of urban spatial planning, and the USP committee was invited to represent local governments and its networks.

The **French Cooperation Development Strategy** was presented by Emilie Maehara for the ministry of Foreign Affairs and tabled some key recommendations made from France: the coproduction of territorial policies; the consolidation of local public works; adoption of a capacity building program; and the recommendation made in the conference Rio+20. There is also a commitment of France to support the guidelines on territorial planning. The first meeting of expert is expected to take place in Paris, by the end of October 2013.

The **MEDCITIES** short input was presented by the Mayor of Tripoli, who shared the story of the Lebanon strategic planning process in the City of Tripoli and other cities. There was a bottom-up and top-down planning approach which developed a four track strategy document that was followed through by support from international donors to help operational the plan. Again, the role of political leadership was stressed and the use of a technical championship approach where knowledge was shared.

In the input from the **Cities Alliance** Secretariat, Mr. Rene Hohmann called for a paradigm shift in strategic planning, with a focus on institutional learning as the stage is being set for Habitat III. The political role of intermediary cities and how to improve the capacity of political leadership, the role of Local Government Associations in this regard was covered. The transfer of knowledge also from "primary to secondary cities" was stressed.

The **CIMES Network** input reinforced the importance of the Frame Document of intermediary cities, and members were once again urged to read and offer constructive criticism on the document.

Some thoughts from Mayors from Mozambique and Brazil on the role of decentralized **cooperation between Brazil and Mozambique** were also shared. It was pointed out that the sharing of best practices between experts will shift gear from remote support to hands on support. The **project set up between Porto Alegre (Brazil) and Inhambane (Mozambique)** to design an urban strategic plan was looking very exciting.

In making some general observations, Ms. Hoeflich noted how encouraging it is to see how the partner agenda has been enlarged from a range of partners from all over the world over the last years. To have the UNHABITAT for example inviting UCLG to participate in the Planning Guideline process was a testament to how far the Committee has come. Lobbying for **making Intermediary cities more visible** will also be part of the agenda in UCLG.

After a tea break, the second half of the meeting looked at the issue on how the learning agenda will be pursued. The manager of **MILE Insitute**, **Mr. Sogen Moodley** suggested to build on the findings of Tim Campbell, envisioning a new apex role of UCLG, more focused on providing normative guidelines, with the learning agenda be led and managed by **regional learning hubs** in Africa, South America and Europe as a start. This was accepted in principle. The issue of **cross learning** between (eventually three) hubs was also accepted. "One on one" city to city learning and "cities to cities" learning was also seen as important using the mechanism of learning exchanges. The USP committee will put a proposal to be designed by MILE for discussion in the next opportunity for reflection on committees work. (Expected date: June 2014)

On her second intervention, Ms. Bengoetxea stressed out **the need of boosting the "City learning agenda"**. Cities must be "**allies**" since they share common projects. The Deputy Mayor, presented in brief the **knowledge sharing strategy of Bilbao** with other cities, with includes the development of "agreements of collaboration" with cities with specific common objectives and expected outcomes, instead of only twinning with other cities, which remains more in a political level. Bilbao´s desire is to become a "**knowledge hub**" for other cities.

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After some discussion it was accepted that the **cities are to define their needs**, but based on a well-considered **input by the Vice Mayor of Bilbao**, it was agreed in-principle that they include:

- Digital inclusion
- Citizen focused governance: participatory budgeting
- Local economic development
- Sustainability

The **Chilean Association of Mayors** pledged support to mayor Fortunati to assist in deepening the learning agenda in South America. A political representative from Rabat asked for us to think about culture and its role in strategic planning, whilst MEDCITIES suggested that the issue of partnerships need to be dealt with active networks. Joan Parpal suggested that we use strategic alliances for developing information, training materials, etc.

The ex-Mayor of Rosario again reiterated **the importance of political leadership**, and also stressed that the issue of urban mobility not be lost. The committees are willing to continue working on mobility until a new structure or renewed UCLG leadership on the issue mobility is confirmed.

Ms. Sara Hoeflich and Ms. Jacquie Subban closed the session with a summary of the **main points raised during the session**:

- We must work in the path of "regionalization" of learning.
- Learning must be based on the needs and demands of cities.
- Cities need to define "what" they need to learn and "how" they want to do it.
- Sustainability is a key for the development concepts of cities.
- Cities face the challenge of building capacities for the new economic needs.
- We must build alliances for strengthening the learning agenda.
- We must go from "learning" to "action.
- The committees must define learning processes. If a city is interested on initiating learning program… how we can do it?
- There is an interest and commitment in UCLG with the "cities learning agenda".

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Attendants to the meeting:

Cities:

- Bilbao (Spain)
- eThekwini – Durban (South Africa)
- Porto Alegre (Brazil)
- Rosario (Argentina)
- Rabat (Morocco)
- Ezulwini (Swaziland)
- Harare (Zimbabwe)
- México City (Mexico)
- Chefchaouen (Morocco)
- Rawaby (Palestine)

- Daegu (Korea)
- Inhambane (Mozambique)
- Santa Fe Province (Argentina)
- Ciudad Sur (Chile)
- Lomé (Togo)
- Arua (Uganda)
- Taipei (Taiwan)
- Tripoli (Lebanon)
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Associations of Local Authorities:

- Chilean Association of Mayors
- Frente de Prefeitos Brasil

Other organizations:

- UN-HABITAT
- UNESCO
- Cities Alliance
- MEDCITIES
- French Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Fond Mondial pour le Développement des Villes (FMDV)
- Ministry of Security & Public Administration of Korea
- Interior Ministry fo Morocco

- Bureau Head of Finance and Economic Department
- Ryerson University, Toronto
- Polis Institute
- Arquitectos sin Fronteras
- Walk21
- KPMG Services South Africa

UCLG:

- UCLG World Secretariat
- UCLG-MEWA
- UCLG Africa