

e-Cities Debriefing Meeting

Date: 19 June 2010
Time: 9:30 am - 11:00 am
Venue: Seoul Millennium Hilton Hotel
Attendees: Vincenzo Aquaro, Jonas Rabinovitch, Robert de Jesus, John Wells and Allison Hornery
Minutes by: Buenafe Abdon

Discussion Points

- The meeting was convened to discuss the next steps to be taken by the group in order to move forward with the e-Cities Network for Asia and the Pacific.
- There was a consensus among the attendees that the recently concluded workshop was very productive and some of the major outcomes that emerged from the session such as the e-Cities Network draft framework, strategic map and 'city classification' were shared to everyone. Furthermore, John added that the 3 levels of membership to the e-Cities Network were identified by the participants. This is inter-regional (WeGo, UCLG, etc), National Associations and then the individual cities.
- The workshop participants also mentioned that the first step would be to establish an MoU with UN. This is very important in getting the buy-in from the national government. If the national government can see a UN-backed initiative from the local government, it would be easy to get their support and recognition of the initiative. However, due to the difficult legal procedure with the UN, it is suggested that a Letter of Exchange be done instead of an MoU.
- There was also a strong interest among the participants to replicate the just-concluded workshop in their own countries to engage the stakeholders (national government, local government and the UN). This would also be a good forum to engage the national government in the effort.
- The workshop participants also indicated that they can initiate the activities of the e-Cities in their countries in 6 months and they suggested in creating a desk for this project. Vincenzo and Jonas warned of being clear that there won't be any post to be created for this project and the least they could do to recognize the people involved is the placement of the logo in PAKS.
- Vincenzo said that his mandate at the moment is the national level. He can try to find a way to facilitate the engagement of the national governments in the e-Cities network but he cannot push them. He also added that if only a small number of countries will join, then it will be an issue since this will lead to unequal participation. It is best to find a mechanism to get the participation of everyone across the board.
- Vincenzo also indicated that it is good to establish a classification system for the cities. One that is very similar to the classification used for the national governments (the 4 levels). This could be done in partnership with UN DESA, other international bodies and by working at the local level.
- He also highlighted the need to find a mechanism to reach out to the cities across the board in the Asia Pacific region.
- He described the ideal situation to be like this. There will be a country profile in PAKS for each of the countries then a link to national association would yield its profile and links to the city-level profile. To achieve this, a template that will be used in collecting the information from the national

association and city-level should be created. As an incentive for the national association and the cities to participate and give the required information, national associations or cities can mention in their website about their collaboration with the UN to give them prestige.

- But a mechanism for updating the information will also be needed.
- John then described how he could bring into the table 3 more partners (UCLG, CGLF and ICMA in Washington). He mentioned that ICMA in particular have the pulse of the local issues and have the global knowledge based for local government. All these organizations are thinking how they can roll-out their programs. He added that UCLG has the political will, ICMA has the operational capacity and CGLF has the focus and together a capacity building program focused on local government can easily be arranged since they are committed to making impact on the ground.
- Vincenzo said that this all sounded good but it would be nice if he can receive a proposal about what they can offer/provide considering about the current needs of his division. One idea is coming up with a shared classification system for cities which does not exist at the moment.
- The vision for e-Cities Network is that it will facilitate sharing among member cities to optimize resources. The information provided in this network could be used to eliminate the replication/duplication of efforts. Information shared among members should be presented in a very simple and accessible form that can be easily used by members.
- Vincenzo mentioned that it will be good for him to receive the following proposals. This will facilitate the approval process in his division.
 1. Detailed proposal of developing a classification system (no need to reinvent the wheel and check out websites of countries that have established a similar system, e.g. Australia)
 2. A proposal spelling out the mechanism on how to get cities on board, concrete steps on how to go locally and in getting the same information on national level to local level in all cities in Asia Pacific (all cities should have the same information)
 3. Create added-value products such as assessments
- Jonas summarized that next actions as follows:
 1. Research analysis (national level, national associations, cities in all of AP)
 2. Web design (templates for collecting information from national associations/cities)
 3. Network building
 4. Product development (benchmarking, classification system, local government profile, one city feature for UNPAN to start)
- Follow-up actions
 1. Robert will upload the cleaned workshop documents to the UNPAN website
 2. John will prepare a short video captured from the workshop and a 4-page brochure that tells the story of the workshop. Vincenzo mentioned that it will be ideal if there could be some lessons learned from the workshop that could highlighted and be used by others in duplicating the workshop in other countries. If possible, look for contents in the report that could be used as training content.
 3. Convene follow-up conference calls.