



Proposal

ACTION PLAN 2015

MEDCITIES GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Izmir, 13th-14th November 2014

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Context

For MedCities, 2014 has been a transition year after our successful General Assembly held in Barcelona on November 2013 in which almost 20 cities showed their interest to join the network. That success implied hard work in terms of ratification of the Statutes by all members and the legal constitution of the Association. This process is being completed successfully and has strengthened MedCities as one of the most active platforms of cities in the region.

Thus, 2015 will be a year to profit from all the transitions started in 2014, both internally and in our milieu.

Externally, the Second Union for the Mediterranean Ministerial Conference for Urban Development will take place in 2015. It is expected that this conference will give a new boost to urban initiatives in the region

Unfortunately, this will have to be developed in a region that is still far from being free from conflicts and turmoil. Without pretending to be the solution of all problems, tangible cooperation among cities is one of the instruments we can work on to contribute to a stable and prosper development for our citizens. MedCities will stay committed to this goal.

In 2015 Medcities will have to define new projects and will have to find out the most relevant external financial resources. The new EU Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2014-2020 offers us different opportunities but we will have to adapt the needs of our cities to the new EU regulations and financial instruments.. Several EU call for projects will be launched in the coming months, starting by the MED Programme. The application of the EU budget will probably increase the calls for projects launched by the EU Delegations in our partner countries.

Internally, the network will finish its transition to become an Association. Adhesion procedures by our members shall finish in the coming months. This year will be a milestone in our ambitious goal to decentralise MedCities through the consolidation of the Knowledge Transfer Centers (KTC) of Sfax and Al Fayhaa as MedCities antennas, without forgetting the key role of the KTC of Malaga in working on Methodology and Best Practices. The establishment of antennas will allow the network to better response to the needs of our members, and to better design our strategy in order to boost the elaboration of new City Development Strategies (CDS) and the implementation of projects in those cities with a CDS already completed.

Finally, the network will have to increase visibility in the international agenda on advocating for an active role of Mediterranean cities in the development of the region. One of the lighthouses that will guide our advocacy work will be the preparation tasks of the Second UfM Ministerial meeting on Urban Development. But this cannot be the only framework in which to exert our influence as a network. We expect to continue cooperating with our partners and strategic allies to foster urban development in our region and to contribute to the implementation of projects that transform and improve the living conditions of our cities and citizens.

General Objectives

1. Enlarging the network and improving communication among members.
2. Providing proximity assistance to cities through the regional antennas.
3. Preparing projects to be presented to future calls.
4. Elaborating new City Development Strategies.
5. Continuing advocacy for increasing the role for local authorities in the Mediterranean region.

MedCities, a *network* of Mediterranean cities

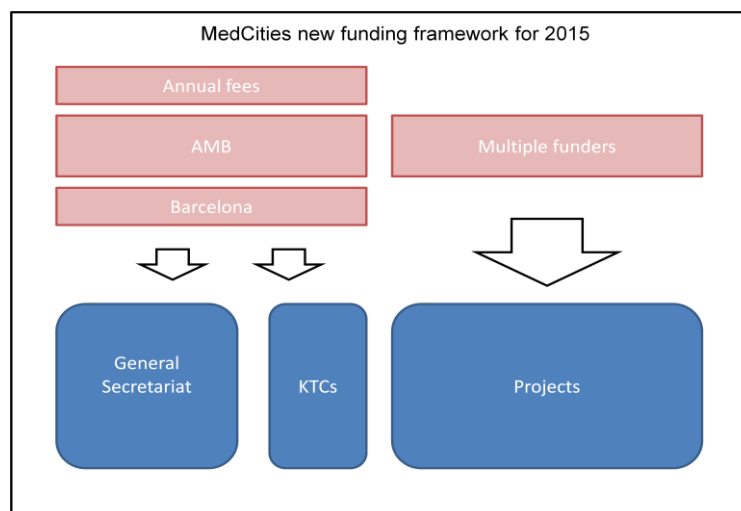
1. Successfully complete the creation of Association

The objective for the following year is to complete the creation of the Association with legal personality. The adhesion process, which most of the cities have already completed, will also be finished for the pending members. Those not having joined the network formally by the end of 2015 will be excluded from membership. The new Association will consequently be registered in the international databases, such as PADOR, in order to have the possibility to request funding from EU sources.

2. New funding framework for the Association

The new juridical nature of the Association implies that the actions of the Secretariat are not under the umbrella of the administration hosting the General Secretariat. In other words, an Agreement will be signed between the new MedCities association and the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (AMB), the member city currently hosting the General Secretariat in order to regulate its relations. Medcities will function as an independent organisation with funding coming mainly from the Barcelona Metropolitan Area, other administrations like the Barcelona City Council and the annual fees paid by members.

Moreover, funding for projects will continue to be provided by multiple sources, as it has been the case in MedCities since its creation. The Secretariat will continue its effort to diversify funding sources and guarantee the viability of the projects of the member cities.



3. Consolidation of the KTCs of Sfax and Al Fayhaa as MedCities antennas.

The decentralization of the network is one of the main challenges MedCities is facing in 2015. This is a mandate of the General Assembly held in Barcelona in November 2013 and it envisages at offering proximity assistance to all members.

The consolidation of the Knowledge Transfer Centres (KTC) of Al Fayhaa and the KTC of Sfax is a strategic decision for the whole network. Their objectives will be to assist cities in the presentation of projects to international calls, the creation of partnerships with other members of the network, the organisation of regional seminars and technical assistance missions. The KTCs will also represent the Association in events. This decentralization strengthens the network and is an asset to have regular contact with all members.

The creation of the new MedCities website and the participation of the KTCs in its update will allow the network to have updated information about each city projects and priorities.

4. Completing communication strategy

In 2015, MedCities will continue its effort to increase accountability vis-à-vis its members and all other actors. The creation of the new MedCities website will be consolidated by the development of new sections of the site at the service of its members.

One of the important aspects of the new website is to be a window open to know first-hand the priorities of MedCities members. To that end, each city will have its own page in the website, where it will have the opportunity to present the city and its projects. All this will be done with the technical assistance of the General Secretariat and the KTCs.

Moreover, the creation of a “showroom” of projects, the enlargement of the Best Practices catalogue and the development of an intranet community are strategic points in that sense. Moreover, the General Secretariat and the KTCs will assist its members in making public their future projects in order to present them to potential partners and funders.

An increase of MedCities presence in the social networks will also be sought. All this efforts will be completed in the elaboration of a MedCities communication strategy during 2015.

5. Enlargement of the network

The enlargement of the network is also an important goal for 2015. Twenty cities entered the network in the last General Assembly in Barcelona and the adhesion process is being completed by most of them. In 2015 the priority will be to present the network to European cities that could be interested in participating in the projects that MedCities will be promoting.

An enlarged network is a network with more political weight and capacity to participate the international debates. Furthermore, the incorporation of European cities makes the network more robust and will diversify the possible partnerships

among members. The General Secretariat has started in 2014 a process to approach some European cities. This process will continue in 2015 with the objective to incorporate new European cities in the next General Assembly.

MedCities, a platform to build City Development Strategies and implement urban *projects*

i. ESDEVET (Project on Urban Development Strategies in Tunisia)

The project has been presented to Tunisian authorities in October 2014. In 2015, this project will be communicated to different partners to profit from the current momentum in Tunisia in which local authorities, the Federation Nationale des Villes Tunisiennes and the concerned ministries consider the elaboration of City Development Strategies as a priority for urban and regional development.

Moreover, the decentralization process the country is going through contributes to generate a good milieu for the implementation of the project, whose funding will be intensively sought during the next year.

ii. Elaboration and search for funding a project on new Urban Development Strategies in Lebanon

The elaboration of new City Development Strategies (CDS) continues to be a top priority for MedCities. The network has obtained international recognition for its task to support cities in the development of CDS. Moreover, it is proved that those cities having developed a CDS are more likely to present their priorities to international and national funders and to create partnerships for their effective implementation.

For this reason, MedCities will set as a priority the elaboration of new CDS. Lebanon is a country in which some cities already have some kind of city strategy but in some occasions it is either not complete or its implementation is not always a smooth path. The network will work for the elaboration of new CDS in those cities lacking a strategy and for advancing in the implementation of the strategic projects of those already with a CDS.

iii. Workshop in Tetouan (Morocco) on public and private participation and implementation and updating of Plans Communales de Développement (CDS in Morocco)

Almost all Moroccan cities have already elaborated their CDS and are in a phase of implementing and updating them. Medcities will organize on the first semester of 2015 a workshop on these issues in collaboration with the German Cooperation Agency (GIZ) and the Centre of Mediterranean Integration of Marseilles (CMI).

iv. Capacity-building for the CDS implementation in Sousse

The Barcelona Provincial Council is funding a project for consolidating the Local Development Office of Sousse to foster the implementation of the CDS, elaborated under the USUDS project. The project will be done in partnership with the association AERYC and the municipality of Sant Cugat del Vallès (Spain).

Bringing support to the cities that have finished a CDS is also a priority of the network. It assures that the CDS turns to be living and dynamic reality after its completion and contributes to the launching of short-term and quick-win projects that generate appropriateness among the population.

v. CISUD Project (Capacity Building project on Urban Development promoted by ARLEM)

The CISUD project will proceed in 2015 through the process of labelization by the Union for the Mediterranean. This project on capacity building for integrated urban development will have an in-country component the members of MedCities will be able to benefit from. The ultimate objective of the project is to provide assistance to cities to improve their management capabilities and to better respond to its development from an integrated point of view. The updates on the advancement of the negotiation for the implementation of the project will be duly communicated to our members during the year.

vi. Preparation of projects through the groups made in the Izmir Assembly

2015 will be a year with several EU call for projects. MedCities will profit from the debates of the General Assembly held in Izmir in order to identify priorities and promote partnerships to be presented in this calls.

The General Secretariat will assist those cities willing to participate in these projects as well as looking forward to act as leaders in some of them. The role of the General Secretariat will be to act as a facilitator and a promoter of projects.

vii. Elaboration of strategic projects portfolio in cooperation with MedCities antennas and presentation to funders

One of the key steps to implement urban projects is to communicate the top priority projects of cities to possible funders. To that end, MedCities will contribute to create a portfolio of the priority projects of each city in order to be presented to different stakeholders.

To that end, the use of the new MedCities website will be important to make grow and consolidate the projects “showroom”.

The objective is to establish contacts to present these projects to the following actors:

- a. EU Delegations in Lebanon, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan and Palestine.
- b. Institutions and International cooperation agencies: Cities Alliance, , European Investment Bank, National Development Agencies , Decentralised Cooperation Programs, etc.

- c. Private sector: ASCAME, FEMIP,...
- d. International philanthropy foundations

viii. Bilateral agreements among cities of the network

The promotion of bilateral agreements between members of the network is also a top priority for 2015. Decentralized cooperation is a good instrument to advance in the implementation of projects. In 2015, the following bilateral cooperation will take place: Barcelona-Tetouan, Barcelona-Saida, Marseille- Al Fayhaa and Marseille-Sousse. The General Secretariat is willing to promote more bilateral agreements as those described above.

MedCities, a *lobby of cities* to reinforce the role of local authorities in the Mediterranean

MedCities will continue its advocacy function to increase and reinforce the role of local authorities in the development of the Mediterranean region. This is a founding objective of the network. The creation of the Association and its enlargement has served to gain visibility vis-à-vis international actors. Moreover, the participation of elected political representatives of MedCities gives more visibility to the activities of the network. This participation will be sought and open to different members of the network, notwithstanding the representative function of the Presidency.

In 2015, the main activities of this working line will be:

- ➔ Participation in international forums on urban development in the Mediterranean. Some of which already in the agenda:
 - a. Political Committee of UCLG Mediterranean Commission (11th and 12th of December in Marseille)
 - b. “MED Confederation: The Challenges of Mediterranean Urban Agenda” (Barcelona, 15th-16th December 2014)
 - c. Participation in the 6th ARLEM Plenary Session in Antalya (14th and 15th December)
 - d. Participation in the urban experts group of the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean, in preparation of the Second UfM Ministerial Conference on Urban Development.
 - e. Other opportunities that may arise.

- ➔ Continuing the collaboration with our Strategic allies and other partners working in urban development in the region (CMI, AVITEM, UCLG among others).

- ➔ Maintaining the relations with several international sectorial networks and organizations such as ACR+, Med3R, CODATU, SUDMED, and IME.

- ➔ Organisation of regional seminars led by the KTCs (at least two seminars on 2015) on top priority issues of MedCities members. Members can contribute to the elaboration of the agenda of these seminars and suggesting key topics of their interest.