



Africities 4: “Building local coalitions for an effective implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in African Local Governments”

Nairobi, Kenya, 18-24 September 2006

Joint Special Session on Pro-poor PPPs for Municipal Service Provision

Concept Note for the session (Draft)

The process of decentralisation is on top of the development agenda in many African countries. Institutional structures have therefore been established by Governments in many countries to push the different stages of its implementation. In tandem with this process, poverty reduction programmes are also being rolled down to the local level and many municipal governments have already proven their ability to find creative solutions and form innovative coalitions to address their citizen's service delivery needs and preferences. While the decentralisation process seeks to entrust municipalities and other sub-national governments with new responsibilities to meet the basic needs of their citizens, it also empowers them to identify, prioritise and support innovative development initiatives by the private and civil society sectors that impacts positively on the lives of the poor in their constituencies.

The creation of inclusive people centred partnerships involving public, private sector institutions and civil society (including communities) is one of the most promising of the newly emerging forms of cooperation at the municipal level being applied to address local developmental concerns to achieve MDG targets. This cooperation is based on the recognition that public and private sectors as well as the civil society sector (including communities) can better contribute to development initiatives and achieve the MDGs by pooling their resources to improve the delivery of services to all citizens.

Efforts to implement these partnerships at the local level, however, face many challenges. For municipal governments, the challenge is to find ways to fulfil their constitutional responsibility by ensuring that all citizens and especially the poor have access to reliable but affordable basic services. For many municipal governments, partnerships also imply a new and often difficult transition, from provider and manager of basic services, to enabler and regulator of such services. For the private sector, the motivation is the availability of adequate and enforceable policy, legal and regulatory frameworks that allows for fair competition and reasonable returns on investments. The civil society on the other hand has a big challenge of playing critical advocacy and oversight roles to ensure that both the public and private sectors live up to their obligations enshrined in partnerships, and at the same time apply effective community mobilization incentives to transform citizens, who benefits from basic services from being mere consumers of services to good customers and reliable partners.

Overcoming these challenges is complicated by a range of gaps in the capacity of both the public and private actors as well as the civil society actors. Major gaps include: the reciprocal mistrust and lack of understanding of each other's interests and needs; the absence of locally available information, inadequate experience with arranging sustainable partnerships; the lack of access to long-term finance and the absence of inclusive financial institutions that offer a broad range of financial products and services to micro, small and medium contractors, and the legal, political, and institutional obstacles that obstruct the formation of effective pro-poor public-private relationships.

1 – The Purpose of the Joint Session on PPPs

The purpose of the joint session on PPPs is to promote the use of pro-poor PPP as a viable alternative approach for the provision of basic urban services. The session will inform African mayors, municipal and national government professionals, and civil society organizations (including academic and research community) on the benefits and challenges of PPP to deliver services and share some experimental evidence of this approach. It will also serve to advocate inclusive PPPs at the local level as a promising new approach for sustainable provision of municipal services reaching the poor and contributing to the realization of the MDGs and to achieve local development for all.

The pursuit of this purpose will be supported through a brief introductory presentation by programmes supporting these approaches at the local level: PPPUE and Cap 2015, presentation of PPP initiatives

and their impacts on local development by AAEP project partners from Africa, facilitated plenary discussions and interactions among stakeholders on issues, challenges and experiences from participating countries. Sharing of innovative solutions, capacity development tools and information exchange will also be advanced.

2 – Participants to the Networking Event

The Event will be co-sponsored by collaborating partners: the UNDP Public-Private Partnerships for the Urban Environment (PPPUE), the UNDP South-South Cooperation Africa-Asia Eco-Partnership Programme (AAEP) and the UNDP Capacity 2015 Africa. Stakeholders from Africa representing the public sector (municipal and national government professionals, elected officials and councilors), private sector (multilateral corporate bodies, financial institutions and micro-credit organizations, micro-small and medium enterprises, and civil society organisations such as workers unions, traditional authorities, women and youth organisations, associations of users and residents, NGOs, and research, university community) who have responsibilities for developing, providing, implementing and managing basic infrastructure and services at the municipal level will be invited to the event to learn and contribute their knowledge and experiences.

3 – Structure and the organisation of the Special Session

Invitees from African local governments and representatives from PPPUE, Capacity 2015 and AAEP will make brief presentations on their respective initiatives, experiences on the role of private sector working with local governments and civil society including communities to deliver services and their impacts on poverty reduction efforts and local development. Capacity development tools and learning networks on local development will also be presented to further reinforce the session,. A significant part of the session will be dedicated to open discussions from the audience to allow interactions and sharing of experiences by participants.

The event will be facilitated by a partner with significant experience in local level PPP and capacity development on pro-poor PPP for local stakeholders. The session is expected to stimulate discussions on key issues affecting service delivery at the local level and create an opportunity for participants to understand and appreciate the importance of mutually beneficial partnerships and the critical role capacity development plays in Pro Poor PPP processes, to empower local actors and strengthen them to play their partnership roles for sustainable service delivery at the local level. The session will also inform political leaders (appointed and elected) to examine their roles in fostering ownership and commitment for PPPs to enhance pro poor growth. It is expected that the session will pave the way for the development of a learning network of practitioners engaged in local level poverty reduction initiatives involving the private sector and the civil society, and possibly the initiation of joint initiatives that would facilitate policy advice and support to partnerships project preparation, development and implementation processes in specific countries.

4 – Promoting Capacity Development Tools and Innovative Approaches for municipal services

- AAEP experience with municipal partnerships in basic urban services delivery.
- PPPUE experience with municipal PPPs in basic urban services delivery.
- Capacity 2015 experience on local level information systems, participatory planning and partnership building processes
- The role of leadership (appointed and elected) at the local level and leadership development strategies required to champion innovative PPP processes and take them forward.
- Capacity development tools on local development and pro-poor municipal PPP in service delivery.

5 – Contact Persons from organizing partners

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