Launching the African Urban Wiki
Terms of Reference
May 2010

Background

The African Urban Wiki has been established as a non-profit company with support from Urban LandMark and the World Bank Institute in response to demand from African urban management practitioners.

African countries are increasingly demanding knowledge that responds to a new set of challenges facing the continent. These challenges revolve around development and implementation of effective strategies for supporting and maintaining sustainable growth. While Africa is enjoying its fastest growth for decades; around 6 percent a year, its rate is still falling short of the rest of the developing world by about 5 percentage points. Further, the development landscape in Africa is changing with a greater infusion of capital into the continent. In this context, African countries are increasingly looking to the World Bank for knowledge, ideas, and technical assistance to manage these growing resource flows. Moreover, based on the increasingly rapid pace of change as a result of factors such as globalization and technological advances, countries don't just require support to their existing set of challenges but want more forward looking analysis of upcoming trends and issues so as to effectively prepare policies and capacities to be proactive instead of reactive.

The rate of urbanization in Africa is now widely recognized as the most rapid in the world. The proportion of Africans living in urban areas is variously estimated to increase to 46% by 2020 (UN-Habitat, 2001), 52% in 2025 (Njoh, 2003) and 53% by 2030 (African Union, 2006). The World Bank predicts that 46 Sub Saharan Africa (SSA) cities will have populations exceeding 1 million inhabitants by 2010, and that number is expected to reach 70 with a total population of nearly 200 million in the year 2020 (World Bank, 1995).

Concomitant demand for urban management knowledge and capacity is also growing rapidly in many countries in the region. The overall objective of the Africa Urban Wiki is to build urban knowledge and capacity to effectively respond to unique challenges and opportunities faced by African urban policy makers, implementers and development practitioners through creating access to a) international best practices, b) more detailed knowledge of their own national urban realities, and c) effective means to rapidly increase urban management capacity.

The African Urban Wiki provides a platform for networked collaborative knowledge and uses available information and multimedia technologies to access existing knowledge and create new knowledge on urban management and development.

The African Urban Wiki aims:
- To make the most of available technology and social network platforms to solve / innovate around development challenges
- To add to the existing pool of development knowledge in a collaborative way
- To provide a basis for meaningful interaction between development consultants and development partners / clients
- To create a vehicle to systematically track the contributions of urban development knowledge generators / creators and their knowledge consumers.
- To increase networking between the Development Agencies, Consultants, Clients and Programme recipients (community participants)

- To build collaborative intelligence (CQ)[1] among practitioners of urban management and development

An initial version of the Urban Wiki website exists, the Board of Directors is in place, "fundis" have been recruited, and the elements of a business plan have been identified. The incumbent will be expected to launch the Urban Wiki as a self sustaining entity.

1. Scope of Work and Deliverables

Develop a new Urban Wiki Concept, which should include but not be limited to the following:
- Draft a revised business plan that facilitates and promotes sustainability and financial independence: the existing business case and concept documents can serve as a reference point.
- Identify how the target user group (specifically but not only urban management practitioners on the African continent) could be exposed to and give input to the website. Develop a strategy with the above in mind that encourages users to use the website. Liaise with the already established 'fundis' and the Task Team to get input into such a strategy.
- In the new website, which should be simple and functional, priority should be given to how the design will entice users to use/return to the site. The Urban Wiki needs to be highly accessible to users on the African continent, especially urban management practitioners. Simplicity and low resource use is essential (low bandwidth, slow connection speeds etc), as well as easy navigation information on the website. Whether the website should be a repository of information or a referral site should be clarified. The website should occupy a clear niche, should provide added value, and should reach the stage of generating material through user activity.

The following are the expected key activities and deliverables.

2. Deliverables

1. Develop a new website, emphasizing simplicity and functionality presented to the Urban Wiki Task Team for testing within a month of signing the contract. Final 'test' website (post Task Team comments) operational by the end of the 2nd month of the contract. Operational website tested with 'fundis' and identified target group users for a period of 4 weeks, after going operational.
2. Developing and implementing a revised business plan (within the first month of appointment), including a funding strategy for the UrbanWiki, prioritising key short-term interventions to launch the UrbanWiki, priorities include:
   2.1. Drafting of a 6 month project/work plan, showing timelines, deliverables and activities;
   2.2. Secured funding (fundraising) beyond the initial 6 months, prepare the first round of funding requests to appropriate donors. The first 'batch' of funding proposals should be drafted and submitted within 2 months of appointment;
   2.3. Domicilium (base of operations), establish the necessary bank accounts, legal aspects (section 21);
3. To assess and make recommendations over the 6 month period to the Task Team on additional improvements to the website and business plan, these recommendations should be contained in a section of monthly progress reports submitted to the Task Team;

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[1] CQ is an emerging term used to describe a situation where the knowledge and problem solving capability of a group is much greater than the knowledge possessed by an individual group member.

4. Present the new website concept and draft Business plan to the Board for comment and input after 2 months, and after 4 months present the finalised business plan to the Board;
5. As part of the networking activities, be responsible for maintaining and expanding the initial core of fundis. Work with this core group to determine the most effective means of engagement with them and recommend to the Board additional fundis as opportunities arise.

3. Qualifications and Experience

The successful candidate for this position will be familiar with urban development practice and knowledge, and will have a good working knowledge of website design and administration. Of equal importance, the successful candidate will be an excellent organizer and networker, and will have substantial experience with donors and development organizations active in Africa. A relevant Bachelor's degree or Diploma will be an advantage

4. Reporting Arrangements

The incumbent will coordinate on a daily basis with the Urban LandMark Programme Manager. The Task Team will monitor the deliverable schedule and review the deliverables to ensure that the content, quality, and effectiveness meet the requirements of the terms of reference. S/he will immediately communicate with the Programme Manager if any major difficulties arise that may impact the delivery schedule and will prepare a project/work plan which is updated monthly, submit monthly progress reports to Urban LandMark and prepare reports and other documentation as required by the Board of Directors and the Task Team.

5. Conditions of Employment

The successful candidate will enter into a consultancy contract with Urban LandMark for a period of up to 6 months. The initial contract duration will be limited, but can be extended upon success in raising funding as described above. The incumbent may utilise office space at the Urban LandMark offices as necessary, but will be expected to operate independently. Remuneration will be commensurate with market rates.

Interested applicants should submit a letter of motivation, comprehensive CV and a valid Tax Clearance Certificate to Jonathan Diederiks from Urban LandMark (jonathan@urbanlandmark.org.za) and cc: Lerato Ndjwili Potele lerato@urbanlandmark.org.za or by fax to +27 (0)12 342 7639 by 12 noon on 28 May 2010.

Any queries should be directed to Jonathan Diederiks (jonathan@urbanlandmark.org.za) or Mark Napier (mark@urbanlandmark.org.za)