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Peninsula (Luang Prabang, Laos)

Pierre Guédant

Decentralized cooperation and urban development professionals

Decentralized cooperation can take many forms. Here, as in other spheres, there is no model to follow.

However, we can state that whatever the objectives, projects and modes of action, all decentralized cooperation requires strong links between a political ambition and a professional ambition. Both are required, particularly in urban areas where there is a high level of complexity.

The political ambition must be shared by both parties. It must give rise to day-to-day intentions, integrated within a national and local organization which is able to support the desired project and accompany it with the necessary decisions.

The professional ambition must be able to respond to political orders with pooled resources integrating external expertise within a coherent and permanent set of skills where the role of the local factors will be decisive for the long-term durability of the project.

It is this double challenge which decentralized cooperation must meet all

the time. Too frequently one or other of these ambitions is not present on a lasting basis.

Lastly, like all those who are seriously committed to this great adventure, it is absolutely essential to agree amongst ourselves and be coordinated to become more effective. We must never act alone. We should never commit ourselves without informing the ambassador beforehand. All the partners who are already on the spot or who are likely to be should be informed: other local authorities, the French Development Agency and actors involved in international cooperation, the United Nations, foreign donors. We should think of Europe, to which we belong and which we help to exist in the field, and which can help us a great deal. ■

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The involvement of French local authorities — in aid for urban development and the role of central government: a strategic study

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What role does decentralized cooperation have today and what potential does it have in the area of urban development? How does it tie in with other forms of cooperation? How should it be seen by central government, and can the latter support it better? In connection with such issues, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs —DGCID / AECL-CNCD— has asked ACT Consultants and GRET to perform a study into the provision of development aid on the part of French local authorities and its potential with regard to urban development¹.

Several major factors are working together today in order to make decentralized cooperation a particularly important issue for local authorities and all the other players: the tendency for central governments to decentralize; the emergence of local authorities as collective actors on the international stage, their growing desire to consider globalisation as an opportunity for their development and, in the case of our country, the reform of French development aid. Our analysis shows that, as a result of its complex history and the above factors, decentralized cooperation has acquired specific features, which make it profoundly different from the other types of cooperation. French decentralized cooperation seems particularly typical of an “emerging model of cooperation”, and may be called upon to play a considerable role with regard to development aid, on condition that it continues to develop and spread, particularly on a European scale.

Summarizing these characteristics, we can state that decentralized cooperation applies to cooperation between French local and regional authorities and those in foreign countries, for which they alone have full responsibility and which has a political and strategic basis. It is cooperation between one region and another in which institutional support is a central concern in the framework of long-term partnerships. Cultural understanding and personal commitment are also important aspects, although less specific.

Each of these characteristics has important features and effects, which can be summarized as follows:

- Decentralized cooperation is political cooperation, between one mayor and another: the issue of local power is central to its concerns and objectives. Partner local authorities are engaged in mutual questioning about strengthening this local power and its means of action, as well

as about the development of citizenship and participation.

- It is region-to-region cooperation: rooted in administrative and human geography, it aims to mobilize the entire body of local actors. In this respect, it belongs to a dynamic of local development without becoming identified with cooperation between “two civil societies”.

- It is cultural cooperation: this dimension, which at one time was weakened when twinnings were being questioned, is now regaining importance. How is it possible to examine objectives together, develop a common strategy and get actors from different regions to work closely together, without first of all attempting to gain mutual knowledge and understanding? Furthermore, this approach to the cultural question reiterates what has remained a central aspect of decentralized cooperation: the promotion of peace.

- It is crosscutting rather than sector-based coopera-

tion. Its policies are determined more by demand than by supply and it originates in careful identification of the development needs of the third-party local authority and the setting up of a genuine partnership. It is in the very early stages of partnership that the future of decentralized cooperation is decided, as this achieves its full potential only if all the issues which face a city and its development basin are taken into account, without preconceptions.

- It is reciprocal cooperation, because elected officials must justify their actions on the basis of the benefits that citizens from both sides draw from them, and also because it always brings individuals into play, asking them to face the specific features of each area. Practical responses cannot be modelled; they can only be adapted to each situation through dialogue with partners which is enriching to both parties.

- It can be also the case that action in the sphere of

decentralized cooperation is no longer autonomous. French local and regional authorities and their partners are adopting a broader view of international relations. In this framework, they are tending to create "cooperation portfolios" based on economic, geopolitical and solidarity objectives.

The diversity of situations remains extreme and these tendencies are far from ever present. It is nevertheless understandable that institutional support is frequently presented by local authorities as the most important aspect of decentralized cooperation for development. One of the key questions is thus the links between the strengthening of strategic and local management capacities on the one hand and the setting up and above all the financing of the resulting operational projects on the other. While avoiding the pitfall of a project taking the place of strategy, how is it possible to avoid having a strategy without projects?

French expertise and experience in the area of urban development have contrib-

uted to these changes. But decentralized cooperation goes beyond this concept, particularly the connotations that it had acquired in the case of national cooperation dominated by technical operators. The urban and rural spheres are not conflicting technical areas, but express characteristics and dimensions of geographical areas, which are more and more frequently considered together in the context of local development. Urban infrastructures and services are not preliminaries to development but the outcome and tools of the development process. Decentralized cooperation is comprehensive in nature; targeting the area itself, its administration and the actors.

This is why, for example, the true benefit of decentralized cooperation does not lie in the provision of major technical skills (these are present but they are also provided by other operators) but in strengthening institutions and supporting local project owners. While central government sees the positioning of specialized technical operators, in particular contractors,

as an issue of technological and economic influence ("domains of excellence"), for France there is also a political stake in the promotion of the democratic, institutional and social values which are fundamental to local authorities and their action, and in contact with other cultures.

Can local authorities and central government – in this context the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the French Development Agency – recognize together the specific nature of decentralized cooperation? Can they use it as a basis for defining their respective roles and relationships, both with each other and with the other actors involved in cooperation with the local authorities of third countries?

The recommendations in our report attempt to answer these questions in three ways:

- strengthening and promoting the specific character of decentralized cooperation;
- redefining relationships between decentralized cooperation and the strategic frameworks of central government;

- identifying the positioning of the State (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the French Development Agency) by, in particular, introducing a new dynamic between decentralized and bilateral cooperation.

There will be little point in bringing about this necessary improvement in French decentralized cooperation if only French actors are involved in thinking it out. One of the first issues is to make it more directly and firmly part of the European and international frameworks for discussion and partnerships. ■

1. This study was intended to inform the Ministry's strategic consideration of the role and the nature of decentralized cooperation with regard to development aid, and the role and the relations between the different national players. The study is based on existing data and a large number of documents, as well as about fifty interviews with elected representatives, senior managers in French and foreign local authorities, institutions and experts and on contributions from two working groups. The draft final report has been submitted to institutional players for their reactions prior to publication.

A database on decentralized cooperation and international action on the part of local and regional authorities

The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs encourages decentralized cooperation by making the services of its network of embassies and the experts in its Directorates at Quay d'Orsay available to local and regional authorities and by providing cofinancing either for national networks or for regional consultation or coordination structures. Likewise, the website of the National Committee for Decentralized Cooperation (CNCD), which was set up in February 1992 under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister, aims to provide all parties involved in such cooperation with a summary of its founding principles, and a few aids including information on different countries and references. The aids also include a database

entitled "Decentralized cooperation and foreign action" that has been set up in collaboration with the principal associations of elected representatives and involved local and regional authorities. This is a database that presents decentralized cooperation projects involving local and regional authorities "here" and "there" which permits all parties to situate their actions with respect to those of other authorities. It should meet a regularly expressed desire on the part of local elected representatives in all countries where French decentralized cooperation is taking place.

→ Contact: www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/cncd

A brief overview of the Asia Urbs programme (1998-2004)

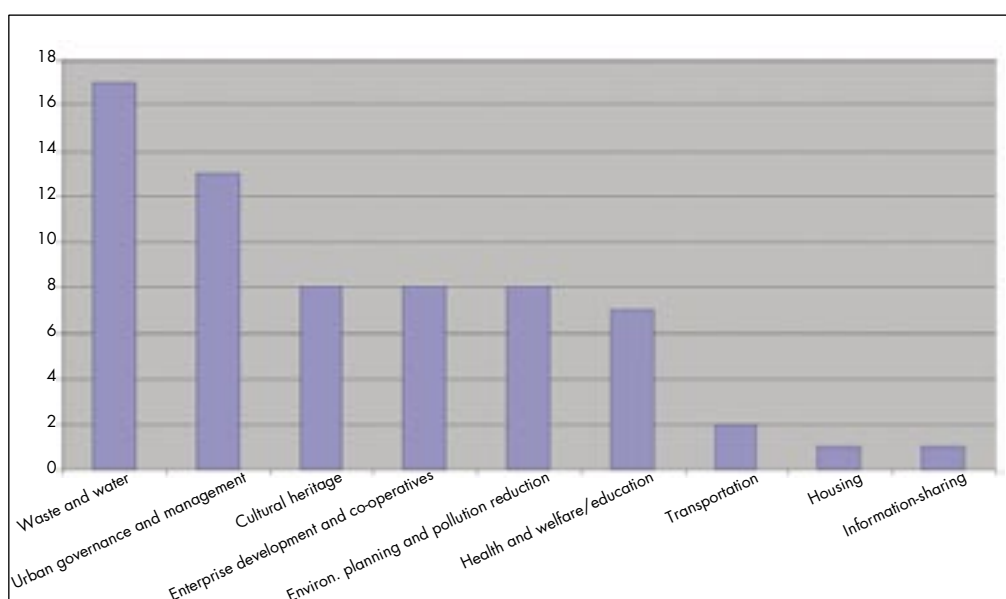
Vincent Rotgé, Town Planner, former Coordinator of the programme

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The positive results of this major programme which brought together players from associations, universities and the private sector around European and Asian local authorities are indisputable. Decentralized cooperation in the urban sphere has been strengthened, the question of the durability of this dynamic nevertheless still stands in view of the fact that the European Commission has not planned a new phase of the Asia Urbs programme which ended in December 2004, and because general doubt hangs over the extension of the few "Asia-wide" programmes which are still running.

The Asia Urbs programme was set up at the end of the 1990s to encourage direct cooperation between European and Asian local authorities in line with the Local Agenda 21 initiative. Its initial objectives, set out in its terms of reference, were intended to be attained by means of a hundred or so pilot projects. These were varied: technical assistance, strengthening of institutional capacities, creation of links between European and Asian local elected representatives, giving support to intercultural dialogue and the creation of international and local partnerships between local authorities and their civil societies. The concrete nature of the pilot projects was made clear: what was required was to set up urban projects in the field to the value of approximately € 750,000, subsequently increased to €1 million, three-quarters of which were financed by the Commission and the rest by the partners. In short, the idea was to achieve political and institutional objectives by means of concrete field projects with a training dimension and local util-

**Asia Urbs Programme
Breakdown of 65 projects according to theme (june 2003)**



ity with calls for proposals issued between 1998 and 2004. The last pilot projects in the field are scheduled to end in 2007.

The team of town-planners recruited by the European Commission started to implement the programme in 1998. This team made important choices including that of leaving urban topics open without exclusion. The Urb-AI Programme – the elder brother of Asia Urbs

for Latin America – had adopted the different approach of launching calls for tenders in order to form thematic networks: street children, drug prevention, etc. This approach seemed less suited to Asia with its very marked differences of a cultural, linguistic, political and administrative nature or as regards levels of development.

The structure for the Asia Urb pilot projects was pre-

defined. The partnerships, which brought together actors from associations, universities and the private sector around a group of European local authorities (at least two from two different countries) and Asian local authorities (at least one), were asked to develop integrated projects involving three categories of actions:

- developing local capacities (for example, training, setting up of facilities),

- one or more microprojects with demonstration and training value with regard to concrete projects in the field, and
- communication and information-sharing activities in the Asian locality, between the international project partners and with other pilot projects in the Programme.

The first projects included the setting up of urban monitoring missions to Laos and Cambodia by APUR (the Paris Urban Planning Office) and its Asian and European partners. Other projects dealt with occasionally ambitious planning issues: upgrading of markets or suburban zones, etc. Many of them dealt with cleansing or the management of water at district level.

Over the years, the urban economic development projects assumed greater importance. One Asia Urbs Project involved the development of urban farming in Cagayan de Oro in the Philippines by improving the distribution of intrans (natural fertilizer from composting household waste), an analysis of the allotment system and an examination of land ownership. This project received a GTZ award. Two other projects dealt with suburban farming in the outskirts of Vientiane and Phnom Penh. These dealt with issues of production (quality labels), storage and product distribution including the drawing up of contracts between urban *restaurateurs* and cooperatives of suburban producers.

Many projects dealt with heritage and conservation. Two projects, one in Luang Prabang and the other in Hanoi, respectively support-

ed by Chinon and Toulouse, aimed to improve conservation practices with regard to the built heritage, and in the case of Luang Prabang, the use of public space. These were part of a broader tendency which consisted of taking account of the importance of the heritage in these two Asian countries which have recently passed heritage protection legislation.

Several projects, supported by Cambodian, German and Italian local authorities with the Conrad Adenauer Foundation, related to urban governance and involved the setting up of urban services (taxation, the granting of planning permission, water rates, etc.) in consultation with the appropriate organizational levels in the local authorities.

Transport was also included with two projects to set up pilot bus routes supported by Hanoi and the Ile de France Region. These projects were extremely successful and are now attracting outside investment.

The Asia Urbs Programme also tried to encourage feedback from pilot projects and networking between them. This was achieved through the participation of the Programme management team at international conferences or workshops in addition to the pilot projects. More recently, network creation projects were launched, such as that currently supported by Greater Lyon.

To conclude this brief presentation of the Asia Urbs Programme, we can stress that the objectives, although large and occasionally imprecise as regards their fulfilment if not their initial specification, have often been achieved. It is true that some pilot projects suffered

from a lack of experience on the part of some actors with regard to development cooperation. But surely this was what the Programme was attempting to improve? The more systematic performance of preliminary studies could help to reduce risks of this type.

There have been many positive results. The concept of decentralized cooperation has come a long way and its practical aspects have been improved. A flow of information between practitioners and European and Asian local authorities has been set up or consolidated; the Programme has disseminated approaches to urban issues, and technical solutions have been tested. Local authorities have professionalized their international cooperation practices. Asian and European professionals have been trained. Structures

have been equipped. And of course, last but not least, urban services have been improved in the communities hosting the pilot projects.

Although for reasons to do with general restructuring, the Commission has reduced its five "Asia-wide" projects to three retaining only those which were not scheduled to end in 2005 (Asia Invest, Asia Pro Eco and Asia link), we can ask ourselves what future the European Commission intends for initiatives of this type. The urban Asia-Urbs Programme met expectations in both Asia and Europe which were not all strictly environmental. Ultimately, the question is whether the dynamic generated by the two first phases of the Asia-Urbs Programme (1998-2004) will be genuinely durable or if it is still too soon to call a halt to the experiment. ■

**Asia Urbs Programme
Breakdown of 65 projects according to eligible countries
(june 2003)**

	Countries	European subvention (€)
Bangladesh	1	325,000
Bhutan		
Cambodia	5	2,239,067
China	7	2,258,869
India	14	4,928,255
Indonesia	1	500,000
Laos	3	1,367,226
Malaisia		
Maldives		
Nepal	2	509,772
Pakistan	4	954,559
Philippines	4	1,251,697
Sri Lanka	2	514,359
Thailand	7	2,925,735
Vietnam	15	6,349,100
Total for Asia	65	24,123,639

The town planning agencies get mobilized

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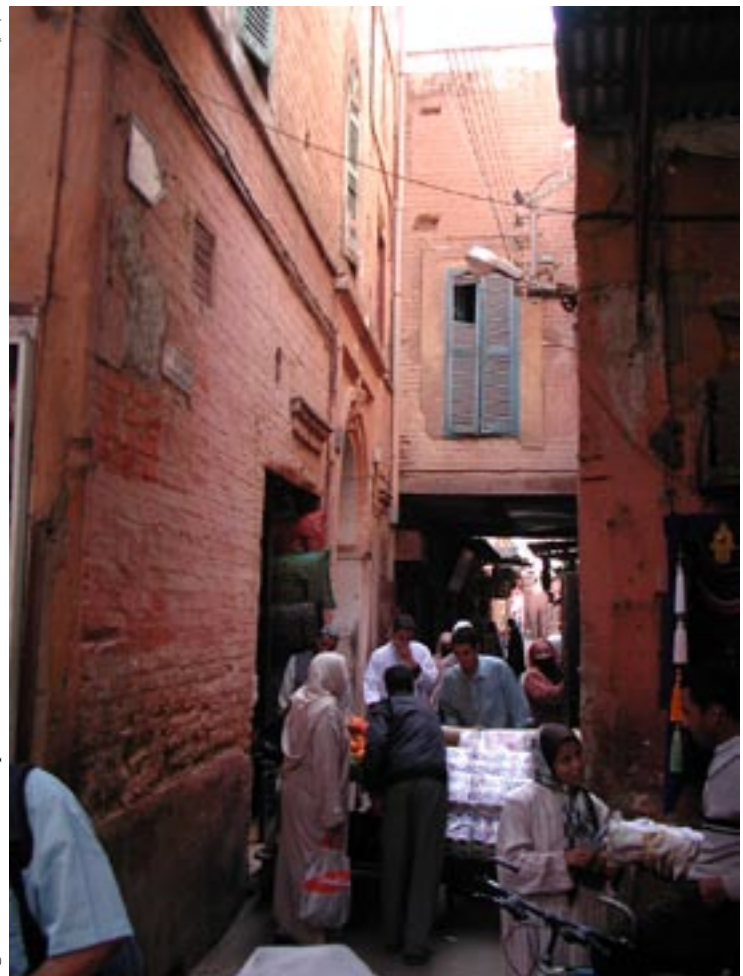
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The highly diversified experience of French agencies mean that they are increasingly sought after as partners by municipal leaders in the cities of the South. This makes it even more necessary for them to clarify their position within French development aid operations.

Sixteen French town planning agencies – i.e. one third of the agencies in the National Federation of Town Planning Agencies (FNAU) – have had involvement at international level since 1990, in a wide variety of contexts. While their activities have usually been performed in the framework of decentralized cooperation agreements or networks of cities (45% of cases), some have also been commissioned by the French official development aid programme (30%), international organizations (13%) and even, occasionally, local contracts (12%). These export missions organized by French town planning agencies involve three major areas:

- planning (intermunicipal links, regional planning, master plans, land law, etc.)
- support of public policies: sector-based policies (transport, land ownership, housing, environment and heritage, tourism), urban management structures (agencies', intermunicipal structures) and management tools (urban research institutes, GIS, remote sensing),
- urban projects (major facilities, neighbourhood-projects, old districts),

Medina of Marrakech – the Hay Essalam district



Agence Clermont - Métropole

some with local participation.

Half the missions involved Sub-Saharan Africa and the Maghreb / Middle East, but Asia is also an important area of growth, accounting for almost a quarter of the identified projects.

The mobilization of the agencies in the FNAU is,

of course, linked to the increase in decentralized cooperation activity on the part of all levels of regional and local government in France. But it also seems to stem from their day-to-day experience of planning in large conurbations which makes them increasingly sought after as partners by

the municipal leaders in the cities of the South. On the one hand, their teams are multidisciplinary, bringing together town planners, economists, GIS specialists, lawyers, etc., generally with experience both of technical production and communication with highly varied publics. On the other hand, the

local context within which they act in France means that they are able to mobilize partners with every type of expertise and ensure coordination between different public policies. This “service management” role is particularly prized abroad, where there is often a high degree of compartmentalization between administrations, organizations and regional and local authorities. Lastly, they can transfer this know-how not only with a fairly good guarantee of long-term continuity, but, in particular, in a variety of forms (assistance to project management, expert appraisals and training, workshops and receiving delegations) To this, the feedback in France from these activities must be added: the unparalleled volume of information and contacts is one local effect which is very much appreciated, by local elected officials,

technicians in the agencies and economic stakeholders alike. The agencies provide “town planning mediation” as much as expertise in the strict sense and thus occupy a unique position in French international urban engineering activities.

While the picture is generally positive with regard to the future and nature of this involvement, qualifications are nevertheless required with regard to some areas. First of all, because the international action of agencies quite soon reaches its limits, either because of an inability to mobilize staff, or because it can generate an excessive workload in view of priority local activities in France and for the elected officials who supervise agencies. They consequently experience obvious logistical difficulties in becoming mobilized for calls for tender with frequently short deadlines: for these reasons and those given

above it would be illusory to imagine that they could act in a meaningful and long-term manner abroad to the same extent as specialized consultancies. It is consequently better for them to be associated with such consultancies as co-contractors or subcontractors, which lightens their tasks in the areas of exploration, management and action.

While it is likely that an increasing proportion of town planning agencies will have an involvement at international level in the course of the next ten years, these activities will therefore no doubt be situated within the framework of the following:

- decentralized cooperation activities conducted by their supervising local authority or authorities, which is the main source of activity for many agencies;
- responding to commissions from French or

international donors, directly or in association with research consultancies (an additional source of activity);

- and, last, new opportunities that could – or should – be created by genuine networking between the experts in the different agencies, within the FNAU with ISTED, the AdP or, possibly, networks of foreign professionals.

A three-dimensional strategy of this type could only benefit the decentralized cooperation activities of town planning agencies: this cooperation does not need to take the place of the conventional types of technical cooperation, but may play an important role in changing its nature. ■

1. Expertise – training partnerships have, in particular, been set up between the French agencies and their counterparts in Mexico and Morocco under the aegis of the FNAU.

The Lyon conurbation at the service of decentralized cooperation

Gérard Collomb, *Senator and Mayor of Lyon, President of Greater Lyon
Chair of the Decentralized Cooperation Committee of “United Local Governments and Cities”*

In all the urban regions of the world, both in the South and in the North, regional and local authorities are intensifying their exchanges and commitment in the area of development aid. Side by side with central governments, multilateral bodies and NGOs, local authorities are seeking ways and means of achieving successful local development in their areas, improving the living conditions of the population, encouraging its participation, providing access to essential local public services to the largest possible number of people, managing these services efficiently and thereby reducing poverty. The Lyon conurbation is involved in these international exchanges in a variety of ways:

- decentralized cooperation projects with a dozen or so cities in developing countries;
- setting up of several decentralized cooperation operations:
 - . The “Cities United against Poverty” Fund created with the cities of Geneva and Bamako in order to pool North-South and South-South municipal expertise with regard to putting in place and managing local public services;

- . The “Digital Solidarity Agency” to lead projects that will reduce the gap between rich and poor cities as regards information access;
- . The “Water” Fund, a public-private partnership between this local authority and Veolia Environnement.
- Leading the European “Pro-Act” programme which aims to strengthen partnerships between European and Asian cities and make it easier to obtain funding for their projects from international donors.

Finally, Lyon is very actively involved in international networks of local authorities: it has the Vice-Chairmanship of the Eurocities network which brings together 130 large European cities and is also a member of the Executive Office of United Local Governments and Cities and, since June 2005, has chaired its “Decentralized Cooperation” Committee.

To fulfil its international commitments, Lyon mobilizes all the expertise in the conurbation, from the private, para-public or public sectors, in particular the professionals employed in our local authorities and town-planning agency who bring all their experience of urban services, from the planning to the management of urban development.

Decentralized cooperation between the Greater Paris Region (Ile-de-France) and the city of Hanoi for Urban Development

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The example of Hanoi shows the general action strategy implemented by the Ile-de-France Region with regard to its foreign partners: by setting up durable systems it aims to create a deep partnership that operates on a sufficiently large scale to generate more ambitious bilateral cooperation between governments.

Decentralized cooperation is first of all a question of human relations and then evolves into a relationship between local authorities as a result of political choices and decisions. From the twinings of the past to the cooperation agreements of the present, decentralized cooperation has changed much, both in objectives and methods. The Ile-de-France Region, which signed its first cooperation agreement in 1983, is no exception to this rule. On his election in 1998, the Region's President, Jean-Paul Huchon, made clear his desire for the Region to cease to act as merely as a source of funds and become an active partner of the foreign local authorities with which it has a cooperation agreement. The nature of this partnership would depend on whether the local authorities involved were from the North, the South or emerging countries. The principal objective of cooperation with the local authorities of the South is to provide institutional support to enable them to assume



Pedestrian crossing in the centre of Hanoi, south of the Hoan Kiem Lake (2003)

their responsibilities with respect to their population. This is an ambitious task which requires long term commitment on the part of Ile-de-France. It is also a clear political choice which requires total commitment on the part of the elected officials who have to fix long term-policy with regard to each agreement. It was for this purpose that "joint cooperation committees" were set up; these are special consultation and decision-making bodies which establish a clear and

precise framework for the actions of all parties. Although 12 of the Region's current 13 priority cooperation agreements are predominantly urban, urban development is not central to them, except in the case of Hanoi. This is partly explained by the fact that the costs involved are very high in this sector, exceeding by a considerable margin the funding made available for decentralized cooperation. Nevertheless, all the activities that are undertaken relate to or assist

urban development, for example hygiene or cleansing in Antananarivo, waste in Nouakchott, regeneration of the Bois des Pins in Beyrouth, teaching in Dakar, microcredit in Santiago or fighting AIDS in Gauteng province. In Hanoi, the realization on the part of the local and national authorities of the problems associated with the doubling of the population between now and 2015 has channelled cooperation towards the key issues of public transport and region-

al planning. This choice was made rapidly and to facilitate the implementation of measures it was decided to set up a special body, the Institute of Urban Professions, which provides a forum for encounters between the City's different local government departments.

The example of Hanoi enables us to understand the general action strategy implemented by the Ile-de-France Region with regard to its foreign partners.

The first stage was to specify a public transport policy that is adapted to the changes in Hanoi focusing on the increase in the number of private cars. The relatively fast increase in purchasing power has led to a rapid transition from bicycles to motorcycles (of which there are currently one million) then to the car. The mayor therefore decided to give priority to public transport with a two-fold objective: to redynamize and develop bus services and to consider the creation of mass transit in the form of a tram or metro network.

With the support of the Ile-de-France Region, which cofinanced, with the Brussels-Capitale Region, a European project known as "AsiaTrans"¹, the Mayor was able to persuade central government to transfer responsibility for organizing urban transport from the Ministry to the Municipal Authorities. The first effect of cooperation was to support decentralization.

Implementing the project provided an opportunity to demonstrate the reliability of bus transport which had fallen into disuse over the years, and the number of passengers rose from 6 million to 245 million per year between 2000 and 2005. This project also provided an opportunity to train drivers, open a depot with



Giap Bat Coach station, Hanoi. (2003)

Patricia Yarnaison Revolle D.R.

its own maintenance workshop² and create a large six route bus interchange.

The extension of this programme should result in the introduction of an appropriate multimodal ticketing system, foreshadowing the creation of a regulatory authority. Last, this part of the programme should also include an urban express railway line that links into the bus network.

The second aspect of the project involves the creation of a mass transit system. In connection with this, many visits and meetings have been organized in France and elsewhere in Europe which have allowed the Mayor and his teams to form a definite idea. The project for a pilot line running on an East-West route across the city was studied in the framework of the cooperation agreement and then, in view of its size, was taken by the Ile-de-France Region and the Hanoi Popular Committee to the level of the Franco-Vietnamese bilateral agreement³ with the support of the French Ambassador. The Municipal Authorities considered

that this first line, which should be opened in 2010 in time for Hanoi's 1000th anniversary, is the first part of a network of eight lines.

This cooperation project, which got under way in 2000, has been responsible for about forty expert missions and funding of more than €1M from the Region. It is currently continuing in the framework of a new European "ECOTRANS" programme which is being conducted with the City of Hanover.

The effectiveness of this cooperation owes much to the body that has been set up in another framework, the Institute of Urban Professions, a forum for encounters between the City's different local government departments and permanent liaison with the Ministries of Transportation and Public Works. The region is currently engaged in deliberations with the latter concerning the setting up of regions in Vietnam and is supporting it in the drawing up of a Master Plan for the future region of Hanoi.

Decentralized cooperation permits in-depth work on

a sufficiently large scale to ensure good reproducibility. It may provide an excellent means of creating more ambitious intergovernmental bilateral cooperation. ■

1. This project is concerned with the creation of three exclusive bus lane routes with a bus interchange and is part of the European Asia Urbs programme. It has been jointly funded by the European Commission (€0.6M out of a total of €1.2M) and is currently being extended by an EcoTrans project in the framework of the Asia Pro Eco programme with the participation of the City of Hanover.
2. The training of drivers and the setting up of the maintenance workshop was supported by the City of Paris Public Transport Authority (RATP) which has also sold 200 buses to the Hanoi bus company.
3. The feasibility study, performed by SYSTRA has recently been submitted to the local authorities which have to choose between four projects (two tram projects and two metro projects). In this framework, ISTEED has provided project management assistance to the City Authorities and greatly assisted local decision-making.

A pilot local authority - donor partnership at the service of urban development in Madagascar

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The Alsace Regional Institute for Development Cooperation (IRCOD) has as its mission to bring together local authorities and development structures in Alsace to create synergy and coherent cooperation action where there are existing commitments. This constitutes an original decentralized cooperation arrangement in France, bringing together in the same structure the technical potential of a region, Alsace. The cooperation partnerships are always based on a framework agreement with an African local authority. This defines the issues on which the actions which are developed take shape.

The Institute has been involved for ten years with the urban commune of Majunga (200,000 inhabitants), and has been asked to take part in the refurbishment of four of the city's markets in the framework of a project that has received eight million Euros of cofunding from the French Development Agency (AFD). This project aims to achieve several major objectives for the city of Majunga, in particular: making it more attractive, improving the hygiene and operation of the markets and integrating informal districts with poor facilities within the urban tissue. It also aims to improve the quality of municipal management, which is well in line with IRCOD's commitment to the municipality.

The City of Mulhouse, which is an IRCOD member, has mobilized its technical services (health, finance, markets) in order to help the commune of Majunga set up a municipal market management company. With the



Market in Majunga, Madagascar

AFD, IRCOD has committed additional resources in order to finance this mission and the social project management role it was entrusted by AGETIPA, the chief project manager. The Institute's cooperation set up combines mobilization of Mulhouse's expertise (ex-

pert visits to Majunga, running short training courses in Mulhouse for municipal employees from Majunga) with local monitoring by a young French technician working with the head of the markets department. This project makes use of, on an international level,

the experience acquired by the municipal services of Mulhouse, which have just terminated a project of the same type in their own area.

The AFD funding has made it possible to carry through this ambitious project with

structural impacts for the city while at the same time involving decentralized cooperation in local actions which support the institutional structure of municipal services. Consequently, this institutional support is completely compatible with the organization of a large-scale physical project, which decentralized cooperation with its limited resources often finds difficult on its own.

Because it is a structure for bilateral cooperation, the AFD has more legitimacy than those involved in decentralized cooperation with regard to proposing institutional changes which are essential for the success and durability of the

project to the Madagascar government (setting up a municipal company with a supplementary budget). These institutional changes, accepted in principal by the Madagascar government before the agreement which commits the governments was signed, are honed by the players directly involved at local level at the time of implementation. They thus reflect the constraints and realities that apply in the field and are intended to assist the thought process with regard to legislative changes to municipal operation.

The value of this partnership lies in the continuation of the partnership between Mulhouse and the local au-

thorities in Alsace after the project which will give it a greater chance of success. Activities are therefore no longer simply concerned with project functioning and do not cease with outside funding which is essentially concerned with the construction of infrastructure. IRCOD's mode of functioning is also a source of flexibility: each year, the Institute budgets the resources on the basis of specific annual needs for the various operations in the different geographical areas in which it operates.

This experience will certainly reveal new means of cooperation that involve French local authorities. It will also

demonstrate that local authorities in Madagascar, and more generally in Africa, when organized and supported in the framework of genuine long-term accompaniment, can take responsibility for the management of such market infrastructure, which are often entrusted to the private sector on the recommendation of donors or governments in order to make management of the investment more secure. What is involved is effective strengthening of municipal project management, which is a guarantee of managed and directed local economic development ■

Publications

Gouvernance urbaine et accès à l'eau potable au Maroc

Partenariat Public-Privé à Casablanca et Tanger Tétouan.

Claude de Miras and Julien Le Tellier in collaboration with Abdelmalik Saloui.

276 pages - 22.50 Euros

2005 - L'Harmattan - Villes et Entreprises.

This book presents a major part of the results obtained from the research project "National Transitions, Urban Governance and Drinking Water Management in Cities. Morocco and Vietnam" that was conducted as part of the Urban Development Research Programme (PRUD) - 2001-2004). The authors present an overview of experience of delegating public services in the water sector in Morocco, based on analysis of the concrete situations in Casablanca, Tanger and Tetouan. Detailed observation of conditions and mechanisms of implementing the Moroccan model in the field is put into perspective by comparative analysis of the delegated management systems implemented in various countries during the last two decades.

→ www.editions-harmattan.fr



Dix ans de coopération décentralisée Chinon - Luang Prabang

sponsored by UNESCO.

Collective publication by the Chinon Development and Urban Planning Agency coordinated by Cathy Savourey

2005 - UNESCO

This publication marks the tenth anniversary of the City of Luang Prabang's inscription on the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites and UNESCO's request in 1995 for implementation of a safeguard and enhancement plan, a project which had the support of the city of Chinon. This publication recounts ten years of cooperation between the two cities, which has not only resulted in the enhancement of Luang Prabang's natural and cultural heritage but also job creation, regional development, improvement of educational and health infrastructure and scientific exchanges. In addition, this experiment has been recognized as an exemplary partnership as regards decentralized cooperation issues.

Les stratégies des grandes métropoles

Enjeux pouvoirs et aménagement Gilles Antier

256 pages - 24 Euros

2005 - Armand Colin Collection U.

From a very large amount of recent data and examples collected in more than a hundred metropolises in the North and South, this book identifies the specific features of the "metropolitan phenomenon" and analyzes the modes of metropolitan intervention with reference to the most important development issues: improving transportation, providing water, combating pollution, preventing risks, assisting access to housing, regional planning. This world survey shows that beyond the specific nature of different urban contexts a certain form of "metropolitan governance" is taking shape through the convergence of solutions, frequently of an innovative type, that are implemented in order to cope with difficulties and tensions which are more and more frequently shared. The issues here are considerable in terms of internationalization and the redistribution of powers between central and local governments.

→ www.armand.colin.com

News on cooperation

ISTED

World Urban Forum III

AFRICITIES 4

**Our Future:
Sustainable Cities
Turning Ideas into Action
(19 - 23 June 2006)**

**Nairobi, Kenya,
18 to 23 September 2006-02-02
“Building local coalitions for the implementation
of the Millennium Development Goals”**

This forum is to be held in Vancouver (Canada) under the aegis of UN-Habitat and the Canadian government. Thirty years after the first UN-Habitat conference on human settlements in Vancouver, the same city is hosting the Third World Urban Forum (WUF) which is held every two years. It will bring together opinion leaders and experts from all over the world for discussions about the world's transition to a sustainable urban planet.

The World Urban Forum is an international conference that aims to encourage the sharing of experience and knowledge regarding urban sustainability. This forum does not follow the formal rules of procedure that usually govern official UN meetings and during the WUF much discussion takes place in an informal framework to encourage dialogue between government leaders, local administrations, non-governmental organizations, popular action groups, urban planning professionals, young people and the private sector.

The five day forum programme aims to encourage information sharing and the formation of networks on the following main theme:

“Our future: sustainable cities. Turning ideas into action”, and the following sub-themes:

- sustainable cities: urban growth and the environment
- sustainable cities: partnerships and finance
- sustainable cities: social inclusion and cohesion.

The reports and recommendations from the World Urban Forum will be submitted to the UN-HABITAT Governing Council for it to examine them and take the necessary steps. The previous World Urban Forums were held in Nairobi in 2002 and Barcelona in 2004.

→ Contact: www.unhabitat.org/wuf/2006

The Africities 4 summit in Nairobi will be essentially a meeting of actors. The intention is to bring together the main stakeholders at local authority level in order for them to engage in dialogue about the best way of working together in order to implement the MDGs within African local authorities.

The first two days (18 and 19 September 2006) will be given over to the thematic sessions, with, on the one hand, a comprehensive debate on the Millennium Development Goals and the local strategies to be implemented in order to implement them and, on the other, meetings between actors which will give all the groups of actors the opportunity to discuss ways of achieving the MDGs, the constraints the group has encountered in its attempts to work with the other actors, and its proposals for overcoming the barriers that have been identified. The proposals will be submitted as recommendations to the policy segment of the Summit. The last two days (21 and 22 September 2006) constitute the Summit's policy sessions, devoted to the meetings of the CADDEL (African Ministerial Level Conference on Decentralization and Local Development) and the UCLGA (United Cities and Local Governments of Africa). These policy meetings will first of all assess the

implementation of the resolutions and recommendations from the last Summit in Yaoundé, and will also consider the proposals made by the various actors, with a view to fixing and adopting a ten-year strategic programme (to the year 2015) and an initial three-year action plan aimed at speeding up the achievement of the MDGs at local level. These meetings will also discuss the draft charter on local governance. A three-way dialogue between the representatives of the CADDEL, the CGLUA and the development partners will then evaluate the possibilities and conditions for cooperation with a view to implementing the ten-year strategic programme and the three-year action plan.

Between the thematic sessions and the policy sessions, the third day (20 September 2006) will be devoted to the special sessions. These will provide institutions and networks that are interested in collaborating with African local authorities the opportunity to initiate, develop and pursue dialogue with them.

In parallel with the various meetings, a CITEPO exhibition will give central governments, local authorities and the business community the opportunity to present their products, services and experience with regard to the MDGs.

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