

Mistra Urban Futures

Minutes Board Meeting No. 24

13 June, 2017

Participants:

Thomas Rosswall (Chair)
Roberto Sánchez-Rodríguez (Vice-Chair)
Olivia Bina
Lyla Mehta
Hans Ristner
John Robinson
Caroline Wanjiku Kihato

Ex officio:

Johan Edman, Mistra
Anna Ledin, GC Chair
Mats Viberg, Chalmers
David Simon, Director
Henrietta Palmer, Deputy Scientific Director
Stephen Agong, KLIP
Margareta Forsberg, GOLIP
Magnus Johansson, SKLIP
Beth Perry, SMLIP
Warren Smit, CTLIP

Invited participants:

Jan Riise, Secretariat
Viveka Blomgren, Secretariat

Not participating: Katarina Pelin; Nayoka Martinez-Bäckström, Sida

Tuesday 13th June

1. Opening of the meeting

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the participants, in particular Mats Viberg as the new representative of Chalmers. He noted that Anna Ledin would join the meeting somewhat later.

2. Approval of the agenda and potential conflicts of interest

The Chair invited the members to review the agenda and suggest any additional issues that might be discussed under #9, Any other business, and to inform about any potential conflict of interest.

Decisions:

To approve the agenda; and
To note that there were no conflicts of interest.

3. Minutes from previous meeting and matters arising

Minutes from the meeting on 9-10 March 2017 were previously circulated and approved by the Board electronically.

QME: The Secretariat hopes to have an external person to do the literature review for societal impact identification. The literature review will be used to develop a framework for evaluation.

Comparative projects: The document MUF 24:3 Comparative Projects Matrix as at June 2017. This is a living document. The Board suggested that a framing context would be helpful together with explanatory text on how the cross-cutting projects connect to local level activities and projects. It would also be helpful to explain how the projects contribute to the second phase of Mistra Urban Futures and can be developed in relation to the strategic thinking for Phase 3. The Board also wants to see how these projects link to the SDGs. The plan is to include the comparative projects into the SDG mapping as their scope is clarified.

Decisions:

To note that the QME in relation to benchmark measures will be reported in November, following a literature review.

To note the comparative project matrix and decide that progress on the comparative projects should be a substantive item for the November meeting in Kisumu. To request that an updated version of the matrix with introductory text and SDG targets be circulated with the minutes.

4. Mapping of Mistra Urban Futures' projects onto the SDGs

Sida requires an overview of how projects relate to the SDGs. This is a summary to represent the key elements, drawn from project descriptions on our website and recent summaries of the incipient comparative projects. Almost everything the Centre does fits into the SDG11 but there is a good spread across the other Goals too. The number of Goals to which individual projects relate varies. A third figure should be added to demonstrate this. Linking this analysis to the comparative projects should be part of the Centre's narrative of how MUF relates to the SDGs. In practice, the SDGs can be seen as 17 operational objectives to be achieved by 2030; the essential thing is how they work together to promote overall sustainable development. Hence Mistra Urban Futures' contribution might usefully be understood as a more multi-objective perspective, rather than just to each individual goal.

The challenge is bringing them together and thus highlighting how that is done in the narrative. This report is an answer to a specific Sida requirement; nonetheless this is an important way of communicating what Mistra Urban Futures is doing.

The report will be revised in this light and submitted to Sida. Thereafter, it will be encapsulated on the website in a visually appropriate way that reflects how Mistra Urban Futures is forward looking.

Decision:

To request a revision of the Mapping of Mistra Urban Futures' projects onto the SDGs, with addition of an introductory narrative and a third table showing the relationship of individual projects to the SDG targets and indicators.

To consider in November how MUF contributes to the overall SDGs via discussion of selected comparative research projects discussed under item 3 above.

5. Developing a post-2019 Vision and Mission

Since the last Board meeting, the Centre has been undertaking a concerted process to formulate its post-2019 vision and mission. Building on the foundations of the QME framework approved in March and the outline institutional scenarios presented in March, there have been detailed SWOT (Strength, weaknesses, opportunity and threat) analyses at LIP and Centre levels, and an intensive scenario building workshop. All LIPs have affirmed their wish to remain part of Mistra Urban Futures. The Centre has reaffirmed the validity of the current vision and mission, and agenda of working towards Realising Just Cities as the basis for Phase 3. A draft document was presented that summarised the process to date and sketched four scenarios to indicate the spectrum of possibilities in relation to the key drivers of institutional arrangements and funding models, although other intermediate combinations of the elements are entirely possible and, indeed, more realistic.

Points raised by Board members were diverse, recognising the importance of the document and the complex nature of the challenge. One member suggested that discussion would be easier face-to-face. Opinion differed on which scenarios were realistic (ranging from all to just D). One suggestion was to expand the implications of each scenario; another was that the Vision and Mission should differ for each scenario as they are currently too generic if they fit all four. We should learn lessons about how other organisations, e.g. Institute of Development Studies, have transitioned away from core funding. It was also recognised that this process provides a good opportunity to discuss how MUF can contribute to several key fields, not least co-production, and position the Centre prominently on that basis.

LIP Directors were positive that the amount of work involved is recognised by the Board. It was a strategic choice to focus on structure in view of the importance of governance and funding to the relationship among LIPs/Nodes and hence the nature of what shared research could be done. Discussion of the actual content of the scenarios would have been appreciated, but this can hopefully be done face-to-face in order to draw on the expertise of Board members. The scenarios focus on co-production of knowledge and on Realising Just Cities – all scenarios share that ambition.

The Consortium Council would have liked the LIPs to identify what they wish to achieve by being part of an international centre; they were looking more for a vision and mission for the Centre – why are we collaborating? They think it is very important to define this Centre, what are the benefits, do needs to increase, or is everyone happy at present. The starting point should be a mission and vision for an international Centre – why is it important to work together? It is necessary to further develop the definitions of LIP and Centre –there are misunderstandings between the Consortium Council, Board and Centre that need to be resolved.

Decision:

To note the draft document on Development of Post-2019 Vision and Mission and recommend continued development on the basis of this discussion. Reflection among Secretariat and LIP Directors should continue, leading to a proposed way forward, in relation also to realistic timelines. Time should be set aside in the November meeting for a fuller discussion.

6. Financial update and budget for allocation of additional resources

The budget frames have a difference between 2016 and 2017 of 11 MSEK, Since the last Board meeting, the Secretariat and LIPs have developed their plans for use of carried over underspend on 2016 and 2017 funds, and to utilize the Strategic Reserve and unallocated funds. This is an ongoing process and plans to date have been quantified as far as possible as detailed in the circulated budget document, under the headings agreed at the March 2017 Board meeting. The process is ongoing. For instance, the precise sequence, timing and breakdown of resources as between LIPs and Secretariat for co-production resource production and training activities will be discussed in a LIP Directors' meeting before the Swedish summer break. The emphasis is on thoughtful interventions to increase

research capacity, to galvanise the comparative projects and to add value to the work by capturing lessons and enhancing both internal and external learning and training. The Board discussed favourably an extra LIP meeting, additional participation in the Kisumu conference, and such research capacity enhancement and workshops for comparative projects as had been costed but wanted to see an overall budget and less detail. Hence, the Director was asked to circulate a summary document with totals for each expenditure category once all items have been costed, which the Board would decide on by email within a week.

Decision:

To request the Director to circulate a budget with sums for each category of proposed use when fully costed, and to decide on the proposed uses within a week after receipt.

7. Research School

Planning for the launch this autumn of our Research School in Gothenburg is progressing well. This is a strategic development, designed to embrace the other two Swedish LIPs/Node and to launch a graduate-level training programme on transdisciplinary co-production. As such it will form part of the broader training agenda as already discussed under item 5. By the end of May, there had been 39 applicants, evenly split between researchers and practitioners. Most of the applicants are from the Gothenburg area and Chalmers and University of Gothenburg but as well from Stockholm and SLU in Skåne.

Decision: To note the progress of the Urban Research School and to request circulation of the structure of the curriculum when complete.

8. Next meetings

Decision:

To note the dates for Board meetings in 2017:

#25: 13 September – phone meeting (4-6pm, CEST, COP 2018 outline)

#26: 16 November – physical meeting in Kisumu, in conjunction with the second Annual International Conference, to approve the COP and budget 2018. A closed meeting of the appointed members of the Board should be scheduled before the regular Board meeting.

9. Any other business

Thomas Rosswall

No other business

Date:

16/8/17

David Simon
Director

Date:

16/8/17

Thomas Rosswall
Chair