

MAUC Strategic Plan

The purpose of the MAUC Strategic Plan is to have a document that guides all actions of MAUC towards its vision. In this way, each action and activity of MAUC should be designed and planned to fit into the strategy and the relevance of suggested activities by members or the board can be assessed easily.

The plan is a document for a medium term horizon but should be revised with some regularity, i.e. when major changes take place in the association's context, e.g. changes in GOM's policy or some major changes in the environment where MAUC operates (new structure of Aimag etc.). The present plan is expected to last from 2005 to 2008 during the time of the present GOM and while the present mayors are in office in the urban centres. The strategic plan will be discussed firstly by the MAUC board for its approval and secondly in the MAUC general assembly in 2005. In the assembly, the plan will be presented to ensure the members agreement, involvement and sharing of the plan's content.

The plan's actions and activities are all described in broad terms and it is important to develop annual work plans that follow the strategic plan, these plans should be elaborated each year and approved by the MAUC board and followed and monitored in each board meeting.

The developing of the strategic plan has the following steps:

1. Create a MAUC vision, which is the answer to the question "What does MAUC want to achieve?"
2. Define a MAUC mission answering the question "How does MAUC support the accomplishment of the Vision?" or "Why does MAUC exist?"
3. State objectives of the association to define the purposes or objectives of what MAUC wants to achieve with its actions and activities. All these objectives should support the mission statement and thereby the vision
4. Then the activities or focus areas necessary to reach the objectives should be defined in general terms to ensure that all actions and activities carried out lead towards the objectives
5. Finally, the organisational structure of MAUC, i.e. structure of board, assembly, statutes and secretarial (staff etc.) should be assessed to ensure that the right structure exists to carry out the activities suggested
6. Further, the financial basis should be analyzed in broad terms to secure that the necessary financial structure exist and funding can be provided, although a detailed financial plan is not adequate.
7. Some key assumptions should also be listed to indicate what must be fulfilled, if the plan shall succeed.

The idea is to create a plan that is strategic in the sense, that it relates strategically to the context in which MAUC operates (including its members) and try to benefit from the possibilities the context provides and address problems.

MAUC Strategy

- Development of comprehensive suggestions for changes in the administrative structure and division of task to present to GOM
- Involve other with interest in this work, e.g. researchers, academics, staff from ministries and GOM
- Establish cooperation with relevant government officials to develop the suggestions

The suggestions will especially focus on revisions to the *The Law on Administrative and Territorial Units and Their governance* from 1992, which defines the structure and responsibilities of the administrative units in Mongolia. Three areas have been pointed out where changes are needed:

1. Firstly, clearer division of tasks and responsibilities between the governor's office and the mayor's office of the urban part of soums in the Aimag centres. This problem also covers the mayors' offices in Darkhan and Erdenet and the soum governors in these urban centres. Further, recently most power has been delegated to the Aimag governors and soum governors have in fact very few tasks and little financial power.
2. Secondly, the competence in different offices of governments are overlapping, i.e. governor's office – mayor's office in soums in urban centres, Governor's office – mayor's office in Erdenet/Darkhan/UB and hural chairperson – mayor/governor.
3. Finally, the financing has been centralised including income sources from soums to Aimags and from Aimags to GOM. Aimags depend now on transfers directly from central level, while soums in fact have very little discretionary power, because most services are financed directly from aimag office.

Provide advice, information and services to members on urban development, provision of urban services and business development

Background

Most of the MAUC members have little ability to provide citizens with urban services and are also affected by unemployment and a lack of initiatives to improve the situation from local and central level. Therefore, the members need information and advice on urban development, provision of urban services and business development. The CDS for secondary city is operating within MAUC today in 5 urban centres and the experiences should be spread out to other (smaller) urban centres.

Strategy

- Modify CDS approach from secondary cities to fit the needs of smaller urban centres
- Start out with workshops on modified CDS in pillar 2 cities in each region, each city could be linked up with cities, that are parts of CDS 2
- Produce publication and other material on urban development, service provision and business development
- Spread out the MAUC publications through different medias

Exchange of experiences and training

Background

One of the key arguments for the establishment of MAUC was the need for a forum where the urban centres could meet, discuss and interchange ideas. In 2004, some events have taken place on a regional and national level, although not enough compared to the activity level of other associations in the region. Experiences from other countries show that bringing members together is extremely important for securing their support to the association and willingness to contribute and make members feel that they are part of the organisation.

Strategy

- Organisation of events, meetings, seminars and training at regional and national level to bring the members together
- Organise MAUC general assembly every second year

Link with donors, international organisations and cities

Background

The MAUC members have presented interest in linking up with cities in other more advanced countries for exchanges of experiences and/or for securing funds or equipment for projects in their urban centres. Some of the members, e.g. Ulaanbaatar and Darkhan have already linked up with foreign cities, and the other members can learn from their experiences. Although these relations can be important, the MAUC members should be aware of that cities in other countries might seek a twinning partner for cultural exchange and not necessarily to sponsor projects, and Mongolian cities should be aware of this to avoid creation of false expectations. On the other hand, sometimes a twinning arrangement starts with a cultural exchange and later the twinning partners find out how they can also implement assistance, e.g. donations of equipments and implement some projects.

The experience from associations in other developing countries is that donor agencies and international organisations fund activities and even in some cases operational costs of associations, sometimes as part of a general programme and sometimes as a specific project. With the current level of income, MAUC needs additional support, if a substantial number of seminars and workshops shall take place at national and regional level.

Strategy

- Arrange seminars to enhance the members' knowledge on international work and possibly twinning arrangements with foreign cities
- Elaborate and update a list of twinning arrangements between Mongolian cities and foreign cities
- Present information on existing projects within urban development and possibly funding arrangements to members
- Present application to organisations with funds available for associations (VNG-ACB and CityNet)
- Establish membership of relevant international organisations (UCLG, CityNet, City Alliance)
- Investigate possibly other funding sources
- Keep contact with international donors and projects with presence in Mongolia and the region

Provide information to the members and the international community

Background

MAUC needs to have easy access to its members and provide them with information on all MAUC actions and activities. In other countries associations set-up an internet page with all kind of information and publish a news letter, a magazine or something similar. With the MAUC members' limited access to the internet, the internet page is not so important for MAUC's access to the members, while a newsletter is extremely important for promoting MAUC's existence and activities.

In Mongolia already exists the MALA magazine, which presents issues on local governments in Mongolia and this has been important for the promotion of MALA. The magazine has until June 2004 been financed by the support from SIDA, Sweden, the current status is unclear although MALA hopes that finance will be provided from CIDA, Canada.

However, the internet page is important to the members (some 30 per cent) who have access to the internet and for the future. However, for the international community an

internet page is important to promote MAUC's existence. Therefore, the information should be in Mongolian and in English.

Strategy

- Investigate with MALA possibility for "sharing" the MALA publication
- Develop and discuss the concept of "MAUC News" and possibly publish first edition
- Develop a simple internet page in Mongolian and English, which gives some basic information on MAUC to members and international organisations
- Develop a more comprehensive internet page as a centre of information, that can be used by the members in the future

MAUC board and Organisation

Background

At the decision making level it is important that all members have influence on the actions implemented and decisions taken by MAUC, therefore the assembly should be established as the central forum for decision making, planning and overall strategic MAUC event. The functioning of the board meetings should be improved to secure participation of all members and presentation of an agenda for all meetings in due time.

Strategy

Board

- Plan meeting with anticipation and secure that all members participate
- Expose the board to other associations, e.g. by implementation of a study tour for the board to relevant country
- Make the MAUC board the forum for monitoring of all MAUC activities

Organisation

- Build-up a regional structure following the GOM regional structure (although Ulaanbaatar will be part of the Central Region) with regional coordinator in West, Eastern and Central and Khangai regions
- Arrange general assembly every second year

Building up the internal MAUC capacity

Background

With the small secretariat with the executive director, assistant and urban planner, execution of activities at national and regional level and a functioning board (although dominated by the central parts of Mongolia) MAUC has already demonstrated viability. The activities have been financed by member fees and some support from companies. However, the number of activities should be increased in the future and more human resources are needed in the secretariat to upscale existing activities and implement new activities in the future.

One of the key obstacles is normally the financial capacity of an association, which is decided by the ability to generate income from members, donors, private supporters or other sources. MAUC has in 2004 managed to collect 75 per cent of the budgeted fees, and it is estimated that the same amount will be collected in 2005. Further, some funds from private companies have been received. It is essential that MAUC maintains the funding from the members and local companies and extend its financial basis to support from international organisations.

Strategy

1. Secretariat

- Expand slowly the size of the secretariat to a few more staff members – a financial expert, an accountant, a training officer, an urban planner (one more), international relations, business development etc.
- Use external experts for seminars and training, primarily from MAUC's cooperation partners
- Establish MAUC office in separate building, when (and if) funding permits this

2. Finance

- Collect membership fees - calculated based on number of inhabitants in each urban centre
- Ensure that members allocate funds in the budget to be able to pay the fees
- Seek funds from external partners, e.g. donors, other associations and private companies
- Avoid that external funding funds more than 50 percent of expenses
- Seek finance from other projects to share staff members like the urban planner in the CDS project
- Practice openness and transparency in the financial administration