

**Asia URBS programme — Call for proposals for projects co-financed by the European Commission (EC) — 1B/AMS/328**

(98/C 293/08)

**1. Introduction and objectives of the Asia URBS programme**

The EU Asia URBS programme was approved by the Commission in December 1995.

The programme is a new framework for decentralised cooperation between Europe and Asia. Its broad objective is to promote partnerships between local governments and communities in Europe and in South and South-East Asia.

Decentralised cooperation is seen as a way to strengthen local government's capacity in an era of globalisation and fiscal constraints. It is now increasingly recognised that cities and towns, local governments and other institutions have a major potential contribution to make to international programmes of development cooperation through decentralised channels.

This programme arrives at a time when the relationships between Asia and Europe are growing in volume and quality, and has the following objectives:

- (a) to increase the visibility of the EU in Asia and that of Asia in Europe;
- (b) to set up partnership between local governments from the European Union Member States and South and South-East Asian countries;
- (c) to improve the quality of life of the citizens in their cities and towns in assisting local governments to strengthen their efforts towards sound urban management;
- (d) to encourage local level cooperation involving the public and the private sector;
- (e) to promote long-term cooperation initiatives;
- (f) to facilitate the exchange of experiences and know-how among local administrators and other actors of urban and community development in their areas of competence;
- (g) to promote the socioeconomic development of Asian cities and towns;

- (h) to ensure the visibility and the dissemination of the programme's achievements.

**2. Eligible countries**

Eligible countries in Asia are: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

All the European Union Member States are eligible.

**3. Participants**

The core of the programme focuses on direct cooperation between local governments in Europe and in Asia in close partnership. Local governments from the 15 European Union countries and from the 16 eligible Asian countries, with a legal status in their respective countries, are the appropriate bodies to prepare project proposals, make financial requests and implement the related activities.

The term 'local government' refers to the administrative/legislative tier of government which normally entails municipal (city/town) administration or grouping of municipalities at regional levels. Local governments in the various EU Member States and those in Asia have differing degrees of authority. Their administrative and regulatory functions are not identical, though they can be complementary: municipalities, urban communities, countries, general councils, etc. To harmonise the administrative conditions of participation, it has been agreed that any administrative entity of an urban nature or representing a town or a group of towns will be admitted as possible participants.

As a rule, each project should involve at least two local governments in Europe and one in Asia. Each project should not usually involve more than five partners.

**4. Project themes**

The Asia URBS programme emphasises socioeconomic development. As a rule, proposals may relate to any activity under the responsibilities of the participating

local authorities, provided the actions proposed are necessary components of an integrated socioeconomic strategy aiming at tackling specific identified urban problems, or anticipating future problems in a sustainable way.

In the framework of a strategy designed to move urban development planning closer to the beneficiaries, focusing on citizen participation and capacity building, the Asia URBS programme could support pilot actions, the features of which would be:

- the fact that they face problems common to a number of Asian cities in similar conditions,
- the innovative and demonstrative character of the proposed projects and solutions,
- the exchange of experiences,
- the involvement of social and economic groups and institutions (including the private sector, NGOs, CBOs) representing local community interests, seen as an essential condition for their implementation, with a view to their becoming self-financing actions in the medium term.

The following is an indicative list of themes, or combination of themes, falling within the scope of the Asia URBS programme:

- urban management, including institutional development and urban design policies and techniques,
- urban socioeconomic development including participation of women in the cities and towns, urban poverty alleviation,
- urban environment, conservation and rehabilitation,
- management of water and waste,
- urban social infrastructure.

Preference will be given to:

- new approaches within the country: local governments and their partners are encouraged to

solve urban problems by taking advantage of unused sources/opportunities, and/or by investigating new ways to solve them,

- projects which may help in the process of developing local democracy,
- project design and pilot projects where the substance and the proposed form of participatory implementation through citizen's participation have demonstrative values,
- projects involving local communities in their design and implementation,
- projects aimed at improving the quality of life of urban dwellers through adequate provision of urban services,
- projects which aim to achieve social integration,
- projects which do not involve any serious displacement of population, especially if adequate relocation alternatives are not provided, and which do not entail serious environmental threats or other negative side effects,
- projects tackling institutional/legal issues,
- projects that have replication value.

## 5. Project duration

In general, projects should last two years.

## 6. Funding

The Asia URBS programme is co-financed by the European Commission and the local governments concerned. The total budget allocated by the European Commission for the Asia URBS project is ECU 26,2 million for a three-year period.

It is important that local governments (and their partners, if any) commit agreed levels of financial resources to these projects and that this can be assessed. It should be noted that once the budget has been agreed at the project approval stage, the Commission cannot exceed the upper limit of its agreed co-financing contribution. Any additional cost must be borne by the local governments involved.

Participants can apply for two types of projects:

(a) *Project without study*

Applicants who already have a well-advanced project proposal (including partners) may submit a project proposal without undertaking a study and may apply directly for support under the development phase. Eligible European and Asian local governments that have already established links and have identified a project to submit to Asia URBS for financial and technical support can apply for two-year financing. The European Commission will co-finance on a grant basis up to 65 % of the total cost of a project for a maximum of ECU 500 000, while at least 35 % will have to come from the partners (in cash and/or in kind).

(b) *Project with study*

The main reason for organising a preliminary study, lasting no longer than six months, is to give participants the means to elaborate an in-depth operational agenda prior to entering the development phase. The study phase must be considered as a preliminary stage during which development activities are identified. The study should not be an academic one, but a pre-investment analysis geared at defining a concrete investment and development programme, and practical operational rationales. On successful completion of the study phase, and if the study has been approved through the relevant evaluation and monitoring mechanisms established by the European Commission, the project may become eligible for submission under the development phase of the programme. Participants selected for the study phase through the call for proposals will receive financial support on a grant basis from the European Commission of up to ECU 15 000. This financial support will represent up to 65 % of the total cost of the study for which at least 35 % is required from the partners (in cash or in kind).

## 7. Information and application form

Every element of the submitted proposal document (text, maps, photographs, etc.) must be in A4 format, bound in a single volume that does not exceed 50 pages, including the executive summary. An attached copy of the executive summary should be provided on a 3,5" diskette (Windows 95/MS Word 6 or later version). Detailed

information and information packages containing the application form can be found on the Asia URBS website at:

<http://www.asia-urbs.com/>

They may also be requested from The Asia URBS Secretariat and from the Delegations of the European Commission in Asia whose addresses are given below:

Asia URBS Secretariat  
Avenue Marie José 44B  
B-1200 Brussels  
Tel. (32-2) 732 87 94  
Fax (32-2) 732 87 07  
e-mail: [mailto:secretariat@asia-urbs.com](mailto:mailto:secretariat@asia-urbs.com)

European Commission  
Directorate General IB, External Relations  
Directorate for South and South-East Asia  
Unit IB/C4  
Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 200  
B-1049 Brussels

EU Delegations and representations in Asia:

Bangladesh  
House 7, Road 84  
Gulshan, Dhaka 1212  
Tel. (880-2) 88 47 30/31/32  
Fax (880-2) 88 31 18  
Mailing address:  
PO Box No GN 6086  
Gulshan, Dhaka 1212

India  
65 Golf Links  
New Delhi 110 003  
Tel. (91-11) 462 92 37/38  
Fax (91-11) 462 92 06

Indonesia  
Wisma Dharmala Sakti, 16<sup>th</sup> floor  
Jl. Jendral Sudirman 32  
Jakarta 10220  
Tel. (62-21) 570 60 76  
Fax (62-21) 570 60 75  
Mailing address:  
PO Box 6454 JKPDS  
Jakarta 10064

Nepal  
Padma Shree Building, 19<sup>th</sup> floor  
New Baneshwor, Kathmandu  
PO Box 730  
Tel. (977-1) 22 85 85  
Fax (977-1) 22 94 51

Pakistan  
House No 9, Street No 88,  
Sector G-6/3, Islamabad  
Tel. (92-51) 27 18 28 (5 lines)  
Fax (92-51) 82 26 04  
Mailing address:  
PO Box 1608, Islamabad

Philippines  
Salustiana D. Ty Tower 104, 7<sup>th</sup> floor  
Paseo de Roxas, Legaspi Village, Makati,  
Metro Manila  
Tel. (63-2) 812 64 21 (15 lines)  
Fax (63-2) 812 66 86/87

Sri Lanka  
81 Barnes Place  
Colombo 7  
Tel. (94-1) 69 97 45/69 88 19  
Fax (94-1) 69 88 20

Thailand  
Kian Gwan House II, 19<sup>th</sup> floor  
140/1 Wireless Road  
Bangkok 10330  
Tel. (66-2) 255 91 00  
Fax (66-2) 255 91 14

Vietnam  
The Metropole Centre  
56 Ly Thai To Street  
Hanoi  
Tel. (844) 934 13 00/01/02  
Fax (844) 934 13 61

#### 8. Submission of proposals

Proposals should be submitted in triplicate to:

Asia URBS Secretariat:  
Avenue Marie José 44B  
B-1200 Brussels

The external envelope/package should be marked: Asia URBS programme application

#### 9. Deadline for receipt of proposals

The closing date for submission of proposals is Wednesday 14 December 1998, 4 p.m. local time.

The three copies of the proposal must be inside a single sealed envelope/package and must be submitted by registered post. Proof of submission date will be the postmark.

All applicants will be informed of the outcome of their applications.

#### 10. Language

The proposals must be submitted in English.

#### 11. Next call

The next call is foreseen in the third quarter of 1999.

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