

Key decisions of the meetings of the Regional Business Planning Committee held in Port Moresby - 9, 10 Dec 2005

- Designing programs around varied business models that distribute risk and reward could enhance business opportunities and lead to substantial growth.
- As the business model would differ in important details from case to case, it would require detailed negotiation between DLCs at the project preparation and proposals stage, based on common understanding of a consistent set of concepts and principles. This in turn requires a minimum level of organization around an accepted set of rules (*Charter*)
- Given that the current level of association doesn't support such processes adequately, two other possibilities that would bind EAPA DLCs more closely were discussed:
 - A corporate structure such as a company or NGO, which would involve incorporation, shareholding and investment, and
 - An association with a clear charter¹, funded by subscriptions from members as well as fees earned from services.
- A variation on both models that would more closely replicate a conventional franchise were also considered. It was concluded that most of the benefits of a franchise model² could be realised with either organizational structure.
- An association was selected on the grounds of simplicity and greater acceptability at this stage. It was acknowledged, however, that a more formal entity may be the ultimate solution, which could be adopted at a later stage.
- The relationships with the Bank, WBI and other partners would remain, in principle, unchanged. The creation and adoption of a charter would be a natural development of EAPA into an entity where roles and responsibilities were better defined.
- A charter would be drafted by members or their nominees within a specified, limited period of adoption of the general principles.
- The Association would aim to develop collaborative, regional programs and attract sufficient funding to sustain member DLCs. It would also leave room for members to pursue their own local business as needed.
- The main elements of the working arrangements would be:
 - Half-yearly general meetings where the annual work program is reviewed and revised.
 - DLCs business plans upon which a regional plan and subsequent negotiations with clients, on a regional basis, may take place

¹ Refer Attachment 1: "Key elements of the charter of the new regional association"

² Refer Attachment 2: "Services offered to members"

Key elements of the charter of the new Regional Association

The entity

- The regional organizational structure will be that of an Association, governed by a charter, and would have the aim of becoming a legal corporate entity in the future.
- The association (tentatively named “**GDLN Asia Pacific**”) would be governed by a Board of Directors headed by an Executive Chair. The Board would consist (tentatively) of :
 - three representatives of member DLCs, and
 - two invited directors representing key donors or stakeholders
- The Board will be supported by employees and contracted services, initially according to the organizational structure illustrated in the attached document.

Membership

- The founding members shall be those GDLN Centers that nominate themselves as belonging to “Asia Pacific”, during the period agreed upon for formation of the Association.
- All members agree to abide by the charter.
- New members will be recommended by the Board, to be considered for admission by the members, and shall be admitted if approved by a simple majority at a General Meeting.

Relationships with current partners and stakeholders

- The Association will strive to develop the regional GDLN to the next level by strengthening the current relationships with WB, WBI and other stakeholders. As such these relationships will be enhanced or remain unchanged as far as possible.

Aims

- The primary aim of the Association shall be to substantially enhance GDLN business in the region by:
 - Developing high-value regional programs based on business models that take advantage of available capacity and provide equitable distribution of business to member DLCs
 - Working to raise all member DLCs to a common high standard in technological and program quality by providing the maximum possible assistance through technical support, training and other available means; Thereby, striving to provide uniformly high levels of service to clients across the region.
 - Building and strengthening relationships with key clients and partners on an on-going basis.
 - Researching new methods and technologies to ensure that GDLN – AP retains its competitive advantage at all times.

Working arrangements

- The Association will have at least two General Meetings per year, supplemented by consultations via e-mail, teleconference and video conference, as needed. The review, revision and adoption of business plans will be a key element of such meetings.

- The Regional Business Plan, which will be reviewed and revised annually, will include a work program that will aim to develop sufficient business to sustain member DLCs through large, regional initiatives.
- This will be integrated with and depend upon the individual DLCs' business plans which must provide, for this purpose, their:
 - Detailed financial (cost) analysis, and
 - Local initiatives and work program.
- The financial analysis provided in the annual business plans of member DLCs will be the basis upon which the Association's Business Development function will base its assumptions when developing programs and negotiating on behalf of the region.
- The regional work program will be built up through proposals and opportunities presented by member DLCs as well as opportunities developed by the dedicated business development function of the Association.
 - The work program will contain plans for at least one year
 - It will be reviewed half-yearly, at general meetings of the Association
 - Projects will be accepted by the association through the following process:
 - Discussion and negotiation by members
 - Recommendation of the Business Development function, based on the value of the program (content and VC hours), likely costs, available capacity and relevance to the region's calendar of events.
- DLCs shall remain free to pursue individual business opportunities according to local needs, in addition to the regional ones.

Finance

- GDLN – Asia Pacific will be sustained by:
 - Donor contributions
 - Administrative fees (levies) on actual income generated through its regional initiatives. A levy of 8% is proposed, to be reviewed and revised as appropriate. Revision shall require a 2/3 majority vote at a general meeting.

