

## Supporting subscription and outreach services (Working notes)

These notes intend provide some additional background and brief explanations concerning the organization of work routines, joint activities and information support for subscribers to the World Streets 2010 Program (See <http://tinyurl.com/ws-2010sub>.)

### Collaborative Outreach Program: The Last-Kilometer Connection

The World Streets project generates a considerable body of material and working tools specific to the field of sustainable transport policy and practice, but at the same time we need to face up to the reality that we live in an age of information overload. To this end, the operational complement of the program has to provide ways to make this flow of information efficiently available to the end users who need it. Moreover, this has to be routinized to the extent possible since most subscribers have neither the time or budget to handle the continuing flow of materials involved in such distribution process. We call this the last kilometer connection

The "last kilometer" or "last mile" is, of course, a term from the telecommunications and cable television industries involving the final leg of delivering connectivity from a communications provider (in this case World Streets) to an end-user (in this case you and your busy colleagues). Here it is specifically aimed at supporting and expanding the network of those agencies, local authorities, universities, operators, associations, consultants and concerned citizens working on these issues within their country or region.

The following diagram and notes are intended to give a picture of how this can be made to work.



The basic challenge in an age of information overload remains that of how to ensure that this information gets put in the hands of your busy colleagues and staff in an efficient way. We have been told by some of our long-time collaborators that they handle this through personal networks and internal list serves; but some organizations have internal communications systems which can be put to work for these purposes.

Here is the approach we take in this program to ensure smooth flow without overburdening the subscriber.

### Ensuring Time-efficient Implementation

This has to be a real partnership project if it is to function in a way that does not tie up time and resources on the part of the subscriber. Since we have already done this in a number of cases, we feel confident about how it can best be organized in a time-efficient manner. Here are some of the elements:

- \* **Routine:** We propose to start by working with the subscriber to create an efficient routine for (a) daily and then (b) monthly distribution, testing the water in the first months and then learning and adapting from there. Both routines target automatic feedback for management and fine-tuning purposes.
- \* **Daily:** There are several options here which need to be discussed. One approach we have used is to sign up of all those nominated by the subscriber to the World Streets Forum. The subscriber sends on the list of email addresses; each then receives an invitation to join the Forum, thereby guaranteeing efficient notification of postings, related materials and comments on a daily basis. But again there other ways, this needs to be discussed from the outset of the project.
- \* **Monthly:** The World Streets/Monthly Report brings together all entries for the target period into a single 6/8 page monthly bulletin -- transmitted as agreed on the first working day of the month with short descriptions and one-click access to each summarized article of the full contents for the busy reader.
- \* **Weekly?** Once we have the above down, we might look together into handling it as a weekly. If useful.
- \* **Language:** It may be that the monthly summary can be translated into the partner's main working language, to facilitate access and encourage more readership. We strongly recommend this approach.

Some of our working partners have taken the step of integrating summary information on World Streets postings directly into their websites. This can be done efficiently and in different ways. One interesting variant has been developed by the Oxford Transport Network which you can see at <http://oxtran.ning.com/>. They have placed a feed which automatically provides information on the last five articles. Other groups do the same but limited either to titles only or to the title with two or three lines of summary information. (We are told that since this information is automatically updated daily, it also serves to bring traffic to their website.)

### An example of network expansion: Italy 2009/10

Our work over 2009 with our Italian collaborators provides clear evidence as to the level of impact that such collaboration can hope to obtain.

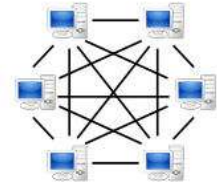
At the time of program startup in Italy on 1 July 2009 there were an average of only one or two persons coming into the World Streets sites daily, whereas as you will see in the small map to the right, coverage has greatly expanded and continues to do so. To this date more than seventy Italian cities have consulted the site (along with almost fifty from other countries, a number that surprised us but also shows that there is more potential there than we may have guessed in setting it up).

What you see here symbolizes our goal for all subscribers: namely, to extend, deepen and integrate nation-wide their sustainable transport network via this and other collaborative projects. Reaching out so far and deep requires team work.



### Linking/Networking/Partnering

World Streets provides a convenient means to channel international information, perspective and expertise to all those involved in the sector in cities, suburbs and rural areas across your country, states or region in an efficient manner. But it is at the same time important to bear in mind that our capabilities and contributions have to fit in with a growing number of advisory and collaborative programs at different levels, national and international, which are increasingly opening up new ideas, channels and opportunities in almost all countries of the world. Thus we need to figure out how to fit in and how to be a useful complement for the others.



The number of these programs and the level of expertise and vigor they offer is steadily increasing in many parts of the world, and indeed one of the challenges is to be able to sort through all of these potential sources and partners to make the right choices for your case. There are so many out there that it is clear that one can by no means get involved in all of them. Better knowledge of the players facilitates making the right choices.

As might be expected there is more going on up to now in Europe and North America (and Japan) where new mobility and sustainable transportation have taken their earliest roots. But increasingly the number and quality of programs, institutions, and collaborative arrangements are expanding rapidly in many other parts of the world as well. It is important to know about them.

The opportunities for creative synergies are considerable and need to be kept in mind as each of these programs advances. It is 2010 and if we have learned one thing over these last years it is that "no man is an island".

To put this into perspective, one good starting point will be found on the W/S site in the left column about halfway down. There you will see that the better part of two hundred outstanding programs and groups have been identified and linked, under the heading "Key Sources, Links and Blogs". This impressive collection includes what, to the best of our knowledge, are most of those groups and programs which are currently leading the charge, not only in Europe and North America but in many other parts of the world as well.

This is more than just a passive listing; each of the indicated groups can be called up directly at a single click from the site. Moreover, this list is continuously being inspected and added to on a selective basis, with the help of recommendations from our work partners and contributors in all parts of the world.

Just above this listing, you will see a special Combined Search Engine (CES) labeled "Search all key sources". To give the reader an idea of its potential usefulness, we have just carried out a search of two sets of keywords, the first "Finland and taxis" and the second "Finland and carfree". Try it yourself. And while, like any Google search, it takes some care to navigate through the results, what is interesting here is that the resulting listing of sources is relatively compact and further that the references all come from the leading organizations included in this listing. It is, of course, not a solution, but it certainly gives one a good start.

But there is more to it than that: in our collaborative project developed with a team from advanced studies unit of the University of Michigan "Building a Worldwide Learning Community", which you can access at <http://knowledge.newmobility.org> a second Combined Search Engine which trolls and reports on more than 800 leading organizations and sources working on these matters in countries around the world. These are tools which should be useful to subscriber and its associates in their own work.

### Joint Events: Conferences, Seminars, Workshops, Media projects

Once the network has been put in place and starts to function, based on past experience it can be expected that the communication, questions and ideas will start to flow both ways. This is a point which needs to be stressed, inasmuch as the majority of programs and sites working in this area rely for the most part on *one-way* communications. That sort of thing saves the organizers time and trouble and certainly has its uses; but it is not the way this interactive program works.



You can get a feel for this process of creative interaction in the large diagram above where it can be seen that the two-way flow extends not only to World Streets editorial offices, but also to the very large number of collaborators and partners working on these issues at the leading edge in places around the world.

It is thus quite normal, once the network is in place and warms up, that discussions get started about other forms of cooperation and exchange. There is important potential for collaborating, co-organizing or otherwise participating in and supporting seminars, workshops and events. This process of international reinforcement has proven useful in many cities and countries in the past, and we have full experience in how to handle this in a workmanlike manner.

Subscribers and participants are invited to suggest topics, events, working tools, or projects which they feel need to be more broadly known, and for which the fully independent reputation of World Streets and our international collaborators and work partners ensures quality, accuracy and relevance. Topic areas in which we have previously carried out this kind of collaboration include, by way of example, the following:

- **Carsharing:** Organization and policy support to accelerate carshare development .  
-- > World Carshare Consortium at [www.worldcarshare.com](http://www.worldcarshare.com)
- **Car-Free Days:** Collaboration in support of CFDSs and similar demonstration projects  
-- > World Car-Free Days Alliance at [www.worldcarfreedays.com](http://www.worldcarfreedays.com)
- **New Mobility Weeks:** -- > For further background see draft at <http://tinyurl.com/nmweek-pdf>
- **Collaborative media projects,** including with university media programs in cooperation with groups working with various sustainable development projects: -- > See [www.media.newmobility.org](http://www.media.newmobility.org)
- **City cycling/PBS:** Ditto for bicycle sharing programs and improved integration of cycling into the overall sustainable transportation strategy and package.  
-- > See World City Bike Collaborative at [www.worldcitybike.org](http://www.worldcitybike.org)
- **New Mobility City Dialogues:** -- > For details - <http://www.dialogues.newmobility.org>

These are just a few first ideas; once the working links are established and the communications start to flow both ways, others will certainly emerge.

In all cases participation generally includes both existing related or new programs in the country and one or more of the representatives of leading groups or experts with whom we and you are in contact in the areas concerned. Sustainable transportation is an international challenge, so we do well to make smart use all of the assets we can lay our hands on to make our projects and programs succeed.