



FCM Approach to International Municipal Development

Introduction

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) is the national association representing municipal government in Canada. Its mission is to improve the quality of life in all communities by promoting strong, effective and accountable municipal government. The International Centre for Municipal Development (ICMD) represents FCM internationally. It works to help local governments around the world develop their capacity to deliver basic services, promote economic growth and encourage the participation of their citizens.

Municipalities, as the order of government closest to the people, are recognized as the key to development. They supply basic services that create healthy and livable cities for men, women and children. They provide and manage infrastructure to sustain the local community. They support economic growth that provides opportunities for even the poorest among their citizens. They also give people in communities a voice to influence the policies and programs that affect them.

At the same time, municipalities struggle with problems such as poverty, pollution, and lack of funding. Globalization of local economies, decentralization of powers from the central government without adequate resources, population growth in urban centers, and increased demands for democratic rights are all factors that impact a municipality's capacity to address the needs of its citizens.

Since 1987, FCM has worked with municipalities around the world to help them improve their capacity to deliver quality of life improvements to all of their citizens. Through its experience with overseas and Canadian partner municipalities, FCM has developed an integrated approach that views municipal government within a system encompassing policies, networks and institutions. This approach, which is explained below, is the basis for FCM's relationship with its partner municipalities in Canada and overseas.

The FCM Municipal Capacity Development Framework sees a municipality as comprised of two entities – the municipal government and the community.

A well-managed municipal government comprises three key elements:

1. good strategic leadership (council, mayor, senior staff, etc);
2. good corporate management (finance, human resource, other departments, etc) and;
3. good service delivery (waste management, water, economic services, social services, etc).

A municipal government and its community are linked together through various forms of governance links (such as elections, open council meetings, task forces, committees, and traditional or informal mechanisms of dialogue, etc.) that enable them to communicate on the needs and problems of the community.

The municipality is also reliant on its external environment:

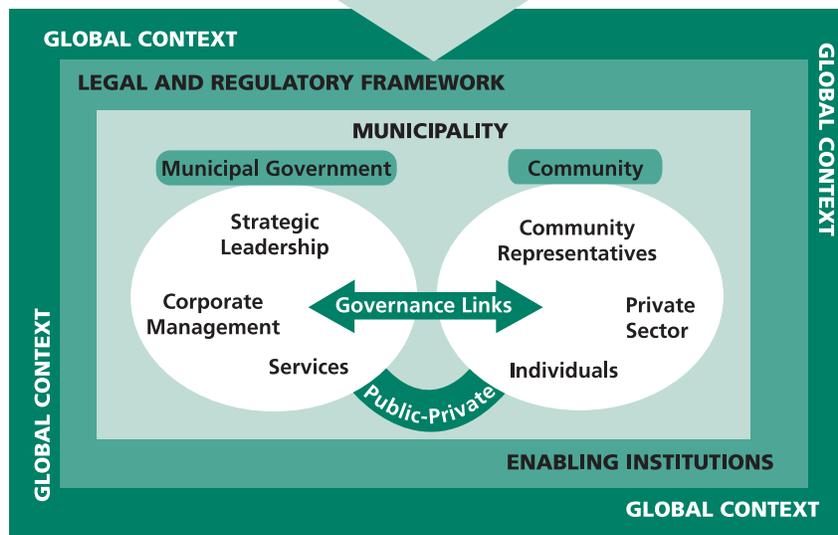
- It is influenced by the policies, laws, and regulations of the country – the legal and regulatory framework
- It interacts with various national enabling institutions that help the municipal government deliver basic services to the community
- It is affected by the global context.

The Municipal Capacity Development Framework

FCM envisions the municipal world as a system in which municipal government interacts with a multitude of players (such as elected officials, municipal employees, community groups, private sector, etc.) and forces in order to deliver services to the community. The Municipal Capacity Development Framework was designed to illustrate these relationships. FCM uses this framework to analyze the context within which projects will operate, to identify the strengths and weaknesses of existing structures, relationships and capacities, to define areas that need support within a given municipality, and to target where its interventions should best be placed within a municipality and the national, regional and global municipal contexts.

Working with key stakeholders within the system of municipal government, FCM delivers programs that help municipalities enhance their strategic leadership, strengthen their corporate management and improve their delivery of services to the community. FCM supports municipal governments to improve their capacity to involve the community in its decision making and planning processes. FCM also helps local government find ways to cooperate with community organizations and private businesses in developing alternative service delivery mechanisms.

While FCM concentrates its work on ways to improve management processes within municipal government, it recognizes that municipalities exist within a larger world that has a significant impact on how municipal governments operate. FCM helps to develop policies and programs for municipal development at the national level within a country through its work with national governments, national associations of municipal governments, research centers, universities, training centers, professional associations and other institutions involved with municipal





affairs. FCM programs support these enabling institutions by helping them develop better methods to address issues, lobby for policy change, build networks, improve communication tools, and develop programs for strengthening members' capacities.

At the international level, FCM works within a global network for policy development and advocacy on municipal issues and priorities. For example, FCM is a member of and works with United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), which plays a leading advocacy role, representing local government and promoting its interests to the United Nations and other key international agencies. Through its activities, FCM is able to link local municipal development with key networks of national and regional associations and institutes – so that global networks gain the capacity to work at the local level, and issues of importance to municipal government are brought into international policy and governance debates.

Institutional Capacity Development Framework

Whereas the Municipal Capacity Development Framework helps FCM and its partner municipalities identify where they will make their interventions, the Institutional Capacity Development Framework assists FCM and its partners in identifying how they will make interventions. FCM has identified four stages of institutional capacity development that municipalities typically move through to improve their capacity to deliver results. FCM uses this framework to help municipalities develop model projects. While given its inherent complexity, municipal reality rarely fits easily into a linear process, nonetheless many of our partners have found this conceptual tool useful in designing their projects. During the course of implementing a project, this same framework is used to monitor how well results are being achieved, and at the end of a project to evaluate its successes and failures.

Stage 1: Diagnosis and Consensus

In the first stage of institutional capacity development, project partners usually identify the development problem and agree to a plan of action. During this stage, a number of things will be accomplished: the issue to be addressed will be clarified with project partners, a needs analysis of the development problem will be carried out, diagnosis of the capacity of the municipality to address the problem will be made, and the goal and purpose of the project will be clearly defined.

What is important during this stage is that there is broad-based agreement on the identified problem and its solutions. For example, a municipality might identify that it needs to improve its solid waste management system. The partner municipality will assess the current solid waste collection system using the Municipal Capacity Development Framework and identify where improvements should be made. They might decide that they need to improve the management of the waste disposal site, develop a financial plan for capital development, identify compliance measures with the country's new Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, and implement a recycling program within the community. The result at the end of this stage will be an agreement between the partner municipality and FCM on a plan of action for building knowledge and developing systems to engineer improvements in the identified areas.

Stage 2: Knowledge and Skills Building

In this stage, project partners build the knowledge and skills needed to develop their capacity to address the goal and purpose of the project. Based on the diagnosis and needs assessment in Stage 1, projects will implement training programs, technical exchanges and other activities that enhance municipal participants' awareness and understanding of potential solutions to their identified problem.

For example, training courses might be organized for municipal staff on landfill operations and management processes, health and safety issues associated with landfill operations, and perhaps specific training for operators of heavy equipment. A technical exchange program might be organized to examine a model recycling program and waste collection system in the Canadian partner municipality. The result at the end of this stage should be a municipal staff who are trained and highly motivated to apply new knowledge and skills to their work.

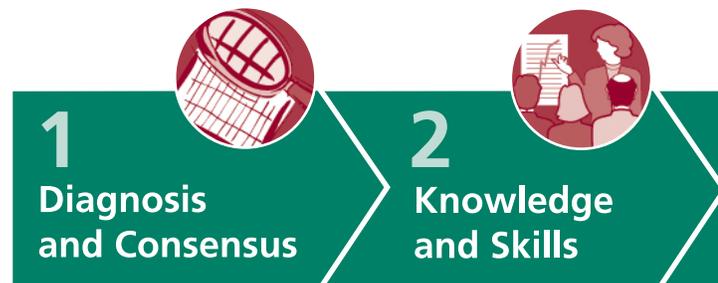
Stage 3: Systems Development

This stage focuses on developing the systems, tools and procedures that the municipal staff will need to maximize the knowledge and skills attained during stage 2. These tools and systems should be designed so that the solutions identified will be sustainable and will continue long after the project is completed. For example, the municipality might design a Landfill Design and Operations Manual that will guide the daily operations of the disposal site. It might also design a public information and educational campaign to ensure a successful recycling operation.

At the end of this stage, the result should be new operating processes (developed and in place) for a well-run, environmentally-sound operation of the solid waste disposal site, and new public education programs (established and in place) that encourage citizen participation in recycling programs.

Stage 4: Institutionalization

Changing the ways things are done is a very important stage in the development of municipal capacity, and perhaps the most difficult stage of the process. Although Stages 1 to 3 may take considerable effort, they can be relatively straightforward – identify a problem, make a plan, acquire skills and develop systems. But actually applying new learning, systems and approaches in a manner that leads to sustained change within a municipality can be



1
**Diagnosis
and Consensus**

Identify the development problem and agree to a plan of action

2
**Knowledge
and Skills**

Improve the capacity, knowledge and skills of individuals to address the development issues



a major challenge. In Stage 4 municipalities are engaged in changing the way they operate by testing and applying the new knowledge, procedures, tools and systems that they developed during Stages 1 through 3. This may often require in-depth training to ensure that participants can effectively apply what has been developed during earlier stages.

As organizational change is never static, it will also be necessary to monitor and evaluate implementation of the new solution in order that it can be refined to meet evolving circumstances. The sign that sustainable change has been achieved lies in the effective implementation of plans, procedures and systems that will endure and continue to evolve even after the project ends.

As municipalities work through the four stages of Institutional Capacity Development, they address capacity problems to improve operations or deliver basic services to the community. Over the long term, it is anticipated that these improvements in municipal capacity will have a meaningful impact in the community and result in an improved quality of life for its citizens. Improved capacity for solid waste management, for example, will result in a cleaner, healthier environment for the citizens of that municipality.

Results-based Management

Whether a municipality has developed a new solid waste collection system that has resulted in a cleaner environment and healthier citizens, or has developed a long-range strategic plan that will bring jobs and resources to the community, FCM international programs target results that can be achieved immediately, as well as over the life of the project, and that will have an impact on improving the quality of life for people in the community.

Immediate results (outputs) are those achieved during Stages 1 through 3 of the Institutional Capacity Development Framework. A diagnosis is made and consensus on solutions is reached. Knowledge and skills within the municipality have been developed. Systems and tools have been built, improving the capacity of the municipality to solve its identified problem. Stage 4 represents the medium-term result (outcome): the ability of a municipality to apply its new knowledge, skills, and systems to the problem at hand. Over the long term, FCM programs should result in concrete quality of life improvements to the population of the municipality (impact). FCM identifies separate levels of results (outputs, outcomes and impacts) in order to help municipalities focus on immediate tasks while keeping in mind the overall purpose and ultimate goal of the intervention.

Essential to all FCM's programs is the involvement and promotion of women in the decision-making, implementation and benefits of development projects. Special efforts need to be made to assess and analyze how proposed activities will impact differently on men and women, and what steps need to be taken to ensure that all people can benefit in the same way from the project. Equally important to FCM's programs are the concepts of a healthier and more sustainable physical environment, and the promotion of economic growth in municipalities that will directly benefit the poor and marginalized population of the community.

Municipal Resources

FCM receives generous financial support from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to carry out most of its work overseas. FCM's member municipalities provide essential support through their volunteer involvement in programs. The core of FCM programs is partnerships and exchanges between Canadian and overseas municipal governments. Canadian municipalities and their municipal associations at the provincial and federal levels have responsibilities and experience relevant to the challenges facing municipal governments in developing countries.

Generally, these partnerships are achieved through technical missions in Canada and overseas supplemented by small funds (for equipment and training, etc.) in support of specific objectives. From FCM's experience, sharing knowledge, experience and best practices from municipal practitioner to municipal practitioner realizes positive results.

FCM also provides funds for policy development, knowledge development, and dissemination of best practices at the national, regional, and multilateral levels. Its work with regional and global networks enhances the opportunities for the priorities and experience of local governments to be put on the table during policy and governance debates.

FCM is more than just a funder of municipal development. The resources it provides go well beyond the transfer of funds to support a project. FCM gathers, develops and disseminates knowledge. It builds capacity of national and global networks. It develops links to communities, private enterprises, and regional and multilateral institutions. Ultimately, it helps municipal governments around the world develop strong, effective and accountable governments that improve the quality of life in their communities.



3
Systems Development
Develop tools, systems and procedures to help municipalities achieve sustainable solutions

4
Institutionalization
Incorporate these new skills and systems into day to day operations to create sustainable improvements

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