

I. INTRODUCTION

Increasingly, cities are defining the way people live in Asia. The management of cities and their expanding infrastructure is therefore of crucial importance. The Municipal Management Forum, which was hosted by ADBI in Tokyo 16-20 February 1998, provided an opportunity for officials from various Asian cities to learn about more effective ways of managing their city organizations.

The Forum was jointly developed by ADBI, the Bank, the project consultants, and professional and academic staff from the Australian Institute of Municipal Management. During the month prior to the Forum, the consultants traveled throughout East and South Asia to meet with participants and their colleagues to discuss management issues in their cities.

This report is a summary of the Forum. It attempts to capture the highlights for the busy city manager while providing examples of innovation in city management in various parts of Asia.

Over the last two decades, public administration everywhere has gone through dramatic changes in line with ever broader political, social, and economic reforms. Governments have tended to discard large bureaucratic structures in favor of greater emphasis on the process of governance. They have looked to the market and other mechanisms to develop, regulate, and deliver goods and services to the community. To this end government organizations have become smaller and more focused on the long-term strategic issues facing their communities.

Recognizing this broader context of change, the Forum ensured that the subject was treated as an important cornerstone of debate and discussion throughout the five days. While the rate

There is no going back to the large monolithic structures of government that existed in the past.

of administrative reform is different for different cities, the general consensus was that there is no going back to the large monolithic structures of government that existed in the past. What comes out of the discussion is the importance of a strong sense of community and the need for visionary leadership in municipal management. City managers are vested with the responsibility of empowering communities to take ownership and control of their situation and to become engaged in the decisionmaking that concerns their collective futures.

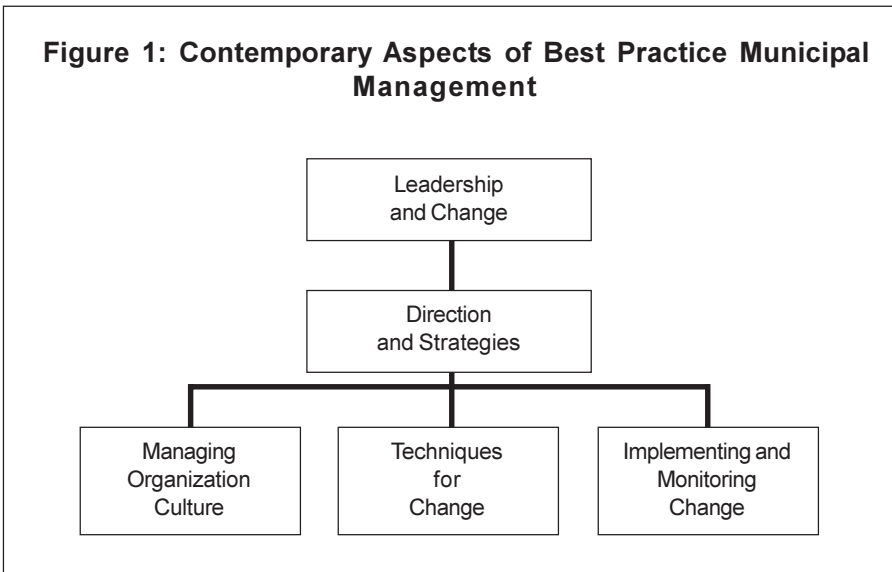
Contemporary approaches to effective city or municipal management look to innovative and creative ways of addressing the many issues before us. The complexity of functions across Asian cities means that there are many ways of managing cities to improve the delivery of works and services. There are, of course, also generally accepted approaches to effective municipal management. In this chapter, a brief overview is provided of these approaches, followed by an outline of the report.

Effective municipal management is characterized by:

- appropriate leadership and the management of change,
- clear direction,
- an appropriate organization culture,
- a range of appropriate techniques for change, and
- a performance orientation for implementing and managing change.

Effective leadership advocates a clear vision of what is possible. It is also one that recognizes and responds to the challenges of change. Effective leadership gives ownership to key stakeholders, vesting in them responsibility commensurate with

the authority they seek. In turn, the stakeholders' vision provides clear direction for the organization through strategic, corporate, and business plans. Underpinning leadership and direction is a concern for organizational culture, the use of specific techniques for change, and an effective



performance monitoring system. These concepts are presented in Figure 1.

The structure of the rest of the report is as follows.

Chapter II identifies the challenges of change and discusses the need to alter our ways of thinking if we are to effectively address the issues facing municipal management. Keshav Varma's presentation on the challenges he faced as Commissioner for the city of Ahmedabad in India describes a vivid example of such a paradigm change.

Chapter III highlights the challenges inherent

in creating economic development to sustain the communities within Asian cities and the need to enhance urban infrastructure so that its use is optimized for the benefit of the whole community. Richard Gordon's dynamic presentation on his role as Chairman and Administrator of Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority shows how one city reversed a perception of economic doom and gloom into one of optimism and enthusiasm for the new Philippines.

Chapter IV focuses on the importance of effective leadership in municipal management. A case study is presented by the mayor of Naga City in the Philippines, Jesse Robredo, an exemplary leader who demonstrates through action and involvement with people at all levels of the municipal hierarchy that action and involvement are key ingredients in effective leadership. This chapter also includes presentations by Omar Kamil, Glen Fukushima, and Asad Ali Shah.

Chapter V summarizes the conceptual material presented in the Forum. The chapter highlights comments made by participants relating to developing implementation strategies to achieve a city's vision, especially those relating to organizational structure and human resource management.

Chapter VI discusses the idea that municipalities provide services to customers — people who live and work in the city — not just those who own land. Mr. Oxley's and Mr. Robredo's two quite different approaches to creating a customer focus are covered here.

Chapter VII opens with a comment on contemporary approaches to financial management before reviewing Mr. Varma's presentation on how the City of Ahmedabad developed the capacity to issue municipal bonds.

Chapter VIII highlights the system of local government in Japan as presented by Jiro Kubota and innovations in municipal management in Tokyo.

The participants had the opportunity to visit several urban development innovations in Tokyo as guests of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and CityNet. These innovations included a land readjustment project, a new waterfront city, and a public-private joint venture urban development project in Yokohama.

Chapter IX presents the closing remarks of representatives of ADB and the Australian Institute of Municipal Management, as well as the Dean of the ADBI.