

# Benchmarking Project News

**RETA 5959: Enhancing Municipal Services Delivery Capability – Phase 2**

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## Updates and Events

### *Institutionalizing Improved Service Delivery*

To achieve lasting improvements to service delivery, the techniques of benchmarking and continuous improvement must be institutionalized.

Effective organizational arrangements are needed to manage the process, identify improvement projects and monitor progress so that the momentum for change is generated and sustained.

The RETA core cities have established their organizational structures and conduct periodic meetings of their respective Steering and Management Committees and the Project Working Group.

The First Cluster Mayors' Steering Committee Meeting is a major upcoming activity scheduled for the second quarter of 2002. During these meetings, the core city and the participating cluster cities are expected to sign a Memorandum of Understanding and agree on the implementation arrangements and schedules.

### *NGO Participation*

From the outset of the Project, it was anticipated that nongovernment organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) would facilitate the establishment of community participation and feedback mechanism on the effectiveness of municipal service delivery.

The inclusion of NGO and CBO representatives as official members of the Project Steering and Management Committees, and City Improvement Teams has further institutionalized and strengthened their role in improving service delivery.

This emphasis on multi-stakeholdership is essential on change management, particularly in planning and decision-making and is one of the Project's notable achievements thus far.

### **About the Project:**

Improvements in delivery of services are seen as the most direct channel for governance to impact poverty reduction and quality of life. This Project demonstrates that the techniques of benchmarking and continuous improvement are useful in promoting change and improving service delivery.

The Project aims to:

- develop a capacity within selected cities in India, Philippines and Sri Lanka to drive and implement change;
- encourage teamwork and networking across participating cities through comparing of performance indicators, sharing of experiences and learning good practices in the delivery of services; and
- establish a mechanism for participation and feedback from the community, nongovernment organizations, and community based organizations on the effectiveness of delivery of municipal services, and publicize the results through media.

### **ADB Reorganization**

The Asian Development Bank implemented a major internal reorganization effective 1 January 2002 to strengthen the country focus of its activities. As a result, RETA 5959: Enhancing Municipal Services Delivery Capability – Phase 2, was reassigned to the Regional and Sustainable Development Department / Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Social Sectors Division (RSDD/RSAN). Mr. Allen Williams, Principal Urban Development Specialist with Mr. Bradford Philips, Director are administering the RETA.

## Coordinator Training

The Coordinators Training Phase II (Benchmarking and Networking) will be conducted by the ACIG during the second and third quarters of 2002.

In the meantime, core city coordinators are conducting the Phase I (Continuous Improvement Skills) training for the city improvement teams and will soon commence with the participating cluster satellite cities.

## Networking

So far, the networking aspect of the Project is limited within the recipient countries through formal interaction among the Mayors of the core and participating cities.

It is envisioned that a more active exchange of ideas and experiences will be established among all the cities in the Project as well as the Asia Pacific region.

One such venue is the upcoming **Asian Mayors' Forum** on *July 8 to 11, 2002 in Bangkok, Thailand*.

The Forum intends to strengthen capacity building efforts in the region through infusion of new ideas, examination of promising tools, techniques and practices and proposing of sustainable improvement strategies for poverty reduction and social development. The theme of the Forum is "Good Governance for Poverty Reduction and Social Development".

The Forum will provide participating cities in the Project an opportunity to share and present their accomplishments and successes in the use of benchmarking and continuous improvement in enhancing service delivery.

## Institutionalizing Change

Change is always difficult. People resist change, and systems form barriers to prevent and dampen change and its effects. For this reason, change must be well founded, understood and supported by people, fully documented, piloted, monitored and, above all, managed well. Essential to managing this change is the existence of an organizational structure that focus solely on service improvements which is beyond personalities or rank and dictates of projects.

In the city of Colombo, Sri Lanka, they established the Institutional Development Committee (IDC) with middle managers as members. The IDC meets regularly and deliberates on proposals for change and service improvements.

In Cebu, Philippines, the city government re-launched the Services and Procedures Rationalization in Government (SPRING) Program. This Program is being implemented in two schemes:

- **Case Studies** involve the documentation, analysis, and design of services and their associated systems and procedures as well as proposals for Systems Improvement
- **Systems Improvement Projects** involve the implementation of approved Systems Improvement proposals

Cebu also developed a SPRING Manual that will guide City management and staff on the implementation of the Program. The Manual sets out the procedures on how to identify and propose service improvements. It also establishes accountability throughout the process through the created structures such as: the Steering Committee; Management Group and its Secretariat; Training Group; Case Study Teams; and Systems Improvement Teams.



(clockwise) Cebu coordinators strategize during the team-building exercise; Bangalore coordinators prepare the Report for their case study; and Colombo coordinators discuss causes of findings during group work.



## Enhancing Competencies

Capacity building for the Project is designed to focus on the skills of the coordinators (Phase I: Skills Training on Continuous Improvement) and move to comparing and sharing of service improvements (Phase II: Benchmarking and Networking).

The Phase I training courses were conducted over a one week period with both theoretical and technical learning, and practical exercises in the application of knowledge. The topics covered were:

- Overview of the Project, roles of Project Stakeholders and communication
- Service Selection and Project Definition
- Process Mapping
- Measuring Performance
- Formulating and Conducting Customer Surveys
- Measuring Quality, Cost and Timeliness
- Reporting Results
- Planning a Continuous Improvement project

This is an example of one of the case services studied during the Phase I training.

When the cities have completed their analyses and measurement of selected services, they will undergo Phase II which deals with Benchmarking and Networking.



Bob Hood with Bangalore coordinators inspect one of the on-going trenching works.

### Sample case service:

**Location:** Bangalore City Corporation (BMP), India  
**Project:** Improvement of Trenching Management (Inspection) in BMP

**Goal:** Improve the citizen's satisfaction level in the City's process of managing trenching works.

### Methodology:

- Studied on-going trenching works and details of existing method.
- Documentary review including terms and conditions of contracts and agreements.
- Studied performance measures covering inputs, process and outputs.
- Customer satisfaction survey and analysis.

### Opportunities for Improvement:

- Timeframe for BMP's inspection of trenching works is not preplanned or scheduled.
- Contractors are not briefed, prior to civil works, on the details (terms and conditions) of the agreement.
- Program of inspections not being published and reported to higher authorities.
- Terms and conditions in the agreement with the contractors do not specify or include site specific safety measures.
- The site terms and conditions are given only to agency and not the contractor.

### Recommendations:

- Develop a procedure that creates safety measures in the terms and conditions that are unique for a specific trenching site, to include cycle or frequency of inspections.
- Train the inspectors to assess risks and how to apply the above procedure.
- Purchase a computer or utilize existing computers, to record the inspection schedule, register the results and also highlight to management those scheduled inspections that are late, overdue, or not registered.