

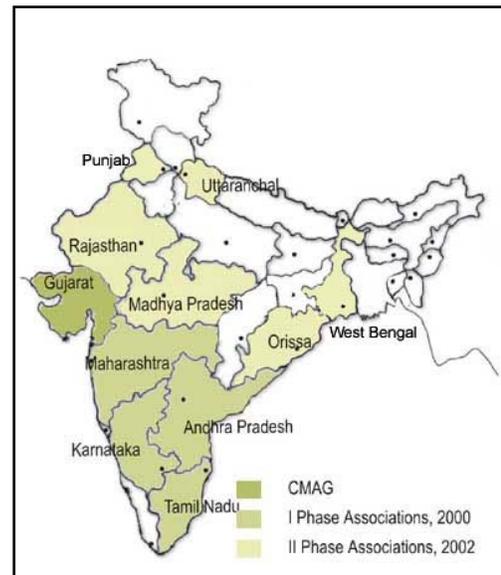
City Managers' Association Development, India

Project Name: City Managers' Association Development
Client Name: US Asia Environmental Partnership-a program of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
Country: India
Length of assignment: September 2001 - September 2005

Project Brief

Urban local bodies, anywhere in the world, are constantly grappling with problems. It's fire fighting for city managers every day. They have to face acute and varied pressures. There is a general perception that municipal authorities function poorly, and not to the satisfaction of the citizens! This may or may not be true for all cities. In the rapidly changing urban scenario, however, there are encouraging signs of leadership and innovation among urban local bodies, initiatives that are indicative of administrative and political will for improving urban management.

UMC promotes sound urban development in Asia, focusing on financial management, decentralization, association building, citizen participation, community development, environmental policy, participant training, performance measurement and strategic planning. UMC provides technical assistance activities. It provides advisory services to newly formed and established municipal associations and local government leagues; gives guidance to local governments participating in Resource Cities or other donor funded local governments; facilitates information generation and information sharing and enables facilitation of grants, study tours and conferences.



Detailed Description of the Actual Services Provided by UMC

Since 1997, UMC has established 13 city managers associations with funding from USAID. These CMAs are located in Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Uttaranchal, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Developing the capacity of India's CMAs is a critical step in professionalizing the country's urban local bodies, raising awareness of urban issues with the state and central governments and advocating for greater decentralization and financial/administrative autonomy. UMC assisted in designing and conducting the formation workshops for these City Managers' Associations, in drafting their memorandums of associations and assistance for their formal registration. UMC also provided assistance to recruit and train secretariat for the CMAs.

UMC conducts annual workshops to build capacity of secretariat in financial management, grants management, service delivery, association development, strategic planning, performance measurement, staff development, environmental management and performance measurement. UMC has also conducted several orientation programs for the CMA board members and administered grants to hire coordinators and purchase needed office equipment for each of the associations. UMC

has provided training on best practices dissemination and continues to facilitate the sharing of information among CMAs and local governments throughout India; the organization published a toolkit “Institutionalizing City Managers’ Associations in India” as a guide towards sustainable city managers’ associations.

UMC continues to serve as a mentor for the CMAs in India and provides on-going guidance on association development issues. Technical assistance activities include:

- ✓ Advisory services to newly formed and established municipal associations and local government leagues.
- ✓ Guidance to local governments participating in Resource Cities or other donor funded local governments.
- ✓ Facilitates of information generation and information sharing.
- ✓ Facilitation of grants, study tours and conferences.

Some achievements of these associations have been:

- ✓ A sense of camaraderie among city managers across sectors. The creation of a strong, sustainable network of local government professionals that provide targeted, demand-driven professional development, information/research, networking and advocacy services to municipalities.
- ✓ Continued Education Opportunities- “Continued Education” is a concept well recognized in the corporate sector. The concept has been well-received and paid off extremely well in terms of enhanced efficiency and improved skills. Unfortunately the same has very recently percolated to the government sector. CMAs organise regular workshops and hands-on training programs for their membership on a diverse areas ranging from strategic planning, effective team building, financial management to hard core technical areas.
- ✓ Increased knowledge and easy access to best practices/good initiatives and technological knowhow from across the country as well as from other developed nations. To date, city managers’ associations have documented and disseminated more than 200 number of innovative practices, which have led to the overall improvement of urban management in India. This documentation has led to a number of study tours and facilitation of replication of these practices. CMAs also pair up ULBs to facilitate transfer of these successful initiatives.

