GOOD PUBLIC WORKS MANAGEMENT IN FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES

Building Capacity for Sound Public Works in First Nations Communities

A Planning Handbook

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada

Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada

Public Works and Government Services Canada

Travaux publics et Services gouvernementaux Canada

Canada

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I. INTRODUCTION

A good public works infrastructure is essential to the health, safety and well-being of any community. Unless, a community has a solid basis of well-maintained roads, a good water supply, sound sewage and solid waste disposal and a workable planning system, among other things, improved social well-being and economic expansion will be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve and sustain.

Many First Nations communities are adept at handling public works. Others, less so. This handbook is a planning guide for a First Nations or a group of First Nations whose goal is to achieve significant improvements in their capacity to govern and manage public works in their communities.

The handbook should serve First Nations in a variety of situations. Some examples include:

- Those First Nations who are negotiating or implementing self-government agreements that will provide for increased responsibilities in public works; or
- First Nations who are moving to new communities where the public works challenge will be considerably changed from that of their former community; or
- First Nations who are about to undergo a major building program or who are about to take over a complex new facility; or
- First Nations who are unhappy with the current state of their public works function and are looking to make substantial changes.

The Handbook is divided into three major sections addressing the following questions:

- What is public works? (Section II)
- What is building capacity and what are commonly used approaches and tools? (Section III)
- How can a community develop and implement a capacity-building plan for public works? (Section IV)

PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook is a planning guide for a First Nations or a group of First Nations whose goal is to achieve significant improvements in governing and managing public works in their communities.

II. WHAT IS PUBLIC WORKS?

This section examines three aspects of public works: 1) its scope - that is, the set of functions encompassed by the term; 2) the range of governing and management tasks or activities that a sound public works demands; and 3) the reasons why public works is so challenging for most communities.

A.   Scope of Public Works

Public works covers the broad spectrum of activities essential to the smooth running of any community. These activities tend not to be controversial unless they are not functioning properly. In that sense, they are often 'taken for granted'.

Included in the term public works are very visible community assets such as government buildings and schools, including their upkeep and maintenance. Further, the term encompasses the roads, bridges and related infrastructure such as street lighting as well as the ability to keep these in good repair and to clear snow in the winter. Providing fire protection, critical in remote communities for house fires and for bush and forest fires, and ensuring energy supplies for heating and electricity in an efficient and environmentally friendly manner are also part of public works, as is work site safety.

Other elements include systems for collecting, treating and disposing of sewage and solid waste, for providing potable water, for developing and maintaining parks and recreation facilities, for wharves, harbours and airstrips, for land management and expropriation and for the development of community plans and zoning by-laws.

Finally, public works might also entail, in some communities, regulating the construction of private buildings through such means as building and fire codes.

B.   Governing and Managing Tasks

Governing is the primary responsibility of political leaders in a community. Managing, on the other hand, tends to be the responsibility of technicians or staff. In practice, there is often considerable overlap between these tasks.

Governing responsibilities for public works are many and varied. Among other things, Chief and Council establish the overall direction of the public works function, adopt by-laws and policies to guide staff and members, approve long term capital plans, set yearly budgets, establish the public works organization, ensure clarity in the roles and responsibilities of the principal actors, and ensure that the rest of the First Nations staff provide the necessary financial and administrative support. In performing these governance tasks, Councils will need to be mindful of overall principle of sound governance - transparency, accountability to community members for their actions, the importance of maintaining high standards of personal conduct, the provision for redress for unfair treatment of members and so on.

Within the parameters established by Council and by other governments, managing responsibilities include:

- *Planning* - because of the long lead times required to build community assets;
- *Designing* - public works facilities are complex and in many cases highly technical;
- *Financing* - community assets are expensive to build and maintain;
- *Constructing* - these challenges vary from play structures in parks to multi-million dollar schools;

- *Maintaining* - all of the physical assets of a community from roads to buildings to potable water systems require constant upkeep and regular maintenance;
- *Regulating* - because many of the public works functions affects health and safety of the community or have the potential for harming the environment, they are often inspected to ensure that the facilities themselves and in some cases their operators are meeting certain standards often set out in a law;
- *Responding to Emergencies* - such emergencies could be spawned by water quality, environmental spills, fire, floods, etc.

Combining the range of public works functions with the principal governing and managing tasks leads to the following definition of public works.

WHAT IS PUBLIC WORKS?

Public works, therefore, consists of the governing, planning, design, financing, construction, maintenance, emergency response and related regulatory regimes pertaining to:

- public buildings (government buildings, schools, libraries, public housing, etc.)
- roads, bridges and related infrastructure
- work place and construction site safety
- systems for providing potable water
- systems for collecting, treating and disposing of sewage
- solid waste collection and disposal
- development of community plans and zoning by-laws
- parks and recreation
- wharves and harbours
- community electrification & energy management
- land management and expropriation
- fire protection & suppression

Public works may also entail, in some instances, the regulation of the construction of private dwellings through building and fire codes etc.

Annex A refers to a variety of resource materials, some of which provide more detail on the nature of Public Works.

C.   Challenges of Governing and Managing Public Works

A definition of public works tells only part of the story. An obvious next question is the following: what are the principal challenges facing First Nations in developing sound public works. Several facets of public works appear to be critical.

1. The wide range and variety of the functions within public works

Public works encompasses many different functions. The provision of potable water has little in common with the construction and maintenance of roads. Similarly, the design and construction of a new school present different demands to maintaining the structure. The regulatory nature of many public works functions adds to the complexities involved.

The wide range and variety of functions leads to another conclusion: there is no one best way to govern and manage public works. Each community has to search for its own approach that best meets its responsibilities within the context in which it operates. There are no magic formulas or easy solutions.

2. The technical nature of public works

Many aspects of public works demand skilled people. Engineers from several different disciplines, financial experts, project managers, lawyers, construction experts - these are some of the highly trained and experienced individuals required to ensure sound public works. Further, as the variety of technical systems involved - from sewage treatment to heating building - become more complex and reliant on sophisticated technology, even the maintenance of the facilities poses new and more demanding challenges. Finally, the technical nature of public works also adds to the governing challenges of Chief and Council, many of whom do not have technical backgrounds.

No small community can possibly have all of the technical expertise necessary to govern and manage public works. Therefore, these communities need to 'buy' the needed expertise or services from time to time either from neighbouring jurisdictions or outside contractors. Either solution means managing outside experts and this can present its own special challenges.

3. Public works affects everyone

Unlike many government programs, public works affects every community member in important ways. Here are some examples:

- Some services such as the provision of potable water can be partially financed through user fees. Administering and collecting such fees can be difficult in some communities.
- Some public works activities place specific responsibilities with members of a community. For example, community members may be responsible for the maintenance of community owned housing that they occupy. Other members may have roles to play in the maintenance of private wells, water cisterns or septic systems.
- Zoning systems can place restrictions on the use of property controlled through certificates of possession.
- The development of comprehensive community plans requires a broad consensus within the community if such plans are going to work effectively.
- Badly maintained roads or public buildings are obvious to all members and can result in significant pressures on political leaders to 'fix things'.
- Handsome, well maintained public buildings, on the other hand, by reflecting Aboriginal culture, can be an immense source of pride to the community and serve as a visible statement of who they are as a people.

- Public works underpins the success or failure of many other community programs including housing, economic development, education and environmental management to name a few.

4. Sound public works demands solid relationships with many outside the community

Good external relationships with other governments and institutions outside the community are critical to sound public works. Many small communities, for example, are not capable of providing the wide variety of public works services required by their community and therefore enter into contractual relationships with other governments for such services. Tribal councils are often mandated to provide critical advisory services and therefore this is an important relationship to manage. In most, if not all, cases, critical funding comes from federal departments and these external relationships are therefore crucial. And finally, outside contractors, universities and colleges and professional associations can play central roles for assuring sound public works.

Cooperation between neighbouring jurisdictions on the provision of public works functions can have other benefits. Through mutual aid agreements, several neighbouring communities may agree to work together to provide a certain public works function, such as fire fighting services. Working together in such cases may provide for a better and more financial effective provision of services. Alternatively, there is another fundamental reason for maintaining good relations with neighbouring jurisdictions: some public works functions can affect neighbours in negative ways - for example, poorly treated effluent from sewage treatment plants can pollute neighbouring rivers and lakes. Thus, First Nations and their neighbouring jurisdictions need to maintain cordial relationships and have open lines of communication, should emergencies occur.

5. The stakes can be high

The recent tragedy at Walkerton, a small town in southwestern Ontario, illustrates what can happen if a critical public works function goes badly wrong. In May 2000, a deadly form of E.coli entered the town's drinking water. The contamination was confirmed on May 15. It was six more days before residents were alerted. Six people died and 2300 others became ill. It is hard to imagine any other locally delivered government service having such a catastrophic impact on a community.

6. The complex, regulatory nature of public works

The Walkerton tragedy also illustrates another complexity of public works - its regulatory side. Testimony at the Walkerton inquiry and media reports reveal a long list of problems with the regulatory system: the lack of a legislative base for water standards in Ontario; poorly defined roles and responsibilities; lack of accreditation for testing laboratories; no ongoing accreditation of water plants; water operators who were not certified; equipment breakdowns that were not reported; political leaders who may not have understood their responsibilities; and poor communication with the public. There is no reason to believe that First Nations communities are immune to a similar list of problems.

Thus, paralleling the challenges stemming from the technical nature of public works is the depth and complexity of provincial and federal legislation affecting public works. This adds another layer of difficulties for Chief and Council, who have ultimate responsibility for the health and safety of their communities.

PRINCIPAL CHALLENGES

To summarize, some of the main challenges in governing and managing public works include:

- The wide range and variety of the functions within public works
- Its highly technical nature
- The fact that it affects all members of the community in critical ways
- The importance of sound external relationships with a wide variety of other governments and institutions
- The high stakes if something goes wrong
- The complex, regulatory nature of public works

Further information on the challenges facing Public Works in small Canadian communities is contained in "Public Works in Small and Rural Municipalities", referenced in Annex A.

III.   WHAT IS BUILDING CAPACITY?

This section explores a definition of capacity building, the question of whose capacity is being developed and with what tools or approaches, and finally what experience both in Canada and abroad has taught us.

A.   A Definition of Capacity-Building

The United Nations defines capacity building as "the process by which individuals, organizations, institutions and societies develop abilities (individually and collectively) to perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve objectives". It is an approach that builds independence by increasing competencies. Put in the context of this handbook,

Capacity building is the long term process whereby Chief and Council, their staff and members of the community improve in a sustainable manner the way they perform public works functions.

B.   Whose Capacity & What Approaches or Techniques

As the previous section has illustrated, there are a number of 'actors' both on and off reserve that lead to sound public works in First Nations communities. The diagram below illustrates this point.

Public Works
Dept.

Chief &
Council

First Nation
Administration

Youth & elders

Members

**Sound
Public
Works**

On Reserve

Off Reserve

Contractors

Neighbouring
Municipalities

Federal Depts.

Tribal Council & other
Aboriginal org.

Provincial
Government

Colleges &
Universities

Provincial
Associations of
Public Works
professionals
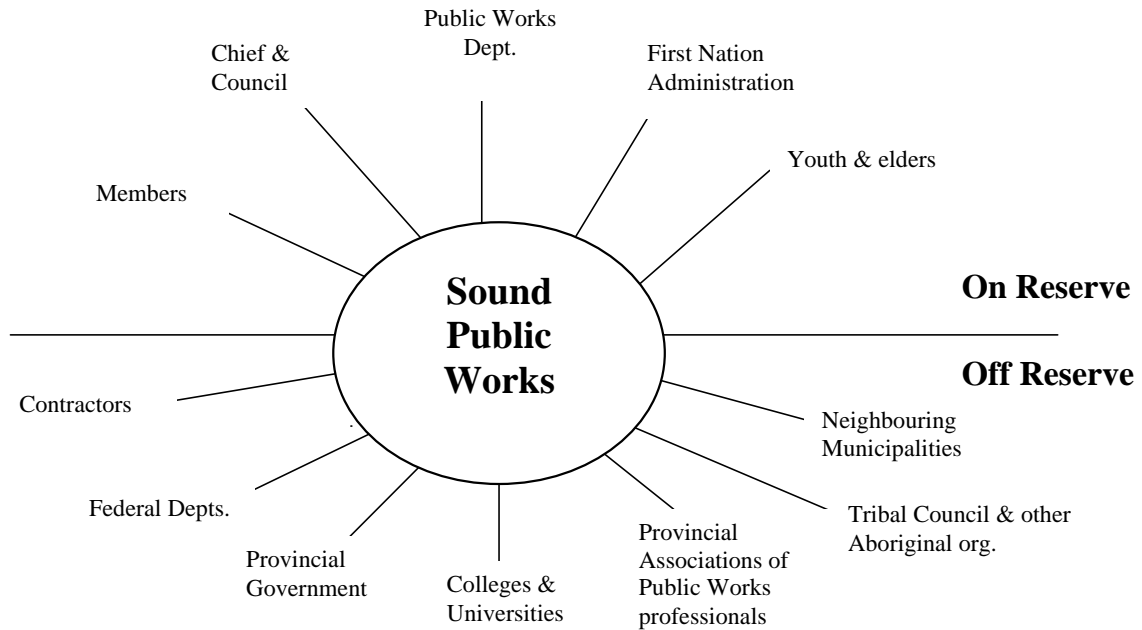
The above diagram leads to four broad strategies to building public works capacity in a First Nations community. The first would focus on individuals, usually on reserve. Likely participants in such an approach would be the staff of the public works department or members of the comm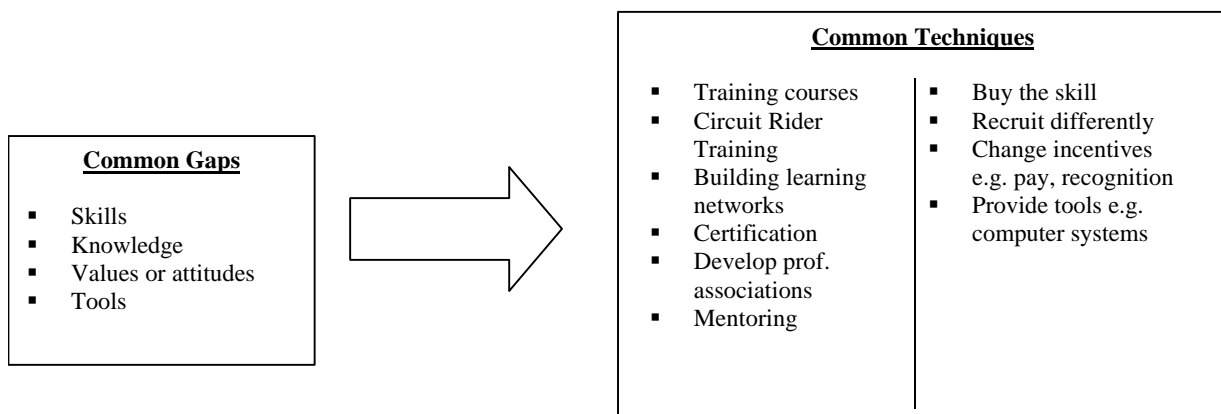unity (for example, to improve home maintenance skills) or individual members of Council. Such approaches tend to be short term, low cost and often low risk because they have little or no impact on the politics of the community. For these reasons, this type of capacity building strategy tends to be popular. (Indeed, when many people refer to capacity building, they often have in mind training courses aimed at staff.) The diagram below illustrates the type of common problems or gaps and some of the approaches or techniques to deal with them.

COMMON TECHNIQUES DIRECTED AT INDIVIDUALS

Common Gaps

- Skills
- Knowledge
- Values or attitudes
- Tools

Common Techniques

- Training courses
- Circuit Rider Training
- Building learning networks
- Certification
- Develop prof. associations
- Mentoring

- Buy the skill
- Recruit differently
- Change incentives e.g. pay, recognition
- Provide tools e.g. computer systems

A second broad strategy might be to focus on the performance of the First Nations' key *organizational components* relating to public works - Chief and Council as a collectivity, the public works department, and the rest of the First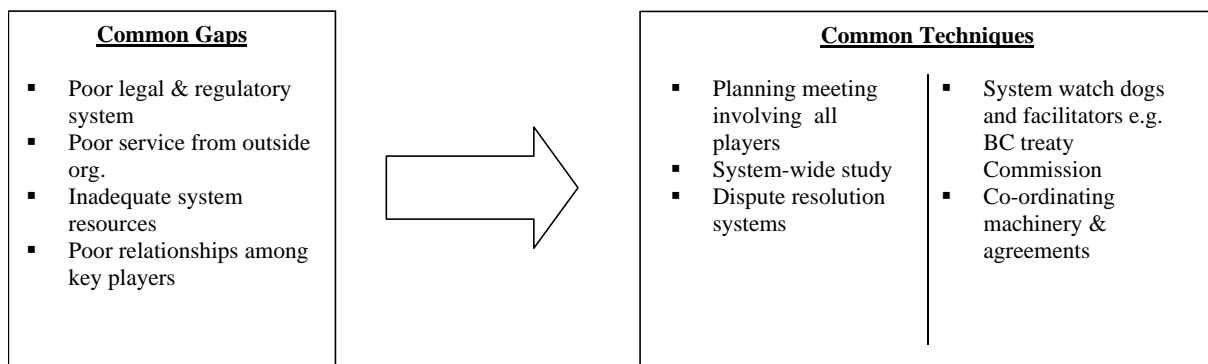 Nations administration. This approach would take longer than the first strategy, would be costlier and would entail higher risks because it could affect the political life of the community. Potential benefits, however, are correspondingly higher. The diagram below illustrates common problem areas and techniques to deal with them.

COMMON TECHNIQUES DIRECTED AT ORGANIZATIONS

Common Gaps	Common Techniques	
▪ No clear mission ▪ Poor morale ▪ Lack of policies ▪ Poorly defined roles (staff and Council) ▪ Poor management systems	▪ Policy & program review ▪ Leadership change ▪ Consultant study ▪ Re-organization ▪ Awards programs ▪ Org development workshop	▪ Certification schemes for org. - ISO series ▪ Involve members (workshops, annual meeting) ▪ Twinning with outside org.

Focusing on the *system* as a whole - that is, on the nature of the relationships among the principal actors both on and off reserve - might be a third broad strategy. Time requirements, cost and risk would all increase. The potential payoffs, however, might be higher than either of the first two strategies. The diagram demonstrates commonly identified problems that drive this choice of strategy and approaches to deal with them.

COMMON TECHNIQUES DIRECTED AT SYSTEMS

Common Gaps	Common Techniques	
▪ Poor legal & regulatory system ▪ Poor service from outside org. ▪ Inadequate system resources ▪ Poor relationships among key players	▪ Planning meeting involving all players ▪ System-wide study ▪ Dispute resolution systems	▪ System watch dogs and facilitators e.g. BC treaty Commission ▪ Co-ordinating machinery & agreements

A fourth strategy might combine elements of the first three strategies - that is, it would focus on individuals, organizations and elements of the system as a whole, especially key external relationships. Such a strategy would be comprehensive and long term.

In summary, the overall approach to capacity building and the tools and methods to be utilized will be highly dependent on the answer to the question "Whose capacity requires strengthening?" Further, time lines, costs and risks will be depend on whether individuals, organizations or the system as a whole become the primary focus.

C.   National & International Lessons

The discussion above indicates the potential complexity of capacity building. What we have learned, therefore, about capacity-building from experience in both Canada and abroad becomes an important issue. Some principal lessons appear to be the following:

1.   *Local ownership and leadership is critical*

Funding agencies can not play the lead role or dictate the content, pace and direction of capacity building. Rather, **the lead must come from the community itself**. Further, the community and its leaders must be genuinely committed to making improvements. Such a community-driven approach often requires dramatic changes in the way in which funding agencies operate. They must become better at adapting their policies and procedures - their way of doing business - to the needs and circumstances of the communities they serve. Beyond that, funding agencies must see their role, ideally, as being to put themselves out of business. A funding agency is successful when a community no longer needs its help, or needs less of it.

2.   *Capacity building is ultimately about politics, political leaders and their relationship with their citizens*

A strong bond of accountability between citizens and their leaders generates demand for capacity building. The quality of a government's performance is determined to a great extent by the interplay between it and its citizens. Pressure by citizens and citizen organizations for improved public sector performance will drive capacity building efforts and ensure that local ownership is respected.

One way to develop strong demands for high quality public services is through the wide dissemination of information that would allow citizens to monitor government performance. Disseminating such information can have a powerful impact on the attitudes and behaviour of public officials. In short, experience has shown that putting relevant and easily understandable information into the hands of citizens promotes a more accountable and effective government.

3.   *Effective capacity building takes time*

Today's industrialised countries took centuries to develop effective public sector institutions. Developing countries and First Nations reclaiming law-making authority are trying to do the same thing in the space of a few years. Funding agencies require a longer term perspective because

fundamental change can take decades. Short term projects, if they are not consistent with a longer term, capacity building plan, tend not to be helpful.

4. Long term partnerships can be critical to successful capacity building

Partnerships and effective capacity building appear to be closely linked. That said, 'genuine' partnerships appear to be more the exception than the rule. If capacity-building is to be led by communities and not funding agencies, then the impetus for defining the terms of the partnerships should rest with the communities. Factors leading to high performing partnerships appear to be the following:

- Similarities in orientation and values with respect to capacity building.
- Motivations of each of the partners are known (there are no hidden agendas) and taken into account.
- The partnership is formalized through an MOU or letter of agreement.
- The partners share a similar vision of where the partnership might lead but start 'small' in a step by step manner.
- The partners devote the required time to keep the relationship on a solid footing.

IV.   DEVELOPING A CAPACITY BUILDING PLAN FOR PUBLIC WORKS

This section divides into three parts. The first focuses on the rationale for developing a plan for capacity building for public works. In the second, the emphasis shifts to examining in detail an approach or process that a community might undertake to develop such a plan. And in the third, there is an example of how an actual capacity building plan might be organized and what might be its principal sections.

A.   The Case for Planning

A plan outlines a series of actions that a community will undertake, often within a set time period, to move from its current to a target position. Thus, in a self-government context, a plan would outline the activities that the First Nations will effect to ready itself for assuming all of the new public works functions outlined in the agreement.

Several reasons prompt the need for such a plan in this and other circumstances where a First Nations is undertaking significant improvements to its public works function:

- Public works, as noted earlier, is complex, involving a number of governing, managing and regulatory tasks in a wide range of areas, many of which are technical and legal in nature. A plan will help deal with this complexity by putting order into the capacity building process.
- The process of planning for capacity building is an exercise that in itself builds capacity. Authors of the plan and those that review it are forced to identify their community's challenges and devise solutions for them - the essence of what capacity building is all about.
- Successful capacity building over a sustained period often involves partnerships - partnerships with funding organizations, learning institutions, regulatory agencies and so on. A plan forces the partners to think through their roles carefully and come to agreement on common
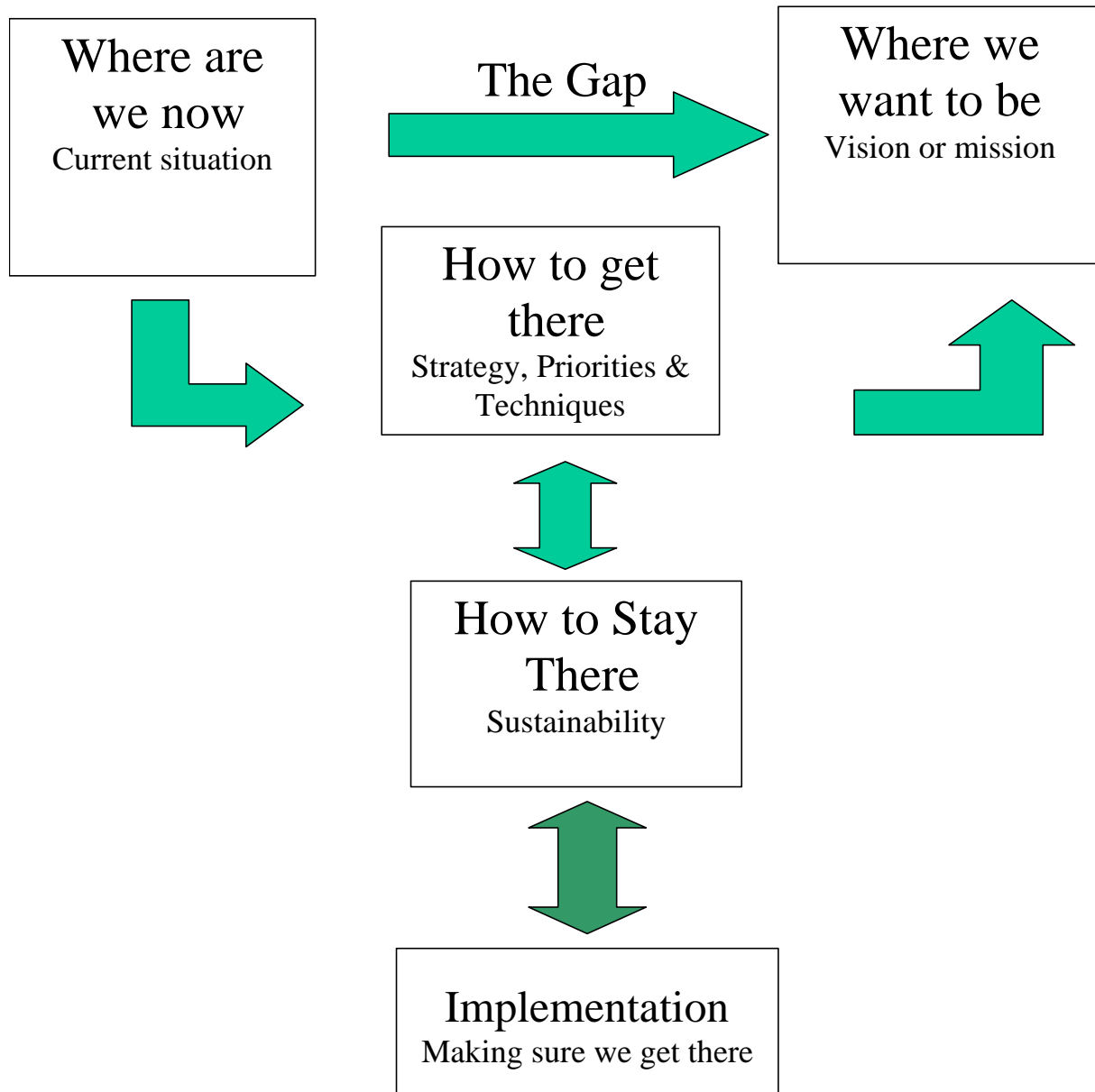
objectives. That a plan is critical, indeed essential, to successful partnerships is now widely recognized.

- Planning processes, if properly designed, can involve members of the community in determining the final product and in this way can gain community-wide commitment for change.
- Another benefit of a plan is that it forces a community to think through its priorities. Seldom can everything be accomplished all at once. A planning process thus compels communities to make choices about what is important to do now as opposed to later.
- Finally, a plan can be an important accountability device to the community. It indicates the commitment of political leaders to making significant changes affecting their community's well being. Community members thus have a concrete means of holding their leaders accountable.

B.   Developing a Plan for Capacity Building

The diagram on the next page provides a simple framework for developing a plan for building capacity in public works.

Where are we now
Current situation

The Gap

Where we want to be
Vision or mission

How to get there
Strategy, Priorities & Techniques

How to Stay There
Sustainability

Implementation
Making sure we get there

Adapted from Capacity Assessment and Development, UNDP, January 1998, p. 12.

From this framework seven steps appear necessary in developing a capacity building plan as the box below illustrates:

PRINCIPAL STEPS TO DEVELOPING A CAPACITY-BUILDING PLAN

Step #1:   determine the nature of the 'gap'

Step #2:   decide on an overall strategy

Step #3:   determine priorities and set time frames

Step #4:   match the need to appropriate capacity-building techniques

Step #5:   check to ensure sustainability and financial viability

Step #6:   develop a process to ensure effective implementation

Step #7:   seek the necessary approvals for the plan

The remainder of this section elaborates on each of these steps.

Step #1: determine the nature of the 'gap'

Determining the nature of the capacity gap in public works involves answering two basic questions:

1.   *What is the current situation?*
2.   *Where would the community like to be?*

Answering these questions is often easier said than done. In fact, of the seven steps, this one is probably the most difficult.

A good starting point is where the community wants to be. This may be laid out in a self-government agreement or clearly identified by the move to a new community. Or where the community wants to be may be much less clear - perhaps a feeling of unease among Chief and Council and vocal members of the community that 'things' are not going well.

In any case, questions must be asked not only about where the community would like to be (the end result), but also about the process of getting there, including the potential use of temporary measures (the transition process). For example, in a self-government agreement, a community might decide not to take up, in the near term, all of the public works powers it has negotiated.

There are a number of methods that may be used to get a sense of where to go. The more complex the change facing the community, the more likely is the requirement for a variety of these to be utilized.

- **Workshop with Chief & Council** - Workshops with Chief & Council, followed by a community meeting or other form of community consultation, is one method of determining "where we want to go". This method is particularly useful in encouraging the local community and First Nations staff to take "ownership" of the public works function.

- **Community Consultations** - Soliciting opinions from community members and staff through survey instruments is one form of consultation. Other forms include focus groups, articles in community newspapers asking for comments and soliciting input from existing community organizations. Such methods provide the opportunity for more wide-spread community input and more "factual" data but may not encourage "ownership" by the community, particularly if the required change is significant. Annex E contains a brief description of a wide range of techniques for involving citizens.

- **Future Search Conference** - A technique called a Future Search Conference is especially useful as a visionary exercise for groups as large as 80 people. It involves moving participants through a carefully designed agenda - starting with the past (what went well and not so well); moving to the present (what are the principal challenges facing us); focusing then on the future (what is the common vision that we have for dealing with the issue at hand) and then ending with the development of an action plan based on the common vision. (Annex A contains a reference on how to obtain more information on this technique).

- **Key Competencies** - Identifying the "key competencies" required for any given Public Works activity may assist in determining the human resource aspects of a future vision. For example, the Director of Public Works might have the following key competencies for a particular community:

KEY COMPETENCIES OF A DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

- General management skills
- Project management skills
- Human resource management skills
- Time management skills
- Negotiation skills
- Communication skills - written and verbal
- Knowledge of finance and budgetary procedures
- Knowledge of the regulatory regimes for each Public Works activities
- Basic understanding of the "technical" side of each Public Works activity

- **Public Works in Adjacent Communities** - Comparing Public Works activities to those of similar communities in the area is another useful technique to help determine future directions. Is the community's public works providing similar types and levels of service? Are they being provided as efficiently? What can we learn from the adjacent community? These are some of the questions that such a comparison approach will generate.

In summary, there are a number of key questions that should be asked when deciding where a community is going with its Public Works.

PRINCIPAL QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT THE COMMUNITY'S VISION

- What have Chief, Council and community identified as being public works activities that require improvement?
- Is there a common vision of the direction the community's public works should go? If not, is it possible to achieve consensus?
- What will be the key competencies required for the principal positions in the public works organization?
- How do the public works in the community compare to those in adjacent communities?

Once the community has a clear vision of where it would like to be, the next question to answer is what is the current status of public works in the community. Where a community is may be easier to answer than where it wants to go but such a question still presents challenges - challenges which are technical, legal, governance related or sometimes politically sensitive. To help a community answer this question are a multitude of approaches including the following:

- **Assess Public Works Staff Capacities** - Do the public works staff meet the key competencies required for their positions? Are they certified or licensed? If any staff do not have their required key competencies, these shortfalls need to be identified. The assessment should also include a look at why the staff lacks the required skills and what additional staff or outside resources may be required.

- **Assess Community Members' Capabilities** - There are a number of public works functions that may require involvement of local community members. These functions might include the maintenance of their homes, private wells and private septic systems. In some communities, community members may not meet these responsibilities for a variety of reasons: a lack of skills, a lack of clarity about who is supposed to do what, or a lack of resources. A further issue is the means by which members can hold their leaders accountable. This might require an assessment of the information available - for example, on testing results for potable water in the community. Some jurisdictions require that such information be regularly provided to their citizens.

- **Assess the Regulatory System** - Regulation is an important element of public works. The provision of potable water, the treatment of sewage and solid waste, construction and safety-related issues, fire protection - these are a few examples of where regulation plays a critical role. There are a number of characteristics that are important for a sound regulatory system, including:

CHARACTERISTICS OF A SOUND REGULATORY SYSTEM

- Clear, concise, consistent and measurable regulatory objectives;
- A legislative base;
- Clear roles and responsibilities among the key players, including what to do in an emergency;
- An appropriate balance of promotion, monitoring and enforcement activities;
- A regulator that is set up and organized in a way that limits the ability of other stakeholders from unduly influencing monitoring and enforcement;
- An understanding of the regulated group, including who they are and how they behave. This knowledge will assist in developing effective promotion, monitoring and compliance;
- Regular evaluation for effectiveness, and adjustment from time to time due to intervening factors.

Evaluating the community's regulatory system against this list of characteristics may help identify areas that need improvement. Annex B provides a more detailed look at the characteristics of sound regulation.

- **Assess Elements of the Infrastructure** - an assessment of the current state of some of the community's infrastructure may help identify which areas require technical improvements in order to meet standards set out in by-laws, regulation and policy.

- **Assess the Organization of the Public Works Function** - Areas to evaluate include the nature of morale, clarity of mission, whether there are policies in place, and whether public works staff and politicians have clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Further, the public works organization relies on financial and human resource services, among other things, from the central administration of the First Nations. Their adequacy needs to be assessed as well.

- **Assess the Nature of the Community's Emergency Response Capacity** - Responding effectively to emergencies that threaten the community like floods, nearby forest fires and spills affecting the environment can be critical to saving lives and preserving community assets. The following provides some of the principal characteristics of a sound emergency response system (more details are provided in Annex C).

CHARACTERISTICS OF A SOUND EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEM

- The range of emergencies to be covered is comprehensive
- Roles and responsibilities of the major players both on and off reserve are clearly laid out for each kind of emergency and are in writing through a formal MOU
- There is an emergency response team identified to be the focus of the response effort
- Sufficient resources can be made available by the various players to deal with the emergency
- There are clear expectations about response times
- How the various players are to communicate with one another during the emergency are laid out
- There is a communications plan for dealing with public concerns
- Emergency response team members are trained, and periodic tests and exercises of the system are conducted.

For information on developing an Emergency Response Plan see Annex C.

In summary, there are a number of key questions that need to be asked when ascertaining the current status of a community's Public Works function.

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT CURRENT STATUS

- Do public works staff meet their key competencies? If not, why?
- Has the Chief, Council and/or community identified any particular areas of concern? If yes, what are they, and what are their causes?
- Are community members involved in any public works activities? If yes, do they have the skills to perform the activity? Are they aware of their responsibilities? Do they have the resources they require to adequately perform the activity?

- Are the current regulatory and emergency response regimes sound? If not, what areas require improvement and who is involved in these systems outside the community?
- Does the current infrastructure meet technical requirements, codes, by-laws etc. ?

After a complete analysis of "where we are" and "where we would like to be", planners should then be in a better position to define the nature of the public works capacity gap. The following list highlights some of the key areas that may need to be addressed.

NATURE OF THE GAP

1. **Individuals**
   - Community members
   - Chief and Council
   - Public Works staff

2. **Organization**
   - Clarity of roles and responsibilities
   - Mission
   - Morale
   - Policies
   - Administrative systems

3. **System**
   - Regulatory systems
   - Emergency response systems
   - Funding Arrangements
   - Quality of current external relationships
   - Overall system resources

Step #2: decide on an overall strategy

The next step in developing a public works capacity building program is deciding on the broad strategy and determining which area or areas should receive emphasis. As section III noted, there are four basic approaches:

- **Concentrate on individuals** - this approach could be the easiest and least controversial, especially if the focus is on First Nations staff, but may have a more limited impact.
- **Concentrate on the organization of the First Nations** - this approach is more complicated and requires the solid support of the First Nations leadership, but has the potential for greater impact.
- **Concentrate on system-wide issues** - this approach focuses on external relationships with funding agencies, regulatory and emergency response organizations etc.
- **Some combination of all three**.

In determining the most appropriate strategic approach, a number of factors need to be taken into account:

1. **Community Priorities** - The community leadership, perhaps based on extensive community consultations, may have already identified the changes in public works functions that are priority. This in turn may dictate the choice of a capacity-building strategy. The need for improvements in potable water, for example, may require a comprehensive approach involving community members, staff, the public works organization and key outside agencies.

2. **Health and Safety Issues** - If the drinking water is not safe, or there have been construction site accidents due to inadequate safety measures, these issues will likely take priority. Such issues would appear to require a strategy focusing to some extent on system concerns.

3. **Likelihood of Co-operation from Outside Agencies** - System-wide changes require the cooperation of 'actors' outside the community. The community may need to determine if there is sufficient support for the kind of system-wide changes that its analysis of the gaps has revealed.

4. **Commitment of the Current Community Leadership** - All capacity-building, but particularly at the Organization and System-wide levels, requires the strong commitment and support of the community's leadership and preferably of broad sections of the community itself.

5. **Nature of the Change** - The nature of the change itself may dictate the choice of strategy. Thus, a move to a new community may require that a comprehensive strategy, one that involves individuals, the public works organization and the co-operation of a number of external players to effect certain system-wide changes. Similarly, a self-government agreement may implicitly determine the broad outlines of a capacity-building strategy.

Once all of the factors influencing a strategy have been assessed, Chief and Council may need to take a final decision, following consultations with the community and possibly with key outside organizations.

To summarize, some of the key questions to ask when deciding upon a strategy include:

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT STRATEGY

- What are the community's priorities?
- Are there any urgent health and/or safety issues that need to be addressed?
- Does the community have support for change from its funding or other external agency(s)?
- Has the community leadership made a commitment toward change?
- Is the choice of strategy dictated by the nature of the required change - for example, a move to a new community?
- Should the identified change be approached from an individual, organizational, or system wide perspective, or some combination of the three?

- Who should be involved in deciding upon the most appropriate strategy?

Step #3: determine priorities and set some time frames

With a choice of a broad strategy in hand, the community planners can turn their attention to establishing a set of priorities and specific objectives as well as a timeline for meeting these. In general, three to five years is a useful planning horizon to adopt for setting and sequencing priorities.

Some of the key factors in determining what to tackle first have already been canvassed in the choice of a broad strategy. These include the public works priorities established by the community itself, health and safety issues and commitment of community leadership. Other factors include:

Sequencing

Proper sequencing of related activities is essential to the smooth implementation of a strategy. Some goals must be met before others can begin. For example, a community may believe that its water supply is not safe, as there have been reports of e.coli. To improve the situation a member of the community requires training leading to certification in the running of a water treatment plant. However, training takes time. It may be necessary to hire an outside water treatment plant operator to run the plant while the local operator receives further training. Thus sequencing this activity may lead to the following capacity-building activities:

YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
• Hire outside, trained water treatment plant operator on contract • Train local water treatment plant operator	• Have local water treatment plant operator take over running of the water treatment plant	• Ensure plant operator follows-up formal training with on the job training through a circuit rider program

Available Funding

The community must also evaluate its priorities in terms of the funding available. Funding may not be sufficient to meet all of the identified priorities, or the payment of funds may be staggered, requiring the community to put off acting on some priorities until a later date.

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT PRIORITIES

- What priorities has the community identified?
- Are there any health or safety issues that need to be addressed immediately?
- Does the community's leadership support the identified priorities?
- Do certain priorities and objectives need to be met before the community can proceed with others?
- Is there sufficient funding available to meet the set priorities and goals?

Step #4: match the need to appropriate capacity-building techniques

Once the priorities have been set, and a timeline established for meeting them, identification of the most appropriate techniques can follow. It is also important, at this point, to do a more detailed cost analysis of the activities making up the plan.

As mentioned in Section III, there are three primary approaches to capacity building, each with its own techniques.

1. People-Oriented Approaches

There are a wide variety of techniques available to develop the capacity of public works staff and the local community leadership. They range from the Circuit Rider Training Programs and other on the job training approaches to certification regimes, to the use of associations of public works professionals, to changing the conditions of employment (such as pay and benefits) in order to attract and retain quality people to seminars and orientation courses.

That said, by far the most common technique of capacity building, and one of the most important, are training courses usually offered outside the community. For this reason, Real Property Services for Indian and Northern Affairs (RPS for INAC) have developed a compendium of certification and training programs for public works professionals. This compendium is referenced in Annex A.

Choosing an appropriate training program is no easy matter. Their number and variety can be imposing. Consequently, Annex D contains a list of principles and best practices for adult learning. These might be helpful for a First Nations trying to determine the best program for its needs.

Improving the quality of current or future staff is not the only way to improve public works capacity at the "people-oriented" level. It is also possible for a community to buy a public works service or hire outside staff to perform the function.

Techniques aimed at building capacity of community members also rely to a significant extent on learning programs, likely delivered in the community. Other approaches might be based on providing positive incentives to members, such as reducing housing rents or introducing home 'ownership' approaches contingent on improvements to housing maintenance.

2. Organization-Oriented Approaches

There are also a number of techniques available to develop capacity at the Organizational level. The large majority of these involve the use of some 'outsider'. Examples include the following:

- The use of a consultant to conduct an organization review
- Hiring a facilitator to work with Chief and Council and their senior staff to improve organizational performance through clarifying roles, developing appropriate policies, and introducing other administrative changes

- Twinning with a neighbouring jurisdiction in order to learn from it how to better deliver public works services
- Joining a certification scheme aimed at organizational improvements such as the ISO series.

Other techniques on the other hand might be internally generated. Replacing the head of the public works organization is one example. Another is for Council to re-organize itself, say through the adoption of a portfolio system.

3. System-Oriented Approaches

At the system-wide level, there are several techniques for improving capacity. For example, if there is lack of shared vision among key players, a Future Search Conference may be appropriate. On the other hand, if the problem is poor relationships or poor service from an outside organization, then a change in the service provider may be in order. Or, if that is not possible, then a simple system to resolve disputes such as resorting to mediation might be an option.

Another common technique to deal with system-wide concerns is through the use of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in order to better set out roles and responsibilities or to establish agreed on service standards. In complicated systems, a neutral third party can be named by the parties to ensure the smooth operation of the relationships and commitments established in the MOU. This approach has been adopted in claims negotiations but might be useful in complicated regulatory systems as in the public works area.

Costs

All of the above techniques have associated costs. Although a training course designed specifically for the Public Works staff in a First Nations community may be the most desirable, relevant and applicable, it will also be more costly than sending staff away to a generic course. An awards program may well improve staff morale, but does the First Nations have the resources to implement it? It is therefore important at this stage in the planning process to accurately cost the priorities and techniques identified, and determine if the resources available to the community are sufficient to carry them out. This costing exercise might also require a reworking of the priorities and timing identified in step #3 so that activities match the available resources.

QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT MATCHING CAPACITY-BUILDING TECHNIQUES

- Are the "gaps" that have been identified in Step 1, of a people, organization or system-wide nature?
- Which techniques would best fill the "gap"?
- Should the community "buy" the service or build capacity in-house?
- If building capacity in-house (i.e. through some form of training) what form should the training take and where can the required training resources be found (see Annex A)?
- Are sufficient financial resources available to implement the chosen approach?

Step #5: Check to Determine Sustainability

Sustainability is a key element of any capacity building plan. It is one thing to build capacity, another to maintain it. Several factors make sustainability a challenging goal including the following:

- Changes in the political leadership of the community
- The difficulty of retaining high quality staff
- The need for re-certification of staff
- Changes in the demographics of the community members
- Changes in the policies and practices of outside organizations, such as funding or regulatory agencies, on which the community is dependent
- Lack of certainty about funding levels in some circumstances
- Changes in the staff of organizations such as tribal councils from which a First Nations draws services.

All of these factors can be harmful to maintaining public works capacity. Consequently, a community's plan needs to anticipate them and provide some flexibility to be able to develop a response.

<div align="center">

QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY

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- What are the likely changes that the community can anticipate, changes that will reduce its capacity to govern and manage its public works function?
- How should the plan be adjusted to meet these changes?
- What contingencies need to be added to the plan to deal with unanticipated change?

Step #6: Implementation

The final step in developing a plan is to focus on how it will be implemented. Experience with implementation suggests that this aspect of the plan might address the following:

- **Who will have overall implementation responsibility?** - Successful implementation depends to a large degree in assigning an individual or an implementation group with the responsibility for this task. In addition, this individual or group needs to have the authority and resources to do the job. This usually means a budget, dedicated staff, if appropriate, and receiving a specific mandate from Chief and Council.

- **Is it clear what successful implementation means?** - The mandate of the implementation team should set out what success means in this undertaking. This will require answers to such questions as When will implementation be complete? What are the major milestones to be achieved along the way? And what are key standards that our public works activities must meet?

- **How will Chief and Council monitor results?** - The implementation team as part of its mandate will need clear instructions from the community's political leaders about when it is to report on progress and how often. Further, the team will need to have some understanding of

how the plan can be modified. For example, within certain limits the team might be able to make minor changes to the plan. Major changes would require approval of Chief and Council.

- **How will the community be kept informed of progress?** - As part of its mandate the implementation team will need to keep the community informed of progress implementing the plan. This might occur in a variety of ways - through a community newspaper, a web site, special meetings, written documents posted in convenient places throughout the community and so forth.

- **How will the plan be updated?** - Plans tend to become less and less relevant with time. Conditions change. Funding assumptions are either too conservative or do not anticipate a new source. Estimated costs need to be revised. External partners change or new opportunities suddenly present themselves. Given all of this, it is likely that the implementation team will need to revise the plan periodically and seek the concurrence of the political leadership for the revisions. This might occur on an annual basis.

<div align="center">QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT IMPLEMENTATION</div>

- Does the implementation team have the necessary mandate resources and skills to do the job?
- Is the definition of successful implementation clear?
- How will minor changes be accommodated?
- How will Chief and Council hold the team accountable for results?
- How often will the plan be updated?
- How will the community be kept informed of major developments?

Step #7: Final approval for the Plan

The final draft of the plan of the plan will likely require the approval of Chief and Council. In an extreme case - say a move to a new community - the nature of the change may be so significant as to require, in addition, overall approval by the community.

Approval in either case will likely flow more smoothly if the process for developing the plan has involved Chief and Council and the broader community at critical junctures along the way. In addition, should the changes involve the participation of agencies outside the community, they too will need to be involved in the early stages of the plan's development. Indeed, a partnership with potential key outside interests like funding and regulatory agencies and with service providers like the Tribal Council and learning organizations such as universities and colleges may be called for in the development and execution of the plan.

C.   WHAT MIGHT A PLAN LOOK LIKE?

As a way of summarizing this section of the handbook, it is useful to lay out what might be the Table of Contents of a typical Capacity Building Plan for public works (see below).

It is worth stating again one of the critical themes of this handbook: a capacity building plan, without the support and commitment of the community and its leaders, will not succeed. The process for building the plan is at least as important as its contents.

FIRST NATIONS CAPACITY BUILDING PLAN
TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.   **INTRODUCTION**
- Purpose, scope, methodology and organization of report

II.   **CONTEXT**

- Description of the community
- The public works function - description, past history, key players
- Forces for change in the function

III. **NATURE OF THE GAP**

- Where the community would like to be
- Assessment of current status
- Principal elements of the gap

IV.   **OVERALL STRATEGY**

- Key options to close the gap
- Assessment of the options
- Preferred option

V.   **PRIORITIES AND TIMING OF PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES**

- Determining priorities
- Timing and funding considerations
- Proposed activities
- Estimated costs and funding sources
- Principal partnerships

VI.   **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

- Anticipated changes and proposed response
- Contingencies for unanticipated changes

VII. IMPLEMENTATION

- Make-up, mandate and budget for implementation team
- What constitutes success
- Monitoring by Chief and Council
- Communicating with the community

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

- Importance to the community of this initiative
- Need for support, co-operation and accountability

V. CONCLUSIONS

This handbook is a planning guide for a First Nations or group of First Nations whose goal is to achieve significant improvements in governing and managing public works in their communities. Seven essential points emerge from it:

1. Public works is a complex, multi-faceted function essential to the health safety and overall well-being of any community.

2. It is a challenging function to govern and manage. Aspects of it are highly technical. It affects everyone. Failures can result in sickness and even death. And for that reason it has a complex legal and regulatory side demanding collaboration from players both on and off the First Nations community.

3. For the purpose of this handbook, capacity building is the long term process whereby Chief and Council, their staff and members of the community improve in a sustainable manner the way in which they perform the public works function.

4. It is useful to identify four broad strategies for building public works capacity - strategies aimed at a) individuals, b) the public works organization including Chief and Council, c) the system as a whole including key external players or d) some combination of the first three.

5. Based on experience both in Canada and abroad, successful capacity-building demands ownership by the First Nations community and its leaders, a recognition that it is ultimately about politics and political change, long planning horizons and effective partnerships.

6. Capacity building for significant change - such as a move to a new community or the implementation of self-government affecting public works - demands planning.

7. The handbook identifies a seven-step process for developing a plan for capacity-building. Critical to the success of any such plan is the participation by the community leadership and by the broader community itself. Indeed, process may be as or more important than the quality of the research and analysis underpinning the plan.

ANNEX A
MATERIALS TO AID PLANNERS

THE PUBLIC WORKS FUNCTION

Institute on Governance, The Public Works Function in Canadian Jurisdictions, (RPS for INAC, October 1998)

This paper describes the legal and regulatory relationship between provincial governments and municipalities in Canada in the areas of land use planning, building codes, roads and bridges, parks and recreational facilities, water and sewage systems, and solid waste collection and disposal. Financing options available for selected functions are also examined. Available on the RPS for INAC website, http://pwgsc.gc.ca/rps/inac/content/docs_governance-e.html.

Institute on Governance, Self-Government Agreements and the Public Works Function, (RPS for INAC, October 1998)

An examination of how public works functions (public buildings, roads, potable water, etc.) are treated in four sets of aboriginal self-government agreements. It includes an analysis of self-government agreements with regard to (a) the similarities and differences with the tiered governance model developed by the Royal Commission On Aboriginal Peoples; and (b) the treatment of the public works function as it relates to the government's Inherent Right Policy. Available on the RPS for INAC website,
http://pwgsc.gc.ca/rps/inac/content/docs_governance-e.html.

Institute on Governance, Backgrounder: Public Works Function in Self-Government, (RPS for INAC, March, 2000)

A look at public works in First Nations communities, including the existing legal and policy framework, roles and programs, and building capacity. It also explores the issue of public works in the context of self-government. Available on the RPS for INAC website,
http://pwgsc.gc.ca/rps/inac/content/docs_governance-e.html.

Institute on Governance, Public Works in Small and Rural Municipalities, (RPS for INAC, March 1999)

A synopsis of how various public works are managed in small and rural municipalities across Canada. This paper illustrates various approaches to public works management (chiefly financing, administration, and training), and examines some of the public works trends and challenges faced by small, and often remote communities, including government downloading of responsibilities, growing use of public-private partnerships and user fees, problems of technology transfer, increased citizen expectations in service quality, and limited resources (time

and funding) for staff training. Available on the RPS for INAC website,
http://pwgsc.gc.ca/rps/inac/content/docs_governance-e.html.

Institute on Governance, A Compendium of Provincial Public Works Statutes, (RPS for INAC, March 1999)

A 'road map' for federal negotiators and Aboriginal counterparts in addressing the scope of public works provisions in self-government agreements. The compendium provides a synopsis of provincial statutes relevant to the following six public works functions: (1) building and safety codes; (2) water and sewage; (3) solid waste; (4) roads and bridges; (5) parks and recreation; and (6) land use planning. Attention is paid to standards and regulations, inspection procedures, appeal or redress mechanisms, and offences and penalties. Available on the RPS for INAC website, http://pwgsc.gc.ca/rps/inac/content/docs_governance-e.html.

Profiles of Successful Public Works Delivery in First Nations Communities, a forthcoming publication of Real Property Services for INAC

CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity Assessment and Development, Technical Advisory Paper No. 3. Bureau for Development Policy, United Nations Development Program, 1998.
Available on the UNDP website, http://magnet.undp.org/Docs/cap/CAPTECH3.htm.

Schacter, Mark, "Capacity Building": A New Way of Doing Business for Development Assistance Organizations, Policy Brief No. 6, Institute On Governance, 2000.
Available on the Institute On Governance website, http://www.iog.ca/publications.html.

REGULATORY SYSTEMS

A Strategic Approach to Developing Compliance Policies, Parts I and II, Treasury Board of Canada, 1992

Regulation of the Private Provision Public Water-Related Services, CEPIS/OPS-II and Malcolm Sparrow, "The Regulatory Craft", Brookings Institute, (Washington: 2000)

SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL

Neegan-Burnside Ltd., Compendium of Information and Training Resources and Self-Assessment Tool, (RPS for INAC, May 2001)

Intended as a tool for First Nations, this compendium is intended to serve as a source of information for First Nations interested in finding out more about public works. It includes an overview of public works functions, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal sources of information on

related training and certification, and a self-assessment tool to enable First Nations to consider their interests and capacities in taking on a larger role in public works management and delivery.

FUTURE SEARCH CONFERENCE

Weisbord, Marvin and Janoff, Sandra, <u>Future Search: An Action Guide to Finding Common Ground in Organizations and Communities</u>, (Berrett-Koehler, 1995)

ANNEX B
PRINCIPLES OF A SOUND REGULATORY SYSTEM

A review of several Treasury Board documents and other articles on regulation leads to the following key considerations in developing an effective regulatory program. Below is a summary of those principles.

The key principles in developing a sound regulatory program are:

1. **Well Defined Objectives**

   Objectives should be clear, concise, consistent and measurable. These objectives and the key elements of the regulatory program should have a legislative base.

2. **Comprehensive Program Design**

   A program design should take into consideration the capability of the regulated group to comply, the capability of the regulatory system to monitor, promote and enforce compliance and the level of understanding and acceptance of the objectives and rules by the regulated group. An appropriate balance between promotion, monitoring and enforcement activities must be determined, based on an assessment of the factors affecting compliance, the characteristics of the regulated group, and how to best influence them.

3. **An Understanding of the Characteristics of the Regulator**

   The regulator should be set up and organized in a way that limits the ability of other government departments, the regulated group and other interested parties from unduly influencing the monitoring and enforcement of a compliance program.

4. **An Understanding of the Regulated Group**

   An effective regulatory system will have a strong understanding of the regulated group, including who they are and how they behave. This knowledge will assist in developing the most effective promotion, monitoring and enforcement activities.

5. **Identification and Utilization of Allies**

   A good regulatory system will identify those who benefit from the rules (possibly including members of the regulated group itself) as potential allies, and will use them as a resource for the promotion and monitoring of compliance.

6. Ongoing Evaluation

Compliance policies and practices are evaluated regularly for effectiveness, and may be adjusted from time to time due to intervening factors, including budget cutbacks and new enforcement priorities.

ANNEX C
DEVELOPING AN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

Step 1: Authorize Plan Development by Band Council Resolution (BCR) or Bylaw
The Band must pass a BCR or Bylaw to authorize development of an Emergency Plan. This should be presented at the initial meeting with the Chief and Council for approval.

Step 2: Appoint Band Emergency Coordinator
A key individual should be appointed to manage the development of the Emergency Plan. This person should have an interest in emergency planning and have sufficient status to gain cooperation from the various departments involved in the planning process.

Step 3: Establish Planning Team
The Planning Team should consist of a minimum of six persons who represent the various activities at the Band level, including the Fire Department, Health, Social Services, Public Works, Education, local police, and Band Council. The Team should be headed by the Band Emergency Coordinator and should report to the Chief and Council.

Step 4: Review Planning Process
The Planning Team should determine the number of planning meetings required and estimated time requirements. Members of the Team should ensure they can commit to the workload and time requirements.

Step 5: Identify Potential Emergencies
The Team should identify potential sources of danger and rate their probability of occurring. This exercise will help specify which emergencies should be included in the Emergency Plan.

Step 6: Identify Impacts and Resources Needed to Cope
This step involves the Team assessing the impacts for each of the specific events identified in Step 5, and adapting the specific emergency responses to reflect the community's unique situation. This includes putting together an emergency response telephone list and evacuation plan.

Step 7: Consolidate Information into Draft Plan
Assemble a Draft Plan from the information collected in Steps 5 and 6. Distribute copies of the Draft Plan to those within the Board administration affected by the Plan, as well as other levels of government, for review and comments. Revise the Plan to reflect comments offered. Also develop a *quick reference* wall chart.

Step 8: Gain Plan Approval by Chief and Council
Present the revised Plan to a meeting of Chief and Council for approval by motion.

Step 9: Produce Final Plan
Produce copies of the Emergency Plan, contact lists etc.

Step 10: Distribute and Communicate Plan
Determine the distribution list and distribute the Emergency Plan and quick reference resources to all parties. Advise community members, using local publications, posters etc., that the Band has an Emergency Response Plan in place and the name of the Band Emergency Coordinator. Discuss the Emergency Plan at a community meeting.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS CALL YOUR REGIONAL RPS FOR INAC OFFICE.

ANNEX D
PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING EFFECTIVE ADULT EDUCATION

Adults learn best when they are involved and participating; consequently, a steady diet of lecture type formats should be avoided and more emphasis placed on small group discussions, case studies, active question and answer periods, etc.;

- adults also like variety, variety in instructors, teaching modes, timing of sessions, etc.;

- adults often bring rich experiences to bear on issues raised in training sessions and sharing these with their fellow participants can make for powerful learning experiences;

- adults want their learning to be relevant to their needs; consequently, it is important to build into the course design ways of checking their expectations to ensure they are being met;

- adults also want to act on their learning; so structuring a period at the end of the course, so that participants can develop their own action plan and make some personal commitments, makes sense;

- adults can be assisted in turning learning into action within an organization by developing an identifiable network of people who have shared the same learning experience; any course or workshop should facilitate communication among participants following the session.

COMPENDIUM OF TECHNIQUES FOR ENGAGING CITIZENS WHICH MAY BE RELEVANT TO FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES

Consultation (traditional)

Consultation is a method traditionally utilized by governments to seek the input of stakeholders on a particular policy issue. It can take many forms including: community meetings, opinion polls, focus groups, meetings with staff, and establishment of advisory committees.

Open Houses

The purpose of the open house is to provide an environment for a free-flowing conversation directed by the visitor. People can come whenever they wish, stay as long or short a time as they wish, speak to whomever they please and address whatever topics of interest in whatever order they choose. As a result, staff talk with a larger number and broader cross-section of the population than they would at the typical public meeting. Moreover, the quality of the exchanges is usually much higher; thus, the open house can provide the setting for clear communication. It requires that the hosts be prepared to answer questions, to explore options and to be open to listen to concerns voiced by the public.

Citizen Juries

These bring together a small number of people, randomly selected from the population, to hear expert "witnesses" on a particular issue, deliberate over a short period of time and issue recommendations to the press and public. Developed by the Jefferson Centre in Minneapolis, Minnesota. http://www.jefferson-center.org

Community Indicator Projects

Members of a community get together and work through a process to formulate indicators of community progress. The indicators are more subtle than 'crime' or 'GDP', and therefore become a tool to use to intervene in public policy. There are many of these projects happening around the world now. To find out more, contact Redefining Progress in San Francisco. http://www.rprogress.org

Community Issues Groups

Community Issues Groups (CIGs) are a combination of the focus group and citizen jury. The purpose is to capture the energy, reach and cost-effectiveness of a focus group, combined with the potential depth of the jury. CIGs consist of 8-12 people who meet for roughly 2-2.5 hours on several occasions to discuss designated issues in depth. Each meeting is designed to build on discussions of the previous session. Proponents of the method claim that it promotes a valuable interaction based on reason, reflection and revision.

Future Search Conferences

A Future Search Conference is a two-day meeting where participants attempt to create a shared community vision of the future. The process is managed by a steering group of local people representing key sections of the community. They take part in a highly-structured 2 day process in which they review the past and create ideal future scenarios. Practitioners claim that it is designed to empower participants in that it upholds the idea that individuals are experts in their own lives. (There are facilitators present but no other experts.) It is also designed to reach consensus by bringing together key stakeholder groups who are often opposed to each other to find common ground and find solutions. Those taking part are expected to identify points of action and to be responsible for realizing them. http://www.ippr.org.uk

Interactive Panels

A panel is composed of 12 members of the general public meeting roughly three times a year to discuss topics set by the organisers. Several panels, each following the same agenda, are organized simultaneously to provide confidence of the results. Members are recruited by quota sampling to cover a range of demographic characteristics, though there is a regular turnover of membership to bring in new voices. Frequently, they are supplied information beforehand, and are encouraged to discuss the material with friends and family. The purpose is to explore the views and values of the public on the issue at hand. An independent researcher generally facilitates panels. The discussion is recorded and Transcripts, as well as a final report, are produced, providing qualitative and quantitative information on members' views. To date, Interactive Panels have been used mainly by health authorities, although they could be readily established by other agencies to address a wide range of topics. http://www.ippr.org.uk

On-line Discussions

A variety of internet-based communications tools have arisen that facilitate interaction between citizens and groups in disparate locations. These include mailing lists, usenet groups, internet relay chats, electronic conferences and intranets. One of the benefits of this form of communication tends to be a flattening of hierarchies in group relationships. http://www.worldbank.org/devforum

Study Circles

Small group deliberation involving 10-15 people who meet regularly over a period of weeks/months to address policy issues; usually involves a trained facilitator and basic ground rules for discussion. The Study Circles Resource Centre exists as a non-profit organization (established in 1990 in the US) to promote the use of study circles on public policy issues. http://www.cpn.org/SCRC/

ANNEX F
PWGSC CLIENT SERVICE UNITS FOR INAC

Regional Director
Real Property Services for INAC
Ontario Region
55 St. Clair Avenue East, Room 623
TORONTO, ON
M4T 1M2
Tel.: (416) 973-8019
Fax.: (416) 954-4748

Regional Director
Real Property Services for INAC
Manitoba Region
275 Portage Avenue, 6th Floor
WINNIPEG, MB
R3B 3A3
Tel.: (204) 983-6269
Fax.: (204) 983-1626

Regional Director
Real Property Services for INAC
Atlantic Region
40 Havelock Street
AMHERST, NS
B4H 3Z3
Tel.: (902) 661-6304
Fax.: (902) 667-0783

Regional Director
Real Property Services for INAC
Yukon Region
105-300 Main Street
WHITEHORSE, YT
Y1A 2B5
Tel.: (867) 667-3946
Fax.: (867) 393-6707

Regional Director
Real Property Services for INAC
Nunavut Region
PO Box 400, Building 2225
IQALUIT, Nunavut
X0A 0H0
Tel.: (867) 975-4646
Fax.: (867) 975-4647

Regional Director
Real Property Services for INAC
Quebec Region
Place Jacques-Cartier Complex
320 St-Joseph Street East
QUEBEC, QC
G1K 9J2
Tel.: (418) 648-3836
Fax.: (418) 648-4040

Regional Director
Real Property Services for INAC
Saskatchewan Region
2221 Cornwall Street, 2nd Floor, Room 215
REGINA, SK
S4P 4M2
Tel.: (306) 780-6741
Fax.: (306) 780-7242

Regional Director
Real Property Services for INAC
Alberta Region
9700 Jasper Avenue, Room 630
Canada Place
EDMONTON, AB
T5J 4G2
Tel.: (780) 495-5137
Fax.: (780) 495-6445

Regional Director
Real Property Services for INAC
British Columbia Region
1401 – 1138 Melville Street
VANCOUVER, BC
V6E 4S3
Tel.: (604) 666-5152
Fax.: (604) 666-5159

Regional Director
Real Property Services for INAC
NWT Region
PO Box 518
YELLOWKNIFE, NT
X1A 2N4
Tel.: (867) 766-7110
Fax.: (867) 873-5885