

Without strong local institutions and motivated staff, decentralization and human settlements reform will not deliver the desired development outcomes. Yet, many local authorities and civil society organisations lack the human resources required to meet urgent needs. Training and capacity building is therefore a wise investment into the future sustainability of our cities. The Training and Capacity Building Branch (TCBB) of UN-HABITAT supports national training institutions to build their capacity to implement innovative programmes, focusing on local governance and sustainable human settlements development. Typical activities include training needs assessment, development of manuals, training of trainers, and impact evaluation. TCBB products have been successfully adapted and translated into over 20 languages.

This Quick Guide is a snap-shot overview of UN-HABITAT's new series on Local Elected Leadership Training (LEL). The LEL series presents two roles and ten competencies essential for every elected official when serving their local communities. Comprised of 4 Volumes, this user-friendly training package includes; Volume 1 - Quick Guide; Volume 2 - User's Guide, Volume 3 - Concepts and Strategies, and Volume 4 - Training Tools. These Volumes describe the roles and competencies that elected officials should have in order to effectively perform their job. The many training exercises and tools can also be used as a practical on-the-job guide long after the leadership training workshop has ended.

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Volume 1: Quick guide
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Key Competencies for Improving Local Governance



Volume 1: Quick Guide



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The Local Elected Leadership Series

Key Competencies for Improving Local Governance

Volume 1: Quick Guide



Foreword

One of the most successful UN-HABITAT initiatives to increase the capacity of local governments, their leaders, and many other key local stakeholders worldwide has been through the efforts of its Training and Capacity Building Branch (TCBB). Through the development and dissemination of practical training materials and the training of trainers, TCBB has been able to extend its reach and influence to public officials and communities with the desire and commitment to improve and promote good local governance. More importantly, these user-friendly learning tools have opened the door for an increasing number of women to join the ranks of public officials who can leverage their communities resources to fight poverty and bring about positive changes in their governing institutions. Among these tools is the Elected Leadership series.



UN-HABITAT first developed and published the Local Elected Leadership series a decade ago, and the series enjoyed a wide success in many regions of the world through numerous training programmes and has been translated into more than twenty-five languages over the years. We expect that this new Local Elected Leadership series will establish new benchmarks of service to local governments and their leaders because of a network of trainers and training institutions that already exists. Their dedication and commitment to elected leadership development is legendary. Without their efforts, it would be impossible to reach around the world with the learning opportunities that are embodied in this series.

This work significantly contributes to the Global Campaign on Urban Governance, which was launched by UN-HABITAT in 1999 to support implementation of the Habitat Agenda goal of “sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world.” The Campaign’s goal is to contribute to the eradication of poverty through the improvement of urban governance. There is growing consensus that the quality of urban governance is the single most important factor for the eradication of poverty and for prosperous cities. Based on this consensus, the Campaign has focused on contributing to the capacity of local governments and other stakeholders so they can fully implement good governance initiatives.

There are so many to thank in the accomplishment of this project: the financial support through funding from the Government of the Netherlands and the Open Society Institute; the expert committee that took time to share their thoughts and wisdom, the hundred of trainers

who contributed to a better understanding of how to strengthen the series; the team of UN-HABITAT professionals who guided the project and products to fruition; and the principal authors of the series, Dr. Fred Fisher and David Tees.



Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka
Executive Director, UN-HABITAT

Preface

First published in 1994, the initial edition of this Local Elected Leadership (LEL) series has been translated into twenty-five languages and used in many regions of the world. Hundreds of trainers worldwide have been trained to facilitate elected leadership workshops and several hundred thousand local elected and appointed officials have participated in leadership programmes using the materials. In addition, the LEL series has been used by hundreds of non-governmental and community-based organizations to strengthen their management and leadership skills and competencies.

Based on the success of the original series and the changing nature of local governance, urban challenges, and the growing wisdom and understanding about issues like governance and sustainability, UN-HABITAT decided to revise and update the LEL series to meet the learning needs of a new generation of local elected leaders. A global written survey of users was conducted and a representative team of elected officials, trainers, and governance specialists was convened at UN-HABITAT headquarters in late 2002 to review the survey data, reflect on their own experiences in using the original series, review the materials in-depth to determine how best to improve on them, and reach consensus on a comprehensive list of recommended actions that should be taken to revise the materials based on changing times and growing demand.

Several factors dictated the development of this new series of local elected leadership materials.

- ❑ There was confirmation that the roles and responsibilities covered by the initial series were, in large part, still valid. The basic competencies required of elected officials to perform leadership roles within their jurisdictions have not changed.
- ❑ While the basic competencies may not have changed, the need for greater depth of understanding about these competencies and the skills to apply them had grown in the intervening years. The world is much more complex and the challenges of local elected leadership more demanding than they were a decade or so ago.
- ❑ A reservoir of valuable experience about governance, elected leadership, and the issues confronting local leaders in today's complex urban environments has been growing over the last decade. It was time to tap this reservoir of experience and knowledge as resources for significant elected leadership learning and development.
- ❑ Finally, there has been a profound shift in the understanding of what constitutes good governance and effective elected leadership over the past decade or so.

Issues of equity, inclusion, subsidiarity, civic engagement, accountability, transparency, and the old standards of effectiveness and efficiency, have gained new significance, understanding, and importance as elected leadership mandates and criteria for measuring governance performance.

Based on these factors and the wisdom of all those who helped contribute to this new series, there are several key changes that mark this new series.

- ❑ It recognizes representation and leadership as the core roles and responsibilities of the elected official. They must represent their constituents and they must provide leadership in their representation. Both of these roles are complex and demanding.
- ❑ In order to fulfill these core roles and responsibilities, the elected leader must be knowledgeable and skilled in the following competencies: communicating, facilitating, using power, decision making, policy making, enabling, negotiating, financing, overseeing, and institution building.
- ❑ These competencies must be exercised within the principles of good governance as defined by international standards. These principles establish the context within which each of the competency skills should be applied.
- ❑ The roles of trainer and training manager are recognized as central to the success of elected leadership development. An extensive User's Guide has been developed to support their initiatives. In addition, nearly ninety individual training and governance tools are available to assist them in designing relevant experiential learning experiences based on the needs of their learning constituents.

We hope users will find this new series most enriching.

Fred Fisher and David Tees
Principal Authors

Acknowledgments

This revised edition of the Local Elected Leadership series has benefited from the contributions of many individuals and partners.

We would first and foremost like to thank the participants of the Expert group meeting held in Nyeri, Kenya, in October 2002 who held spirited discussions about the many facets of this training series, their use in various countries, and ways to improve them based on their collective experience and the results of the user survey conducted earlier. These participants made consensus possible on major additions, deletions, and changes in the content, structure and process of these training materials that will assure their continued use and service to a world-wide audience of local government officials, and capacity building institutions and their staff. Their valuable observations and recommendations have indeed shaped the structure and substance of this revised series of Elected Leadership. In this regard, we particularly would like to mention the contributions of Ms. Habiba Eid of Sustainable Development Center for Training and Capacity Building, Egypt, Mr. Artashes Gazaryan of SPTC/VDM, Lithuania, Ms. Anna Laczowska of FSDL Training Centre, Poland, Mr. Patrick Senelart of Habitat et Participation, Belgium, Mr. Kulwant Singh and Mr. K.K. Pandey of Human Settlements Management Institute (HSMI), India, Mr. Mohamed Soumare of Environnement Et Développement Du Tiers-Monde (ENDA), Ms. Ana Vasilache of Partners Foundation for Local Development (FPDL), Romania, Ms. Luba Vavrova of the Local Government Assistance Centre, Slovakia, Mr. Nestor Vega Jimenez of IULA-CELCADEL, Ecuador, as well as Mr. David Tees and Fred Fisher who are consultants and also the principal authors of this revised Elected Leadership series.

In addition, we would like to acknowledge the contributions of several partners in the User Survey on the first edition of the Elected Leadership series conducted prior to the expert group meeting mentioned above. The results of the survey were instrumental in informing the agenda of the expert group meeting and in revising and improving this series generally. We particularly recognize the contributions of the FSDL Training Centre, Poland, HSMI, India, Habitat et Participation, Belgium, and the Local Government Assistance Centre, Slovakia. The Government Training Institute, Kenya through Nelson Mong'oni, Samuel Githaiga, and Absalom Ayodo, and Environnement et Développement du Tiers-Monde (ENDA) through its officers, Mohamed Soumare, Bachir Kanoute and Fatou Ly Ndiaye, also contributed to the development of this manual including the User Survey.

This exercise would never have come to fruition without the initiative, direct support and guidance of UN-HABITAT through many of its substantive officers. We are grateful for the vital support, advice and contributions of these substantive officers led by Gulelat Kebede, Rafael Tuts, Tomasz Sudra, John Hogan, Sarika Seki-Hussey, Hawa Diallo, Mohamed El-sioufi and Liz Case. We also acknowledge the support provided in the

internal review of these manuals by Winnehl Tubman and Bridget Oballa.

A very special recognition goes to the principal authors of this revised Elected Leadership Series, Fred Fisher and David Tees. The authors have worked tirelessly to ensure high substantive quality throughout the development and finalisation of this revised series.

These contributions have all shaped this edition, which we trust will offer many opportunities for capacity development of local governments, their leaders and stakeholders.

Rafael Tuts,
Chief, Training and
Capacity Building Branch,
UN-HABITAT

Table of Contents

- Forewordiii**

- Prefacev**

- Acknowledgmentsvii**

- Why a Quick Guide?1**

- Why not a Quick Guide!2**

- What to expect in this Quick Guide3**

- A Quick Guide to the specifics5**
 - The 12 competencies5**
 - Representation6
 - Communicating6
 - Facilitating7
 - Using power8
 - Decision-making8
 - Policy Making9
 - Enabling10
 - Negotiating10
 - Financing11
 - Overseeing11
 - Institution building12
 - Leadership13

- A Reflective Task Opportunity13**

Why a Quick Guide?

The answer is simple. We want to accomplish three things:

1. We want to introduce you to the new edition of UN-HABITAT's *Local Elected Leadership (LEL) Series*.
2. We want to entice you, your elected official colleagues, and other community leaders to undertake an unforgettable personal and professional development experience based on the new LEL Series.
3. And, we want to help you change your life as an elected official and citizen of your community.

Of course, we are talking about the opportunity to organize a series of leadership development workshops for you, your elected colleagues, and other community leaders based on UN-HABITAT's new LEL Series. Not only will you and your colleagues increase your knowledge, skills, and understanding in 10 specific leadership competencies, you will learn how to apply them in your collective roles and responsibilities as community representatives and leaders.

But first, we want to share a paradox about the use of these handbooks. While they are clearly identified in the title, and throughout the series, as being for *elected officials*, we must confess that many other public officials and community leaders found the initial series to be helpful in their own personal and professional development. And, that's why we have added mention to these other groups in this Quick Guide. With a bit of creative language adaptation, these handbooks can also serve the needs of your local government's administrative and technical staff members. Likewise, community leaders serving in NGOs and CBOs, and women and youth group leaders, to name some obvious target groups. As you will learn later, this fits nicely with your *enabling* competency as an elected leader.

Now, about that promise to change your life! This, of course, is really up to you but we know it can happen based on the experiences of thousands of local elected leaders who participated in workshops based on the initial UN-HABITAT LEL Series. For example, you will:

- ❑ Learn how to be a better *communicator, decision maker, meeting manager, negotiator, and policy maker*. Just imagine how important these skills are in being a more effective member of your governing body? Or, how handy they will be when meeting with unhappy citizens?
- ❑ Better understand your local government's *financial management* needs and processes so you can represent your constituents more effectively;

- ❑ Understand, perhaps for the first time, what it really means to be an *enabler*, and how to enable individual men and women, groups and organizations to assume more public service responsibilities within your community.
- ❑ Become a more effective *overseer* of your local government's programmes and services in a comprehensive and responsible way. Not to mention a better understanding of what is meant by *institution building* and actually being helpful in making it happen within your local government organization.
- ❑ And, finally getting a handle on how to use your power more effectively as an elected official and community leader, and how to use it in a principled and responsible way.

When these things begin to happen in your roles and responsibilities as an elected leader, we believe they have the potential to change your life.

Why not a Quick Guide!

In this case, the answer is obvious. The initial version of UN-HABITAT's *Local Elected Leadership (LEL) Series* has been translated into 25 languages and used on every continent. Hundreds of trainers have already been taught to use the original LEL training materials. Because this new series has been vastly improved, based on the feedback from literally thousands of trainers and workshop participants, these trainers and those they train will be able to further their effectiveness as learning facilitators. The impact of this strategy to train trainers who in turn train elected officials - many of whom become LEL trainers - is awesome.

For example, Ana Vasilache and Nicole Rata from Romania's Partners Foundation of Local Development (FPDL) have trained over 350 trainers from more than 25 countries on three continents. Polish trainers who took part in some of the initial FPDL training of trainer (TOT) programmes, in turn trained 40 more trainers in their country. The trainers in the first and second wave of these TOTs in the various countries have, in turn, trained thousands of elected men and women and many other trainers. Ana and Nicole are only two of the hundreds of trainers worldwide who have used the initial series of local elected leadership materials.

It is estimated that nearly a half a million local elected officials and other community leaders on six continents have been involved in learning experiences using these LEL handbooks. That's good news for citizens who expect good governance from their elected officials. It's also good news for elected men and women who have taken the time and effort to sharpen their leadership knowledge, skills and understanding through participation in LEL learning events.

But, the best news is yet to come! The new version of UN-HABITAT's *Local Elected Leadership* training series is based on nearly a decade of experience by elected men and women, trainers, and others in using the LEL series and their feedback on how to make it even more effective. While the initial LEL series enjoyed phenomenal success, we expect the new series to be even more successful, thanks to hundreds of elected leaders and trainers worldwide who contributed to making them better. Given the potential for even greater success in serving elected and community leaders through this LEL series, this *Quick Guide* is designed to make it happen quicker.

What to expect in this Quick Guide

Assuming we have convinced you about why UN-HABITAT has developed this *Quick Guide*, we want to use this opportunity to tell you what's in the new series of *Local Elected Leadership Handbooks*.

First, much of what made the initial series successful has been retained. For example:

- Each role and competency still includes two key parts. Part One discusses the *concepts, principles and strategies* of the role and competency being covered (in Volume 3), and Part Two includes a series of *training and governance tools* (covered in Volume 4) to be used by trainers and participants to enhance their learning about and application of the concepts, principles and strategies. Most of the training and governance tools are new and there are more than 100 from which to choose.
- The authors continue to use:
 - *Proverbs* (over 150 in the new series from more than forty countries);
 - *Reflection* exercises in Part One although they are called *Reflective Opportunities* in the new series: 72 in all;
 - Nearly 200 *Key Points* designed to summarize the content in each Handbook; and,
 - Over 150 *References* to other documents that were used to enrich the content of the discussions.

However, some things are quite different. For example, the new edition:

- Uses some new terminology and organizing strategies. For example, the initial LEL Series was organised around the various *roles and responsibilities* of the elected official, i.e. policy maker. The new series is organised in terms of the competencies required to carry out these roles and

responsibilities as an elected official. By **competency** we mean the combination of knowledge, skills, understanding, and attitudes associated with a particular type of elected leadership performance, e.g., policy making, or institution building. Of course, the competency doesn't translate into elected leadership until it is used effectively and consistently in your role and responsibility as an elected official.

- Ties the various elected leadership *competencies* to the widely recognized and accepted principles of good governance. While there are some differences in how various institutions define good governance principles, we look to UN-HABITAT's *Global Campaign on Urban Governance* for guidance. It defines these principles as:
 - *Sustainability* in all dimensions of local development.
 - *Subsidiarity* of authority and resources to the closest appropriate level consistent with efficient and cost-effective delivery of services.
 - *Equity* of access to decision-making processes and the basic necessities of community life.
 - *Efficiency* in the delivery of public services and in promoting local economic development.
 - *Transparency and Accountability* of decision-makers and all stakeholders.
 - *Civic Engagement and Citizenship* with all men and women participating in and contributing to the common good, and
 - *Security* of individual men, women, girls and boys and their living environment.

To these challenges, the LEL Series adds two more: diversity and trust. *Diversity* of gender, race, ethnicity, age, and other community characteristics should figure prominently in your local government's policies and decisions. *Trust* defines the quality and integrity of relationships between you as the governing body and your citizens.

- Includes a new Handbook on the *representation* role of the local elected official, substantially changes the *leadership* handbook by incorporating new ideas on leadership, and a *User's Guide* for trainers and practitioners of elected leadership.

Lastly, we've redefined the conceptual framework used to associate the roles and responsibilities of elected leadership with the competencies required to carry them out. The final part of this *Quick Guide* provides a summary of this conceptual framework and what you can expect from each of the handbooks. We've also included some proverbs and key points to reflect more closely what you can expect in the series.

A Quick Guide to the specifics

Your *roles and responsibilities* as an elected man or woman are encompassed within the various competencies covered in the series. For example, you have a role and responsibility to *make decisions*, to *enact policies*, to *negotiate* with other institutions, to *oversee* your local government. Of the 12 competencies covered in the LEL series, we put special emphasis on your *representation* and *leadership* roles and responsibilities as an elected official. After all, that's why your citizens elected you. They expect you to represent them in public decisions and deliberations. And, they expect you to provide leadership.

Representation is the legal mandate of the office you have been elected to serve. *Leadership* is the sum total of your contributions as an elected official to the common good of the community during your time in office, and beyond. The "beyond" timeframe of your leadership contribution is your legacy. The series thus begins with representation and ends with leadership.

The 12 competencies

In between the representation and leadership roles, responsibilities, and competencies, are 10 supporting competencies you need to be an effective elected leader. As you look at these, you may recognize that each of them has a unique contribution to make in your efforts to be effective in your role and responsibilities as an elected official.

- ❑ Some are much more personal, such as the *communicating* and *facilitating* competencies.
- ❑ Others, i.e. the *policy making*, *decision-making*, and *enabling* competencies, are related directly to the collective actions of you and your elected colleagues as representatives of the community.
- ❑ The *overseeing*, *financing*, and *institution building* competencies are associated with your responsibilities to your local government organization as an operating institution.
- ❑ *Using power* and *negotiating* are both personal as well as collective governing competencies.
- ❑ And, the *representation* and *leadership* roles and competencies fit into all these somewhat arbitrary categories.

Let's look at each of them in a bit more depth.

Representation

The art of leadership is to act as a representative of a much larger constituency than those who voted for you.

Peter Parker Former Chairman of British Rail

Representation is the core responsibility of local elected officials. By vote of the people and the legal mandate of the office, elected men and women are responsible for representing the rights and needs of *all citizens* within their local government jurisdiction.

- ❑ Representation is the measure of how well your local government serves all of its citizens in accordance with widely accepted principles of good governance.
- ❑ Representation involves the development and enforcement of policies, allocation of public goods and services, assisting local men and women in their interactions with their local government, and keeping in touch with all citizens on a continuing basis.
- ❑ Conflicting demands, pluralistic pressures, and problems challenge effective representation when no-one is in charge of solving them.
- ❑ Representation is not a one-way process.
- ❑ Representation and good governance share common values: participation, respect for the law, equity and inclusiveness, transparency and accountability, effectiveness and efficiency, and subsidiarity.
- ❑ Representation is enhanced through a rich network of partnerships, which is different from a network of rich partnerships.

The *representation* competency will help you better serve all your constituents, not just those who voted for you, or live in your district.

Communicating

Nature has given us one tongue, but two ears, that we may hear from others twice as much as we speak.

Epictetus Roman Philosopher

Communicating involves giving and receiving information, ideas, and feelings with accuracy and understanding.

- ❑ This simple definition ignores the complexity of the competency for elected officials. Is it spoken or written? From the individual or the whole governing body? To an individual, a group, or the entire community? Formal or informal?
- ❑ Because of this complexity, the focus in this series is primarily on inter-personal communications.
- ❑ Effective communication is critical to the good governance principles of openness, transparency, accountability, and trust.
- ❑ Active listening and asking the right kinds of questions are the elected official's best communicating tools. For many, it's a learned behaviour.
- ❑ It is all right to say *no* as an elected official, but some ways are better than others.

The *communicating* competency will help you become a better listener, ask more incisive questions, and learn how to say *no* without losing the next election.

Facilitating

*When one is helping another,
both are strong.*

German proverb

Facilitating covers such activities as fostering collective effort, helping others solve problems, ensuring that committee meetings are productive, and managing inter-personal and inter-group conflict. Whether you call it *facilitating* or something else, it covers a whole lot of what you do as an individual elected official.

- ❑ Facilitating, strictly speaking, is a process where a substantively neutral person without decision making authority and acceptable to all, intervenes to help improve the problems are solved and decisions taken.
- ❑ Facilitating also means learning a lot about group processes, mediating disputes, understanding gender perspectives on conflict resolution, making meetings more productive, and building effective teams.
- ❑ Facilitating is an extremely valuable individual competency to have as an elected official.

The **facilitating** competency will help you learn how to do a lot of ordinary things better as an elected leader. For example, how to conduct a

better meeting, mediate disputes, and help teams become more effective and productive.

Using power

One of the great challenges of leadership is to develop harmony between service and the power that is necessary for the exercise of leadership.

Keshavan Nair 20th Century Indian Author

Using power involves using your personal and position sources of power to get things done. Unfortunately, the discussion of power, particularly when associated with the actions of elected officials, makes a lot of people uncomfortable. To paraphrase Abraham Lincoln, *if you want to test the character of human beings, give them power*. This is precisely why your use of power as an elected leadership competency cannot be ignored.

- Every institution creates its own power culture. As elected leaders you have a responsibility to mould that culture to reflect the principles of good governance.
- Using power responsibly as an elected official is probably the single most important hallmark of public leadership.
- Sharing power is not the same as giving it away.

The *using power* competency will help you understand the various sources of power you have available as an elected leader and how to use them more effectively.

Decision-making

Decisiveness is “biting through” the entirety of the situation and not nibbling around the edges, or just pulling off what is loose around the bone.

Bob Messing 20th Century American Author

Decision- Making involves deciding how to act when there is a choice. Of course, it is much more complicated. For example, failing to act on your options and choices is also a form of decision making, and sometimes very appropriate.

- Decision-making is a crosscutting competency affecting just about everything elected men and women leaders do.

- ❑ Elected men and women have lots of options when it comes to making decisions. They can make the decision, delegate it to someone, delay it, support the decision if someone else makes it, veto it, or cancel it after it is made.
- ❑ Decisions should be judged by their quality and acceptance by those who have to live by their consequences.
- ❑ The poet, T. S. Eliot, wrote: *Between the idea and the reality falls the shadow*. He was talking about decision-making. When it's an enlightened decision, the shadow disappears.

The *decision-making* competency will help you identify and analyze problems and opportunities and explore options before making decisions.

Policy Making

The village which is not discussed is not built.

African proverb

Policy making involves understanding the need for new or improved formal elected body mandates, analysing the potential consequences of acting, or not acting to establish these mandates, examining alternatives, and determining implementation strategies that will guide present and future actions to benefit the community.

- ❑ *Policy making* and *politics* should not be confused. It diminishes the importance of the most fundamental competency that defines public decision-making.
- ❑ Gender analysis needs to be an integral part of your policy making process. Birgitta Hedman chides all of us about this important policy making mandate. *More often than not, the problem with policy making and gender equality are the people at the top of the organisation. They don't always practice what they preach.*
- ❑ Elected officials by the power invested in them will either make policies that meet good governance qualities, or policies that call into question their commitment to good governance and their local men and women. The choice is yours.

The *Policy making* competency will help you understand how to carry out this fundamental elected responsibility within the framework of good governance principles and establish, through the policy making process, the foundation for conducting the business of the public.

Enabling

In the long history of humankind those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed.

Charles Darwin, 19th Century English naturalist

Enabling provides the means for others to get things done. It defines local governance largely in terms of what others can do to provide programmes and services for the community and citizens, not what local governments should do.

- ❑ The enabling competency involves a wide range of options: for example, forming partnerships with private sector firms, NGOs, neighbourhood organisations, and women's groups.
- ❑ These power sharing initiatives can include project planning and development, capacity building, community interface, awareness raising, advocacy, providing services, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and services, conflict resolution, and more.
- ❑ Enabling others also has a dark side, i.e. working with incompetent organisations, misusing civil society institutions for less than honourable reasons, and more.
- ❑ Trust is at the heart of all enabling ventures. This important enabling quality is strengthened when built on a clear understanding of who is accountable for what and with whom.

The *enabling* competency will help you and your elected colleagues forge a wide range of partnerships within the community to conduct a wide range of programmes and services, and to manage them in the best interests of the total community.

Negotiating

Blowing out the other person's candle won't make yours burn any brighter.

Arabic proverb

Negotiating involves interaction by two or more parties representing differing interests and positions seeking to do better than they could otherwise through jointly agreed-upon actions.

- ❑ Negotiation is an integral part of the governing process. It involves deciding who gets what from whom.

- ❑ The negotiating process is influenced by the cultural context of the environment where it happens.
- ❑ The win-win approach to negotiating takes the process from competition to collaboration, regardless of culture and other variables. It's just that different cultures arrive at win-win in different ways.

The *negotiating* competency will help you secure the best decision from the perspective of all those parties involved so that progress can proceed in the best interests of your local government and its citizens.

Financing

*If there is no oil in the lamp,
the wick is wasted.*

Cambodian proverb

Financing involves making decisions about raising, allocating, and expending public funds. At the heart of this competency is the ability to understand and bring leadership to the annual budgeting process.

- ❑ Financing responsibilities are probably your most time-consuming and important of all your responsibilities as an elected official. They can also be your most problematic because of their complexity and potential for misuse.
- ❑ Openness and transparency are the two most important good governance principles in defining how you use your financing competencies.
- ❑ Civic engagement in local public financial management is synonymous with good governance. See that it happens in your community.

The *financing* competency will help you better understand the budgeting process from different perspectives including from the perspective of gender, and to make rational decisions about the creation, allocation and expenditures of public funds.

Overseeing

To paraphrase a nineteenth century Hungarian chemist, "Overseeing is seeing what everyone has seen and thinking what nobody has thought."

Overseeing ensures that the elected body and the local government staff are doing the right things and doing things right. It involves the on-going and

periodic monitoring and evaluating of the performance of all local government policies, programmes, and services.

- ❑ The *overseeing* competency covers a wide range of possible issues, concerns, options, and strategies. They run all the way from doing the mandatory financial and compliance audits to the possibility of having to oversee corruption.
- ❑ While corruption is endemic in all societies and institutions, local governments are particularly vulnerable so they require an added measure of overseeing scrutiny. Just in case there is any confusion, *corruption* is the misuse of entrusted power for private gain.
- ❑ Effective overseeing is based on trust between those overseeing and those who are overseen and the overseen.

The *Overseeing* competency will help you put in place various safeguards to assure the effective, efficient, and lawful performance of all policies, programmes and services under your governing body's jurisdiction.

Institution building

We will be forever known by the tracks we leave.

Dakota proverb

Institution building ensures that the elected council as an institution, local government organisation and staff, and key intergovernmental and community-based organisations with whom the local government works closely are supported in their developmental needs and challenges.

- ❑ Governance is not government, and organisations are not institutions. An organisation becomes an institution when it succeeds in being valued by others as important and significant.
- ❑ The institution-building competency is designed to help local governments become institutions by achieving important and significant status from local men and women of all ages and from the wide range of communities in your area.
- ❑ Governing body efforts in institution building should start with an assessment of success in achieving the generally recognised principles of good governance.

The *Institution building* competency will help you as an elected official support the long-term development of your local government and its partners within the recognized principles and strategies of good governance.

Leadership

*You cannot choose your battlefield,
the gods do that for you.
But you can plant a standard,
where a standard never grew.*

Nathalia Crane Early 20th C. American Poet

Leadership is the sum total of your contributions as an elected official to the common good of the community during your time in office and beyond.

- ❑ Elected leadership is managing the paradoxes within the principles of good governance.
- ❑ Elected leadership is the ability to infuse complex community problems with governing principles, practical competencies, and measurable and sustainable results.
- ❑ If you yearn to leave a leadership legacy for your service to local government and the community, think *stewardship*. Stewardship is the fulcrum by which you can leverage a more inclusive governance.
- ❑ Add inspired visions, clarity of purpose, integrity, will, and trust to your collection of good governance principles. Without these essential ingredients, there can be no good governance and no elected stewardship.

The *leadership* competency will help you mobilize and direct all of your other competencies so that your legacy as an elected leader in your community lives on.

We hope that we have adequately described what you can expect from the new version of UN-HABITAT's *Local Elected Leadership* series of training handbooks.

You are cordially invited to take a few moments to reflect on what this LEL series has to offer as a learning opportunity. We have selected this one from the *Enabling Handbook* because it combines the principles of good governance with the various elected leadership competencies outlined above.

A Reflective Task Opportunity

This reflective experience is a bit different from those you will normally encounter in this series of learning opportunities. It is more task-oriented

and provides a way to assess your most important enabling partnerships with civil society institutions, i.e. private firms, NGOs, neighbourhood associations, and others. In your reflections, we would greatly appreciate it if you would relate the partnership to the other competencies and the principles of good governance. Below, we take the liberty of helping you reflect on these variables.

1. Jot down the name and a short description of a partnership arrangement your elected body currently has with a civil society organisation for the purpose of providing a specific service to your constituents.
2. Describe in a few words the type of service or programme activity the partnership is designed to accomplish.
3. Is the partnership designed to relate to one or more of the good governance principles? For example, was it designed to reduce the cost of the service as an example of efficiency? Or, to expand the service into more parts of the city as an example of effectiveness? After each principle are two check-off spaces. Check the first if this is the primary reason why the partnership was established. The second check-off space is to record if the partnership provides an incidental or unintentional response to this principle.

Principle	Primary reason	Incidental benefit
To encourage participation	_____	_____
To be more responsive, e.g., timely	_____	_____
To increase the quality (effectiveness)	_____	_____
To improve the cost (efficiency)	_____	_____
To achieve subsidiarity by Decentralising implementation	_____	_____
To promote equity	_____	_____
To assure inclusiveness	_____	_____
To increase accountability	_____	_____
Was the partnership decision process open and transparent? Yes _____ No _____		
If not, why not? _____		
Has the partnership resulted in a more trusting relationship between the local government and citizens? Yes _____ No _____		
In either case, why? _____		
Assuming this partnership represents the application of the elected leadership competency of <i>enabling</i> , check off the other competencies you		

believe were also involved in establishing the partnership. Provide a short description of how this competency was involved in creating and sustaining the partnership.

Competency:	Yes?	How?
1. Communicating	_____	_____
2. Facilitating	_____	_____
3. Using power	_____	_____
4. Decision making	_____	_____
5. Policy making	_____	_____
6. Negotiating	_____	_____
7. Financing	_____	_____
8. Overseeing	_____	_____
9. Institution building	_____	_____

Are you surprised at how many principles this partnership responded to and the number of leadership competencies that were involved in creating and sustaining it?

As you can see from this *reflective opportunity*, elected leadership is both complicated and exciting. To learn more about how you can increase your competencies in all these areas of elected leadership, contact the Training and Capacity Building Branch of UN-HABITAT at tcbb@unhabitat.org.

Leadership begins not with techniques but with premises, not with tools but with beliefs, and not with systems but with understanding...it is often difficult, painful and sometimes even unrewarding, and its work. There are also times of joy in the work of leadership, and doing the work of a leader is necessary in our society.¹ As Karl Wallenda, the late, great circus performer said, "*Being on the tightrope is living; everything else is waiting*".

¹ De Pree, Max, *Leadership Jazz*, (New York, Doubleday Publishing, 1992), p.17-9

