

# KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT TOOL

## SHARING GOOD PRACTICES AND LESSONS FROM DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

### 1. INTRODUCTION: IDENTIFYING AND DISSEMINATING GOOD PRACTICES AS A KEY PROGRAM ACTIVITY

Demonstration projects are a component of the Municipal Partners for Economic Development (MPED) Program. Their purpose is to support the development and the implementation of innovative mechanisms and models that will accelerate local economic development (LED) in MPED partner cities. In the context of MPED, a demonstration project is defined as «... *an innovative, sustainable, replicable and relevant LED model or practice that promotes and fosters measurable socio-economic benefits/impacts within a selected community/region* ». These models/practices can typically be grouped under four broad themes: LED strategic planning; organizational and operational structures; business support and retention; and investment attraction.

One key dimension of demonstration projects is the commitment of partners to document the processes and results of their projects in order to disseminate good practices and lessons learned to other cities. The program and partner Local Government Associations (LGAs) have agreed that they will play a central role in disseminating these good practices and lessons to members.

In order to make the most of the knowledge emerging from demonstration projects, there is a need to adopt a systematic process to gather and analyze results. MPED has decided to utilize case studies, good practices and success stories to capture and disseminate this knowledge. For the purpose of MPED, they will be utilized in the following way:

- first, the experience of demonstration projects will be captured through the preparation of **case studies**;
- second, these case studies will become the basis for identifying **good practices** that will be disseminated to local governments who are interested in replicating some successful aspects of demonstration projects; and
- third, **success stories** that highlight successful dimensions of the demonstration projects for wider audiences will be derived of good practices.

**These guidelines have been prepared for MPED partners to guide them in the systematic collection and analysis of data from their demonstration projects.**

In addition to this introductory section, this document contains two sections.

- Section 2 presents the steps to be implemented and the tools to be utilized to complete case studies.
- Section 3 proposes ways to disseminate the knowledge produced through the case studies, focusing on sharing good practices and dissemination of success stories.

### 2. CONDUCTING THE CASE STUDIES: STEPS AND TOOLS

**Sharing lessons broadly with all municipalities will build the capacity of partners and other local governments to strengthen their LED activities and avoid recreating the wheel and repeating mistakes.**

The preparation of case studies on demonstration projects is designed to help partners, including the MPED program team and local partners, understand how LED is occurring and the steps local governments can take to replicate these processes. This will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of LED programming and the sustainability of MPED's results. The case studies are also important tools for Local Government Associations to share the experience of projects with members. The learning that will ensue will constitute one of the main legacies of MPED.

The purpose of case studies is to add depth to the information available through the various reporting activities and the comprehensive MPED performance

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Prepared by Pascal Lavoie  
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For more information: [international@fcm.ca](mailto:international@fcm.ca)



monitoring system. As it is critical to the identification of meaningful findings, we need to ensure that a learning perspective guides our case study approach. In that respect, the challenge will be to create systematic and structured ways through which project stakeholders can reflect on their experiences and identify the key lessons learned and good practices arising from their project.

**A small team composed of at least two representatives from the country partner city, one delegate from the Canadian partner municipality and one representative from the LGA should be established to pilot the preparation of the case study.** The involvement of a consultant to support the preparation of the case study should be considered early in the process, if needed<sup>1</sup>. A consultant could also be considered to edit the initial draft.

## 2.1. WHAT IS A CASE STUDY?

A case study is a research method used to understand a specific situation or a set of decisions within a specific context. Case studies are crafted using qualitative and

quantitative data from different sources. In addition to the data collection and analysis process, the validation of findings with the main stakeholders strengthens the quality and validity of the study. It is an appropriate method for documenting the results and lessons of MPED's demonstration projects and for identifying good practices to be disseminated to other municipalities.

The completion of case studies will help answer the following broad questions:

- What LED initiatives worked and did not work in the context?
- What factors influenced project success?
- What are the main lessons learned and good practices to communicate to those who would like to replicate this project in their municipality?

Table 1 below presents a proposed table of contents for a case study report, the length of which should NOT exceed 6 to 8 pages (plus annexes, if tools or methodologies developed for the project can be shared as part of the case study).

**TABLE 1: Table of Contents for a Case Study Report**

SECTION/SUB-SECTIONS	CONTENT
<b>1. Overview of the project</b>	<b>Description of the main parameters of the demonstration project.</b>
1.1. Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the project about?</li> <li>• What is the situation or problem the project aimed to improve?</li> </ul>
1.2. Project methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was the strategy or approach adopted to address the situation or problem?</li> <li>• What were the main project components, processes, activities and milestones?</li> </ul>
1.3. Partners and stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who were the main implementation partners and what were their respective roles?</li> <li>• Who were the stakeholders (women and men) of the project — including all those affected, positively or negatively by the initiative?</li> </ul>
<b>2. Project results</b>	<b>Description of the results achieved (planned and unplanned) and not achieved by the project at the end of its life cycle. And discuss their sustainability. <i>Please include pictures and other visual elements in the report to illustrate the process, activities and/or change that has taken place.</i></b>
2.1. Expected versus actual results	<p>A project rarely unfolds exactly as it was initially planned. This section intends to compare the expected results with the actual results, and to provide a short explanation about the (sometimes, difficult) choices that had to be done as the project evolved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were the expected results planned when the demonstration project was designed?</li> <li>• What results have been achieved to-date? (including unplanned and unexpected)</li> <li>• Compare expected results with actual results. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the approach. What are the factors or decisions explaining the main variances or changes?</li> </ul>
2.2. Compatibility with crosscutting Program goals	Describe how the project considered and addressed the issues of gender equality and environmental sustainability.
2.3. Success factors	Identify the factors that had a) a positive impact and b) a negative impact on the project. These factors can be <b>internal</b> to the project (e.g. competencies, budget, material resources, expertise provided by Canadian volunteers or consultants, etc.) or <b>external</b> (e.g. the adoption of a new policy framework by the national government or complementary actions by other donors).

*continued ...*

<sup>1</sup>The role of an external facilitator is to support collaborative learning processes conducive to the sharing of key insights by the projects' stakeholders.

**TABLE 1: Table of Contents for a Case Study Report (cont'd)**

SECTION/SUB-SECTIONS	CONTENT
<b>2. Project results (cont'd)</b>	
2.4. Sustainability of results	Discuss the sustainability of the results from the following angles (as relevant): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizational: Are the organizations involved in the project able to continue their involvement?</li> <li>• Technical: Will the technology/approach developed or adopted be sufficient to meet the future needs of the municipality? Are stakeholders capable of maintaining it?</li> <li>• Financial: Is this project in a position to finance itself?</li> <li>• Social: Is this initiative socially acceptable to the citizens (women and men)?</li> <li>• Environment: What type of (long term) impact does the project have on ecosystems and human settlements?</li> </ul>
<b>3. Sharing the experience</b>	
<b>What did stakeholders learn from the experience that could be adapted by other municipalities?</b>	
3.1. Lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What would you do differently if you had to do this project again? (planning process, start-up process, choice of partners, sectoral expertise, human and financial resources, support systems, implementation phase, etc.).</li> <li>• What lessons were learned by partners in the course of this project that they would like to share?</li> <li>• What advice would you give to another local government who would be interested to replicate this project?</li> </ul>
3.2. Good Practices	From your point of view, what are some of the approaches or specific ways of the experience that can be considered good practices?
3.3. Success stories	From your point of view, what are some of the specific achievements of the project that could be featured and communicated as a success story?
<b>Annexes</b>	<b>Provide other sources of evidence supporting the content of the case study report, like useful templates, guidelines, training modules, etc.</b>

## 2.2. A Two-Step Approach

The approach we recommend to case study development is practical and involves two steps. The first step uses available reporting and performance monitoring information. This second step involves follow-up meetings with representatives and stakeholders of the demonstration project to: a) validate/confirm analysis based on existing information, and; b) deepen the analysis and focus on what was learned by stakeholders during the process.

Table 2 presents the main data sources and collection methods proposed to complete the case studies.

An analysis should be conducted as part of the process leading to the preparation of the case study. The purpose of the analysis is to explore the meaning of the findings within the context of the project and should therefore go beyond the description of processes and results.

The qualitative data collected is analyzed to identify the most significant elements and establish linkages between data collected through the various sources

**TABLE 2: Case Studies – Main Data Sources**

SECTION & SUB-SECTIONS OF CASE STUDY	SOURCES OF DATA / COLLECTION METHODS
Overview of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial project proposal / Project Plan.</li> <li>• Progress reports submitted by the participating municipality.</li> <li>• Performance information from MPED's performance monitoring system.</li> <li>• Site visits by the case study team members, discussions with key project stakeholders or short interviews with target groups.</li> </ul>
Project results	
Sharing the experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress reports submitted by the participating city.</li> <li>• Qualitative data collection through interviews and/or small workshop.</li> <li>• Stories told by participants during story telling sessions.</li> <li>• Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with stakeholders.</li> </ul>

and methods. The analysts (i.e. the team in charge of preparing the case study) will look for convergence and divergence in the points of views of participants, using grids and other tools to guide analysis on the topics presented in the table of contents.

The quantitative data analysis could involve a cost-benefit analysis. Table 3 lists some of the potential, quantifiable benefits and costs resulting from an LED project. Each demonstration project should select the ones that are relevant to its undertaking, taking into account the project timeframe and expected results.

The last step of the analysis to be conducted by the case study team is to combine the results of the quantitative and qualitative analysis to give sufficient depth and breadth to the findings and ensure the robustness of the good practices and lessons identified within the context of the project. **An important step in this process is the validation of findings with the stakeholders. This is done through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).**

FGDs are good conducted using a series of semi-structured questions or talking points that invite comments from participants on all aspects of the design, implementation and ongoing administration of the project. The questions can be distributed to participants ahead of time or simply be used by the facilitator (i.e. ideally someone from the team in charge of preparing the case study) as the basis for steering the discussion. Depending on the size of the group, participants can be asked to work in small groups before sharing with the larger group. The conduct of FGDs requires a structured framework to ensure that all relevant issues are discussed, but should leave enough room for spontaneous interactions amongst participants. A broad guide for conducting FGDs is presented in the table below.

In the event that a key project stakeholder cannot take part in a FGD, a semi-structured interview could be conducted using an interview protocol similar to that of the FGD.

**TABLE 3: Quantifiable Outcomes of Demonstration LED Project**

DESCRIPTION OF OUTCOME	MEASURE OF OUTCOME (TYPE OF UNITS) AND (IF POSSIBLE) VALUE OF OUTCOME	OBSERVATIONS
New jobs generated as a result of project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of jobs created in city attributable to project (disaggregated by gender)</li> <li>Average salary of jobs created <math>\times</math> number of jobs</li> <li>Number of unemployed (disaggregated by gender)</li> </ul>	
New businesses created as a result of project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of new businesses</li> <li>Jobs in new businesses <math>\times</math> average salary</li> </ul>	
New investments generated as a result of project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Value of investments made</li> </ul>	
Improvement in civic amenities (infrastructure improvements, parks, improvement in physical appearance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Value of investments made</li> </ul>	
Improvement in quality of local government services for people and/or businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in wait for permits, reduction in # of visits to local government offices, etc.</li> </ul>	
Increase in civic participation in LED issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance at meetings, creation of LED related membership associations</li> </ul>	
Non labor costs of implementing the project (equipment, construction costs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This includes the costs of any facilities developed, equipment purchased during project start-up</li> </ul>	
Labor costs of implementing the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of staff assigned to project implementation</li> <li>Estimate of the actual number of weeks worked on the project <math>\times</math> average salary</li> </ul>	
Ongoing operating costs of project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual budget assigned for future operations of project</li> </ul>	

### Guide for Focus Group Discussions with Stakeholders

- The facilitator starts by explaining to participants that the purpose of the FGD is to learn about their experience and to identify lessons and practices that would be useful for other municipalities.
- The information gathered so far on the demonstration project is shared with participants.
- Participants are asked if this information reflects their own experience or views of the project's achievements, challenges, lessons, etc.
- Participants are asked to share their own experience in the project: How did they overcome some of the challenges? What advice would they give to another municipality? What are the elements/dimensions of this project that they are most proud about? If another city wants to replicate one of their practices or do a similar project, what should they consider?
- If the number of participants is big, FGD participants can be asked to work in small groups to reflect on specific issues. Participatory approaches should be utilized with lots of visual tools to make it interactive and conducive to collaborative learning.
- The session should end with a wrap up of main learning, future directions and what participants learned from this process.

## 3. SHARING GOOD PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED

If a case study reveals that a demonstration project has been successful relative to its goals and objectives, and if the type of project is judged to be generally applicable to other locations, the MPED team will prepare a “good practice” document — a shorter tool, in a written document or other formats (e.g. video) to be utilized for sharing the practices.

### 3.1. Identifying Good Practices

Good practices can be defined as programs or strategies that have produced successful outcomes which are supported to some degree by subjective and objective data sources and other types of evidence. Within the context of MPED, a good practice can be all aspects of a demonstration project or just one element of it (for example, how a municipality went about consulting the population for the development of its LED strategy).

The format for presenting and disseminating good practices is shorter and more focused than the format used to present case studies. Table 4 presents a proposed format for a good practice document.

Particularly important to the documenting of good practices is thoughtful consideration of replicability. The

replication of good practices in complex environments usually requires some adaptation and thus they should not be seen as blueprints. The good practice document should aim at proposing an effective principle to guide decision-making towards a successful replication.

In collaboration with LGA partners, MPED will consider organizing knowledge sharing workshops at regional or national level to share these practices. Once the good practices have been identified and properly defined, it would also be useful to combine them under the four broad themes utilized to categorize the LED models retained by MPED: LED strategic planning; organizational and operational structures; business support and retention, and; investment attraction.

### 3.2. Success Stories

Success stories can highlight a specific aspect of a demonstration project, one that had a positive impact on individuals, a community or a municipality. It is very focused and tends to be utilized for communicating with a broad audience. Well thought success stories appeal to both the head and the heart of their audience.

A success LED story could be an example of how a specific demonstration project has changed a person's life or has produced tangible and sustainable outcomes.

**TABLE 4: Disseminating Good Practices — Proposed Format**

<b>Name of the practice: The name of the practice should be explicit. For e.g. “Cities Successfully Develop and Adopt LED Strategies,” or “Krivorig City Council and Citizens Work Together to Create Development Strategy”.</b>	
<b>1. The City and the Problem</b>	Where was it implemented? What problem was this project responding to?
<b>2. The Project and its Results</b>	Brief overview of the project's components, processes and activities with results achieved.
<b>3. Steps in Implementing this Practice</b>	A step-by-step presentation of the implementation process that should allow others to understand how it was implemented.
<b>4. Considerations for its Replication</b>	What should be considered by those who would like to replicate this practice? What principles should guide their adaptation of the practice to their context — for example, mistakes to avoid, strengths to build on.
<b>5. For Additional Information</b>	To learn more about this practice or to obtain the case study report prepared for this demonstration project please contact: <b>X</b>



Questions to ask for the identification of success stories include:

- Is there an element or a component of this experience that appears to be particularly successful? Would it appeal to a broader audience?
- Is it possible to highlight how this project changed people's lives? Or how it created an environment that was conducive to LED initiatives? Or how it impacted on other initiatives implemented by the municipality and its partners?
- What would be the best format for this success story? A written document? A short videotaped interview?