

Municipal Capacity Index Indicator: Measuring the Performance of Municipalities

Within the framework of enhancing and institutionalizing best practices in good local governance, Global Communities has developed throughout the implementation of two USAID funded programs, an index for measuring municipal capacity, in line of a pioneered model for Governance Excellence in local governance. This model holistically covers the expected role of each municipality namely in three areas: leadership, management of service delivery, and community participation. According to this model, Global Communities initiated the development of an index scale in 2007 to assess the performance of municipalities in 37 partner municipalities in West Bank and Gaza. The main objective of this index was to assess the municipalities' ability to measure their performance in an accurate, transparent, and precise manner; as well as analyze their capacity and its ability to fulfill this capacity based on expected roles to improve their service delivery towards their respective communities, while ensuring what progress they were making towards enhancing their (i) Efficiency, (ii) Effectiveness, and (iii) their Responsiveness to their constituents

The index scale has evolved during different paces, where by the end of 2012, , Global Communities has managed to engage more than 1,200 municipal representatives to help fine tune and further develop the scale, including the development of progressive scoring instrument (Participatory Performance Measurement Tool) to help municipalities apply the index with minimal consultancy support, while ensuring the engagement of the majority of municipal staff and relevant community representatives in the process of finalizing the indices and related scores. In 2013, Global Communities began the implementation of MCI in 26 partner municipalities by adopting this participatory measurement methodology where municipality staff and council members, regardless of their organizational hierarchy, would participate in the scoring of their municipality.

Various stakeholders benefit from this measurement tool including:

1. Municipalities can diagnose their institutional realities, review and evaluate their performance in terms of the above mentioned functional areas, while maintaining focus on measuring progress in becoming more efficient, effective, and responsive in service delivery.
2. National Government can use the outcomes of the index to help identify policy directives required at the local level to ensure local development instruments at the local level are geared towards enhancing institutional capacities.
3. Monitoring Authorities can enhance the levels of cooperation and coordination between official monitoring authorities to put into action monitoring and guidance procedures.
4. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) can develop better partnerships between various municipalities on one hand, and between private and public sectors, on the other hand, to achieve sustainable local development.
5. Donors can use the tool as a database to guide program development, design, monitor, and evaluate projects. Donors can also measure the impact of governance interventions during their future projects design to guarantee they are more responsive to citizens' needs and will ensure the achievement of local sustainable development.
6. CBOs can benefit from this tool which will provide them with objective measurement regarding the reality and performance of their respective municipalities. This will safeguard the community's ability to monitor the performance of the municipality, which will ultimately lead to an improved transparency and confidence between both parties.