2.3 Educational and participatory practices

2.3.1 Capacity building programs for local government and stormwater management industry professionals

Description

Capacity building is a 'holistic approach to knowledge building and transfer, identifying issues of relevance and benefit to foster professional skill development, competency, innovation, creativity, confidence, certainty and clarity. Capacity building is also a means to facilitate network building, linkages and training for continuous improvement' (Clearwater, 2002, p. 2).

Stormwater-related capacity building programs can be run at a variety of scales, from a program that covers a small local government area to one that covers an entire State.

Providing people with the information and contacts they need to make better decisions is an essential part of promoting best practice stormwater management.

Applicability

These programs are applicable to local government authorities, metropolitan regional councils and stormwater management industry associations.

Refer to the Recommended Practices section for the potential target audiences, who should be involved in the scoping stage of the program.

Recommended Practices

The Clearwater program in Victoria and the Urban Water Cycle Management Capacity Building Program in New South Wales are good examples of stormwater management capacity building programs (refer to the Examples/Case Studies section for further information).

Recommended steps to developing a stormwater-related capacity building program include:

- ✔ Scoping the program by identifying the capacity building requirements for the target audience. For example, specialist market researchers may be engaged to survey the target audience (through methods such as focus groups, workshops and phone surveys) to identify current levels of stormwater knowledge and awareness, training and development needs, barriers to change, potential education and networking opportunities, including existing communication networks.
- ✔ Using the information from the scoping step to identify key project areas.
- ✔ Developing project plans for each of the key project areas. These plans detail how major projects will be delivered (e.g. training events, information registers, websites and guidelines), including details such as the target audience, objectives, expected outputs, expected outcomes, method of evaluation, timing and responsibilities.
- ✔ Implementing these project plans.
- ✔ Communicating with stakeholders *throughout* this process. Opportunities for communication include newsletters (paper and electronic), websites, workshops and travelling 'road shows', where stakeholders are introduced to the capacity building program, new projects are advertised (e.g. upcoming training events or guidelines), and new products are explained.

✔ Evaluating the program. An approach to monitoring and evaluation should be planned at the beginning of the program's development and executed throughout its delivery. For advice on designing a suitable monitoring and evaluation plan, see Taylor and Wong (2002d).

The following potential target audiences should be involved in the initial scoping exercise (i.e. step number one above):

- elected members (particularly in small to medium-sized local government);
- senior managers in local government, State government and relevant water service providers;
- town planners, engineers, ecologists, architects, landscape architects and staff responsible for the maintenance of stormwater assets; and
- the construction and stormwater management industries (both in government and the private sector).
- local catchment groups, industry associations and other existing communication networks, where applicable.

In large urban areas covering several local government districts, there are potential benefits associated with combining available resources to form a major regional capacity building program (e.g. jointly funded by State and local government).

Benefits and Effectiveness

The potential benefits of a capacity building program include:

- increased rate of uptake of stormwater best practices by the public and private sector;
- increased understanding of the need for stormwater management initiatives (e.g. strict town planning controls and stable funding mechanisms), particularly by senior managers and elected officials;
- widely communicated results of other successful projects;
- enhanced communication networks amongst stakeholders that will exist long after the capacity building program has officially finished; and
- identification of common needs (e.g. a specific guideline or training module) and the facilitation of a cost-effective, high-quality regional project that most organisations could not fund on their own.

Best practice stormwater-related capacity building programs may be highly effective if designed, delivered and evaluated in accordance with the steps highlighted in this guideline.

Challenges

The primary challenge for running a capacity building program is cost. Some of these costs could be recovered by charging participants to attend specific training events and to access products, although this option is rarely chosen.

Stakeholder needs may change over time. For example, in the early stages of a program, stakeholders may require basic information and knowledge. As stakeholders become more experienced, other issues, such as funding and the regulatory framework, may become more prominent. Bold initiatives like strict town planning controls, enforcement programs, new funding arrangements and new organisational structures may not be implemented unless senior managers, elected officials and the broader community understand

the need for these measures. A capacity building program can help to ensure this base level of knowledge is obtained, particularly within professional stakeholder groups.

Cost

Stormwater-related capacity building programs are scalable. As an indication of cost, the State-wide Clearwater stormwater capacity building program in Victoria is funded at a level of $1,000,000 over 2 years (J. White, pers. comm., 2003).

Additional Information

For further guidance about how to undertake specific educational events (e.g. training programs), see Sections 2.3.2 to 2.3.5 in the Educational and Participatory Practices section of this chapter. Chapter 8: *Education and awareness for stormwater management* provides additional case studies and guidance on how to design a community education and awareness program.

For information on the effectiveness of educational and participatory approaches to stormwater management, see Taylor and Wong (2002c).

For more information about capacity building, see the Implementation chapter of this Manual.

The following *behaviour change* resources are recommended when designing the program:

- Community Change (Victoria, Australia) via <www.communitychange.com.au>.
- Social Change Media (New South Wales, Australia), the home page is available via <http://media.socialchange.net.au> and *The Seven Door Social Marketing Approach* (Robinson, undated) is available via <http://media.socialchange.net.au/strategy>.
- Community Based Social Marketing (Canada) via <www.cbsm.com>.
- *Fostering Sustainable Behaviour: An Introduction to Community-Based Social Marketing* (Mckenzie-Mohr & Smith, 1999). Further information is available from Community Based Social Marketing via <www.cbsm.com>.

The *Facilitation Toolkit: A practical guide for working more effectively with people and groups* (Keating, 2003) is a recommended resource to use when facilitating workshops, seminars or group meetings. The toolkit is available via <www.environment.wa.gov.au> or by telephoning (08) 9278 0300. See also the Coastal Cooperative Research Centre's *Citizen Science Toolbox* (Australia) for advice about particular facilitation techniques (<www.coastal.crc.org.au/toolbox/index.asp>).

Examples / Case Studies

The Victorian Clearwater Capacity Building Program and Information Exchange

The Clearwater capacity building program is a Statewide targeted education and training program to support local government and industry professionals in the sustainable management of urban stormwater. It is a joint initiative of the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and the Stormwater Industry Association of Victoria (SIAV), made possible through the Victorian Stormwater Action Program (Clearwater, 2002 and 2003).

The four key goals of the program are to:

1. Identify capacity building requirements for local government and stormwater industry professionals in urban stormwater best practice.

2. Develop a suite of tailored capacity building training/education packages promoting urban stormwater best practice to local government and training professionals.

3. Effectively deliver tailored capacity building training/education packages promoting urban stormwater best practice to the target audiences.

4. Effectively communicate and promote the program to the target audiences and key stakeholders (i.e. community, industry, government and non-government organisations).

The vision of the program is to 'achieve best practice urban stormwater management and sustainable urban development'. Its mission is to 'effectively create an environment to facilitate cultural change in the adoption of best practice environmental management of urban stormwater by local government and industry professionals'.

The program has a strong emphasis on case studies and guidance on best practice approaches, and is careful to acknowledge and build upon existing cultures, knowledge, experience and technical skills. A number of planning and focus group workshops were held at locations across Victoria, where stakeholders were asked to:

- nominate key areas of need with respect to training, professional development, technical/information kits or seminars;
- provide input and give direction to the development of the capacity building program;
- suggest what resources or support stakeholders need in order to implement best practice urban stormwater management; and
- nominate who can be involved from their organisation (Clearwater, 2002).

This series of workshops helped to develop a program of education and training events. Key project areas include water sensitive urban design, town planning tools, regulation and enforcement, leadership and commitment. Specific project plans are being developed for each of these four areas.

To respond to the needs of surveyed stakeholders, a 'stormwater information exchange' was established and a travelling 'road show' was delivered at four areas around Victoria, to showcase work being done through the program.

The *Clearwater information exchange* is a web-based database for urban stormwater management initiatives, available via <www.clearwater.asn.au>. It aims to provide up-to-date and relevant information on topics including: tools and resources; research; reports; case studies (including contact details for further information); interstate programs and resources; partnership projects; contacts; and relevant websites.

The New South Wales Urban Water Cycle Management Capacity Building Program

The New South Wales Urban Water Cycle Management Capacity Building Program is a component of the Lower Hunter and Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Strategy (LHCCREMS) in the Newcastle area.

The LHCCREMS is an innovative and successful regional initiative currently being implemented by the seven local governments of the Lower Hunter and Central Coast Region. The LHCCREMS seeks to facilitate a regional approach by actively encouraging greater cooperation between local governments, industry and community groups and other relevant authorities (LHCCREMS, 2003).

The LHCCREMS's Water Sensitive Urban Design Capacity Building Program for local governments and catchment managers earned LHCCREMS five awards in the 2001 Local Government and Shires Association Excellence in the Environment Awards, including divisional winner and overall State winner for both the Built Environment and Stormwater Management categories. The project developed a Water Sensitive Urban Design Capacity Building CD and Toolkit for local governments, which contains a range of reports, presentations, and video-based training modules and tools.

A comprehensive, interactive training tool for use by all local governments throughout NSW may soon be available.

The capacity building program led to the development of regional planning and management tools in the Lower Hunter area. *Water Smart Model Planning Provisions for the Lower Hunter and Central Coast Region* and a *National Design Guide for Water Sensitive Urban Design* are two important documents for local governments and industry practitioners that have attracted interest and attention from all levels of government and organisations across Australia.

A *Stormwater Extension Officer program* has also been established as a joint initiative between LHCCREMS and the NSW EPA's Stormwater Trust. The primary role of the extension officer is to help 16 local governments within the Central Coast and Hunter region build capacity to effectively manage stormwater. The position was funded over 18 months. Further information is available via <www.lhccrems.nsw.gov.au>.

The HIA GreenSmart® Program

The HIA GreenSmart® Program is a national, industry-based capacity building program run by the Housing Industry Association of Australia within each State, in cooperation with the Federal government (Department of Environment and Heritage), Greening Australia and industry groups. The program aims to promote environmentally responsible land-development and building practices. The program focuses on energy efficiency, water efficiency, waste management and stormwater management. It involves training, accreditation of professionals (builders), demonstration sites and promotional activities (e.g. annual awards). For more information, see <www.greensmart.com.au> or telephone (08) 9244 3222.

References and Further Information

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