Enhancing the capacity of local government practitioners: the experiences of eThekwini Municipality

eThekwini Municipality’s Municipal Institute of Learning Municipal Capacity Enhancement for local government practitioners, by local government practitioners
To share the experience of establishing the Municipal Institute of Learning (MILE):

- The rationale
- The offerings from MILE
- Progress made to date
Background: Key Challenges

- Challenges facing local government in Southern Africa are well known.

- Whilst addressing these challenges will require a multi-faceted and holistic strategy, a key element will be that of enhancing the existing capacity of local government practitioners.

- Must begin by acknowledging the value played by many initiatives and agencies to help build technical capacity of local government.

- It is our contention that one unique opportunity that has not been explored sufficiently is the ability of well capacitated Metropolitan municipalities to begin to play such a role (internally – externally; local – international; learning and sharing).
Background: The emergence of MILE

- The eThekwini Municipality did NOT have an adopted Knowledge Management Framework to guide how we create, share, document and store our knowledge.

- Given innovative work in several areas: water and sanitation delivery, solid waste management, environmental management, revenue generation, and urban strategic planning many of our senior officials have been asked to assist municipalities by enhancing their capacity through learning sessions, MILE structures the leanings and the integration of such efforts to be more effective.

- MILE initiates, co-ordinates and draws many resources to enhance the learning opportunity (Universities, Technicons, Expert Specialists, NGO’s Business etc)
Our Vision

To be Africa’s premier learning Institute for local government practitioners, driven by local government practitioners.
Our Mission Statement

To support municipalities in the global south with capacity and knowledge in order to be effective in the delivery of local government’s competencies (new and old!).
4 Pillars of Mile

- Capacity Enhancement: Empowering Officials with Tools through Learning and sharing
- Municipal Learning Partnerships And Networks: Learning, Sharing And Network building
- Collaborating With Academia: Leveraging Partnerships With Tertiary Institutions
- Municipal Technical Support: Offering a Municipal Technical Support service

Knowledge Management Co-ordination of Ethekwini Knowledge Management Agenda
Progress made to date

Capacity Enhancement

- Municipal Executive Dialogue Series (MEDS) are Breakfast Seminars held with senior managers (a feel, taste on key topics for City Governance).

- Urban Safety; Green Jobs; The Science and Negotiating Climate Change; Topical Research Results and Implications etc.

Successful Master Classes Delivered:
- Strategic Urban Planning
- Solid Waste Management
- Water and Sanitation
Learning Exchanges:
These are two-three day focused learning sessions with site visits:

• Informal Settlements International Learning Exchange: in partnership with Sustainable Cities
• Sanitation Learning Exchange: Ekurhuleni Metro
• Urban Strategic Planning Learning Exchange in partnership with United Cities and Local Governments
Mile Technical Support

MILE, through the Inter-governmental Relations Unit and local govt associations and agencies - CIFAL programme; UCLG; SALGA; SACN is offering structured support to selected municipalities and associations, some examples:

- Harare City Council (Zimbabwe)
- Mzuzu Town Council (Malawi)
- Namibian Municipalities
- Umdoni Local Municipality (UGU District, KZN)
- Ezinqoleni, Vulamehlo, Umzumbe, Newcastle, Enambithi and Ulundi.
Collaborating with Academia

- MILE facilitated the signing of a Pledge for Academic Collaboration to work in partnership with tertiary institutions to strengthen and synergise efforts to enhance research, enhance skills, and contribute to knowledge sets within the municipal context and within our tertiary institutions:
  - Research
  - Internships
  - Partnerships
Knowledge Management

During 2010/11 KM has developed a KM framework for the municipality, website, learning electronic platform etc.

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- Several publications have been launched:
  - Innovations in Local Sustainability: Good Practice from eThekwini, South Africa;
  - Municipal Lessons Learnt in Urban Governance, Communities of Practice Learning Notes etc.
  - MILE also co-ordinates and provides City support to knowledge management initiatives on local government for other networks, organizations etc (to bring in the practitioner response).
Operationalising MILE

- MILE is a FIVE YEAR PILOT PROGRAMME “located” within the Corporate Policy Unit in the Office of the City Manager.
- Internal Sector Work Groups; Steering Committee and External Reference Team.
- Staff are drawn from within Units in Council to run the learning programmes, and opportunities to compliment as required - consultants, academics, research students etc.
- Existing funds are being used to operationalise MILE.
- A cost recovery and partnership approach for logistics and support (only) is implemented.
- Active fundraising for MILE from donor agencies initiated – outcomes specific.