

Improving Human Resource Capacity: Exploring Certification in Local Governments

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The proposed institutionalization of certification pathways for local government officers and staff is a step towards the continuing capacity building to raise the qualifications standards and improve the professionalization of the local government bureaucracy. Certification as a concept serves to validate that the local officers and staff possess and are able to demonstrate the required competencies for the job in accordance with set standards, and thus counteract the common perception that they are inefficient, lacking in skills, and hired based on political influence. Two existing and comparable certifications systems, namely, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) national certification system for technical and vocational skills, and the Local Government Training Package in Australia are analyzed in formulating a model for local government certification system. The proposed local government certification system will require policy reforms geared towards the recognition of the local government sector as an industry and establishment of a qualifications framework for the local government industry. Different institutional arrangements or modalities including the centralized, collaborative, privatized and mixed models may also be explored in pursuing the certification system.

Keywords: *certification, human resource management, local government, local government personnel, certification in local government*

Introduction

This article explores the possibility of certification of local government officers and staff to address the continuing challenge of developing the quality and stock of human resources in local governments. It reviews local government performance in capacity development and examines existing models of certification. It argues that certification is feasible, but that it must overcome certain policy and institutional challenges to be adopted and to be effective.

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