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Capacity**Development**

STRENGTHENING CAPACITY IN POLICY, ADVOCACY, GOVERNANCE, AND FINANCE

A Facilitator Guide for Organizational Capacity Assessments

July 2014

This publication was prepared by staff of the Health Policy Project.

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CONTENTS

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- Futures Group
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INTRODUCTION

What Is an Organizational Capacity Assessment?

Country-led programming is built on a commitment to provide responsive and customized technical assistance to partners. The primary function of an organizational capacity assessment (OCA) is to support a process of internal learning, dialogue, and goal setting around capacity-strengthening priorities within a partner organization. The OCA process enables organizations to direct their own development and track their current capacity against what is needed to achieve their goals.

Assessing capacity is a crucial step for development projects to assist partners in identifying priorities. An OCA facilitates the assessment of an organization's systems, processes, and procedures; the resources it has available; and the competencies it requires to carry out policy-related work.

The assessment process described in this guide is highly participatory. It is designed to strengthen a partner organization's ownership of the process and its Capacity-Strengthening Plan, while fostering a trusting and collaborative relationship with the international partner to collaboratively define the scope of a capacity development effort. The process is not generic; rather it focuses on how to assess and strengthen capacity to carry out policy, governance, advocacy, and finance activities.

Why a Self-Assessment?

Capacity assessments can take many forms, depending on their purpose. Two common variables are who conducts the assessment and how the tool is developed. Generally, capacity assessments exist on a continuum from an external, diagnostic assessment conducted by someone outside of the organization to a participatory self-assessment in which people within the organization reflect on and rate its capacity in a particular area or set of competencies.

External assessments are often used to ensure compliance with contractual obligations, make funding decisions, or evaluate program effectiveness. These assessments position the external facilitator as an expert who determines the organization's capacity or achievements in a given area by assessing it against a fixed set of standards.

By contrast, the goal of a participatory self-assessment is organizational learning to support improved systems and technical capacity. Some participatory assessments use an existing tool, and some engage the organization, or a cohort of peer organizations, in designing its own tool by determining standards of excellence against which the organization will assess itself.

Facilitated self-assessments, such as the methodology described in this guide, constitute a hybrid approach. The facilitator's role is to guide the organization in self-reflection, stimulate analysis, and ensure equitable participation. However, the learning process relies on staff contributions and the willingness of staff and leadership to share their perspectives and build a joint understanding of how and why the organization functions the way it does. Group analysis and decision making promote consensus and increase the likelihood that staff will commit to capacity-strengthening actions, allowing the organization to chart its own trajectory.

While self-assessments can provide rich information about organizational capacity and inform performance monitoring plans, they should be seen primarily as capacity-strengthening tools rather than performance evaluations. One critical aspect of a participatory assessment is fostering a safe space where staff can freely discuss an organization's issues and priorities, without the fear of consequence when highlighting organizational weaknesses, challenges, and needs for performance improvement. Ultimately, the results of the assessment belong to the organization itself and should not be shared without permission.

In summary, self-assessment is a type of “self-diagnosis” in which an organization is guided through a process to reflect on its performance, identify priorities and goals, and set a path toward achieving benchmarks. An OCA is a powerful approach to support organizational decision making and ownership of the capacity development process.

FACILITATOR INFORMATION AND TOOLS

Overview of HPP's Organizational Capacity Assessment Approach

The Health Policy Project (HPP) has developed a set of resources and tools to facilitate an assessment process to strengthen an organization's policy-related activities. These can be tailored for use with a diverse range of organizations (large or small, government or nongovernmental, nascent or mature). HPP's facilitated self-assessment process is designed to help organizations analyze their ability to contribute to the policy, advocacy, governance, or financing aspects of health systems and chart their own path toward increased capacity and performance.

Objectives and Principles

An OCA sets the foundation for a capacity-strengthening approach. The results are used to prioritize actions and interventions to achieve an organization's objectives and ultimately contribute to improved health systems and health outcomes.

The OCA presented in this guide defines **four main objectives**:

1. Establish a baseline of the partner organization's capacity in key technical areas of policy expertise
2. Promote organizational dialogue, learning, and standard setting
3. Inform capacity-strengthening plans to address policy-related organizational priorities
4. Serve as reference point for follow-up assessments

The approach reflects **four key principles**:

1. **Appreciation**—the assessment focuses on discovering internal strengths and builds on successes to improve organizational effectiveness.

2. **Specificity to context**—the assessment helps the organization develop its own understanding of capacity and charts the organization's growth based on its particular socio-cultural context, local environment, role in health systems, and organizational vision.

3. **Internal reflection**—the assessment provides an opportunity for staff members and leadership to reflect on organizational performance and create a shared vision for the future. Doing so strengthens internal collaboration across functions and creates joint commitment goals.

4. **Relative to sectoral standards**—the assessment lays out competencies that are recognized by leaders within the health policy field as important for organizational performance. By assessing the organization against these standards, staff and leadership develop an understanding of what constitutes organizational excellence within the global context and what is needed to achieve relevant performance ideals.

OCA Phases and Timeframe

Prior to the assessment, the facilitator will meet with the organization's leadership and key staff to provide an overview of the capacity assessment process and exchange expectations. A full assessment typically consists of **four phases** conducted over one week to one month: **preparation**, **guided self-assessment**, **results debrief and analysis**, and **priority setting and action planning**.

The self-assessment is the diagnostic component of the process and combines facilitated discussion with private individual scoring of an organization's strengths and weaknesses by participants. The self-assessment workshop can take one half day to two days, depending on the length of the customized tool, the number of participants, and the depth of the discussion. Following the self-assessment, the facilitator will compile the results and share them with the organization during a debrief meeting. The facilitator will guide the participants in analyzing the results and identifying capacity-strengthening priorities. Action planning can be done in conjunction with the results debrief, or as a separate session, although both should occur shortly after the self-assessment session to maintain momentum and ensure relevance.

The last step of the process culminates in the development of a capacity-strengthening plan that typically covers a one-year timeframe. Targeted capacity development support or other resources may be needed to implement the plan, and organizations may require support to track progress toward benchmarks and make adjustments to the capacity-strengthening plan. In subsequent years, the organization may choose to update its plan annually and/or undertake a re-assessment every few years to track progress on its goals and set new ones.

There is no set time when an OCA should take place. Good opportunities for self-assessment are during the launch of an activity or new partnership, following a scan of the policy environment, when the scope and workplan for an activity or country program are being defined, and when key partners and stakeholders are being identified.

An OCA process may not always be the best tool for an organization. For example, if the organization was established recently, there may not be enough history for staff to draw on for analysis and reflection. Organizations should be at least one year old, have basic systems in place, and have some formative technical experience before undertaking an OCA. For newly formed organizations, other organizational development processes may be of greater benefit in the start-up phase, such as participatory visioning. Likewise, it may not be optimal for an organization in the midst of a staffing or leadership crisis to undertake an OCA, particularly if organizational dynamics might prevent open, honest communication and constructive thinking.

The OCA process can be intensive and time-consuming. If an organization does not have adequate time to commit to completing all the steps and following up, and/or is already fully engaged in other organizational development processes (such as overhauling the finance system), the additional burden may not be beneficial. If an organization previously had a negative experience with capacity assessment, it is crucial to discuss what went wrong and what can be done differently. Finally, many organizations that work with international agencies suffer from "assessment fatigue," as a result of having been assessed multiple times to meet donor expectations and funding requirements. Any new assessment should add value to what was done previously.

Participants

The assessment process is only as meaningful as the quality of staff participation. Ensuring active participation is a responsibility shared by participants and the facilitator. When planning the assessment, consider the following:

- **Facilitator**—The facilitator is a neutral individual who is external to the organization. As the guide for the assessment process, the facilitator should possess basic knowledge of the technical and policy areas being assessed, be familiar with the OCA tools and indicators, and be able to lead group discussions and elicit participant perspectives. In comprehensive assessments and/or assessments with many participants, it is beneficial to have two or more facilitators.

- **Organizational Leadership**—Because an assessment is often linked to an organizational change process and is designed to plan for capacity-strengthening activities, it is important to involve the organization's leadership from the beginning. In almost all situations, this means the participation of the executive director/president; and for organizations with a functioning board of directors, engaging board members in the assessment is valuable as well. In larger government institutions with complex or multi-layered leadership structures, the involvement of directors or managers with significant responsibility and decision-making authority is vital.

- **Assessment Focal Point(s)**—It is helpful for one respected individual or a small group from the organization to serve as the focal point for planning and mobilizing the assessment process. The focal point should be given adequate time to devote to the exercise and receive support from management to do so.

- **Assessment Participants**—An assessment group typically ranges from 10–25 participants but should include no fewer than five participants. If the organization is too large for all relevant staff members to participate, then a smaller, representative group—in terms of function and hierarchy within the organization—should be selected.

OCA Suite of Tools

The self-assessment takes place in a workshop setting and combines facilitated group discussion with individual scoring on a series of indicators. Given the diversity of partner organizations that work on policy-related issues in terms of size, mandate, and sector, HPP has developed a flexible yet comprehensive approach to the assessment process. This approach uses a suite of resources that can be adapted to ensure organizational relevance and utility. There is no one specific assessment “tool,” but rather a package of resource guides and standardized indicators developed by subject matter experts on the key competencies needed to carry out policy work. A participant scoring sheet is used during the facilitated self-assessment workshop, and there is a spreadsheet dashboard to support discussion of the results.

The OCA suite of tools[1] includes the following documents, templates, and other resources to assist the facilitator throughout the assessment process.

1. **Overview of the HPP Organizational Capacity Assessment—**This two-page document describes the OCA process, defines what an OCA is, explains roles and responsibilities, and provides a basic timeline (see Annex 1). It can be helpful when conducting outreach to partner organizations.

2. **Capacity Development Resource Guides—**HPP has developed a series of Capacity Development Resource Guides (CDRGs) covering the technical areas of expertise related to health policy work, including advocacy, finance, governance, and social participation. The CDRGs define what capacity means for these technical areas and are intended to inform the content of a tailored capacity assessment tool. Specifically, the guides outline performance ideals that characterize high-performing individuals and organizations in each technical area; the knowledge, skills, and attributes necessary to achieve high performance; other capabilities and competencies that support performance in a particular area; illustrative capacity-strengthening approaches; and a list of published curricula, tools, and related resources.

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[1] The OCA suite of tools is available on the Health Policy Project’s website at http://www.healthpolicyproject.com/index.cfm?id=topics-CapacityDevelopment.

3. **Capacity Indicators Catalog—**Corresponding to the CDRGs, the Capacity Indicators Catalog includes a detailed list of indicators of capacity for each technical area, as well as relevant cross-cutting indicators. The catalog is a collection of indicators that can be used to create a tool that is relevant and tailored to the organization and context. Annex 2, "How to Create a Tool," offers guidance on how to use the catalog. Once the indicators are selected for an organization, they are compiled into a Capacity Assessment Scoring Sheet (see below).

4. **Capacity Assessment Scoring Sheet—**This sheet is central to the assessment process—participants use it to record their scores during the self-assessment workshop. A template for the score sheet is provided in Annex 3. Prior to the workshop, the facilitator should prepare the scoring sheet by entering the selected capacity areas and indicators into the template and print a copy for each participant. The assessment tool uses a Likert scale to rate each respondent's level of agreement with the capacity indicator statements (from strongly disagree to strongly agree). Facilitators often find it helpful to prepare their own version of the score sheet, with notes for leading the group discussion for each capacity area. See Annex 4 and "Phase 2: The Self-Assessment Workshop" for a sample facilitator's version of the tool that includes discussion sets.

5. **OCA Results Spreadsheet—**The Excel-based spreadsheet is an easy-to-use tool for entering and displaying the results of the assessment and can be adapted to any tool or organization. It contains embedded macros that can be adjusted based on the number of participants (up to 30), areas of expertise in the tool (up to 10), and numbers of indicators per area of expertise (up to 15 per technical area).

6. **Capacity-Strengthening Plan Template—**A key step in the OCA process is developing a Capacity-Strengthening Plan that the organization can use to define, plan, and monitor its capacity-strengthening priorities and activities. These may include the organization's own initiatives or support from other external partners. See Annex 5 for the template.

7. **Variations in the OCA Process—**Once a facilitation team is comfortable with the basic structure of an assessment, there are many opportunities to adapt and innovate within the OCA process. Refer to Annex 6 for ideas and guidance.

STEP-BY-STEP FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

The four phases and ten steps of the Organizational Capacity Assessment process are summarized below.

Table 1. Organizational Capacity Assessment Process

OCA Phase	Purpose	Steps
Preparation	• Build ownership of and commitment to the process and results • Reach consensus on the parameters of the assessment	1. Orient leadership and garner commitment 2. Orient staff (note: may take place as part of the self-assessment workshop) 3. Customize the assessment tool
Self-Assessment	• Engage the organization in open reflection and analysis of its current capacity • Assess organizational capacity by scoring a series of indicators	4. Conduct a visioning exercise (optional) 5. Conduct the self-assessment 6. Compile data and prepare a results package
Results Debrief and Analysis	• Validate the assessment findings with participants • Analyze the meaning and implications of the results	7. Present, validate, and analyze the results 8. Prioritize areas for capacity strengthening
Priority Setting and Action Planning	• Identify capacity-strengthening priorities and strategies and actions to address them • Plan for monitoring	9. Draft a capacity-strengthening plan 10. Document the process, results, plan, and next steps

Phase 1. Preparation

❖ Step 1: Orient the Leadership and Garner Commitment

When initiating work with a partner about undertaking an OCA, it is important to meet with the leadership well in advance of the first workshop. This meeting serves two main purposes: (1) informing leadership about the OCA process and what is expected of the organization during the assessment and (2) gaining their buy-in to the process. The leadership must be comfortable with the process and believe in its value; it is important that they understand both the assessment process and the time commitment needed from staff.

Normally the orientation meeting includes only a few participants and discussions move quickly. The following agenda can help facilitate a constructive and efficient conversation. The *Overview of the HPP Organizational Capacity Assessment* will help you prepare for the meeting and provides the organization with a useful summary of important points about the process.

Objectives

1. Orient the organization's leadership to the capacity assessment process, investment of time, and commitment needed from participating staff
2. Generate enthusiasm for the process and the resulting capacity-strengthening plan
3. Obtain the leadership's support for the process
4. Align expectations for the process among all stakeholders (including the facilitator)

Recommended time: 90 minutes–2 hours

Materials

- Handout: *Overview of the HPP Organizational Capacity Assessment*
- A list of proposed areas of expertise to be assessed
- A suggested timeline for the assessment and planning
- Flipchart paper and markers (optional)

1. Welcome and introductions

a. Welcome participants and thank them for their time. If this is the first time all the participants are meeting, introduce yourself and give a brief background on your policy- and health-related work.

b. Take a few moments to get to know everyone present. Individuals may be asked to share their
   - Name
   - Position
   - Expectations for this meeting and/or the assessment process in general

c. Take notes on feedback, especially regarding expectations. Meeting these expectations, or clarifying early on what is realistic and what is not will help the assessment go more smoothly.

d. Review the objectives for the meeting. It is helpful to display them on a flipchart or dry-erase board.

2. Explain the purpose of the assessment

a. Explain that the assessment process is first and foremost a learning tool for the organization. The goal is to promote dialogue and build consensus to guide the partnership going forward.

b. Explain that this is a facilitated *self*-assessment, you will not rate or judge the organization, and the results will not be used to make funding decisions.

3. **Explain the role of the facilitator**

a. Explain that you are present as a guide to work with staff to help create a Capacity-Strengthening Plan that the organization can use to drive its own development.

b. Explain that you will also provide the "big picture" of the organization and help connect the organization's priorities to the objectives and activities of the project.

Note: If the leadership is hesitant about the assessment, it may be helpful to offer examples of how other organizations have benefited from the process. Ensure the examples are anonymous, and highlight the positive outcomes and organizational learning that came from the OCA. Consider asking another organization to share its experience and serve as a reference.

4. **Set the OCA parameters**

a. Remind participants that this OCA is flexible and can be tailored according to the time and resources each organization has to invest in the process and the time the organization is able commit to follow-up.

b. Use the following questions to direct a conversation about the assessment. Agreement on the decision points should be reached before moving on with the discussion.

- *In the last two years, has the organization undergone a capacity assessment or strategic planning process that examined its strengths and weaknesses? If so, what was your experience like? Would you be willing to share the tool that was used and the results so we can build on your experience and avoid duplication?*
- *How much time can leadership and staff commit to the assessment workshops?*
- *How much time can leadership and staff commit to following up by implementing the Capacity-Strengthening Plan?*
- *What technical capacity areas do you believe should be assessed? Typically the OCA includes 3–6 technical areas.*

  Note: It may be helpful to let the participants propose topics freely before referring to the capacity areas represented in the Capacity Indicators Catalog. Explain that you will select and tailor the indicators so that they best fit the organization and context. Also explain that because a facilitated discussion introduces each capacity area during the assessment workshop, the more technical areas covered, the longer the self-assessment workshop and action planning sessions will take.

- *What general organizational development and cross-cutting topics would you like included in the assessment (for example, human resources or financial management)?*
- *What organizational health and sustainability indicators should be included in the OCA?*

  Note: All organizations are encouraged to consider including at least some of the organizational health and sustainability indicators. Come to a consensus about whether "organizational health and sustainability" will be a separate section on the OCA or you should simply weave a few of these indicators into the technical areas.

5. **Discuss confidentiality and reporting**

   a. Explain that the organization's participation in the capacity assessment is entirely *voluntary* and that individual scores will be *anonymous***;** results will be presented in the aggregate and no remarks will be linked to any one individual.

   b. Indicate that no detailed results will be shared outside of the organization without prior consent, aside from those needed to facilitate and monitor follow-up technical support and summary results to respond to donor reporting requirements, if any.

6. **Discuss the importance of honest participation**

   a. Reiterate that genuine, honest participation is crucial to the validity of the assessment results and commitment to the Capacity-Strengthening Plan. Also request that leadership make a conscious effort not to dominate the discussion and allow all participants an equal opportunity to share their opinions.

   b. Request that leadership communicate this message to staff and stress the importance of everyone's participation and openness to the process.

   c. Suggest that leadership reassure the staff that all opinions will be respected and that opinions expressed during the OCA will not have any connection to individuals' performance reviews.

   d. Use the following questions to explore and establish protocol for leadership's participation during the OCA.

      - *What do you think is your role (as organizational leadership) during the OCA?*
      - *If you observed a staff member making a statement or expressing an opinion based on false or misunderstood information, what would you do? Would you speak up, or let the person come to his/her own conclusions independently, even if you disagreed?*
      - *Are there any areas of the assessment that contain sensitive material that might be easier to discuss if leadership stepped out of the room for a few minutes?*
      - *Do you think open and honest participation will be a problem for your staff? Do you think participants will be forthcoming? If not, how you can assure them that there will not be any negative repercussions for their honesty?*

7. **Identify the assessment focal point(s) and assessment participants**

   Use the following questions to identify the organizational focal points and who will participate in the assessment.

   - *Who should be the organizational focal point person, or small task force, to serve as the facilitator's counterpart in the assessment process?*

     Note: If a team is needed, discuss the composition of the assessment team and the role each person will play.

   - *How many people do you think should take part in this assessment?*

     Note: Remind leadership that typically 10–25 people are involved.

   - *Which departments or teams should be represented in this OCA? How many people from each team should participate?*

8. **Set the timeline and key steps**

   Note: It is critical for the facilitator to recognize that the organization has other ongoing activities and obligations and to work with each organization to make the OCA as convenient and valuable as possible.

   a. Explain the key phases and steps of the OCA process. Agree on a timeline for each step of the process.

9. **Collect background documentation**

   a. Ask for background documentation to review prior to the assessment; it can inform the process. Useful documents include mission/vision statements, an organogram, strategic plans, information from previous capacity assessments, etc. Collect these documents in hard copy or ask for an individual's contact information so you can follow up to collect soft copies.

10. **Close with final questions and thanks**

    a. Before concluding, ask for any outstanding questions or concerns. Take the time to explain any points that are unclear.

    b. Thank everyone for their time and reiterate your excitement about starting this useful and important process. Share your own contact information and encourage participants to reach out if they have lingering questions or think of further information that may be useful for the assessment process.

    c. Explain that you will send a follow-up email that lists all decisions made at the meeting and next steps to ensure everyone is in agreement moving forward.

❖ *Step 2: Orient Staff*

Just as it is essential to meet with the organization's leadership to answer questions and build support, the same content should be covered with staff (and board members, if appropriate). This orientation sets the tone of the assessment, ensures realistic expectations, and bolsters enthusiasm for the assessment and the action planning process.

Depending on staff availability, this step can occur as a separate meeting before the assessment or a first step on the day of the assessment workshop. If it is conducted before the assessment, consider pairing it with the visioning exercise and be sure to review the important points, such as the objectives for the day, norms for participation, and the rating scale, on the day of the self-assessment workshop.

The following is a suggested agenda to help facilitate a constructive and efficient conversation. Note that many of the steps below are repeated from the previous section, Orient Leadership.

Objectives

1. Orient staff to the capacity assessment process and present the day's objectives
2. Set norms for participation and align expectations among staff, leadership, and the facilitator(s)
3. Build commitment to the assessment process and the capacity-strengthening plan

Recommended time: 30–45 minutes

Materials

- Handout: *Overview of the HPP Organizational Capacity Assessment*

1. **Welcome and introductions**
   a. Welcome participants and thank them for their time.

   b. Introduce yourself and give a brief background on your policy- and health-related work.

   c. Explain the purpose of the meeting. If possible, display the objectives on a flipchart or dry-erase board.

   d. Explain that it is important to hear from everyone in the room, and start with brief introductions. Go around the room and ask everyone to give the following information:
      - Name
      - Position/Department
      - Length of time with the organization
      - Number one expectation for this OCA process

   e. Capture responses to question D on a flipchart. When everyone has finished, take a moment to align the participants' expectations for the assessment with the objectives and realities of the process.

2. **Explain the purpose of the assessment**
   a. Explain that the assessment process is first and foremost a learning tool for the organization. The goal is to promote dialogue and organizational learning and build consensus on capacity-strengthening goals and actions for the organization.

   b. Explain that this is a facilitated *self*-assessment and you will not rate or judge the organization.

3. **Explain the role of the facilitator**
   a. Explain that you are present as a guide to work with staff to help create a Capacity-Strengthening Plan that the organization can use to drive its own development.

   b. Explain that you will also provide the "big picture" of the organization and will help connect the organization's priorities to the objectives and activities of the organization.

4. **Discuss confidentiality and reporting**
   a. Explain that individual scores will be *anonymous*, and results will be presented in the aggregate; no comments or opinions will be linked to any one individual.

   b. Indicate that the detailed results will not be shared outside of the organization without its expressed consent, except as needed within the project to facilitate and monitor follow-up technical support. Summary information of baseline and follow-up assessments may be included in the facilitator's organizational reporting.

5. **Discuss the importance of honest participation**
   a. Reiterate that staff members' honest and active participation is crucial for a meaningful and productive assessment process.

   b. Invite someone from senior leadership to say a few words that reinforce this message, and assure staff that there will be no negative repercussions for honest participation during the OCA.

6. **Close with final questions and thanks**

   a. Before concluding, ask for any outstanding questions or concerns. Take the time to explain any points that are unclear.

   b. Thank everyone for their time and reiterate your excitement about starting this useful and important process.

❖ *Step 3: Customize the Assessment Tool*

Based on the assessment parameters and topics agreed on with the organization's leadership, customize the OCA tool and design the assessment process, with input from other technical team members.

Refer to Annex 2 of this guide for step-by-step instructions on how to customize the tool before moving to the next step.

Phase 2. The Self-Assessment Workshop

❖ *Step 4: Conduct a Visioning Exercise*

Visioning exercises can help an organization clarify its goals and set new standards of excellence. There are many approaches for conducting a visioning exercise. Visioning activities may be used to draft a formal organizational vision statement to accompany a mission statement or as part of strategic planning processes to guide the identification of strategic goals. Visioning can be particularly helpful if an organization is nascent, has undergone rapid growth, or is experiencing changes in its internal or external environment.

The optional exercise suggested here is intended to set the stage for the assessment process. It uses a timeline methodology to help participants reflect on the life cycle of the organization by considering noteworthy events and trends in the operating environment, organizational milestones and achievements, and the organization's desires for the future. The timeline begins with the organization's formation and projects five years ahead. This active and participatory exercise allows everyone in the room to contribute to constructing a collective understanding of the organization's past and a joint vision for its future.

The timeline exercise can be done on the day of the self-assessment workshop as an opening activity or conducted separately prior to the assessment.

If the organization's vision is unclear, outdated, or if the organization is nascent, this visioning exercise is highly recommended. However, if the organization has recently completed a comprehensive visioning or strategic planning process, a brief, facilitated discussion to link those to the OCA might be more appropriate.

See Annex 7 for a detailed explanation of how to conduct the exercise, or you may also consider another visioning methodology, as relevant.

❖ *Step 5: Conduct the Self-Assessment*

During the self-assessment workshop, participants will rate the organization's capacity using the indicators on the score sheet. The facilitator leads participants in a group discussion of each capacity area, followed by individual private scoring on the indicators for that section. The conversations held during the self-assessment process are intended to stimulate personal reflection, cross-organizational communication, and learning and to form the basis for subsequent analysis and interpretation of the results during the action planning step.

Objectives

1. Engage the organization in open reflection and analysis of its capacity
2. Raise awareness of issues and areas for growth
3. Assess organizational capacity in predetermined areas by scoring a series of indicators

Recommended time: Varies depending on the scope of the assessment. Allow 30 minutes at the start for giving instructions and orienting participants to the score sheet, and approximately 30 minutes per area of expertise for discussion and scoring.

Materials

- Assessment scale flipchart
- A copy of the self-assessment scoring sheet for each participant
- Method for recording observations (this may include a note taker/co-facilitator)

Note: The day can be organized in many ways. If a staff orientation and visioning exercise were conducted previously, then move to the brief opening below. If not, go through the steps in the staff orientation session under Step 1 and consider starting with the visioning exercise.

1. **Opening**
   a. Welcome participants and introduce the facilitation team.
   b. Review the purpose of the capacity assessment, referring to the prior staff orientation meeting.
   c. Present the day's objectives.
   d. Stress the importance of honest and active participation.

2. **Give instructions for the session**
   a. Begin by writing the technical areas of expertise to be assessed on a flipchart and give some background as to why and how these technical areas were selected.
   b. Distribute the *Capacity Assessment Scoring Sheet* (one per participant) and review the general layout of the tool and the process that will be followed:
      - Reiterate that scoring is anonymous—participants should not write their names on the score sheets.
      - If the organization would like to disaggregate the results by gender, staff versus board, etc., ask participants to note their category on the top right-hand corner of their score sheets.

        Note: It is recommended that results be disaggregated by gender if the organization is large enough to protect the identity of the individual respondents. Other distinctions that may be helpful in analyzing the results for larger organizations are staff versus board members and management versus non-management.
      - Explain that there will be a short, facilitated group discussion of each technical area prior to scoring the indicators. The discussion is intended to share perspectives prior to scoring, thereby increasing objectivity. Encourage all participants, regardless of where they sit within the organizational structure, to formulate an opinion and score each indicator after the discussion, even for technical areas that may fall outside their technical scope. Highlight the systems nature of capacity and emphasize that many competencies and functions are interconnected (e.g., program staff are affected by the organization's financial systems and practices, and vice versa).
      - Explain that after the discussion, participants will score the indicator statements for that capacity area directly on the scoring sheet, using a Likert scale: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree; 4 = strongly agree; 0 = don't know. It is useful to write the scale on a flipchart and post it on the wall.
      - Discourage participants from leaving questions blank or using "0" as a default response for difficult questions. Reiterate that all perspectives are important to derive a collective understanding of the current status of the organization.
      - Explain that the group will only move on to the next technical area after everyone has finished scoring the current area, and repeat this process until all the technical areas of expertise have been discussed and scored.
      - Pause for any questions.

c. When everyone is clear on the scoring process, tell the participants how and when the results will be shared with the group and discussed, and how and when the group will reconvene to identify priorities and draft a Capacity-Strengthening Plan. [Remember that this will vary for each capacity assessment; the follow-up meeting(s) could happen as soon as the next day or within a few weeks.]

IMPORTANT FACILITATION TIPS

- To prevent a situation in which the organization's leaders dominate the assessment discussions or impose their views on the group, the facilitator should discuss their desired role with leaders before the assessment meeting. (Refer to Step 1, "Orient Leadership," number 6, for detailed ideas about what this may entail.) Immediately before the assessment, reinforce these decisions so everyone involved has clear expectations.
- Remember that the discussion is not between the participants and the facilitator, but among participants. Ask open-ended questions to avoid suggesting responses, and encourage participant interaction.
- Strong personalities can also dominate the group. It is the facilitator's job to help balance the conversation and ensure everyone has the opportunity to share his or her opinion. Participatory discussion methods, such as bean voting, can provide alternative ways for participants to share their perspectives on a given topic. Sam Kaner's book, *A Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making*[1] is a useful resource for facilitators and provides group discussion exercises that can be integrated into the OCA process. Also see "Pact's Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) Facilitator's Handbook" (http://www.csokenya.or.ke/site/uploads/resource/222.pdf) for sample discussion sets that can be used during the self-assessment.
- The facilitator's role is not to dispute or refute participants' opinions, even if a participant is not representing something accurately. The facilitator's role is to ask probing questions to help the group accurately describe the organization, but even when the right questions are asked, the results may not be what you expect.
- Ask participants to turn their score sheets face down during the group discussions. This will keep participants from moving ahead and scoring the other sections before the discussion of the remaining capacity areas has taken place.
- If a participant comes to the session late, it is not necessary for her/him to complete the sections for which s/he was not present. The group discussion is meant to lend greater objectivity to the scoring, by sharing and considering perspectives from others before scoring and is a critical aspect of the assessment.

[1] Kaner, S. 2007. *A Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

3. Conduct assessment for each capacity area

Note: Pause for breaks as appropriate; consider taking the first break after the second capacity area.

a. **Introduction** (5–10 minutes): For each capacity area, begin by introducing the technical topic. Ask participants to read the "performance ideal" for the technical area on the participant score sheet. Explain that the performance ideal describes individual, organizational, and system characteristics that are considered important by experts in the field. Clarify terminology or concepts and answer questions about the characteristics described.

b. **Facilitated group discussion** (15–25 minutes): Next, lead a discussion about the technical area. Customize the questions for the group. The following are some recommendations for how to structure the discussion, using the technical area of advocacy as an example:

- To focus the discussion, start with time-bound questions and concentrate on *objective information***,** such as:
  - *Over the last 12 months, has the organization conducted any advocacy activities? How did you decide on those activities? Who was the target of your advocacy efforts? Who was involved from your organization? Did you collaborate with any other stakeholders on these activities?*

    Note: To ensure relevance and accuracy, the time period reviewed should not extend beyond the last 18 months.
- The discussion should promote reflection but not focus on problem solving or reaching consensus on the nature of the issue, which comes at a later stage in the assessment process. Draw-out perspectives from various individuals**,** such as:
  - *What was the outcome of the advocacy efforts? Why do you think that was/to what do you attribute the success? Does someone from a different team/department have a different perspective to share?*
- Other discussion questions that can be applied to any capacity area include:
  - *How is the organization's work in ______ currently managed? How is it staffed? Who leads it and who is involved? What systems are in place to support _____?*

    Note: Follow up and ask for specific examples whenever possible.
- Consider using participatory discussion methods to allow quieter participants to share their perspectives. See "Important Facilitation Tips" on page 16 for examples.

Note: It is difficult to lead a discussion while simultaneously taking high-quality notes. Therefore it is strongly suggested that a co-facilitator, rapporteur, or assistant accompany you and take detailed notes.

c. **Individual scoring** (10–15 minutes, depending on the number of indicators): Before scoring, read the indicator statements out loud to ensure participants understand them or allow time for the participants to read through the statements and ask for clarifications as needed.

- Remind participants that this self-assessment is an opportunity for them to anonymously and honestly record their own views, which will help build a stronger and more technically sound organization.
- Encourage participants to consider each item carefully before responding and not to feel pressured to overestimate their organization's capacity.
- Ask each participant to work individually when scoring the indicator statements for the first technical area and to turn over the score sheet when the section is complete.

4. **Close**

   a. After all the technical areas on the scoring sheet have been discussed and scored, collect the completed scoring sheets. Remind the participants that they should not write their names on their sheets.

   b. Explain that you will compile the results and share the findings in a follow-up workshop that includes discussion and analysis and conduct an exercise to identify priorities that will inform the Capacity-Strengthening Plan.

   c. Confirm the date for this exercise.

   d. Thank everyone for their time and participation.

   Note: It is crucial to collect all the score sheets so the ratings can be captured in the results. If the self-assessment workshop is scheduled over several days, collect score sheets at the close of each day. Participants can draw symbols on their papers so they can identify their sheets when the assessment process resumes.

❖ *Step 6: Compile Data and Prepare a Results Package*

Using a fully adaptable, easy-to-use spreadsheet, this step compiles the individual assessment scores into a results package that the organization will use to make decisions about its capacity-strengthening priorities and actions. The results spreadsheet is the primary record of the self-assessment meeting.

See Annex 8 for detailed instructions on how to compile the results data.

Phase 3. Results Debrief and Analysis

❖ *Step 7: Present, Validate, and Analyze the Results*

The purpose of this step is to present the results to the assessment group so the organization can digest and analyze the results and compare its current capacity against its longer-term goals. The presentation and discussion of results should be non-judgmental and positive. This step leads directly into identifying priorities and drafting a Capacity-Strengthening Plan, which can be done during the same meeting/workshop or over subsequent days. If possible, this step should occur within several weeks of the self-assessment to maintain momentum and ensure continuity.

Objectives

1. Share results of the self-assessment with the organization
2. Analyze results for each technical area assessed
3. Promote consensus on capacity issues

Recommended time: Varies depending on the scope of the assessment and the options for group facilitation, as described below. Typically, presenting and interpreting the results takes several hours or half a day, with the second half of the day allocated to priority setting and action planning (Step 8).

Materials

- Hard copies of the results package (one per participant)
- A flipchart and markers
- Large index cards (or sheets of paper)

Part I – Analyze the Results

1. **Open the session and welcome everyone back to the OCA**

   a. Update participants on the status of the assessment process, the steps completed, and what comes next.

   b. Explain the purpose of this meeting, taking time to review the objectives.

   c. Reiterate that all results will be kept confidential and encourage continued active participation.

   d. Explain that you will start the session by sharing the self-assessment results.

   Note: The results are presented using the Excel spreadsheet.

   See Annex 9 for a sample results package for a fictional organization.

2. **Distribute the results package**

   a. Distribute a copy of the results package to each participant.

   b. Orient the participants to the overall format and content of the document, and explain what the scores and graphs represent (e.g., what the capacity score refers to or how to interpret the graphs).

   Annex 8 provides guidance on the key components of the results report. Proceed slowly with your explanation and discussion, allowing time for clarification questions and reflection.

3. **Discuss and analyze the results**

   a. When the overview is complete, lead a plenary discussion of the results for **the first technical area of expertise**. The following questions can guide the discussion:

      - *What is your reaction to these results? Are there any surprises?*
      - *What are your observations about the organization's overall capacity in this area?*
      - *Look at the distribution of scores for each indicator statement. Are the scores polarized, scattered, or consistent with each other? Why do you think that is?*
      - *What is the organization doing well? What can the organization learn from the success in this area?*

   b. After examining the first capacity area as a group, allow time for silent, individual review of the remaining technical sections. Allow 5 to 10 minutes per technical area for this step, and encourage participants to take personal notes for the discussion activity that will follow.

   c. When everyone is done, divide the participants into small groups corresponding to the number of technical areas to be discussed.

   d. Assign each group one of the remaining capacity areas. Ask the groups to repeat the analysis and discussion process used in the plenary for the first capacity area. Choose key process questions from the list above and write them on a flipchart for the groups to reference during the activity.

   e. Allow the groups about 20 minutes to discuss their technical areas. Circulate among the groups to ensure everyone is on task and to respond to any questions.

   f. When the groups are finished, ask one group to volunteer to summarize the discussion of its assigned technical area by *highlighting the results that were most surprising or elicited the greatest differences in opinion within the group*. If reactions to the capacity scores vary widely, spend some time exploring the different views and the reasons behind them. Ask for feedback from individuals outside the group: do others generally agree or disagree with the group's conclusions? Allow 10–15 minutes for the report out and discussion of each capacity area.

      Note: The objective is for the groups to analyze the results, not to reach consensus on another group's perspective. If a dispute develops that cannot be resolved within 10 minutes, politely interrupt, ask that the group agrees to disagree, and move on.

   g. When all technical areas have been discussed, close for the day or take a break before moving to Part II.

Part II – Identify Key Capacity Issues

This step allows participants to extract key organizational capacity issues from the self-assessment results and group analysis in the previous step. *The result will be a list of critical organizational issues and priorities* which, if addressed, would enable the organization to better fulfill its mission and achieve its goals.

To streamline the process, particularly for smaller organizations, you may combine this step with the preceding group analysis of the assessment results by capacity area.

1. **Reflect on the assessment results**

    a. Divide the participants into groups. These may be the same as or different from the groups in the results analysis exercise. If the organization is small, the participants may prefer to work as one large group.

    b. Ask the participants to reflect on the previous session. Generate a brief plenary discussion using the following questions:

    - *What are our greatest issues or weaknesses as an organization?*
    - *What is causing these issues?*

    c. Explain that the next step is for groups to discuss and identify **key capacity issues** revealed during the OCA. Remind the participants to consider the following points during their conversation:

    - Look for the **root causes** of issues and not just the symptoms. For example, if participants identify that staff have weak technical capacity in a particular area, why is this? Is it because of the organization's inability to recruit and/or retain qualified staff? Is it due to a lack of strategic direction in the technical area?
    - Look for issues that **cut across, or are common to, multiple capacity areas**. For example, an organization that identifies weaknesses in its capacity for policy monitoring may also find issues linked to its capacity for data analysis and use or monitoring and evaluation.

2. **Identify key capacity issues**

    a. Distribute a stack of large index cards to each table. Ask the participants to discuss and identify the key capacity issues and transfer their ideas to the index cards. Participants should write *only one* issue or idea on each card. Allow about 20 minutes for this step.

    b. When the groups are finished, ask a representative from the first table to share *one* of its cards, and tape it to the wall. The person should read the card out loud and confirm that the larger group understands it. Ask for clarification as needed. This is a brainstorming step, so all ideas should be welcome and considered valid. It is not necessary for the other teams to agree with a card, but simply to understand it.

    c. In turn, ask representatives from the other groups to share cards/ideas, following the same protocol. Ask that representatives share only *new* ideas that have not been mentioned by other groups.

    d. Continue this process until all ideas have been shared and posted.

    e. Pause and ask, *Are we missing anything?* Give the groups 5–10 minutes to generate new cards; seeing all the cards together often prompts additional ideas. Share and post any additional cards/ideas.

3. **Organize/group the issues into themes**

    a. *Optional*: If the groups generate a large number of cards, consider sorting them into themes. When all the cards are posted, ask a few volunteers to help arrange related cards according to themes, with input from the larger group.

b. Ask the group to give each cluster/theme a name. Write the titles on pieces of paper and tape them to the wall as headings for each cluster. For example, if one theme includes cards related to "strengthening external relationships with stakeholders," you might use the title "Stakeholder Strengthening." Any cards that do not fit with the major themes will stand as their own themes/issues.

c. Explain that this process lays the groundwork for designing the Capacity-Strengthening Plan. Thank everyone for his/her participation and take a break, allowing time to set up for the next activity.

❖ *Step 8: Prioritize Areas for Capacity Strengthening*

This step helps the organization prioritize the various issues that emerge during the assessment for inclusion in the Capacity-Strengthening Plan.

Objective

1. Select priority issues (from the lists generated in the previous activity) for inclusion in the Capacity-Strengthening Plan.

Recommended time: Varies depending on the scope of assessment, the size of the group, and length of the lists generated in Step 7. The process should take one to three hours.

Materials

- Idea cards from Step 7 (displayed for everyone to see)
- Stickers
- Flipchart paper and markers

1. Link the identified issues with the goals

a. Before the session begins, make sure that the cards from Step 7 are visible and accessible.

   Note: If you have organized the issue cards into themes, decide which category of card (i.e., the original or the grouping card) will be used when voting. This is decided by the group and you, but it is important to ensure that details about the nature of the issues that would be important for identifying capacity-strengthening interventions are not lost.

b. When the group convenes, explain the purpose of this session and review the objective. Organizations that have completed the timeline visioning exercise should revisit the goals and highlights from that discussion. If an organization has not completed a visioning exercise, it may be helpful to refer to the organization's mission and/or vision statements and any current strategic goals.

c. Remind the group to keep these goals and the corresponding timelines in mind throughout the exercise.

d. Start with a brief plenary discussion. Prompt discussion using the questions below or new questions tailored to the particular group/assessment.

   - *Do you think any of the themes or issues identified are more important (or more critical) than the others? Why?*
   - *Which of these areas, if strengthened, would foster the greatest change in bringing this organization closer to its vision and goals?*

e. Read out the cards from Step 7, and ensure there are no questions or discrepancies before moving forward.

2. **Vote and reach consensus on priority issues**

a. Ask the participants to vote individually on which issues they consider to be priorities for the organization over the next year and should therefore be included in the Capacity-Strengthening Plan.

Note: Some groups find it useful to have criteria in place to inform their voting. You may guide the group in establishing criteria or suggest that participants use the criteria listed below.

POSSIBLE SELECTION CRITERIA

- Urgency—issues that are pressing, particularly in terms of achieving near-term goals
- Ease of achievement— issues that can be addressed quickly and with relative ease, or require few additional resources; these "easy wins" can build confidence for the larger capacity-strengthening process and provide momentum for other initiatives
- Interconnection—issues/themes that, if resolved, would strengthen multiple aspects of the organization
- Leveraging of strengths—over the medium term, areas that can be addressed by leveraging existing strengths or successes
- Setting of new standards—areas where the organization is performing relatively well, but would like to strengthen its capacity to make further progress toward its goals or branch into a new area
- Alignment with mission—strengthened capacity in these areas would bring the organization closer to its achieving its mission and vision

b. Distribute 3–5 stickers to each participant and ask people to vote on priority issues by placing their stickers next to the issue card(s) they perceive to be most important. Participants can place all their stickers on one area or to distribute them among multiple cards.

c. Explain that the highest-rated priorities will inform the development of the Capacity-Strengthening Plan.

Note: The number of stickers given to each participant is at the discretion of the facilitator and should be based on the size of the group and the number of issue cards.

d. When the voting is complete, invite the group to review the results and share initial reactions. Use the questions below to guide a plenary discussion of the results.

- *What do you think of your voting? Do the results surprise you? Why or why not?*
- *Is anyone having a strong reaction (either positive or negative) to the voting results?*

Note: Invite participants to elaborate.

e. Ask the following questions to achieve a consensus on the priority areas:
    - Explain that the number of competencies/technical areas to include in the Capacity-Strengthening Plan depends on the time available to implement the plan, the complexity of activities, and the resources required. Organizations often plan more capacity-building activities than they can realistically absorb in the designated timeframe, so encourage the group to be pragmatic.

f. As a group, decide how many of the issues to include in the Capacity-Strengthening Plan. When the selection is final, acknowledge that the lower-ranking competencies are still important. Encourage the group to address these at a later date, and remind participants that the plan can evolve and be updated throughout the year and beyond.

3. **Identify performance milestones**

a. The final step is to identify performance milestones for each issue. Start with the first issue. Ask the group, *What are some relevant milestones that your organization would expect to achieve within a six-month to one-year timeframe?* Refer the group to the scoring sheets used during the capacity ranking session, which list "performance ideals" for the relevant technical areas. These performance ideals can provide examples of capacity benchmarks.

b. As the group identifies milestones, list them on a flipchart for reference during the next activity.

c. When discussion of the first theme is complete, move onto the others in turn. At the end of this step, you should have one flipchart for each theme or technical area that lists possible six-month to one-year milestones.

d. Before closing and moving on to the next step, hang all the flipcharts on the wall. Ask if anyone has any suggestions for changes or additions before moving on.

Phase 4. Priority Setting and Action Planning

❖ *Step 9: Draft the Capacity-Strengthening Plan*

Once the group has selected the priority competencies, it is ready to develop a detailed action plan to address these priorities. While you may be overseeing the process and may be able to provide support for capacity-strengthening activities, the organization should understand that this is its own plan. Capacity-strengthening plans can be useful for attracting support from other donors to address organizational priorities.

Objective

1. Identify a set of realistic action steps/strategies for the organization to implement as part of its Capacity-Strengthening Plan.

Recommended time: Varies from 90 minutes to 3 hours, depending on the scope of the assessment.

Materials

- Large index cards (or sheets of paper)
- Output from the timeline activity (if conducted; see Step 4 for specific guidelines)
- Flipchart and markers

1. Identify capacity-strengthening interventions

The first step in the action planning process is to identify the most appropriate capacity-strengthening interventions to address each of the priority competencies. Ask participants to keep an open mind and think creatively about strategies for building the organization's capacity that do not require a heavy investment of resources. Many capacity-strengthening options require few external resources and come from the organization's initiative to improve its own systems and performance (e.g., setting up communication protocols or developing handbooks).

a. Divide the participants into small groups and assign one or several of the priority issues selected in Step 8 to each group.

b. Explain that the groups will examine different interventions and strategies that could be used to address and strengthen the priority competencies.

   Note: If the number of participants is small, it may be preferable to work as one group and address the areas one by one.

c. Encourage the participants to think creatively about capacity-strengthening interventions. Training is not always the only or even the most appropriate intervention. For example, if the issue is a *lack of institutional commitment to advocacy*, potential strategies are "to revise staff job descriptions to integrate advocacy responsibilities" or "explore and commit resources to innovative approaches to advocacy in the upcoming strategic planning process." The following illustrative list of capacity-strengthening approaches can be posted on a flipchart for reference. Encourage participants to add to the list.

   - Peer learning, networking, and knowledge exchange
   - Training (internal, external, and distance)
   - Coaching and mentorships, shadowing, and secondment
   - Leadership development
   - Technical assistance
   - Strengthening internal structures and systems

d. Distribute a stack of large index cards or sheets of paper to each table. Start with the first priority issue selected. Ask the participants to think about the different types of strategies and potential actions to strengthen capacity for that issue. As they brainstorm ideas, ask a few volunteers to write the options on the index cards.

e. Next, ask the volunteers to tape the cards to a wall, organizing them in columns under the appropriate theme or issue area.

f. Once the participants understand the process, ask them to address the rest of the priority issues. They can make additions to the first theme or write ideas for the themes that have not yet been discussed. Remind participants that they should list only *one strategy or action* per card!

g. As the groups finish brainstorming, collect the cards and tape them to the wall, organized by topic area. The result will be a giant grid with the priority issue card along the top row and corresponding capacity intervention cards in columns beneath them. As they are added to the wall, read the proposed actions aloud to ensure that the other groups understand what is being proposed. Invite the participants to ask clarifying questions, make suggestions, and revise the cards as needed.

Note: Action planning in a large group can become cumbersome and tedious. **While it is important to generate and reach consensus on significant inputs for the Capacity-Strengthening Plan, the detailed planning that follows in Steps 2 and 3 may be best undertaken by a smaller task force (with assistance from the facilitator) following the workshop.** If the group's energy is high and the discussion remains productive, you may decide to continue the process as described below.

2. **Select best strategies**

Once there is a common understanding of the proposed capacity-strengthening actions, assign one theme to each group and ask the participants to work on the following tasks:

a. Review the proposed actions and strategies and reach agreement on the best strategy (or strategies) to address the issue or competency. Criteria can be used to guide the decision-making process—for example, how much time is needed; whether the resources exist internally or the organization needs to look outside for resources; what is the most sustainable action; what action will reach the largest number of people or work units in the organization.

b. Ask each group to present its suggestions; allow the larger group to acknowledge agreement or disagreement and then come to a general consensus on appropriate strategies before moving on.

c. When the capacity-strengthening activities are selected, remove the relevant index cards from the large grid and set them apart.

3. **Draft a plan**

Once the best strategies to address the priority issues are identified, move on to a discussion about implementation.

a. Present a flipchart that lists following categories:

Category 1: Organization Alone
Category 2: With Support from Peer Organizations
Category 3: With Facilitator's Organizational Support
Category 4: With Other External Development Partner Support

b. Use the following questions to lead a large group discussion. Ask a few volunteers to help move the strategy cards into four different categories based on the group's answers. Within each category, list the short-term strategies first, followed by the long-term strategies.

- *Which of these action items can the organization do/achieve by itself, without external resources? What is the timeline for achieving this action?*
- *Which of these action items requires assistance or resources from other organizations in our peer community? What is the timeline for achieving this action?*
- *Which of these action items will require assistance from the facilitator's organization or another external donor organization to complete/achieve? What is the timeline for achieving this action?*

c. Once the target dates are established for all activities, ask the group to reflect on whether the timeline is feasible.

- *Is everything being done at the beginning? Is everything being done at the end?*
- *Is the timing realistic? Are there any events on the organizational calendar that could delay the time line such as a major fundraising event, proposal deadline, holiday, etc.?*
- *What about the order of action items? Is the order logical or are there action items that must be achieved before others?*

Note: Ask if the group wants to make any adjustments to the order or timing of action items to make the plan more workable.

d. Based on participants' feedback, incorporate any final changes to the action items, the order of action items, and the timeline.

4. **Close the self-assessment process**

a. Thank the participants for their commitment and hard work. Explain that you and the OCA focal point will use the inputs they have generated to produce a document that will be shared with the organization's leadership, refined, and agreed on. See Annex 5 for a Capacity-Strengthening Plan template.

b. Inform the participants of the expected timeframe for completing the plan, and explain how the final plan will be disseminated to the assessment participants. Explain that the final plan will include who is responsible for the activities. The focal person(s) for the assessment may request volunteers to take on the role of monitoring the overall progress with the plan.

c. Reiterate that the ownership of the plan rests with the organization, but that you represent a ready and committed partner to help the organization achieve its learning and performance goals.

Note: Although the organization should take primary responsibility for its own plan, you may well play a role in monitoring progress towards benchmarks, and adjusting the plan as relevant. Follow-up capacity assessments will use the same process described in this guide. Before starting the follow-up process, carefully review Annex 10.

❖ *Step 10: Document the Process, Results, Plan, and Next Steps*

After a follow-up meeting with organizational leadership, which concludes the organization's involvement in the assessment process, you should write a report to document the assessment process, present summary results, capture any important group discussions that emerged from the workshops, and present the final capacity-strengthening plan. The level of detail/length of the report should be consistent with the scope of the assessment. The report should be shared with the organizational leaders for their feedback and validation.

A sample report outline is presented below.

- **Title Page**—The organization's logo should appear prominently; funders may require specific branding and acknowledgements as well
- **Background**—Description of the context for the assessment and pertinent background information about the organization
- **Methodology**—Summary of the methods used during the assessment and planning process
- **Assessment Analysis and Results**—Description of key findings and priorities; detailed findings can be included in attachments
- **Capacity-Strengthening Plan**—Description of key activities; the full plan can be included in annexes
- **Monitoring and Follow-up Assessment**—Description of pertinent next steps and a tentative plan for a follow-up assessment

ANNEX 1. OVERVIEW OF THE HPP ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

The HPP organizational capacity assessment (OCA) is a facilitated self-assessment exercise using a tool tailored to the organization's mission. The capacity assessment process supports the organization by

- Establishing a baseline of the organization's capacity in key areas
- Promoting organizational dialogue, learning, and standard setting
- Informing the development of a capacity-strengthening plan for addressing organizational priorities

A participatory assessment can be an important diagnostic, learning, and growth tool, providing time and space for staff members (and representatives of the board, where applicable) to share their perspectives about the organization's functioning, strengths, and challenges. Joint decision making about how to improve performance promotes consensus, increases the likelihood that staff will commit to those actions, and puts the organization in control of its own growth.

HPP's organizational capacity assessment reflects **four core principles**:

1. **Appreciation**— Instead of identifying weaknesses and correcting problems, the OCA focuses on discovering internal strengths and building on success to achieve even more.

2. **Context-specificity**—The OCA helps the organization define its own understanding of capacity and chart growth within its particular socio-cultural context, local environment, and vision of the future.

3. **Internal reflection**—Few groups take the time to reflect on their performance and establish a joint vision for the future. Doing so strengthens internal collaboration across functions and creates a shared commitment to a goal.

4. **Sectoral standards**—The OCA tool reflects competencies recognized by leaders as being important for organizational performance. By analyzing an organization against sector standards, the assessment can raise awareness among staff and board members about what constitutes organizational excellence and provide a foundation for the organization to continually strive for new performance objectives.

What's Involved and How Long Will it Take?

Prior to the assessment process, the facilitator will meet with the organization's leadership and key staff to provide an overview of the capacity assessment and exchange expectations. A full assessment typically consists of four phases—**preparation**, **guided self-assessment, results debrief and analysis,** and **priority setting and action planning**—conducted over one week to one month.

The self-assessment is the diagnostic component of the process and combines facilitated discussion with private individual scoring by participants. It can take one half to two days, depending on the length of the assessment tool, the number of participants, and the depth of the discussion. At a debrief meeting following the self-assessment, the facilitator will compile the results, share them with the organization, and guide the participants to analyze the results and identify capacity-strengthening priorities. Action planning can be done in conjunction with the results debrief, or as a separate session, although both should occur shortly after the self-assessment session to maintain momentum and ensure relevance.

The last step of the process culminates in the development of a capacity-strengthening plan (typically) for a one-year timeframe. Table 1 below summarizes the time associated with each phase.

Table 1. Approximate Timeframe for OCA

OCA Phases and Re-assessment				
Outreach and expectation exchange	**Facilitated self-assessment**	**Results debrief and priority setting**	**Action plan development**	**Monitoring progress and re-assessment**
2-hour meeting (approximate)	1–2 days	0.5–1 day (can be combined with action planning session)	0.5–1 day (can be combined with results debrief session)	Track benchmarks on action plan quarterly *As desired:* • Update action plan annually • Reassess every 2–3 years

Roles and Responsibilities

A self-assessment positions participants as “experts” on their organization’s capacity. Thus, the assessment process is only as meaningful as the quality of participation that goes into it, and active participation is a shared responsibility between participants and the facilitator. **The facilitator** serves as a neutral guide who focuses the conversation and ensures equal participation for all. S/he is able to direct questions, clarify statements, and dig more deeply into topic areas to encourage full and rigorous exploration and analysis. **The organization’s leadership** (senior management and/or board of directors) is crucial to an assessment’s success. The leadership should prepare staff for the assessment by setting expectations for participation and allowing time out from daily tasks and responsibilities to engage meaningfully. If it is not feasible for all staff members to participate, the **assessment participants** should include a cross-section of staff by function and hierarchy. The ideal number of participants will vary by organization (anywhere from 10 to 30), but the assessment should involve a minimum of five participants to allow for dynamic discussion.

How Is the Capacity Assessment Different from an Audit or Evaluation?

Unlike other approaches used to determine donor compliance, funding, or program effectiveness, a participatory self-assessment is not meant to be an evaluation carried out by external experts. The self-assessment results should not be used to make decisions or judgments about an organization, nor to prescribe changes that the organization should undertake.

Rather, the HPP organizational capacity assessment is a “self-diagnosis,” in which the partner analyzes its current performance against industry-informed standards and sets goals for where it wants to be. While the results of a capacity assessment provide useful information for a program monitoring plan, its primary function is to support the entity’s internal learning.

ANNEX 2. HOW TO CUSTOMIZE AN OCA TOOL

The OCA tool should be tailored to align with the parameters and scope of the specific assessment. Below is some guidance on the recommended time, materials, and steps to take for this customization process.

Recommended time: Varies depending on the scope of the assessment, but plan on 3–6 weeks to tailor tools and processes and draft new indicators when necessary. Time should also be budgeted for feedback and revisions from the organization.

Materials

- Capacity Development Resource Guides
- Capacity Indicators Catalog
- Template for Capacity Assessment Scoring Sheet

1. **Confirm the parameters and scope of the assessment with any other necessary team members, based on the meeting with the organizational leadership and staff.**

2. **Consult the relevant Capacity Development Resource Guides to help identify the technical areas of expertise to include in the assessment.** The guides will help the facilitator/assessment team confirm the final list of competency areas to include in the assessment. Note that specific technical areas may not be included in the catalog of indicators and may need to be derived. (See Step 4.)

3. **Review, select, and tailor indicators.** After selecting the technical areas of expertise for the assessment, the facilitator should visit the Capacity Indicators Catalog to choose the most appropriate and relevant indicators for each technical area. Selection of indicators should consider the purpose of the assessment and the size and focus of the organization; selected indicators should include an appropriate mix of individual (staff), organizational, and inter-organizational indicators.

   The facilitator may tailor the wording of the indicators as necessary so they directly apply to the organization.

   If the assessment addresses three or fewer technical areas, the facilitator should aim for 12–15 indicators per technical area. If the assessment includes more than three technical areas, the facilitator is encouraged to reduce the number of indicators per technical area to 8–10 to avoid making the scoring sheet (and the assessment process) too lengthy.

   In addition to the selected technical areas, it is strongly recommended that the organizational health and sustainability indicators be included in the participatory assessment. Although these indicators are non-technical, these capabilities are foundational to the organization’s viability and success and necessary to sustain the technical expertise.

4. **Develop additional indicators as necessary.** The Capacity Indicators Catalog is extensive, but it is not the only source for capacity indicators. Thus, the facilitator and other assessment team members might need to work together to craft appropriate additional indicators.

5. **Get endorsement of the assessment tool and process.** Share the chosen indicators with the organizational leadership/point person for revisions and adjust the indicators based on feedback. Ensure that the organization gives its final approval.

6. **Prepare the Capacity Assessment Scoring Sheet.** Prepare *one* Capacity Assessment Scoring Sheet for the assessment using the template provided (see Annex 3). Make copies of this scoring sheet for use during the assessment.

   a. Decide whether the organizational health and sustainability indicators merit inclusion as a separate section of the scoring sheet or if some or all of them can be integrated into the technical sections. The larger the organization and more complex the scope, the more important it is to separate these indicators. If this is done, organizational health and sustainability should be the first module of the assessment.

   b. Repeat the following steps for each of the technical areas of expertise:

      - Add the name of the technical area of expertise at the top.
      - Refer back to the Capacity Development Resource Guide and copy and paste the Performance Ideal onto the template. Edit if necessary to fit the context.
      - Review and revise the generic discussion questions provided in the template for the Capacity Assessment Scoring Sheet. The (3–5) discussion questions help participants make informed decisions on their individual scores, so the questions should have a close association with the indicator statements.
      - Copy and paste each selected indicator statement into the table on the scoring sheet (one indicator per row).

ANNEX 3. CAPACITY ASSESSMENT SCORING SHEET

Directions for self-assessment: Read each indicator statement below and rate the statement in the column to the right using the 4-point scale.

Technical Area	
Performance Ideal:	
Scoring: **1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree; 4 = strongly agree; 0 = don't know**	
Indicator Statements	**Score**
1.	1 2 3 4 0
2.	1 2 3 4 0
3.	1 2 3 4 0
4.	1 2 3 4 0
5.	1 2 3 4 0
6.	1 2 3 4 0
7.	1 2 3 4 0

ANNEX 4. SAMPLE CAPACITY ASSESSMENT SCORING SHEETS

Directions for self-assessment: Read each indicator statement below and rate the statement in the column to the right using the 4-point scale.

**Technical Area:
Data Analysis and Use**

Performance Ideal:

High capacity for data analysis and use includes being able to

- Regularly demand data as a part of the decision-making process
- Synthesize, communicate, interpret, and facilitate the use of data to support program review and planning, policy dialogue, advocacy and policy development, resource allocation, and program management, implementation, and improvement
- Collaborate and coordinate across sectors and among individuals and organizations to ensure that d are of high quality and trusted by potential data users

At the highest performance level, data analysis and use efforts respond directly to the information needs of data users and consumers and directly address stated policy and program questions.

In the ideal, the following would exist:

- A robust and inter-operable information system that allows for streamlined collection, analysis, and communication of data, including routinely collected service statistics and surveillance data and non-routine sources of information, such as special studies and operations research
- A systematic strategic planning process that includes the development of a research agenda to define and respond to questions of interest to data users
- Opportunities and mechanisms for convening data users and producers regularly to discuss policies and programs, review relevant data, and generate demand for data to inform specific decisions
- Data and information regularly shared in appropriate formats with appropriate audiences
- National systems, guidelines, and protocols for registering new research, communicating findings, and storing, accessing, and sharing data

Scoring:
1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree; 4 = strongly agree; 0 = don’t know

Indicator Statements	Score
1. Staff is knowledgeable on which data are most valuable at various stages of the policy process and can identify reliable data sources.	1 2 3 4 0
2. The organization has staff with adequate skills to analyze data using a variety of tools and methodologies (i.e., modeling, GIS, cost-effectiveness analyses, or data triangulation).	1 2 3 4 0
3. The organization synthesizes data into understandable and actionable narrative	1 2 3 4 0

and graphical forms for different target audiences.	
4. The organization extracts and translates data into language that is accessible to non-technical individuals.	1 2 3 4 0
5. The organization explains/illustrates to policymakers the links between the information it provides and policy recommendations.	1 2 3 4 0
6. The organization has standard operating procedures/systems in place that ensure quality data analysis and use.	1 2 3 4 0
7. Data analysis *and* use responsibilities are included in job descriptions of designated staff.	1 2 3 4 0

Technical Area: Health Financing

Performance Ideal:

High capacity in health financing is being able to

- Assess the resource requirements of a program, primarily through unit cost estimation and budgeting exercises
- Identify current sources of financing and how they may be effectively and efficiently allocated and used
- Determine the resource gap between the required and available funds
- Work with stakeholders to mobilize resources
- Track and monitor the mobilization and use of funds to promote accountability

Individuals and organizations have the capacity to develop a plan for generating and using resources, which may include innovative funding sources. At the highest level of performance, they are able to secure adequate financing for program implementation—for example, by putting forward a sound investment argument to increase or mobilize new resources, typically based on benefit-cost analyses, economic evaluations of past policy implementation, and expenditure analyses.

In the ideal, the following would exist:

- A policy development process in which strategic planning and budgeting go hand-in-hand to ensure fully funded programs and policies
- A culture of using financial indicators and economic analysis to make strategic decisions
- Effective and efficient allocation of resources to maximize impact of limited resources
- Mechanisms to improve financial transparency and management at the operational levels
- Mechanisms to identify and address financial constraints for both the supply and demand sides
- Systems to improve financial risk protection and coverage for vulnerable groups, such as the elderly and key populations

Scoring:
1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree; 4 = strongly agree; 0 = don't know

Indicator Statements	Score
1. Staff are aware of current national laws and policies that guide the use of financial resources for health (e.g., a social health insurance law, NHIF Act, budget regulations, laws that govern private health insurance, or a mandate to allocate a certain percentage of government spending to health).	1 2 3 4 0
2. Staff has the skills to analyze the allocation of funds/resources for health based on cost effectiveness, the burden of disease, and through the lenses of gender and equity.	1 2 3 4 0
3. Staff has quantitative skills to conduct sector expenditure tracking analyses, including national health accounts and benefit incidence analysis.	1 2 3 4 0

4. Staff has quantitative skills to conduct costing analyses to estimate total cost of the program and unit cost.	1 2 3 4 0
5. The organization conducts economic evaluations of past policy implementation.	1 2 3 4 0
6. Staff is able to turn financial and economic information into communications materials that can be used to advocate for and mobilize additional resources.	1 2 3 4 0
7. Staff can identify policy solutions for addressing health inequities e.g. finance mechanisms, private public partnerships, innovative models to reach underserved populations, etc.	1 2 3 4 0

Technical Area: Multisectoral Coordination

Performance Ideal:

High capacity in multisectoral coordination is being able to

- Promote an internal culture that values and fosters collaboration and sharing as a key operating principle
- Establish systems and structures that garner and facilitate communication
- Assign responsibility for collaboration in job descriptions of relevant staff
- Mobilize funds and resources to allow staff members to participate in partnership activities and eve
- Routinely monitor and assess the benefits of partnership and its impact on the core mission, work products, and achievements

At the highest performance level, individuals and organizations develop and sustain strong, supportive relationships with other organizations (or groups, divisions, communities, and institutions working in a vari of technical areas and across sectors).

In the ideal, the following would exist:

- Opportunities and mechanisms for routine multisectoral collaboration
- Sufficient resources and time allocated for effective multisectoral collaboration
- Open, inclusive, and informed discussion among key stakeholders
- A policy process and policies shaped and influenced by multisectoral inputs
- The monitoring and assessment of collaborative partnerships for learning and improvement
- Evidence generated and shared on the cross-sectoral benefits of achieving the stated health goal thr a multisectoral response

Scoring:
1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree; 4 = strongly agree; 0 = don't know

Indicator Statements	Score
1. The organization dedicates resources, such as staff time and funding, to collaborate (e.g., partnerships, alliances, working groups) with external or internal partners.	1 2 3 4 0
2. Staff routinely share and leverage information and resources with other internal departments and external organizations.	1 2 3 4 0
3. The organization has mutually supportive and productive relationships with other entities from related fields (government, private sector, NGOs, academia, religious organizations, media) and technical areas (education, gender, labor, etc.).	1 2 3 4 0
4. Staff are able to lead a diverse team and effectively leverage the strengths and skills of individuals and organizations to advance shared goals	1 2 3 4 0

5. The organization seeks out partnerships with organizations that can that fill identified gaps or add value to its policy-related work.	1 2 3 4 0
6. Staff are comfortable providing peer-to-peer learning and building the skills of partners in relevant areas of expertise.	1 2 3 4 0
7. Staff are knowledgeable about local and national policy environments, laws, and institutions related to various sectors involved in the response.	1 2 3 4 0

Technical Area:
Policy Monitoring

Performance Ideal:

High capacity for monitoring policy development, adoption, and implementation includes being able to

- Effectively and systematically collect, analyze, communicate, and use data related to the process an outcomes of policy development and implementation
- Use data (including financial data, data about service delivery, and health outcomes) to improve pol development and implementation
- Build strong relationships among sectors and among individuals and organizations to adequately monitor the full policy process

In the ideal, the following would exist:

- Opportunities and mechanisms that engage multiple sectors and organizations in policy dialogue
- Systemic monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of policy formulation and implementation for positive or negative effects
- A robust legal and regulatory framework that allows for a strong M&E system but also protects individuals’ rights (i.e., laws on the confidentiality of individuals’ health records and health status; data sharing among institutions)
- National working groups/committees focused on policy monitoring, which meet regularly and have clear working objectives
- A national research agenda, which includes specific research priorities and stakeholders with interest in using the data collected

Scoring:
1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree; 4 = strongly agree; 0 = don’t know

Indicator Statements	Score
1. Staff are knowledgeable of the local and national policy environment, laws, and institutions related to health sector issues	1 2 3 4 0
2. Staff are knowledgeable of processes for uptake of policy by national/subnational institutions, including funding mechanisms, and other systems	1 2 3 4 0
3. Staff are able to identify, analyze, and engage a broad spectrum of stakeholders in policy monitoring, including national level policymakers, advocates, technical specialists, and citizen groups	1 2 3 4 0
4. Staff are knowledgeable on the fundamentals of M&E, including developing SMART objectives, indicators, M&E systems, and evaluation design.	1 2 3 4 0
5. Staff are able to facilitate the use of information at different points in the policy process	1 2 3 4 0

6. Staff are able to identify where a policy issue or problem lies in the policy process and chart out a pathway for successfully developing and/or implementing the policy	1 2 3 4 0
7. Staff can articulate the benefits of and approaches to using evidence to inform different stages of the policy process.	1 2 3 4 0

Technical Area:
Strategy Development

Performance Ideal:

High capacity for strategy development includes being able to

- Take leadership in translating policy into practice through an evidence-based, collaborative process
- Use evidence to guide planners and stakeholders to determine *what, how, when, and where* resources and efforts are required to translate policy into programs

At the highest level of performance, individuals are analytical, systematic, and proactive and facilitate the decision-making process to ensure the optimal programming of valuable human and financial resources. Individuals and organizations also proactively influence and constructively engage internal and external stakeholders to design and adapt need-based and actionable strategies and plans. In the fast-changing and resource-scarce environment, organizations should be able to discern trends, identify future challenges, assess trade-offs of various scenarios, do more with less, and adapt to changing situations.

In the ideal, the following would exist:

- An iterative process of developing policy and implementing action plans, monitoring progress, making midcourse corrections, and updating the policies/plans
- A culture of evidence-based strategic planning and active problem solving
- Information regarding what is and is not working (and why) to inform planners and donors about how and where to allocate resources in a way that maximizes efficiency and effectiveness
- Stakeholder involvement in evidence-based dialogue, decision making, and the handover of policies from policymakers to policy implementers

Scoring:
1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree; 4 = strongly agree; 0 = don't know

Indicator Statements	**Score**
1. The organization systematically monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of proposed strategies to determine their contributions to policy outcomes.	1 2 3 4 0
2. The organization effectively uses costing/budgeting information to develop financial plans.	1 2 3 4 0
3. The organization allocates dedicated resources (staff time and money) to support strategic planning process.	1 2 3 4 0
4. The organization has mechanism in place to collect, analyze and synthesize data to inform development of action plans and allocate resources accordingly.	1 2 3 4 0
5. Staff can facilitate dialogue and build consensus among diverse key stakeholders (policy makers, planners, implementers, service providers, financial decisionmakers, beneficiaries).	1 2 3 4 0

ANNEX 5. CAPACITY-STRENGTHENING PLAN TEMPLATE

Purpose of Capacity-Strengthening Plans: A capacity-strengthening plan outlines and prioritizes the key areas of need for individuals and the organization to carry out policy-related work, as well as outlines strategies or interventions to meet those needs. A capacity-strengthening plan is typically developed following a capacity assessment or needs assessment. The plan should align with the context, timeframe, scope, and resources available for implementation.

Organization Name:	Begin date–end date of capacity-strengthening plan:
Summary of Key Findings (from capacity assessment, needs assessment, or other tools used to identify capacity gaps)	

Performance Ideal:

Objectives:
(facilitate a process for identifying SMART objectives the organization would like to achieve)

-
-

Activities to support capacity development

Capacity Need (Those identified during assessment process)	**Priority Level** (High, medium, or low)	**Target Group** (Who will participate in the capacity-strengthening interventions)	**Intervention/Activity** (The capacity-strengthening activities to be used; when designing the interventions, consider drawing from a variety of relevant approaches)	**Tracking/Monitoring** (Did the intervention happen? How useful was it? What worked well? What was challenging? What are the key lessons?	**Roles/Resources** (What are the organization's responsibilities? What role might other organizations play?)
Need A					
Need B					
Need C					
Need D					

Benchmarks:
(establish markers to check the organization's progress toward achieving the performance objectives)

-
-
-

ANNEX 6. VARIATIONS IN THE OCA PROCESS

The OCA process includes many opportunities for adaptation and innovation. It may be tailored to the skill level of the facilitator, power dynamics within the organization, the timeframe and resources available, or literacy and language considerations. Changes might also be necessary to complement other ongoing capacity development and strategic planning processes.

Highly participatory discussion methods may be needed when working with low-literacy groups, organizations experiencing internal conflict, or organizations in which power dynamics could limit equitable or open participation and sharing by all members. Among others, elements of Objective, Reflective, Interpretive, and Decisional (ORID) discussion methods, appreciative inquiry, and Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA) approaches can be integrated at any stage of the OCA. *The Facilitator's Guide to Group Decision-making,*[2] provides sample discussion sets that can be valuable during OCA and other group processes.

Other steps the facilitator and organization might consider adding to the process include the following:

- **Participatory tool design:** The organization, its leadership, or a set of peer organizations can participate in the design of the tool, drawing on the Capacity Development Resource Guides and Capacity Indicators Catalog. This will ensure relevance and organizational ownership of the OCA process and tool. Engaging a cohort of organizations or members of a network to jointly design a tool can help establish common standards of excellence against which the organizations can benchmark themselves.

- **Visioning and action planning:** There are numerous facilitation techniques for conducting visioning exercises and action planning with organizations. The facilitator is welcome to draw on his/her own toolkit and experience.

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[2] Kaner, S., L. Lind, C. Toldi, D. Berger, and S. Fisk. 2007. *Facilitator's Guide to Group Decision-making.* Available at: http://www.amazon.com/Facilitators-Guide-Participatory-Decision-Making-Kaner/dp/0787982660.

ANNEX 7. VISIONING EXERCISE (OPTIONAL)

Recommended time: Approximately 1 hour to 90 minutes.

Objectives

1. Create a shared understanding of the organization's history and milestones.
2. Identify organizational goals for the next five years.

Materials

- Markers, flip chart
- Sheets of paper in two colors (e.g., red and blue), cut into 2" x 5"strips
- Organizational mission/vision statements, if available

Visioning exercises can be a valuable tool for an organization to clarify its goals and set new standards of excellence. Visioning activities may be used to help draft a formal organizational vision statement to accompany a mission statement or as part of strategic planning processes to guide the identification of strategic goals. A visioning process can be particularly helpful if an organization is nascent, has undergone rapid growth, or is experiencing changes in its internal or external environment.

This optional activity is intended to set the stage for the assessment process. It uses a timeline methodology to help participants reflect on the life cycle of the organization by considering noteworthy events and trends in the operating environment, organizational milestones and achievements, and the organization's desires for the future. The timeline begins with the organization's formation and looks five years ahead. This is meant to be an active and participatory exercise that allows everyone in the room to contribute to constructing a collective understanding of the organization's past and a joint vision for its future.

The timeline exercise can be an opening activity on the day of the self-assessment workshop or can be conducted separately prior to the assessment.

If the organization's vision is unclear or outdated, or if the organization itself is nascent, completing this visioning exercise is highly recommended. However, if the organization has recently completed a comprehensive visioning or strategic planning process, a brief facilitated discussion to link those processes to the OCA may be more appropriate.

Key steps to bring participants together to create an organizational vision through a timeline exercise:

1. If the organization has an official mission and/or vision statement, write it on a flip chart and hang it in the room for all to see and reflect on.

2. Prior to the session, tape four or five pieces of flip chart paper together on the wall to construct one long piece of paper. Draw a timeline, starting with a date one or two years before the organization was founded and ending with a date five years in the future, with evenly space dots for interim years along the line. See the diagram below for an example.

1995__ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __2014__ __ __ __ __ 2019

Note: Significant incidents, events, or trends in the external environment often influence an organization's founding and can be fundamental aspects of its identity. These might include important investments in the country by a donor (e.g., the establishment of the Global Fund), major conferences or global initiatives (e.g., Family Planning 2020), and historical events such as a political coup, election, or natural disaster. Therefore, it is recommended that the timeline starts one or two years before the organization's founding.

3. Introduce the activity and explain that it will involve a discussion of where the organization has been and where it would like to go in the future.

4. Review the day's objectives and introduce the current organizational vision and/or mission statements, if they exist.

5. Ask the participants:

    - *Do you know how or why the organization was founded?*
    - *What brought it about? What social, political, or economic factors lead to its creation?*
    - *What needs did the organization seek to address?*

    Note: As participants share information, write a few key facts at the start of the timeline.

6. Next, ask participants to think about significant events, factors, or trends that have taken place in the *external* environment between the start of the timeline and the present day. If they have trouble getting started, give some examples, such as the passage of an important health policy or civil society law, the establishment of an important government department or network that is relevant to their technical area, or a political or social event. Participants should include both positive and negative incidents or trends. Encourage all participants to contribute.

7. Hand out the blue strips of paper and ask the participants to write an *external* event, milestone, or trend on the paper and post it to the appropriate spot on the timeline; this is meant to be free and active, so participants do not need to wait turns to add their contributions. Once all contributions for the external environment are posted, tell participants that you are going to repeat the process, this time looking at the organization itself.

8. Ask the participants to think about *internal* milestones for the organization and to write these on the strips of red paper. These do not necessarily have to reflect positive incidents or shifts. Offer some examples to get them started, such as the start or end of an important project or funding relationship, drafting of a mission or vision statement, a change in leadership, expansion or cutbacks, or a structural reorganization.

9. Participants should add their milestones to the timeline. Encourage all participants to contribute, even those who recently joined the organization. They can document when they first heard about the organization, when they joined, or other personal milestones.

    Note: If paper is not available in different colors, you can use markers as an alternative. Make sure you have enough markers so that no one is excluded from the exercise.

10. When both the external and internal components are complete, ask the participants to reflect on what they see. The timeline should be a colorful display of organizational history.

11. Some questions to promote discussion include
    - *What shifts or trends have you seen in the external environment?*
    - *How have these influenced the organization?*
    - *What challenges has the organization faced internally or externally?*
    - *What are some of its greatest successes?*
    - *What conclusions can you draw based on this observation?*
12. Make additions or changes to the timeline as desired. Encourage participants to ask questions of each other and share stories about their organizational history together. This is often a great learning exercise for newer employees.
13. Explain that this was a look at the past and that the next stage of the activity will focus on the future. For the next task, ask participants to break into groups of two or three.
14. Allow 10 minutes for the groups to think about longer-term goals and what they want to see on the timeline in the next five years. Write the following themes on a flip chart to help with this process:
    a. Organization's reputation
    b. Impact on the policy environment
    c. Role in the policy process
    d. Relationships with external organizations
    e. Achievements and performance milestones (publications, events, changes in policy, etc.), that they hope to see in the next five years
15. Ask participants to write longer-term goals on cards and post them to the timeline.
16. The facilitator should read the new additions to the timeline out loud and lead a brief discussion on the following questions:
    - *Are there any surprises?*
    - *What do they find most interesting?*
    - *What is the most ambitious?*
    - *What is most exciting?*
17. Ask the group:
    - *What do your goals about the next five years tell us about your organizational vision? More specifically, think about the skills, knowledge, functions, behaviors, staff composition, and resources your organization needs to achieve these goals.*
    - *What is needed in the next five years to get there?*

    Record all responses on a flip chart.
18. When the discussion is finished, ask the participants to review the ideas written on the flip chart(s). Ask if anyone wants to make any additions or changes.

19. When everyone is satisfied that the list is complete, encourage the participants to refer to this discussion and list during the OCA process—especially during the action planning step. The capacity-strengthening plan should be linked to this vision or goals for the future.

20. Close the session and thank everyone for their time.

Note: Save the list created in steps 15 and 17 and bring it to the action planning session of the OCA, or type it up and make a handout to distribute.

ANNEX 8. OCA RESULTS SPREADSHEET: USER GUIDE

Objectives

1. Develop a report and visual depictions of the capacity assessment
2. Support the development of capacity-strengthening plans

Recommended time: Varies depending on the scope of assessment. For comprehensive OCAs with more than 20 participants, allow several hours for data entry and time to consider how the data should be presented. Consider enlisting support from the organization’s focal person(s).

Note: If the assessment group is small (e.g., five people) and the number of technical areas is limited to one or two, you may compile the data during a lunch break and present the results back to the group with or without using the spreadsheet.

Materials

- OCA Results Spreadsheet
- Completed capacity assessment scoring sheets

Using the Spreadsheet: Key Steps

Stage 1

Tab: DE_Areas & Ind.

Fill out the following:

1. The name of each area of expertise under the “Area” heading [Rows 6 & 28]. Example: FINANCE. Begin with Area 1. Only include the areas for which there are indicators.

2. The abbreviation for the capacity area; use three or four letters. Example: Finance is FIN. Located next to Indicator Description Rows 7 & 29.

3. Using the capacity area’s abbreviation (Example: FIN), codify each indicator. Example: FIN_1, FIN_2, …..Use columns C, I, O, U, and AA.

	Area III	
	Finance	
#	FIN	Indicator Description
31	FIN_1	Staff are aware of current national laws and policies tl
32	FIN_2	Staff have quantitative skills to conduct costing analys
33	FIN_3	Staff are able to turn financial and economic informat
34	FIN_4	The organization conducts economic evaluations of pa
35	FIN_5	Staff have quantitative skills to conduct sector expend
36	FIN_6	Staff have the skills to analyze the allocation of funds/
37		
38		
39		
40		
41		
42		
43		
44		
45		

4. Input your indicators (according to your OCA) under Indicator Description Columns D, J, P, V, and AB.

> *Note:* If copying/pasting the indicator descriptions from a Word document, the paste option “Match Destination Point (M)” must be used.
>
> *How To:* When pasting, right click and select “Match Destination Point” under “Paste.”

Stage 2

Tab: DE_Capacity

Fill out the following:

1. Organization's name
2. Number of participants
3. Country
4. Assessment date
5. Results debriefing date

Organization's Name:	Sample NGO	Number of participants
Assessment Date:	9/6/2013	Results debriefing date

Code	ADV_1	ADV_2	ADV_3	ADV_4	ADV_5	ADV_6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	ANA_1	ANA_2	ANA_3	ANA_4	ANA_5
Participant																				
Participant 1	5	5	4	4	4	3										5	4	4	4	2
Participant 2	5	5	4	4	4	3										5	4	4	2	3
Participant 3	5	4	5	4	4	3										5	5	3	2	3
Participant 4	5	4	5	4	3	4										4	4	2	3	3

Using the individual scores **(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree; 4 = strongly agree; 0 = don't know)** obtained through the OCA, fill out the following:

1. Begin in cell B14 (see the chart below) and write "Participant 1, Participant 2, …." Continue until you reach the number of participants.

2. Scores from each participant will be entered in columns C– EC, which accumulate information for your indicators.

Note: Non-response to indicators can affect the validity of the data. It is recommended that any non-answered question is left blank.

Stage 3

Tab: Calculations

There are six buttons.

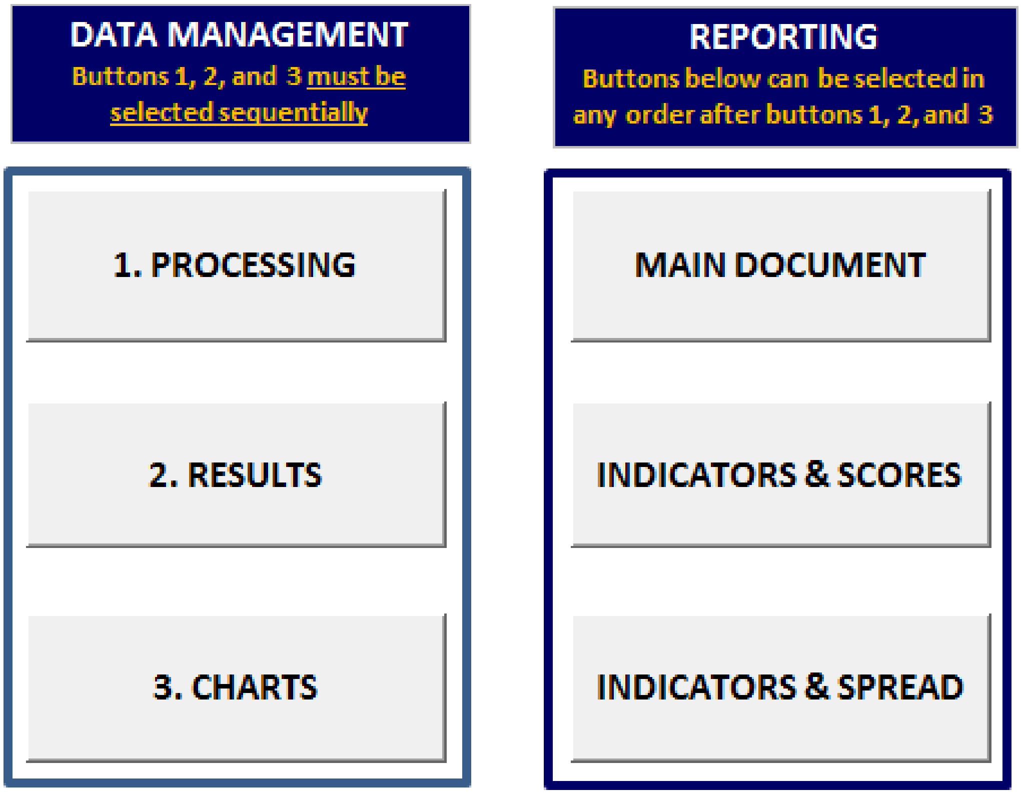
Follow the sequence:

1. Click: 1. PROCESSING

2. Click: 2. RESULTS

3. Click: 3. CHARTS

4. Click: MAIN DOCUMENT, INDICATORS & SCORES, and INDICATORS & SPREAD



Stage 4

Tab: Cover to Spread

Review the reporting sheets (blue tabs).

Tab	Explanation	Comments
Cover		
General: Areas of Capacity—Aggregate Scores	Mean of the capacity scores from all the indicators in each capacity area.	An aggregate score is used to show measurable differences between capacities and leads to discussions about strong and weak areas of capacity.
Area Reports from I–X	Capacity Level Total: Provides a percentage ranking of the capacity area compared to the average of all capacity areas. Capacity Level by Indicator: Provides percentage ranking by each indicator. Detail: Provides averages for each indicator.	These data provide an overview of each capacity area with visuals for discussion on each indicator and the capacity area as a whole.

Improvement: The Indicators with Lowest Values	Lowest Capacity Indicators: Shows percentage value of the lowest-ranking indicators.	Provides a visual to depict the indicators most in need of group review and capacity building.
Detail: All indicators	Shows all of the indicators with their current group level and capacity gap.	Provides a visual for all indicators ranked highest to lowest. This can lead to a discussion on the strengths of the company and areas that need improvement.
Spread: Show scores obtained in each indicator	Provides bar graphs that show the range of scores, including "don't know," for each indicator and how people answered the question.	Provides a visual representation of how the participants ranked themselves for each indicator.
Chart	Contains all the charts seen in the separate tabs and allows users to "copy" and "paste" into other documents.	

For a sample results package based on use of the spreadsheet, refer to Annex 9.

ANNEX 9. SAMPLE OCA RESULTS PACKAGE

Organizational Capacity Assessment

Local Action

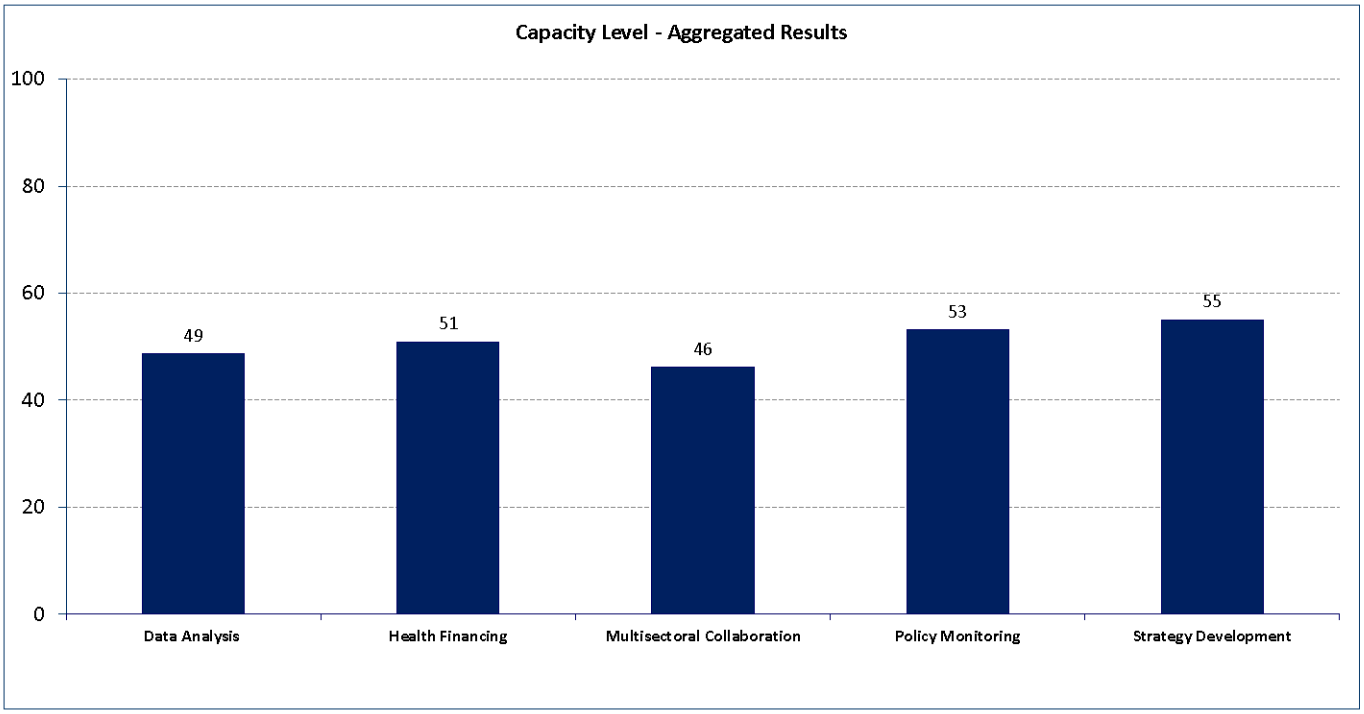
South Africa

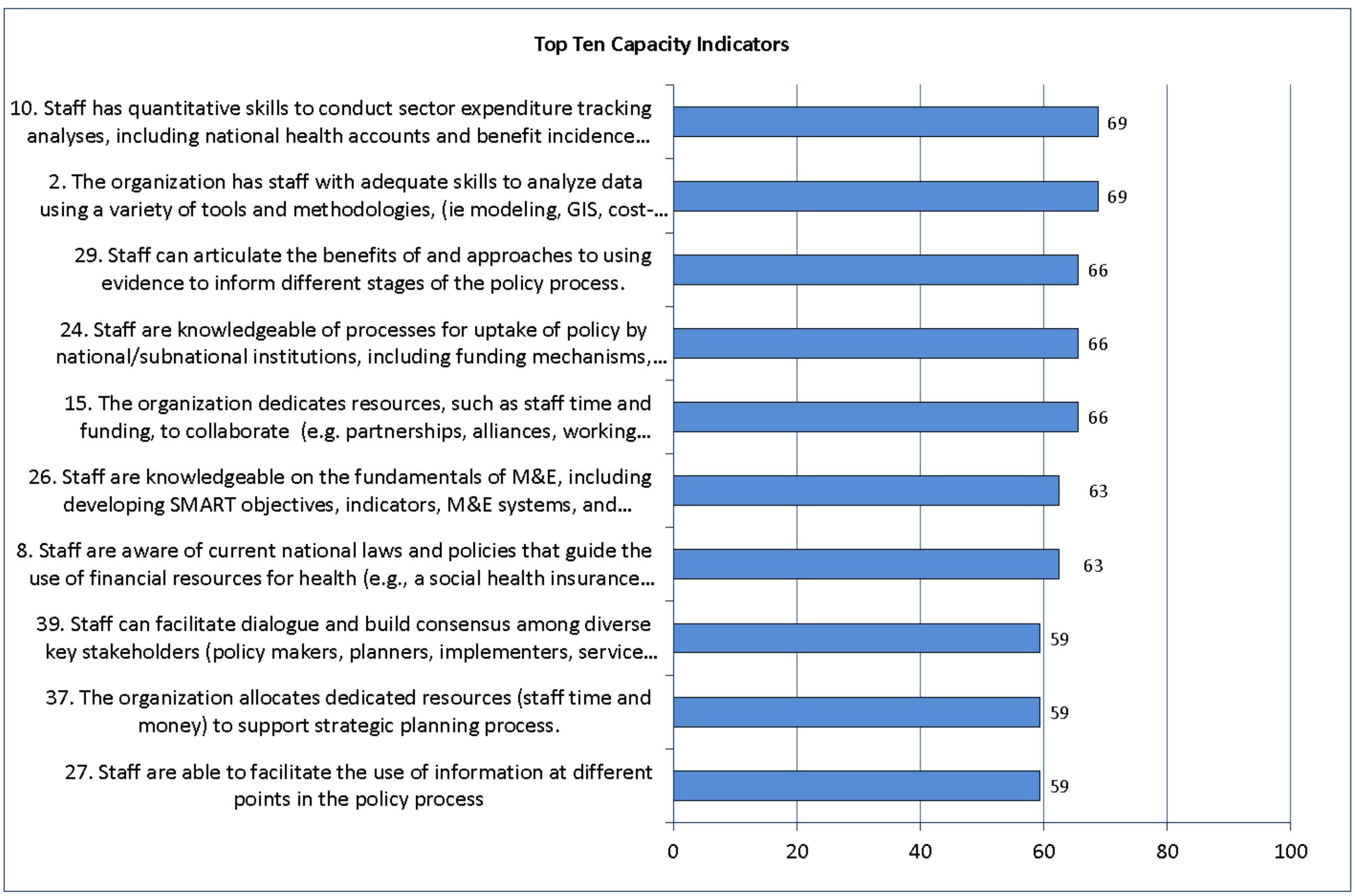
June 24, 2014

Organizational Capacity Assessment

Organization's Name	Local Action	**Assessment Date**	June 20, 2014
Number of participants	8	**Results debriefing date**	June 24, 2014

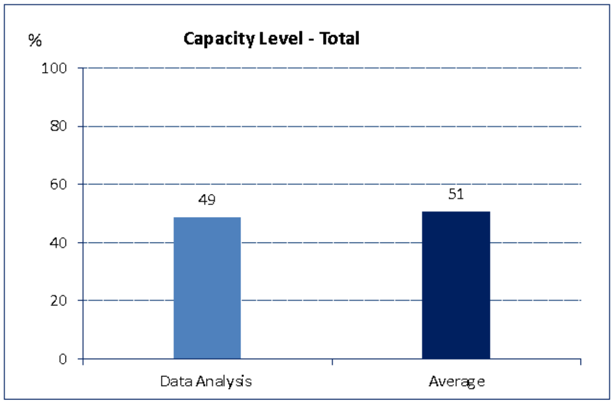
Results

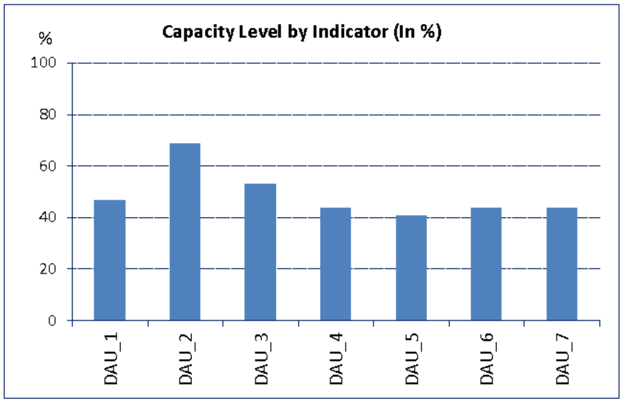




Data Analysis

Ranking Capacity | **4th**



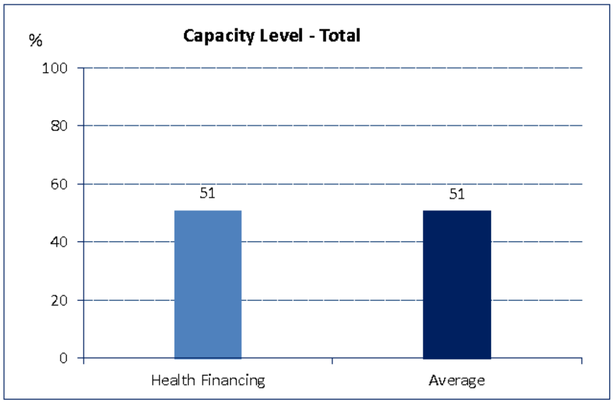


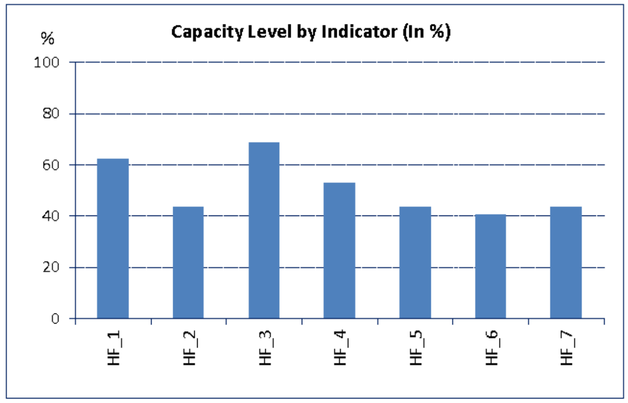
Detail

Indicator	Description	Average
	Maximum Value ==>	4.00
DAU_1	1. Staff is knowledgeable on which data is most valuable at various stages of the policy process and can identify reliable data sources.	1.88
DAU_2	2. The organization has staff with adequate skills to analyze data using a variety of tools and methodologies, (ie modeling, GIS, cost-effectiveness analyses, or data triangulation.	2.75
DAU_3	3. The organization synthesizes data into understandable and actionable narrative and graphical forms for different target audiences.	2.13
DAU_4	4. The organization extracts and translates data into language that is accessible to non-technical individuals.	1.75
DAU_5	5. The organization explains/illustrates to policymakers the links between the information it provides and policy recommendations.	1.63
DAU_6	6. The organization has standard operating procedures/systems in place that ensure quality data analysis and use.	1.75
DAU_7	7. Data analysis and use responsibilities are included in job descriptions of designated staff.	1.75

Health Financing

Ranking Capacity | **3rd**



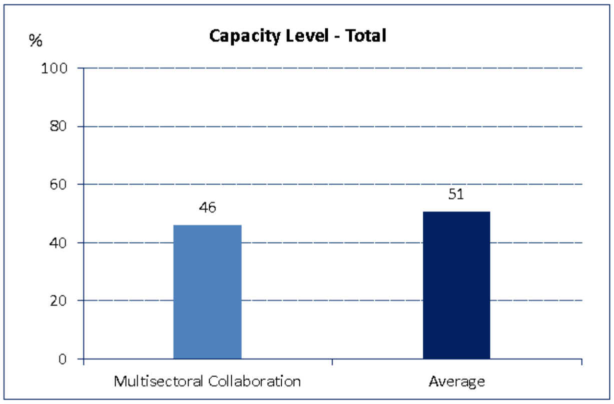


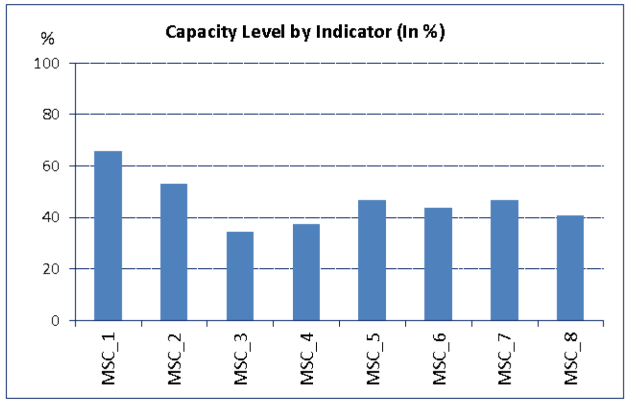
Detail

Indicator	Description	Average
	Maximum Value ==>	4.00
HF_1	8. Staff are aware of current national laws and policies that guide the use of financial resources for health (e.g., a social health insurance law, NHIF Act, budget regulations, laws that govern private health insurance, or a mandate to allocate a certain percentage of government spending to health).	2.50
HF_2	9. Staff has the skills to analyze the allocation of funds/resources for health based on cost effectiveness, the burden of disease, and through the lenses of gender and equity.	1.75
HF_3	10. Staff has quantitative skills to conduct sector expenditure tracking analyses, including national health accounts and benefit incidence analysis.	2.75
HF_4	11. Staff has quantitative skills to conduct costing analyses to estimate total cost of the program and unit cost.	2.13
HF_5	12. The organization conducts economic evaluations of past policy implementation.	1.75
HF_6	13. Staff is able to turn financial and economic information into communications materials that can be used to advocate for and mobilize additional resources.	1.63
HF_7	14. Staff can identify policy solutions for addressing health inequities e.g. finance mechanisms, private public partnerships, innovative models to reach underserved populations, etc.	1.75

Multisectoral Collaboration

Ranking Capacity | **5th**



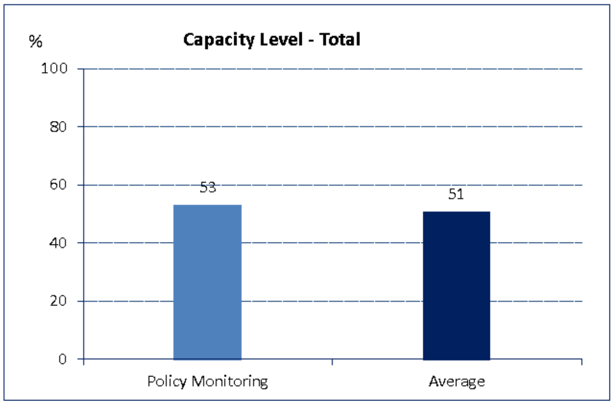


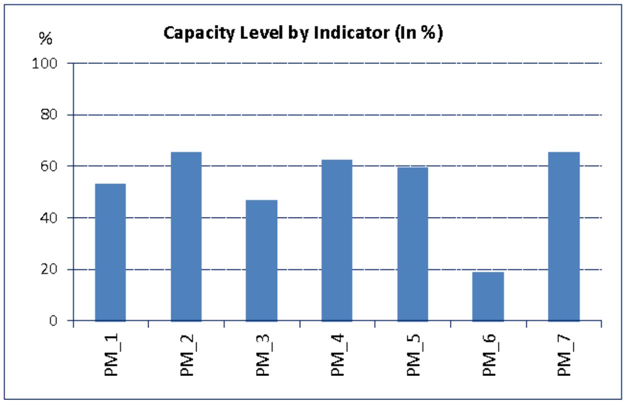
Detail

Indicator	Description	Average
	Maximum Value ==>	4.00
MSC_1	15. The organization dedicates resources, such as staff time and funding, to collaborate (e.g. partnerships, alliances, working groups) with external or internal partners.	2.63
MSC_2	16. Staff routinely share and leverage information and resources with other internal departments and external organizations.	2.13
MSC_3	17. The organization has mutually supportive and productive relationships with other entities from related fields (government, private sector, NGOs, academia, religious organizations, media) and technical areas (education, gender, labor, etc.).	1.38
MSC_4	18. Staff are able to lead a diverse team and effectively leverage the strengths and skills of individuals and organizations to advance shared goals.	1.50
MSC_5	19. The organization seeks out partnerships with organizations that can that fill identified gaps or add value to its policy-related work.	1.88
MSC_6	20. Staff are comfortable providing peer-to-peer learning and building the skills of partners in relevant areas of expertise	1.75
MSC_7	21. Staff can explain technical terms and findings in simple, policy-relevant ways to other stakeholders.	1.88
MSC_8	22. Staff are knowledgeable about local and national policy environments, laws, and institutions related to various sectors involved in the response.	1.63

Policy Monitoring

Ranking Capacity | **2nd**



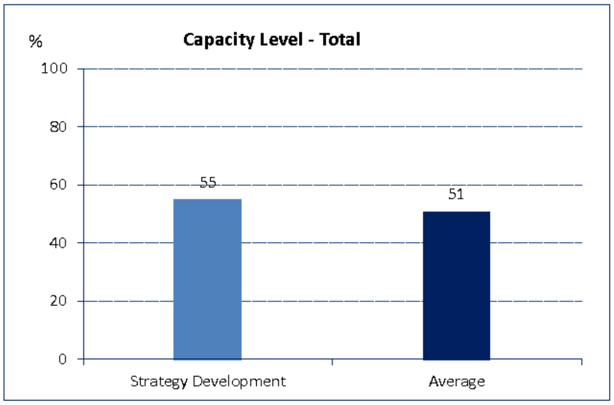


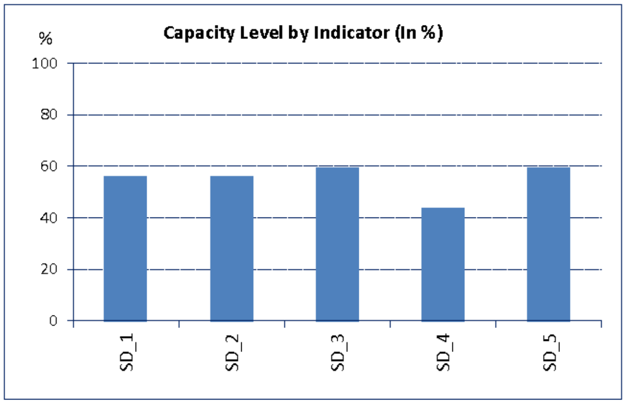
Detail

Indicator	Description	Average
	Maximum Value ==>	4.00
PM_1	23. Staff are knowledgeable of the local and national policy environment, laws, and institutions related to health sector issuesStaff	2.13
PM_2	24. Staff are knowledgeable of processes for uptake of policy by national/subnational institutions, including funding mechanisms, and other systems.	2.63
PM_3	25. Staff are able to identify, analyze, and engage a broad spectrum of stakeholders in policy monitoring, including national level policymakers, advocates, technical specialists, and citizen groups.	1.88
PM_4	26. Staff are knowledgeable on the fundamentals of M&E, including developing SMART objectives, indicators, M&E systems, and evaluation design.	2.50
PM_5	27. Staff are able to facilitate the use of information at different points in the policy process	2.38
PM_6	28. Staff are able to identify where a policy issue or problem lies in the policy process and chart out a pathway for successfully developing and/or implementing the policy.	0.75
PM_7	29. Staff can articulate the benefits of and approaches to using evidence to inform different stages of the policy process.	2.63

Strategy Development

Ranking Capacity | 1st

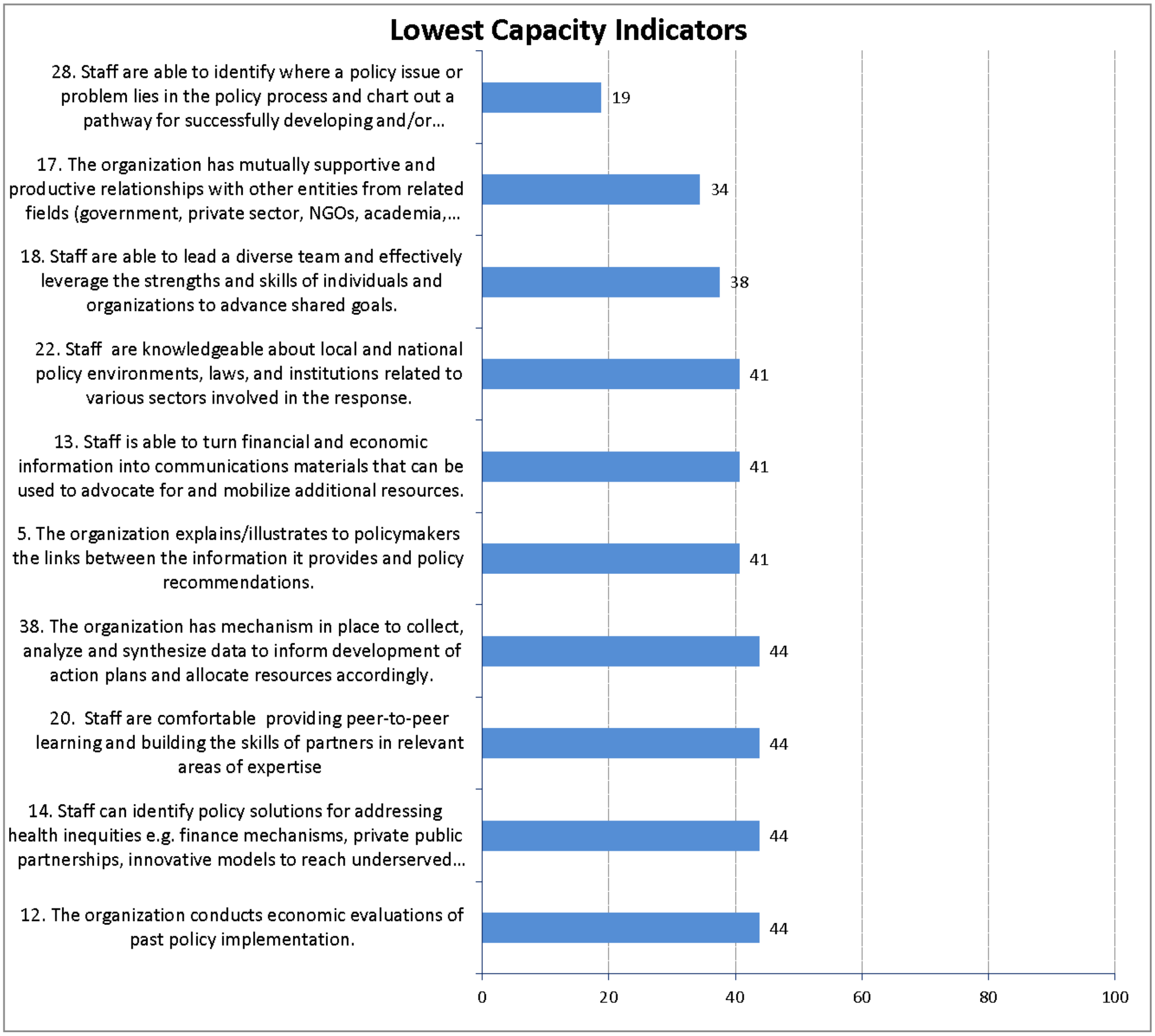




Detail

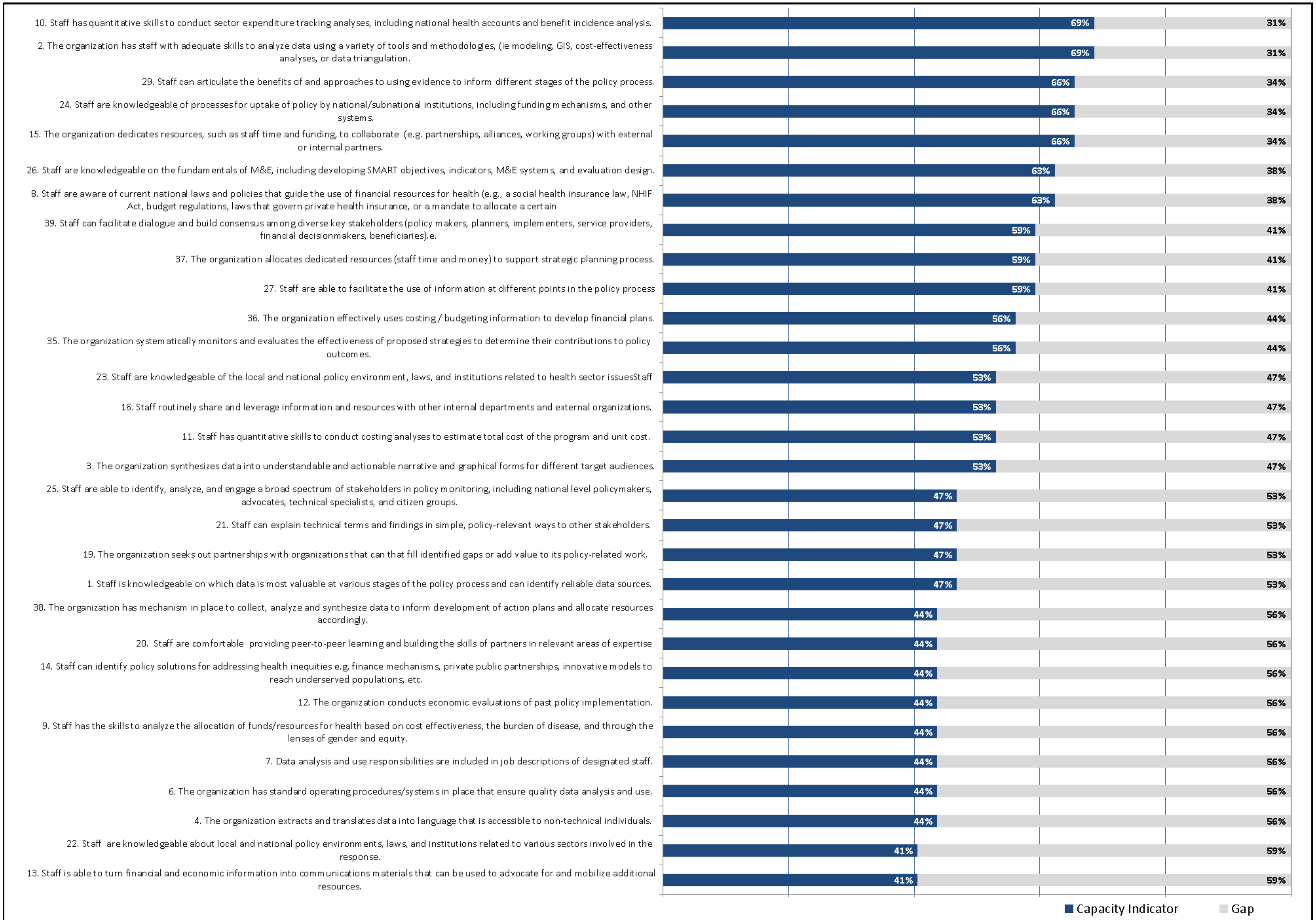
Indicator	Description	Average
	Maximum Value ==>	4.00
SD_1	35. The organization systematically monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of proposed strategies to determine their contributions to policy outcomes.	2.25
SD_2	36. The organization effectively uses costing / budgeting information to develop financial plans.	2.25
SD_3	37. The organization allocates dedicated resources (staff time and money) to support strategic planning process.	2.38
SD_4	38. The organization has mechanism in place to collect, analyze and synthesize data to inform development of action plans and allocate resources accordingly.	1.75
SD_5	39. Staff can facilitate dialogue and build consensus among diverse key stakeholders (policy makers, planners, implementers, service providers, financial decisionmakers, beneficiaries).e.	2.38

Aspects for Improvement

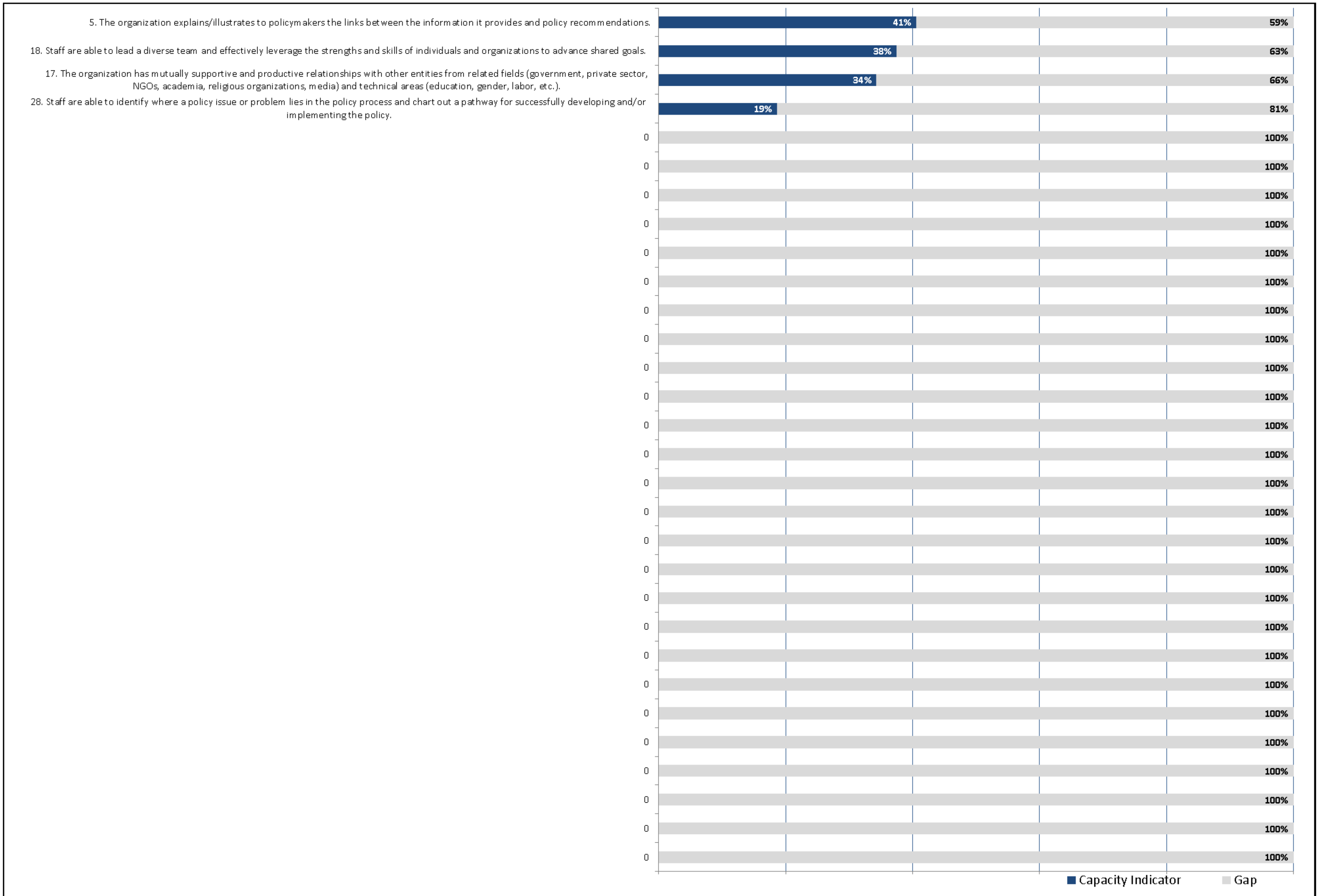


Annexes

Indicators & Scores



Indicators & Scores

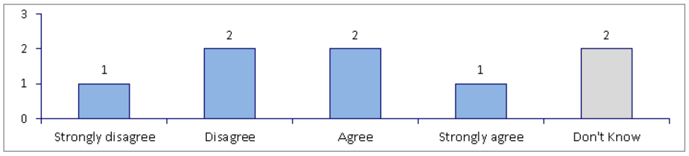


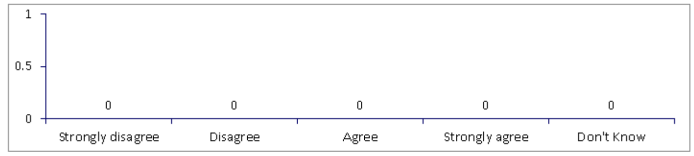
Spread of Responses by Area

Area I

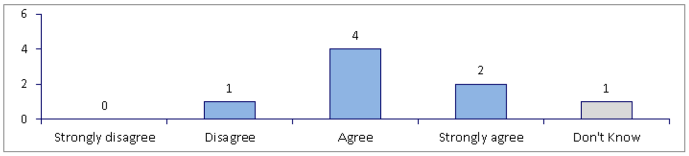
Data Analysis

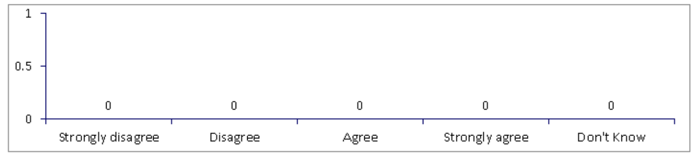
1. Staff is knowledgeable on which data is most valuable at various stages of the policy process and can identify reliable data sources.



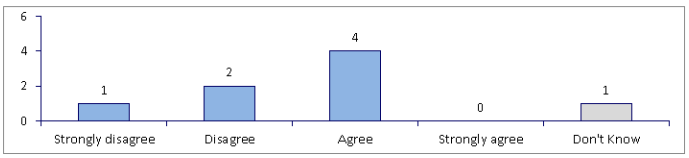


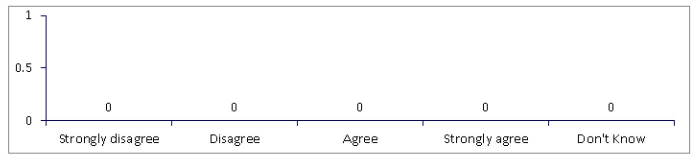
2. The organization has staff with adequate skills to analyze data using a variety of tools and methodologies, (ie modeling, GIS, cost-effectiveness analyses, or data triangulation.



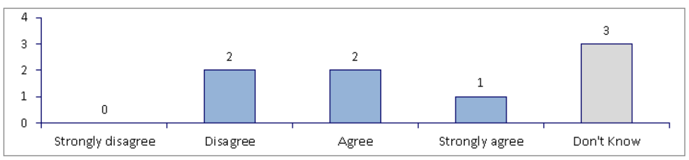


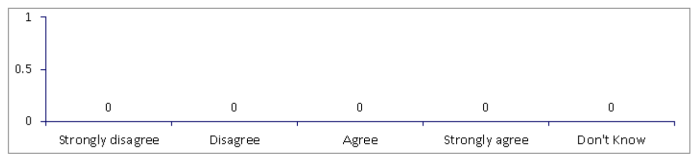
3. The organization synthesizes data into understandable and actionable narrative and graphical forms for different target audiences.



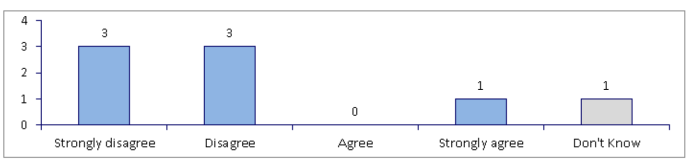


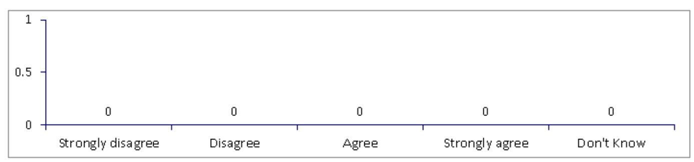
4. The organization extracts and translates data into language that is accessible to non-technical individuals.



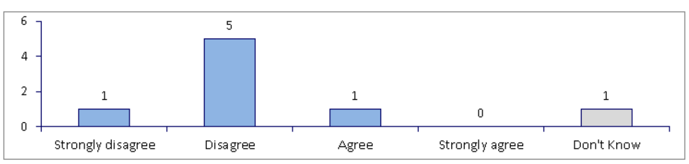


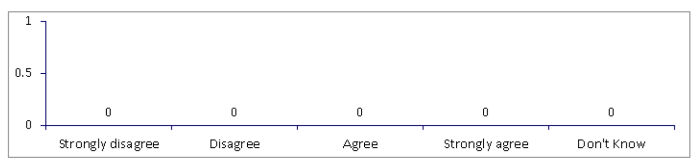
5. The organization explains/illustrates to policymakers the links between the information it provides and policy recommendations.



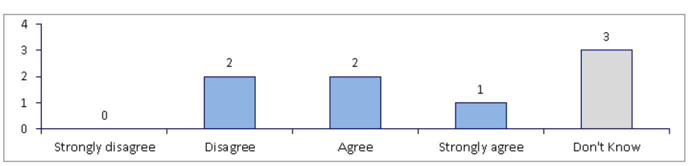


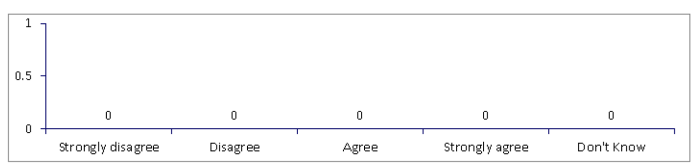
6. The organization has standard operating procedures/systems in place that ensure quality data analysis and use.

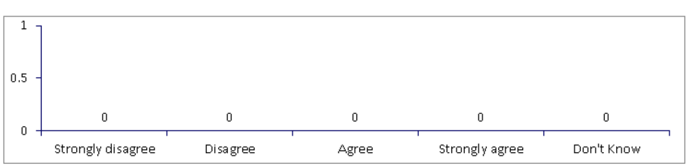




7. Data analysis and use responsibilities are included in job descriptions of designated staff.



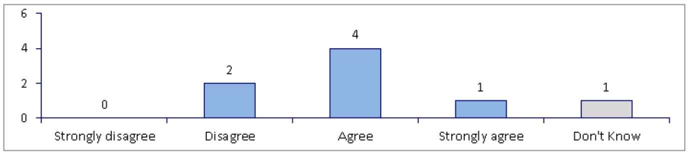


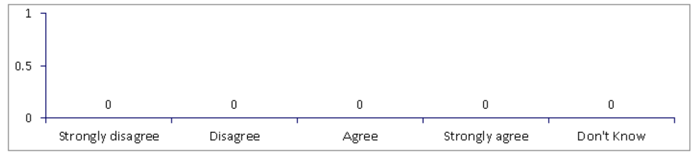


Spread of Responses by Area

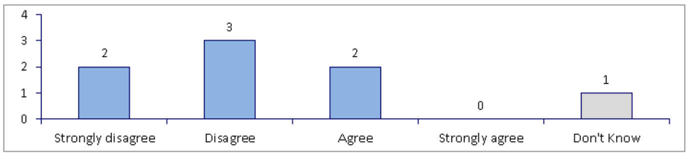
Area II
Health Financing

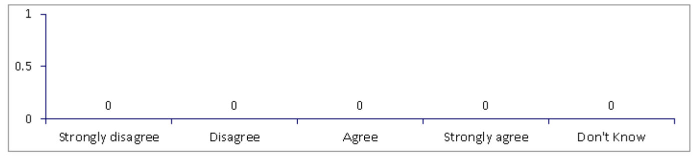
8. Staff are aware of current national laws and policies that guide the use of financial resources for health (e.g., a social health insurance law, NHIF Act, budget regulations, laws that govern private health insurance, or a mandate to allocate a certain percentage of government spending to health).



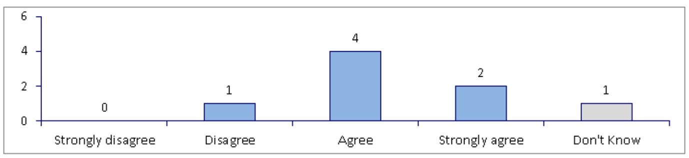


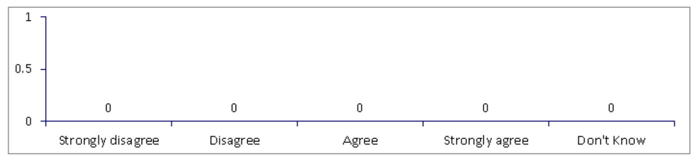
9. Staff has the skills to analyze the allocation of funds/resources for health based on cost effectiveness, the burden of disease, and through the lenses of gender and equity.



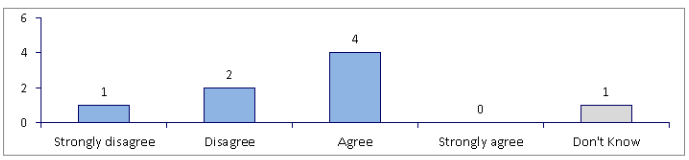


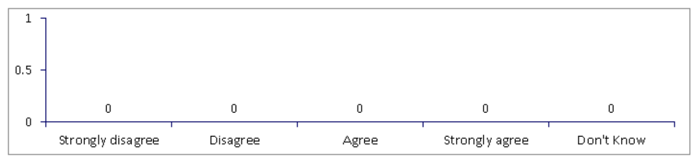
10. Staff has quantitative skills to conduct sector expenditure tracking analyses, including national health accounts and benefit incidence analysis.



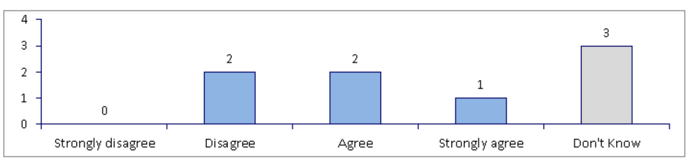


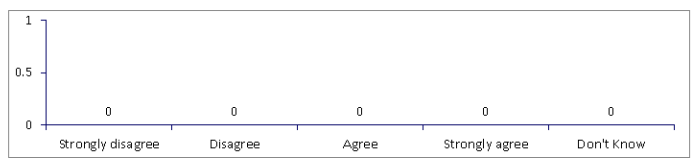
11. Staff has quantitative skills to conduct costing analyses to estimate total cost of the program and unit cost.



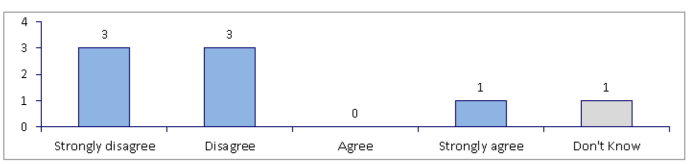


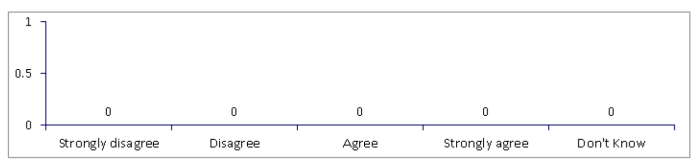
12. The organization conducts economic evaluations of past policy implementation.



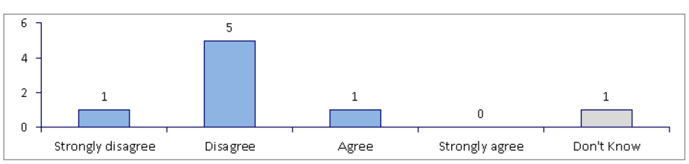


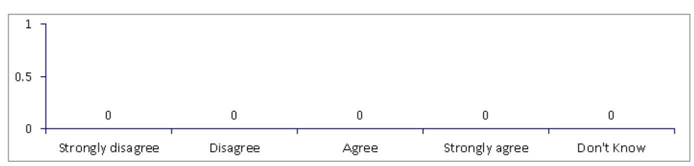
13. Staff is able to turn financial and economic information into communications materials that can be used to advocate for and mobilize additional resources.

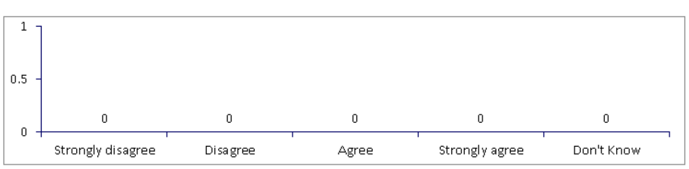




14. Staff can identify policy solutions for addressing health inequities e.g. finance mechanisms, private public partnerships, innovative models to reach underserved populations, etc.





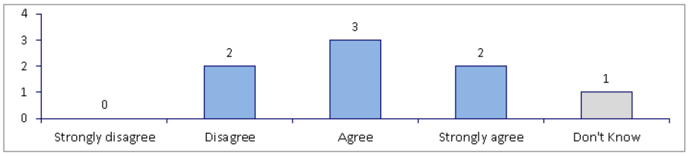


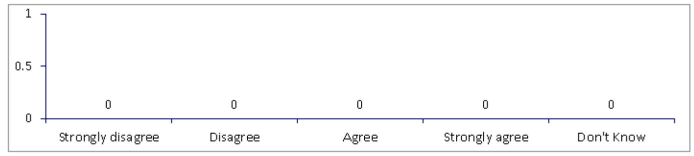
Spread of Responses by Area

Area III

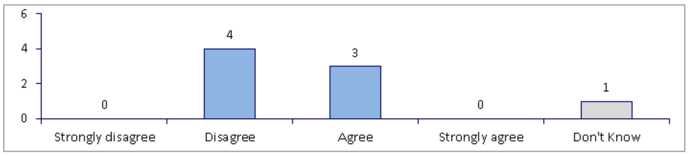
Multisectoral Collaboration

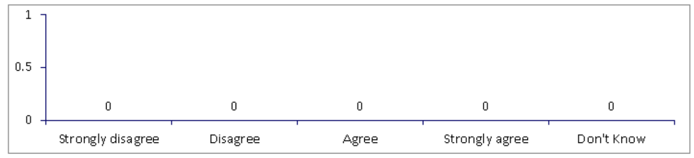
15. The organization dedicates resources, such as staff time and funding, to collaborate (e.g. partnerships, alliances, working groups) with external or internal partners.



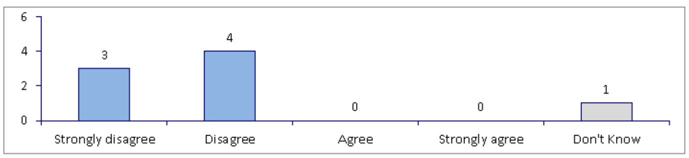


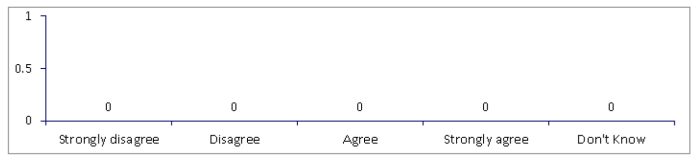
16. Staff routinely share and leverage information and resources with other internal departments and external organizations.



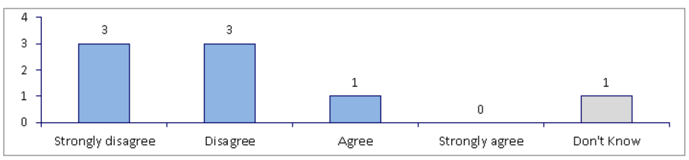


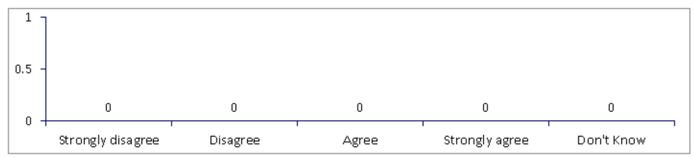
17. The organization has mutually supportive and productive relationships with other entities from related fields (government, private sector, NGOs, academia, religious organizations, media) and technical areas (education, gender, labor, etc.).



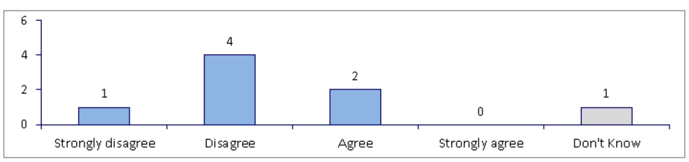


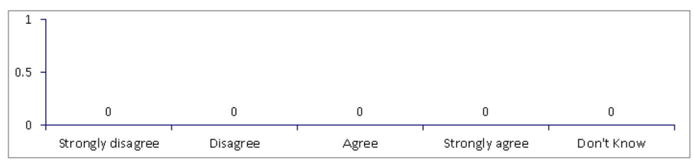
18. Staff are able to lead a diverse team and effectively leverage the strengths and skills of individuals and organizations to advance shared goals.



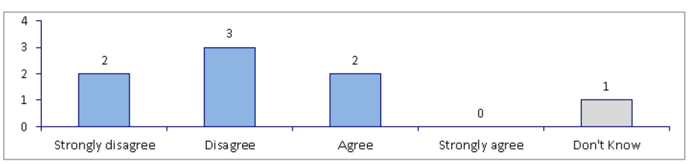


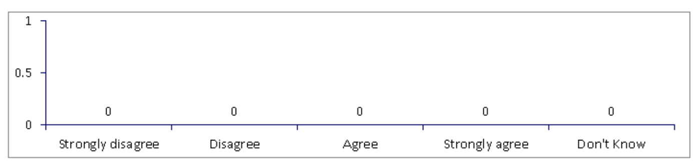
19. The organization seeks out partnerships with organizations that can that fill identified gaps or add value to its policy-related work.



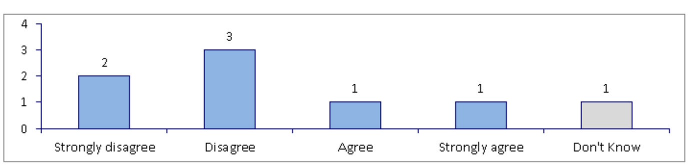


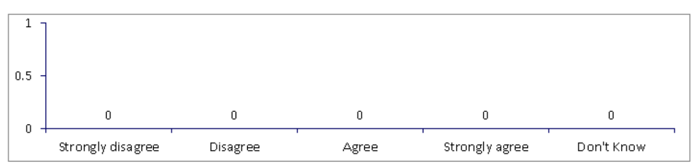
20. Staff are comfortable providing peer-to-peer learning and building the skills of partners in relevant areas of expertise



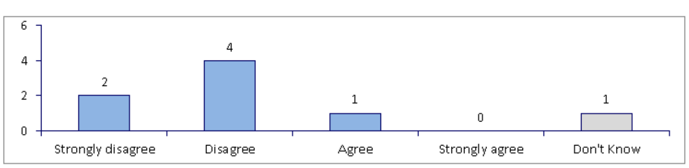


21. Staff can explain technical terms and findings in simple, policy-relevant ways to other stakeholders.





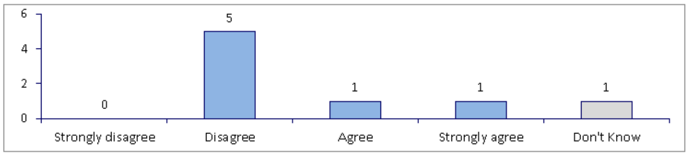
22. Staff are knowledgeable about local and national policy environments, laws, and institutions related to various sectors involved in the response.

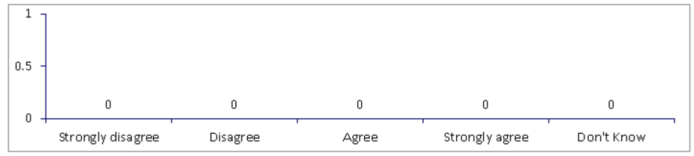


Spread of Responses by Area

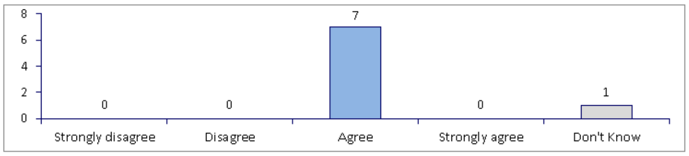
Area IV
Policy Monitoring

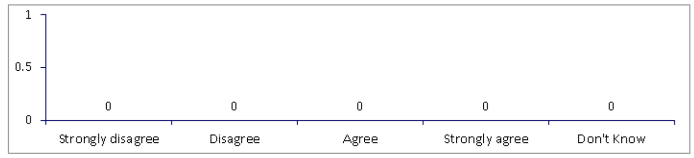
23. Staff are knowledgeable of the local and national policy environment, laws, and institutions related to health sector issuesStaff



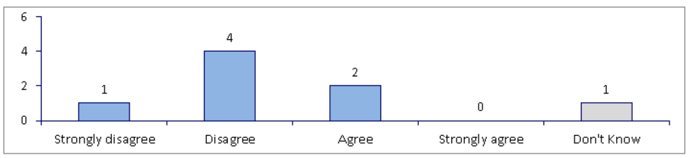


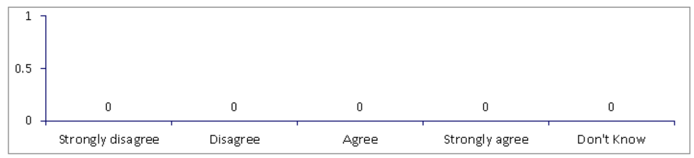
24. Staff are knowledgeable of processes for uptake of policy by national/subnational institutions, including funding mechanisms, and other systems.



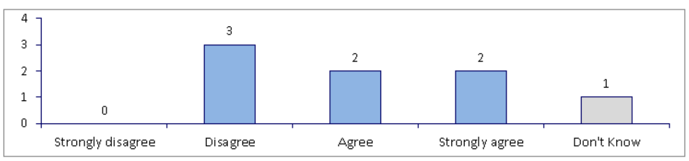


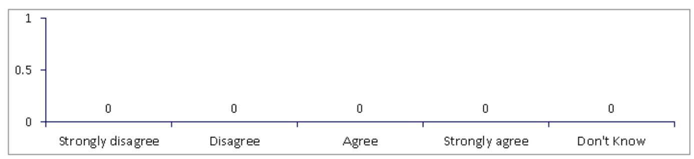
25. Staff are able to identify, analyze, and engage a broad spectrum of stakeholders in policy monitoring, including national level policymakers, advocates, technical specialists, and citizen groups.



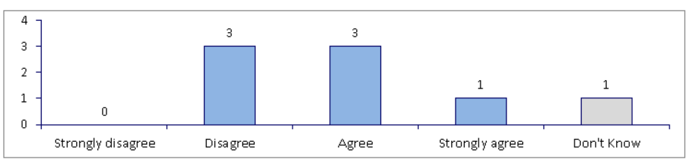


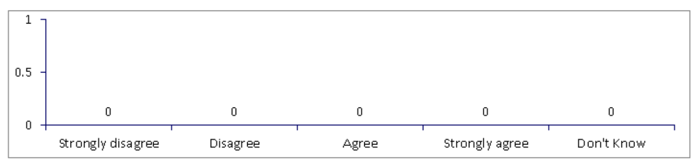
26. Staff are knowledgeable on the fundamentals of M&E, including developing SMART objectives, indicators, M&E systems, and evaluation design.



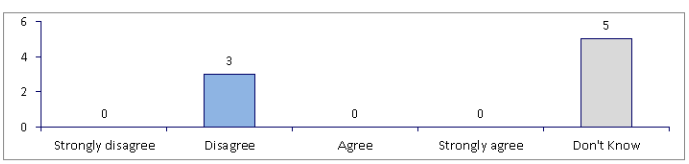


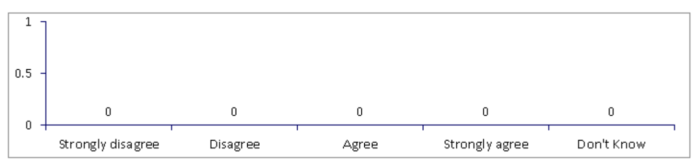
27. Staff are able to facilitate the use of information at different points in the policy process



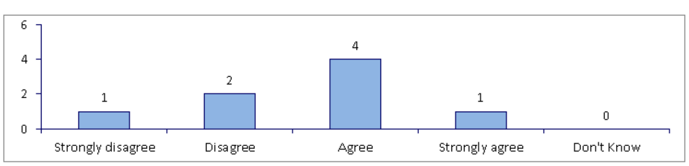


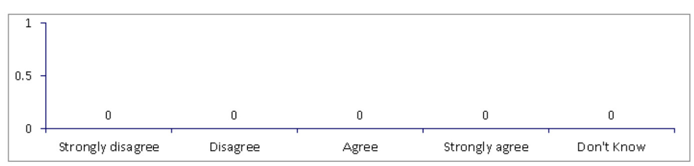
28. Staff are able to identify where a policy issue or problem lies in the policy process and chart out a pathway for successfully developing and/or implementing the policy.

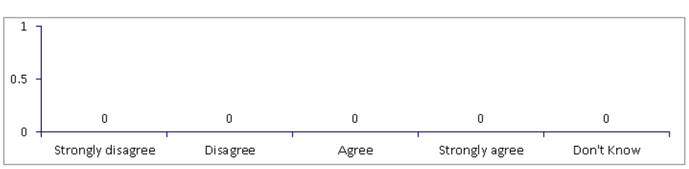




29. Staff can articulate the benefits of and approaches to using evidence to inform different stages of the policy process.



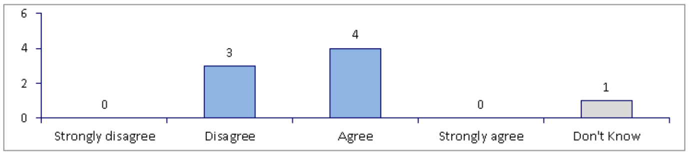


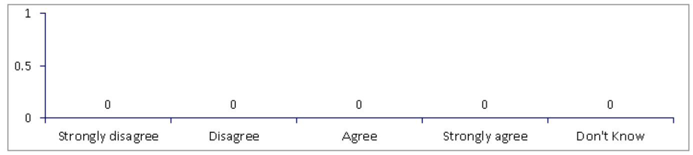


Spread of Responses by Area

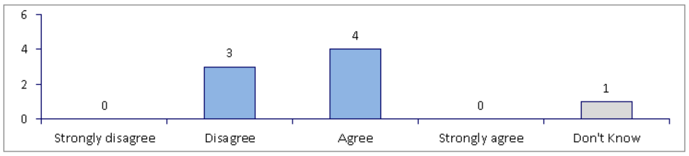
Area V
Strategy Development

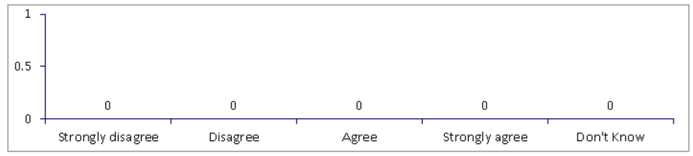
35. The organization systematically monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of proposed strategies to determine their contributions to policy outcomes.



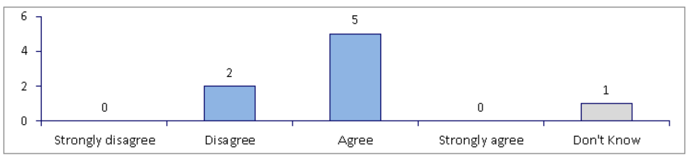


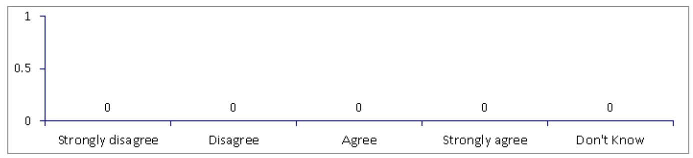
36. The organization effectively uses costing / budgeting information to develop financial plans.



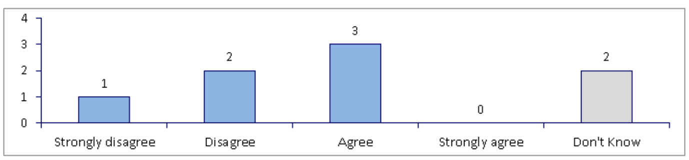


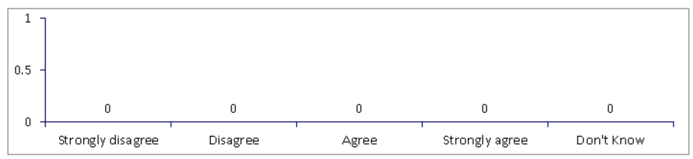
37. The organization allocates dedicated resources (staff time and money) to support strategic planning process.



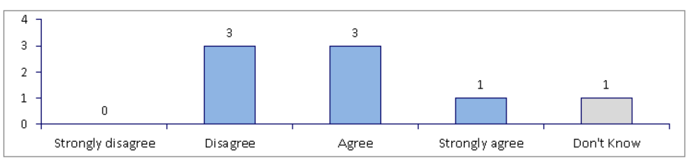


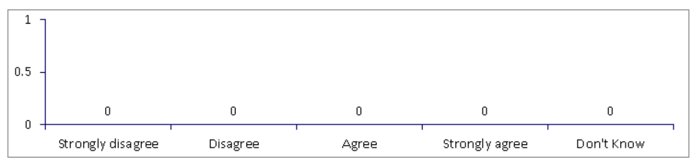
38. The organization has mechanism in place to collect, analyze and synthesize data to inform development of action plans and allocate resources accordingly.

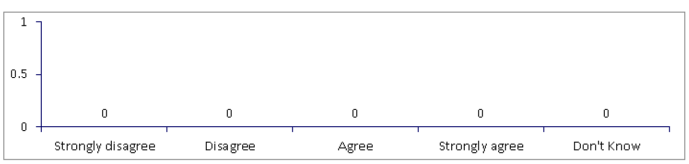


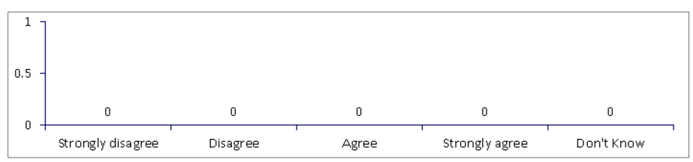


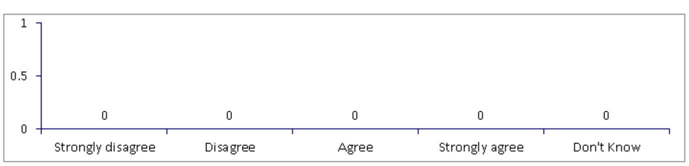
39. Staff can facilitate dialogue and build consensus among diverse key stakeholders (policy makers, planners, implementers, service providers, financial decisionmakers, beneficiaries).e.

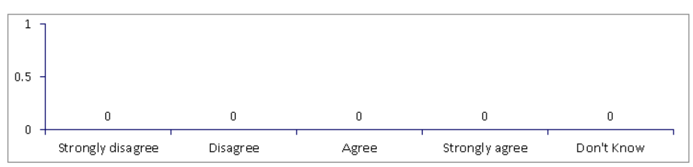


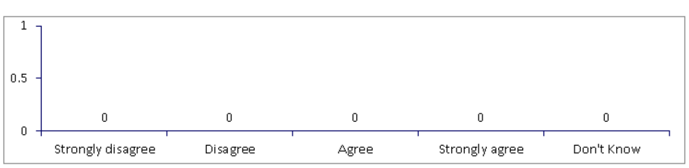












ANNEX 10. IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP OCA

During implementation of the capacity-strengthening plan, the organization will monitor progress toward milestones and make adaptations to the plan as relevant. The organization should take the lead role in monitoring the progress and driving its capacity-strengthening agenda.

When the time comes to facilitate a follow-up capacity assessment, the same process described in this guide is repeated. In the planning stage, the following should also be considered:

- Do any aspects of the tool or process need to be adjusted to reflect the available time and resources?

- Should new areas of expertise or aspects of organizational development be added to the tool?

- If staff turnover has been significant or a significant number of new staff have been added, how will that affect the comparability between the first assessment and the follow-up?

  Note: Rarely would the same cohort of staff participate in both assessments, but the organization should determine how any intervening staff changes should be reflected in the follow-up assessment tool and process. If there has been more than a 50 percent turnover, it may not be feasible to repeat the assessment as a "follow-up" but may need to be considered a new baseline.

- How will the follow-up assessment account for the possibility of response-shift bias?

  Notes: During the first assessment, the concepts and approach employed may be new to participants. After implementing capacity-strengthening activities, their understanding is likely to deepen; participants may realize that the baseline capacity scores were too high (e.g., now they know what they did not know) and their internal metrics for assessing capacity have changed. As a result, it can be difficult to identify whether differences in capacity scores between the first and follow-up assessments are due to an actual change in capacity or a shift in participants' internal metric for assessing capacity due to increased knowledge.

  One option for dealing with this to include two columns in the scoring sheet, one for "How is it currently?" and a second for "How was it in the past?" and using those two sets of results for comparison purposes. The response shift bias should be discussed during the analysis of the follow-up results, and comparisons should be considered in that context. It is not unusual for the follow-up capacity scores to be lower than the first sets of scores, even when the organization has clearly made strides in those areas.

- What other sources of data and indicators of capacity should be considered when reporting on the outcomes of the follow-up assessment relative to the baseline?

  Notes: Self-assessment scores are subjective measures and are not the only indicators of capacity development; nor do the capacity indicators selected for the tool tell the whole story.

  In terms of *performance*, think about, for example, the policy, advocacy, governance, and finance outcomes to which the organization has contributed. Have there been changes in client satisfaction levels? Has the organization played a leading role in providing training or technical assistance to other organizations?

In terms of *stability*, think about whether the organization has taken clear steps to ensure the capacity is sustainable in terms of resource allocation, staff assignments, job descriptions, and internal training programs.

With respect to *adaptability*, think about whether the organization has modified its tools and approaches and applied them to new areas. Is the organization contributing to innovations for improved performance?

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