The Capacity Development Resource Guides highlight the key technical areas of expertise needed to effectively influence health policy design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. Each guide identifies the specific skills, knowledge, and capacities that individuals and organizations should possess in the area. The standardized indicators listed for each competency and capability map to the accompanying Capacity Indicators Catalog, which helps to generate a tailored tool for assessing and scoring an organization’s capacity level. Each guide also includes a list of useful resources for designing and delivering capacity development assistance.

**Monitoring Policy to Assess Links and Barriers to Improved Service Delivery**

**DEFINITION**

Policy monitoring is a process by which stakeholders follow and assess policies to ensure they are developed, endorsed, enacted, and implemented as intended. Policy monitoring involves (1) appraising the policy environment, (2) gauging the level and quality of stakeholder engagement, (3) documenting the progress of policy development and the legislative endorsement of policy, (4) putting policies into practice through financing and implementation planning, and (5) evaluating outcomes of implementation.

**RELEVANCE TO POLICY**

Monitoring policy development and implementation is an integral component of the policy cycle and complements researchers’ ability to link policies with improved service delivery and health outcomes (policy and program evaluation). Tools—such as the USAID | Health Policy Initiative’s Policy Implementation Assessment Tool (Bhuyan et al., 2010) and the Health Policy Project’s Roadmap for Implementing and Monitoring Policy and Advocacy Interventions (Judice et al., 2013)—can help stakeholders monitor policy implementation and identify barriers to and facilitators for effective policy implementation. Other tools developed to gauge the extent of a supportive environment for health policy include the Family Planning Effort Index (Ross and Smith, 2010) and Policy Environment Score module for family planning (POLICY Project, 1998). The information generated can be used to inform policy dialogue and
recommendations for translating health policies into action. Policy monitoring can and should be conducted by all stakeholder groups and requires expertise in different areas, such as advocacy, accountability systems, monitoring and evaluation, and data analysis.

Policy monitoring requires stakeholders to understand how policies move through the process from development to implementation and the potential barriers to progress. Specifically, effective policy monitoring requires an awareness and understanding of the policy environment; analytical skills, such as being able to identify, develop, and apply assessment tools and analyze findings; and the ability to mobilize communities to participate in the policy process, lead strong well-coordinated advocacy efforts, and engage with a range of government departments and units (ActionAid, 2006).

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 and outcomes of policy development and implementation
- Use data (including financial data and data about service delivery and health outcomes) to improve policy 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
## INDIVIDUAL COMPETENCIES

### KNOWLEDGE OF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local and national policy environments, laws, and institutions related to health sector issues</td>
<td>PM1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political processes, power brokering, and key political actors/champions in the health sector</td>
<td>PM2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processes for the uptake of policy by national/subnational institutions, including funding mechanisms and other systems</td>
<td>PM3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits of and approaches to facilitating the use of evidence to inform different stages of the policy process</td>
<td>PM4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M&amp;E fundamentals, including how to develop specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) objectives, indicators, M&amp;E systems, and evaluation designs</td>
<td>PM5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SKILLS TO BE ABLE TO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listen, communicate, negotiate, and influence others to participate in monitoring the processes of policy development and implementation</td>
<td>PM6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect and analyze data from primary and secondary sources to monitor progress in the policy process</td>
<td>PM7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify, analyze, and engage a broad spectrum of stakeholders in policy monitoring, including national-level policymakers, advocates, technical specialists, and citizen groups</td>
<td>PM8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>PM9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop routine data collection systems, including a policy monitoring plan, indicators, and data storage mechanisms</td>
<td>PM10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and implement process and outcome evaluations and/or operations research studies to evaluate policy implementation</td>
<td>PM11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitate the use of information at different points in the policy process</td>
<td>PM12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**ATTITUDES/VALUES ATTRIBUTES**

Values working in collaboration

Is committed and can remain engaged and monitor issues over the long term

**ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITIES**

**TECHNICAL ABILITY TO**

Systematically use qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques to receive input from constituencies on their needs, priorities, and interests and how policies affect them

Identify stakeholders and target audiences for monitoring information and analyze their position for potential support or opposition

Identify where issues or problems exist within the policy development or implementation process and chart an approach to successfully develop or implement the policy

Analyze and document implications of existing policy and proposed policy alternatives, especially from the perspectives of gender, equity, and stigma and discrimination

Develop an M&E plan to track short- and intermediate-term changes in the policy process to accurately assess attribution or contribution to longer-term change through policy implementation

Systematically evaluate the effectiveness of different policy interventions (e.g., advocacy, policy dialogue, policy analysis, strategic planning) to determine contributions to policy outcomes and learn lessons to improve future activities

Communicate findings of policy monitoring through various communication channels to groups who could use the findings for decision making, advocacy, etc.

**RELATIONAL ABILITY TO**

Maintain constructive links with various policy stakeholders, including communities, policymakers, advocates, and civil society organizations

Earn credibility with the public, constituents, media, and donors to ensure that accurate information is collected and that these stakeholders trust the information produced through policy monitoring

Influence others to participate in monitoring the processes of policy development and implementation

Provide training/technical assistance to other organizations on policy monitoring
ORGANIZATIONAL OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT TO SUPPORT

The allocation of dedicated resources (staff, time, money) to policy monitoring efforts  PM27
Systems to collect, analyze, and synthesize data related to the policy process  PM28
Innovation and adaptation of approaches in response to the changing environment, internally and externally  PM29
ILLUSTRATIVE CAPACITY-STRENGTHENING ACTIVITIES

- Conduct training on the policy process and monitoring and evaluation for government institutions, civil society, key populations, etc.
- Engage lawyers and others with expertise in the legal and regulatory framework and policy process to provide technical assistance to individuals and organizations responsible for policy monitoring
- Facilitate multisectoral workshops on the development and implementation of policy monitoring plans
- Provide experiential learning opportunities to design, conduct, and use information from an evaluation of policy implementation
- Support advocacy for country-owned systems for ongoing policy monitoring

RESOURCES


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This resource guide is part of an Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) suite of tools. The USAID-funded Health Policy Project developed the suite to help organizations assess and strengthen their capacity to contribute to improved health systems and health outcomes. The tools include an overview of the OCA approach, a facilitator guide, a series of capacity development resource guides, and a Capacity Indicators Catalog. The suite is available at www.healthpolicyproject.com.

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