STRENGTHENING
CIVIL SOCIETY
GLOBALLY

Capacity Development Interventions

A Guide for Program Designers

Development Practitioner Series

USAID
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SOCIAL IMPACT
ADVANCING DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS

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About the Strengthening Civil Society Globally (SCS Global) Program

Strengthening Civil Society Globally (SCS Global) is a program funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) under a Leader with Associates (LWA) Cooperative Agreement. It works across sectors to offer USAID Missions and Operating Units a flexible, worldwide platform for designing and implementing projects that strengthen civil society and independent media organizations to advance democracy, human rights and governance objectives and other development goals.

SCS Global's investments in programmatic interventions, technical assistance, and research aim to identify and develop effective evidence-based approaches to strengthen civil society and independent media in support of DRG and other development results in open and closing environments. SCS Global is implemented by a consortium of 21 organizations and networks, led by FHI 360, the prime holder of the mechanism.

About FHI 360

FHI 360 is a nonprofit human development organization dedicated to improving lives in lasting ways by advancing integrated, locally driven solutions. Our staff includes experts in health, education, nutrition, environment, economic development, civil society, gender, youth, research, technology, communication and social marketing — creating a unique mix of capabilities to address today's interrelated development challenges. FHI 360 serves more than 70 countries and all U.S. states and territories.

Around the world, FHI 360 strengthens the civil society organizations and leaders who advocate for citizen rights and needs and serve as a check on government power. Our programs are designed to empower groups large and small, formal and informal, seasoned and brand new, in order to promote freedom of speech, anti-corruption reforms, democracy, and good governance. In our work, we engage historically marginalized populations, including women, youth, indigenous populations, and those living with disabilities, to ensure that all citizens can participate in an inclusive, transparent and accountable society.

About Social Impact

Social Impact (SI) is a management consulting firm that provides monitoring, evaluation, strategic planning, performance management and capacity building services to advance development effectiveness. SI's work helps to reduce poverty, improve health and education, promote peace and democratic governance, foster economic growth, and protect the environment. To achieve this, SI delivers consulting, technical assistance, and training services to government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and foundations.

Social Impact employed a mixed-methods approach to developing this *Capacity Development Interventions (CDI) Guide*. SI conducted a literature review and extensive online research on learning and capacity development, including local capacity development interventions and measurement tools. SI consulted two industry experts and drew on discussions that took place during the February 2016 Civil Society Strengthening roundtable sponsored by USAID's Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance. Relevant internal and external stakeholders were also engaged to validate the *Guide's* final list of interventions and tools.

Acknowledgments

The *Guide* was a collaborative effort drawing on the experience and knowledge of numerous USAID, Social Impact and FHI 360 staff. Special thanks go to the following individuals who contributed to the conceptualization and content of the *Guide* and reviewed and provided comments on the manuscript: Keith Aulick, David Jacobstein, Michael Kott, Taly Lind, Maria Presley, Maryanne Yerkes and Asta Zinbo. Additional thanks go to Kaaren Christopherson, Katya Fink and Jeff Wheeler for their research and editorial support.

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Capacity Development Interventions: A Guide for Program Designers is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the support of USAID's Office of Democracy, Human Rights and Governance, under terms of Cooperative Agreement No. # AID-OAA-L-16-00005, through the SCS Global program, managed by FHI 360. The contents are the responsibility of FHI 360 and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

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Contents

Annexes

Foreword

This *Guide* was developed to help you support the capacity development of organizations working in any sector. Use it to envision and implement capacity development approaches that will contribute to strengthening local systems and transforming communities. It helps designers and practitioners move into the realm of Capacity Development 2.0, going beyond enhancing internal organizational management practices to improving engagement with stakeholders, leveraging resources, networking, shared ownership, learning, and adapting.

Regardless of where an organization sits on the capacity spectrum—nascent, emergent, or mature—the *Guide* offers new and seasoned program designers ways to identify the best approaches to shaping an intervention and achieving meaningful results. Recognizing that one size does not fit all, the *Guide*:

- → Contextualizes organizational development and the spectrum of capacity growth of organizations as they mature.
- → Illustrates a variety of interventions with corresponding case studies, tools, and resources.
- → Explains measurement tools and instruments.

The *Guide* provides an overview of 14 capacity development interventions that organizations may use to build upon their existing capabilities and strengthen relationships within local systems. Many of the interventions can be applied to organizations at various stages of growth. In addition, tools are offered for measuring capacity and the impact of CD interventions.

We are pleased to provide this *Guide* to help you enhance the performance and sustainability of projects. We hope you find it and the following online resources indispensable.

https://programnet.usaid.gov/library/capacity-20

https://usaidlearninglab.org/library/capacity-20

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADS	Automated Directives System	**ICNL**	International Center for Not-for-profit Law
AIHA	American International Health Alliance	**ICT**	Information and Communication Technology
AMC	Association Management Committee	**ISP**	Institutional Strengthening Plan
CAP	Capable Partners Program	**KAP**	Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice
CAS	Complex Adaptive Systems	**LCD**	Local Capacity Development
CBO	Community-based Organization	**LICUS**	Low Income Countries Under Stress
CCAT	Core Capacity Assessment Tool	**M&E**	Monitoring and Evaluation
CD	Capacity Development	**NGO**	Nongovernmental Organization
CDP	Capacity Development Plan	**NUPAS**	Non-U.S. Pre-Award Survey
CFI	Collaboration for Impact	**OCA**	Organizational Capacity Assessment
CIS	Civil Initiatives Support	**OCAT**	McKinsey Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool
CLA	Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting	**ODC**	Open Development Cambodia
CoP	Community of Practice	**OM**	Outcome Mapping
CS	Civil Society	**OPI**	Organizational Performance Index
CSO	Civil Society Organization	**OVC**	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
CSOSI	USAID's CSO Sustainability Index	**PACE**	Promoting Active Citizen Engagement
DRG	Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance	**PEPFAR**	United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
EDCPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management	**PI**	Performance Improvement
EWMI	East-West Management Institute	**POET**	Participatory Organizational Evaluation Tool
FinMAT	Financial Management Tool	**SNA**	Social Network Analysis
G-PAC	Policy, Advocacy, and Civil Society Development in Georgia	**USAID**	United States Agency for International Development
HICD	Human and Institutional Capacity Development	**USG**	United States Government
HR	Human Resources	**WSR**	Whole System in the Room
ICAT	Institutional Capacity Assessment Tool		

Capacity Development Terms and Definitions

Buy-in	The commitment of interested or affected parties (often called stakeholders) to agree to support a decision, plan, or approach, often by having been involved in its formulation.
Capacity	The ability of people, organizations, and society to manage their objectives successfully. This can include both hard skills that are easily quantifiable (for example, learning a new software program) and soft skills that can be more difficult to quantify (for example, demonstrating leadership). Capacity is system-dependent: an organization's capacity is understood within the wider system that surrounds the organization and describes how the organization is able to perform within its context.
Capacity Development (CD)	A multi-step, collaborative process that improves the ability of a system, organization, or individual to meet objectives and perform better.
Civil Society Organization (CSO)	A voluntary, non-market, and non-state organization with governance and direction coming from citizens or constituency members whose objectives typically center around the improvement of social, democratic, or economic conditions. It can also be an organization designed to represent and protect the rights of its members.
Network	Individuals or organizations collaborating toward common goals form a network. A network may exist among individuals within an organization, or among public and/or private organizations. Network members share knowledge to generate learning toward achieving a shared vision.
Organization	Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), private enterprises, and community-based groups are all considered organizations. Organizations exist for the purpose of carrying out a specific activity or set of activities.
Organizational Change	Anything that alters the scope, structure, or purpose of an existing organization. (USAID, ADS Chapter 102)
Organizational Development (OD)	Organizational development is a form of organizational change intended to enhance the performance of organizations. It may occur in response to new client demands, changes in an organization's environment, or new technologies. It may target structures, processes, or individuals within an organization.
Organizational Learning	Organizational learning consists of adapting an organization's structure, processes, or culture through incorporating lessons from past experiences. This may include correcting errors or optimizing processes.
Outcome	A result or effect caused by a project, program, or policy. It usually describes an immediate, intended effect. (State Department and USAID Glossary of Evaluation Terms, 2009)
Stakeholder	Any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of a program's objective.
Systems Thinking	A concept that emphasizes how parts work together to form a functional whole and achieve a common goal. It moves away from linear notions to a more dynamic view of change as a process influenced by a multitude of factors interacting simultaneously.

List of Tables

Introduction

Capacity and capacity development (CD) issues are as old as development assistance itself. Through a process of assessment and reform, especially over the past decade, the field has shifted focus to ensuring that local governments, civil society, and beneficiaries drive development, not just receive support and implement programs. The concept of local ownership, articulated in the Paris Declaration and the Accra and Busan agendas, continues to steer donors and development practitioners today. The updated Automated Directives Systems (ADS) Chapter 201, released by USAID in January 2017, reinforces this concept and instructs Missions to operationalize local ownership in all parts of the program cycle and increase alignment with local priorities.

Guiding Principles

1 Civil society organizations (CSOs) must take the lead in selecting or agreeing to interventions identified, for example, via systems mapping or organizational assessment, to sustain positive long-term change. Donors should not prescribe CD interventions.

2 Interventions contained in this *Guide* often may be combined to build synergy and increase their impact (such as training integrated with coaching and mentoring).

3 Many interventions contained in this *Guide* can be applied to more than one organizational stage.

4 Organizations and their capacities may span more than one stage, since organizations are often in flux and evolving along a continuum.

Civil Society: Concept and Definition

In this *Guide*, the term civil society is understood to mean "the arena, outside of the family, the state and the market, which is created by individual and collective actions, organizations and institutions to advance shared interests." Consistent with CIVICUS's definition from its 2011 *State of Civil Society* report, civil society therefore encompasses civil society organizations and the actions of less formalized groups and individuals. Where the term 'organized civil society' is used, it refers to independent, non-state and non-private sector associations and organizations that have some form of structure and formal rules of operating, together with the networks, infrastructure and resources they utilize.[1]

1. CIVICUS, State of Civil Society 2011.

Who Should Use This *Guide*?

This *Guide* was developed to help program designers who work in any sector to envision and implement with CSO partners the CD support that will strengthen local systems and help CSOs achieve their missions. Program designers from both implementing partner and donor organizations who are working to build the capacity of CSOs can use this *Guide* to better distinguish among CD approaches, the processes involved in each, and potential impact of a chosen approach. By identifying organizational characteristics and areas of potential capacity growth, this *Guide* will enable program designers to better select the intervention necessary to achieve their desired goal.

Although this *Guide* is designed to benefit CSOs, the approaches outlined can also be applied to community-based organizations (CBOs) or local for-profit organizations. The approaches included in this *Guide* are designed to increase capacity regardless of the actual knowledge or skill targeted.

Programming in Closed Spaces[2]

USAID continues to program in countries with closed or closing[3] political and civic space. Capacity development programming in these environments differs from programming in open spaces. The most basic considerations—leadership, external linkages, and organizational governance—will vary by organization, and must be understood to promote effective programming. Moreover, capacity development approaches employed must be adaptable to enable implementation in a closing space and not cause harm to the partner organizations or their constituents.

Key considerations for capacity development programming in closing spaces include:

- Focusing on critical areas such as CSO ability to influence and adapt to the legal and regulatory environment
- Providing consultative, flexible, security-aware programming tailored to the situation of each CSO or groups of similar CSOs
- Providing alternative methods of funding
- In addition, when programming in closed or closing spaces, donors and implementing partner staff may need to be more proactive in developing relationships essential to project success. This may entail identifying civil society champions in the government or CSOs who are able to safely advocate or be heard in these environments.

2. Darcy Ashman, *Developing CSO Capacity in Closing Spaces From Sustainability to Survivability. Management Systems International* (May 22, 2015).
3. In closing or closed political and civic spaces, government erects barriers to limit the influence of civil society by imposing increasing restrictions on nongovernmental actors' ability to register, operate, and receive foreign funds. Such environments curb people's freedom to associate, speak freely, publish, and participate in social and political processes without fearing repercussions.

How Do I Use This *Guide*?

This *Guide* is intended to be a reference for program designers. "At a Glance" boxes at the start of major topics help the reader decide whether to dive deeper. The Annexes expand the description of various tools and methodologies presented in the body of the *Guide*.

Section 1 (p.7)

- Discusses the transition from **Capacity 1.0 to Capacity 2.0**
- Describes why Capacity 1.0 is still relevant for program designers
- Explains why USAID is moving toward adopting a **systems approach** to capacity development

Section 2 (p.9)

Outlines the growth trajectory of organizations as they move along the three-stage continuum of organizational maturity:

NASCENT → **EMERGENT** → **MATURE**

Section 3 (p.17)

- Provides an overview of 14 different CD interventions
- Follows the Guiding Principle: **Organizations and their capacities can span more than one stage**
- Reinforces the concept of adaptability and the importance of utilizing multiple, often integrated, approaches

Section 4 (p.46)

- Recommends tools that are most appropriate to measuring capacity and the impact of interventions at each of the three stages of organizational growth
- Shares recommendations for Institutional Strengthening Plans

To Learn More About

NOTES

Capacity Development in Practice

Section 1:
Capacity Development in Practice

USAID recommends that program designers put CD into practice through three stages.[4] This *Guide* can be used to inform each stage.

This *Guide* may also be helpful in targeting the right type of local organizations to serve as project partners.

1 Project Design Stage	Assess the actors and environment within which USAID plans to implement programs. Use this *Guide* with stakeholders to assess the context in which they plan to implement and understand the potential outcomes and impacts of their approach.
2 Activity Design Stage	Identify potential approaches to CD with the partner organization leading this process. The *Guide* provides preliminary information for CSOs to identify their level on the organizational maturity spectrum. To do so, each CSO must reflect upon its current functionalities and capacities.
3 Implementation Stage	Stakeholders learn and adapt to the implementation approach. This *Guide* highlights intervention strategies well-suited for each level on the spectrum.

4. *What is Capacity Development?* (Slide 13) in *Capacity Development 2.0: A Systems Approach to Capacity Development* (USAID, 2017).

From Capacity 1.0 to 2.0

The field of CD is an evolving one. As USAID continues to devote resources to developing organizational capacity in partner countries, it has learned what works and what does not, and is adapting its capacity building frameworks to promote more effective, sustainable change.

Historically, CD has had a narrow focus: promoting the transfer of pre-determined knowledge and skills to improve the function of specific areas of an organization. Simply defined, traditional CD rests on the premise that developing a requisite set of managerial, operational, and programmatic skills—and supporting organizations to achieve these skills—would lead to improved programmatic outcomes. However, a 2008 study[5] by the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) concluded that the traditional CD approach ("Capacity 1.0") was not appropriate nor effective for all situations, proposing that donors broaden their CD methodology to integrate Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) thinking.[6] As a result of that publication, as well as related studies (see Root Change, 2013), USAID's approach to CD has shifted in recent years to a systems-based model, based on the assumption that "increased engagement and communication between organizations, tailored to their context, generates more improvement."[7]

Capacity 1.0

Despite its shortfalls, Capacity 1.0 remains relevant for program designers to understand and consider during activity design, for the following reasons:

- → Because CSOs are positioned on a continuum of organizational maturity (and may fluctuate along this spectrum)—as described in Section 2—Nascent organizations may find it challenging to focus externally on building relationships, networks, and social capital.
- → There are certain capacity areas for which a "technocratic" and traditional CD approach is most appropriate, such as: transmitting skills and technical know-how; establishing formal organizational structures and systems; targeting organizational assets, resources, and financial flows.
- → In many cases, these particular capabilities are "simple" (in the CAS sense) to influence, as opposed to the more complex and less straightforward capabilities that program designers should focus their efforts on developing in Mature organizations.
- → As USAID has documented, "Building knowledge and skills are still necessary elements of a capacity building effort"[8]—such as in cases where an initial assessment demonstrates that a CSO's staff and stakeholders' low level of skills and knowledge represent a significant barrier to delivering on its mission.
- → In short, "There is a need to accommodate both perspectives in the design of interventions" (ECDPM 2008, p. 4).

5. *Capacity, Change, and Performance* (ECDPM, 2008).
6. The ECDPM refers to "Complex Adaptive Systems" as "the view that organizations and networks—whether simple or complex—are more analogous to living organisms than they are to machines. They constantly adapt and change in the face of new circumstances in order to sustain themselves. This process of change is only partially open to explicit human direction and, more importantly, cannot be predetermined" (ECDPM, 2008, p. 2).
7. *What is Capacity Development?* (Slide 5) (USAID, 2017).
8. *Ibid* (Slide 6).

Capacity 2.0

Capacity 2.0 promotes a tailored, partner-led strategy designed to reflect an organization's particular goals and capabilities and the environment in which the organization operates. In Capacity 2.0, "high performance" is no longer defined in terms of management excellence or efficiency, but rather by an organization achieving (or exceeding) its mission, greater resilience to shocks and stress, and the ability to adapt to changing conditions. Most importantly, Capacity 2.0 aims to enhance staff understanding and action to move their organization beyond an internal focus, to a focus on the local system—and more specifically, on how actors within that system interact, communicate and collaborate, and work together to improve results. (See, for example, USAID's Local Systems Framework.[9])

In its 2013 study on systems approaches to CD,[10] Root Change confirmed that purposeful networking behavior by CSOs correlates to organizational performance: "CSOs that effectively link within a community of peers benefit from a flow of trust, reciprocity, information exchange and the norms of cooperation that are embedded in these relationships. What we have learned is that the resources available within a CSO's network are as critical to the understanding of organizational capacity as the substance of CD interventions themselves."[11]

More than knowledge transfer and training, the process of supporting Capacity 2.0 relies on improving communications, building relationships and collaboration between organizations, supporting actors to gather data and make sense of local systems relevant to their missions, using facilitative approaches and intentionally fostering an organizational culture to strengthen learning. This shift in emphasis is reflected in the categorization of interventions in this *Guide*.

Table 1: Key Characteristics of Capacity Development Models

	Capacity 1.0	Capacity 2.0
Assumption	Strong management skills lead to better outcomes in projects and programs	A "Best Fit" approach to improving performance leads to better outcomes
Logic	Improve impact through building excellence in standard internal areas such as human resource management, financial management, planning, governance, and service delivery	Improve impact through helping organizations to transform wider systems within the country, tailoring, CD strengthening to their situation
Process	Emphasize the transfer of knowledge and skills via training and consulting	Emphasize understanding how organizations interact, how to improve communications and collaboration within the systems, and how to adapt approaches

9. *Local Systems: A Framework for Supporting Sustained Development* (USAID, 2014).
10. *New Directions in Local Capacity Development: Embracing a Systems Perspective* (Root Change, 2013), (USAID, 2017).
11. *STAR* (System for Transformation and Results), (Root Change, 2017).

Section 2: Organizational Maturity and Stages of Development

Put simply, **capacity** describes the ability to do something. There are many different abilities that an organization needs to function effectively to achieve its mission. There are also many ways of looking at and assessing those abilities (organizational capacity). To achieve and maintain effectiveness, organizations require internal systems to marshal and manage people, and resources and activities to attain results.

At the same time, they must form alliances with other actors and respond and adapt to changes in their external environments. (Miles et al., 1978)

Five aspects of capacity possessed by the most effective organizations are presented by Ubels et al. in *Capacity Development in Practice* (see Table 2). Though these are distinct capabilities, none is sufficient on its own. It is the interaction of these capabilities that creates the most effective organizations.

Table 2: Elements of Organizational Capacity[12]

1 Act	A collective ability to make choices that an organization's members will work to implement, and move forward strategically. Organizations may struggle with the capacity to act when they have limited resources or low political freedom, when they have weak leadership, or when conflicting mandates cause a lack of direction.
2 Achieve results	The ability to achieve outputs and outcomes in line with an organization's reason for existing. For example, this might include the ability to bring about better maternal health or increased agricultural productivity. This area of capacity is sometimes equated with effective performance management, seen in the form of better service delivery.
3 Relate	An ability to be a part of the system of actors, including leveraging resources and gaining legitimacy by entering into informal or formal alliances with other actors.
4 Adapt	An ability to react to change in a productive way and self-renew through adopting new ideas. Organizations often face challenges stemming from government or funder decisions, natural disasters, or changing beneficiary needs, and must balance stability with adaptation to new conditions. The organizational characteristics associated with this area of capacity include resourcefulness, resilience, and imagination.
5 Integrate	An ability to utilize cross-functional, cross-geographical, or cross-disciplinary teams to achieve greater coherence in programming.

12. Jan Ubels, Naa-Aku Acquaye-Baddoo, and Alan Fowler, *Capacity Development in Practice* (London: Earthscan, 2010).

The Organizational Development Continuum

This *Guide* conceives of three stages of organizational maturity across a continuum of growth (see Table 3)[13]:

- Nascent,
- Emergent, and
- Mature

Although the stages appear linear, this is not always the case: organizations move back and forth along the continuum. Similarly, this *Guide* does not specify at which point an organization's capacity is sufficient to "graduate" to the next level, but rather details the characteristics of organizations at each of the three phases. Both organizations and CD interventions may span more than one phase, since organizations are constantly in flux and evolving. Approaches tailored to a specific organization's needs must be sufficiently flexible to accommodate the organization's range of characteristics.

Each of the three stages may be further understood by mapping organizational maturity within the six dimensions described below. The matrix in Table 3 shows how the following six dimensions complement the stages of organizational growth.

1. **Contextual Orientation:** Considers the environment in which the organization operates, and the organization's reaction to its environment. As organizations grow and adapt, they evolve from being influenced entirely by their environment (reactive) to becoming environmentally aware and influencing their environment (proactive). Alternatively, organizations may shift between influencing and being influenced.
2. **Strategic Orientation:** Considers an organization's strategy. Nascent organizations will often lack a coherent vision and strategy, and their strategic focus and momentum largely reflects donor priorities. Over time, as organizations evolve, their strategic focus may shift as well. They may diversify their mandate and even influence donor requests. The strategy of a fully Mature organization, as described in detail below, considers its external and internal needs and peer relationships.
3. **Performance Focus:** Considers the performance of organizations at each stage. Organizations possessing Nascent characteristics are focused on establishing sustainable internal systems and control and employing effective staff to achieve operational sustainability. Accordingly, such achievements are purely transactional. As the organization adapts and learns, it naturally diversifies its performance portfolio and focuses on a more transformational, innovative, and leading set of performance products and services. As an example, a Mature organization may measure its organizational performance by tracking the number and quality of external laws or policies it has influenced or implemented at the national level, or the impact of its constituents on influencing policy. Its focus is not on its internal functions but instead on how it is impacting the environment in which it exists.
4. **Organizational Innovation:** Considers any innovation being utilized or explored by an organization. At the most basic level, an organization's sole focus is internal control and ensuring survival. However, once the organization has sustained itself and becomes more adept at balancing internal controls and environmental responsiveness, it will progress to understanding what others are doing, replicate these actions (exploitation innovation), or eventually become an innovation leader in the sector, influencing its peers (exploration innovation). Note that certain types of organizations (for instance, government institutions or other bureaucracy) may differ in how they apply innovation to influence peers—and that innovation may operate differently for various types of organizations, based on their respective structure and form.
5. **Measurement Scope:** Considers alignment with organizational performance monitoring. The development of a robust performance monitoring system often reflects a more Emergent state of organizational maturity; at the same time, young organizations—often, at the urging of external investors or donors—will aim to measure input- and output-level indicators focused on the existence and strength of internal systems and staff capacities (such as "number of beneficiaries trained").

13. These characteristics are adapted from various streams of organizational literature and theoretical frameworks on organizational adaptation, systems, evolution, and strategic choice.

Table 3: Six Dimensions of Organizational Maturity Linked to Three Stages of Development

Organizational Dimension	Stage of Development		
	Nascent	**Emergent**	**Mature**
Contextual Orientation	Passive—letting the environment influence the organization	Balancing internal and external priorities against the environment	Leading and proactively creating and influencing its own external environment
Strategic Orientation	Insular, micro-level, donor-responsive	Shift in focus to external, environmental factors	Outward-facing, driving external change; focus on impact and learning
Performance Focus	Transactional—focused on internal performance excellence, streamlining, efficiency	Mainstreaming transactional excellence; scouting transformational orientation	Transformational—leading through strategy, performance growth
Organizational Innovation	Limited/none	Exploitation Innovation, copying other actors; borrowing processes and knowledge	Exploration Innovation; transformation; new knowledge/product/service generation
Measurement Scope	Organizational output-level change	Organizational outcome-level change	Ecosystem-level change, networks, relationships
Performance Focus	Transactional staff; specialists; focused efforts	Generalists; balancing tensions between old and new growth; talent pool expansion	Change agents; thought leadership

As the organization matures, so will its measurement scope, which should begin to include organizational outcomes and relationships, especially as the organization's internal assets and systems match the demands of the external environment for value generation and transformation (namely, outcomes and impact).

6. **Performance Focus:** Considers staff capacity. Nascent organizations usually employ staff qualified to develop and maintain internal transactional systems, secure donor and government compliance, and develop niche competencies. Once an organization is stable, it will begin to expand its talent pool and influence, and will eventually employ thought leaders and networkers to generate new ideas, products, and services of value to the overall external system.

Dimensions of Organizational Maturity

Organizational maturity illustrates how investments of time and resources lead to improved performance of organizations, cohorts, networks, markets, or relevant wider systems (USAID, 2015). In the context of CD, different approaches target different stages of organizational maturity, and the expected changes in an organization will, therefore, be distinct. This section highlights the various stages of maturity along the spectrum of organizational capacity.

Organizations and their capacities may span more than one stage, since organizations are often in flux and evolving along a continuum.

The figure below illustrates how investments lead to performance improvement of organizations, cohorts, networks, markets, or relevant wider systems ("Organizational Learning," 2015). In the context of CD, different stages of organizational maturity have different needs, and the goals and interventions, therefore, will vary. This section offers a menu of CD interventions that are relevant to each of the three stages of organizational maturity. It is common for CD interventions to focus first on establishing effective internal systems and generating outputs and outcomes before building an organization's capacity to relate to other external actors. The process of developing organizational capacity is not always linear, however, and even the most Mature organizations can benefit from Nascent-type approaches in some instances. Thus, both organizations and CD approaches may span more than one stage along a continuum, since organizations are constantly in flux and evolving.

Nascent-level interventions focus on the development and governance of internal, transactional elements of organizational effectiveness (such as financial management, human resources [HR], governance, and procurement). These interventions primarily adopt a "gap analysis" approach to building organizational knowledge and skills and are designed to build human capacity to improve operational and management systems and practices. Intervention strategies tend to include training and mentoring components to address performance gaps related to skills and knowledge. CD for Nascent organizations uses interventions that target the specific staff who control systems and procedures.[14] These staff are responsible for the development and maintenance of internal systems.

Capacity Development by Level of Organizational Maturity

Nascent

Interventions aim to increase effectiveness of internal systems and human capacity to maintain the systems.

CD impact is measured through the functionality of internal systems.

Emergent

Interventions assume existence of Nascent-level skills, so focus instead on scale and quality of service delivery.

CD impact is measured in outcomes related to targeted beneficiaries.

Mature

Interventions assume target organizations are fully functional and instead focus on the networks and sectoral operating environments.

CD impact is measured by the network's strength and influence.

14. For government organizations, these strategies are often useful, required, or requested by even "mature" organizations.

By addressing gaps in individual and team knowledge or skillsets, as well as structural or process-related issues, the implementing partner can increase the overall functionality of transactional elements of the target organization's internal systems, which make these groups more efficient.

Interventions for **Emergent** organizations focus on organizational effectiveness and the results of functioning internal systems. These interventions assume the existence of basic internal operations and systems, and assume these transactional systems are functioning. As an organization begins to evolve into a more adaptive, dynamic, and established organization, it will undergo significant change, including expanding its talent pool to diverse employee skillsets. Thus, approaches to CD for Emergent organizations begin to examine and address adaptability, learning, and resilience using levers such as culture, incentives, leadership, and values.

Intervention strategies are designed to sustain transactional excellence, and to facilitate the organization's movement and adjustment to become more effective (as opposed to efficient) and adaptive.

Emergent organizations have procured resources, possess strong systems governance, and are beginning to look outward, focusing on the impacts of their systems through the measurement of outcome-level indicators. It is assumed that if the Emergent organization leverages its internal transactional excellence then it will become more responsive to its environment and achieve organizational growth. Organizations begin to borrow best practices, talent, and tactics as they take on a more "Emergent" posture toward transformation, which is finally realized as they become Mature organizations. Although some organizations may be more mature in certain dimensions, **Mature** organizations are distinct in that they:

1. use interventions that achieve transformational and organizational excellence,
2. operate with both an inward and outward lens, and
3. attain measurable impact on their environments.[15]

Interventions for **Mature** organizations aim to strengthen the interaction between the organization and its external environment; these interventions may not focus exclusively on an organization, but instead look to strengthen an entire network or set of actors within an environment. Promoting a more ecological model, Mature interventions emphasize that an organization's effectiveness is strengthened by its ability to be part of an ecosystem and respond to shifts in its environment. To that end, these interventions target collaboration and advocacy (*Raynor, 2014*). Thus, the focus moves beyond internal management to focus on stakeholder engagement, relationship brokering, and networking. Interventions are assessed by examining civil society's connectivity to larger systems such as community and government.

Expanding the set of factors that contribute to organizational effectiveness, Mature interventions often target the relationships and connections, or social capital, of organizations, with a view that "capacities are developed through social relationships, and the nature of those relationships has profound consequences for the ability of an organization to get things done" (*Raynor, 2016*). Interventions appropriate for Mature organizations can also be applied to Emergent and sometimes Nascent organizations because there is an inherent value in strengthening a CSO's influence and system relationships, such as through peer learning and networking. This benefit can be realized through supporting Nascent and Emergent organizations to understand possibilities for "value creation" and "network effects." These interventions have the potential to broaden their influence and value and orient their internal, transactional efforts to ultimately arrive at a more mature stage.

One such intervention, the "Whole System in the Room"[16] (WSR) methodology, incorporates multiple actors in a carefully laid-out sequence of participatory tasks so that individuals, groups, organizations, businesses, institutions, partnerships, and coalitions at all levels are able to collaborate on solutions and take action. The system-wide approach helps to identify the leverage points where targeted efforts will have the most impact on the many connections in a system.

15. *USAID and Social Impact Civil Society Strengthening and Capacity Development 2.0 Roundtable*.
16. A "Whole System in the Room" (WSR) intervention is a process to generate system-wide change by strengthening effective communication among the stakeholders—individuals, groups, organizations, businesses, and institutions—involved with a common issue and helping them negotiate and implement concurrent, sustainable, collaborative action toward a common vision and agreed-upon goals.

This intervention moves beyond strengthening a CSO's network connections for the purpose of building its capacity, toward strengthening an entire social ecosystem, including CSOs, funders, the private sector, and government. In other words, it is not only about CSO capacity building; all system actors must work together to improve outcomes in a given sector. Interventions that target Mature organizations also place greater focus on social learning and behavior change through relationships within a network (*Bloom, 2016*).

NASCENT STAGE

Nascent Intervention Characteristics

Capacities Targeted	Systems, operations, ability to function and survive as an organization.
Organization Characteristics	Young organizations; organizations that wish to become more competitive for donor funding.
Approach Focus	HOW: Focus on strengthening internal operations and systems (such as human resources, financial systems, management oversight). What internal systems and procedures does the group have in place? What needs to be put in place to achieve an acceptable level of organizational development?
Governance/Management Skillsets Targeted	Organizational management, performance management, project management, financial management, human resource management, organizational tools, and standard operating systems.
Key Measurement Characteristics	Designed to measure results of intervention strategies at the output level; may not comprehensively measure evidence of organizational success.

EMERGENT STAGE

Emergent Intervention Characteristics

Capacities Targeted	Internal organizational outputs, ability to understand and respond to its environment.
Organization Characteristics	Organizations interested in pursuing long-term growth and capacity in a manner that best reflects their current capacity levels.
Approach Focus	How does the organization operate? How does it achieve its goals? How does it respond to its environment?
Governance/Management Skillsets Targeted	Governance procedures, leadership, strategic thinking, strategic planning, organizational management, change management, information technology systems, project management, performance management systems, strategic collaborations and partnerships, professional networking, access to information resources, advocacy, and mobilization.
Key Measurement Characteristics	Designed to measure and inform intervention strategies; promotes horizontal intervention strategies and measurements.

MATURE STAGE

Mature Intervention Characteristics

Capacities Targeted	External, sector-wide, systematic capacities.
Organization Characteristics	Ability to interact with and inform its external environment.
Approach Focus	How do systems of actors and initiatives operate within specific spheres or sectors?
Governance/Management Skillsets Targeted	Governance and stewardship, policies, laws, and regulations, resource generation and allocation, management of strategic partnerships, partnerships/collaboration, professional networking.
Key Measurement Characteristics	Designed to inform intervention strategies; promotes horizontal intervention strategies and measurements[17]; some tools can also be used for inter-organization measurement.

Organizational innovation theory suggests that Mature organizations that employ CD interventions are ambidextrous—that is, they are able to balance both performance and innovation—exploitation and exploration—toward further strategic value and gains (*Tushman & O'Reilly, 1996*).

Therefore, at this level, CSOs typically become adept at harnessing their core competencies, simultaneously driving environmental change—new policies, influence, new partnerships, governance structures. The focus of Mature organizations is to maintain congruence with the environment and strike a balance between the need to explore innovation, and the need to respond to internal pressures to perform and exploit competitors' efforts.

17. Horizontal intervention strategies underscore the CSO enabling environment by engaging and coordinating key policy and advocacy actors across peer organizations through networking and building coalitions. In contrast, vertical intervention strategies emphasize targeted project implementation.

Section 3: Capacity Development Interventions

This section presents 14 interventions, validated by experienced civil society (CS) practitioners, that work across sectors and regions and are designed to strengthen a range of organizational capacities, outlined in Table 4: Overview of Approaches Included in this *Guide*. In addition, we introduce the Human and Institutional Capacity Development (HICD) Model, a methodology that USAID established based on best practices in the field of performance improvement.[18] Although HICD is not an intervention, it provides a structured, step-by-step process for engaging partners in CD to ensure optimal results. Program designers may consider incorporating the HICD model at the design stage of activities. Interventions described in this section would be delivered during Step 6 of the model, Implement Performance Solutions. For detailed information on how to carry out each HICD step, refer to Annex 1.

It is important to note that **organizations and their capacities may span more than one stage along the continuum, meaning that varied—and even integrated—CD interventions may be most appropriate.** The literature shows limited evidence regarding which interventions have proven effectiveness. Nevertheless, in a 2013 study,[19] Root Change identified two interventions as having the largest effect size[20] in terms of their potential to achieve impact:

1. **Learning and Innovation Partnerships:** This intervention seeks to strengthen relationships within the system and mitigate stove-piping by incentivizing collaboration among local organizations that have limited previous experience working together. Small grants (approximately $50,000) are competitively awarded to triads of organizations to collaborate on an action learning agenda or pilot, with a focus on testing a new idea or innovation.
2. **Grants:** The funder then makes an additional "learning and partnership" grant available to these triads in Year Two, on the condition that they incorporate a previously unaffiliated, fourth partner group, thereby expanding trust and collaboration within the system. This type of financially supported activity integrates the interventions Collective Impact, Financial Assistance, and Peer-to-Peer Learning.
3. **Shared Work Centers:** Based on a service originally sponsored by the Tides Foundation,[21] shared work centers have operated in the United States for many years through association management companies (AMCs). AMCs provide their nonprofit organization clients with "back offices" functions such as administrative and operational support, including accounting and human resources management. In Root Change's model, the work centers are subsidized for a group of six to eight organizations that work on similar sectors and issue areas. Reduced administrative costs allow CSOs to focus on mission critical programming, and close proximity accelerates collaboration. This example integrates the interventions Clustering and Resource Hubs.[22]

18. *Human and Institutional Capacity Development (HICD) Handbook* (USAID, 2010)
19. *New Directions in Local Capacity Development: Embracing a Systems Perspective*. Sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development (Root Change, 2013).
20. "Effect size" refers to the strength of correlation between two phenomena—in this case, between a CD intervention and potential impact.
21. *Develop Shared Non-profit Space and Services*, Refer to Tides Foundation.
22. Root Change, *New Directions in Local Capacity Development: Embracing a Systems Perspective* (USAID Learning Lab, 2013).

Table 4: Overview of CD Approaches Included in this *Guide*

Intervention	Description
Clustering	Gathers together organizations based on their organizational strengths and challenges to form deliberate, sometimes formal, cohorts. Clustering focuses on the role of networks and relationships among the various parts of a cluster, not individual organizations, and promotes models of innovation and competitiveness.
Coaching	Works with individuals on a one-to-one basis, although more than one person in an organization may be coached at a time. Coaching is a task-oriented methodology that enables an individual to develop specific skills and behaviors to address identified issues.
Collective Impact	Follows a structured approach wherein multiple stakeholders from all sectors unite to pursue a common agenda. It promotes collaboration across government, public and non-profit institutions, the private sector, and citizens with the aim of enacting and promoting sustainable change.
Consultative Support	Offers a CSO assistance or advice to address a specific function or task, such as service delivery or resource mobilization. Unlike coaching, consultative support usually focuses on more than one person at a time—often a team, group, board, or department. It is quite flexible and has high-yield potential.
E-Learning/Online Training Courses	Uses electronic technologies (web, computers) to provide an educational curriculum outside of a traditional classroom or workshop. The two main types of e-Learning are self-paced and facilitated (or instructor-led). In a self-paced e-Learning course, a participant follows her own schedule, whereas in a facilitated course, an instructor conducts the e-Learning at a specified time via a web platform.
Financial Assistance	Provides financial support to CSOs. Financial assistance can be offered as a stand-alone intervention or may be combined with other types of interventions such as coaching. Financial assistance can assume various forms, including general operating and core support, and discrete project-based grants focused on building specific organizational capacities such as leadership, fundraising, communications, evaluation, collaborative capacities, and more.
Institutional Twinning	Establishes a partnership between two institutions (typically referred to as supplier and recipient organizations) with the aim of developing the capacity of the recipient organization. This intervention can be used regionally, nationally, or globally.
Marketplace for CD	Transfers the demand for and responsibility of CD activities from international donors to local actors. Local demand for CD meets local supply to fulfill organizational strengthening needs. The Marketplace transforms capacity building from donor led to CSO led by allowing organizations to define their own capacity needs and seek out qualified local actors from which to purchase services to meet these needs. In some cases, services are subsidized or purchased using a voucher.

Table 4: Overview of CD Approaches Included in this *Guide* (*Cont.*)

Intervention	Description
Mentoring	Pairs a seasoned individual who possesses specific knowledge or expertise with a less experienced individual. Mentoring can offer targeted support, respond to specific challenges, or help individuals re-examine their own ideas and find their own solutions.
Networking Events/ Exposure Visits	Fosters relationships among groups or individuals who share similar interests and participate in a shared event. Such gatherings provide a space for development practitioners to share knowledge and ideas and strengthen connections.
Peer-to-Peer Learning	Brings together individuals with similar skills and responsibilities to share tools and resources and exchange ideas, with the intention of applying this learning back at their organizations. Peer learning can strengthen coordination within a sector by increasing participants' awareness of other projects that may offer opportunities for collaboration or coordination, or tactics and strategies they can adopt.
Resource Hubs	Offers CSOs an easily accessed online portal (or in-person platform) that can serve as a repository of information, a platform for collaboration, a central resource-management tool, and place to house and disseminate best practices.
Social Networking	Uses popular platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube to help CSOs reinforce networks for support and information sharing.
Training Workshops	Gathers a selected group of participants at a single event so they can learn or improve skills and knowledge in a specific discipline. Typically training addresses issues of common concern to a target group. Training may take many forms, from hour- or day-long events focused on a single skill, to multi-day, intensive boot camps that develop a range of skills in a larger context, to week-long conferences.

Incorporating CLA Into Capacity Development

Collaborating, learning, and adapting (CLA)[23] is a set of practices that help organizations improve the effectiveness of their development practice and programming. According to USAID Program Cycle guidance (*ADS 201.3.5.19*), "Strategic collaboration, continuous learning, and adaptive management link together all the components of the Program Cycle."[24] When integrated into program design and implementation, CLA:

- Encourages stakeholders to identify areas of shared interest and work together to share knowledge across sectoral and institutional boundaries.
- Engages stakeholders in utilizing a variety of sources of information, including data from monitoring, portfolio reviews, findings of research, evaluations, analyses conducted by USAID or third parties, and knowledge gained from experience.
- Helps stakeholders to apply learning and make adjustments during program implementation.
- CLA is a useful discipline for ensuring that organizations are learning and adapting based on the CD interventions that they choose to implement and the data that they collect about these interventions' impact. For example, in a five-year initiative launched in 2013, DAI Global used CLA to bring together Cambodian CSOs and the technology community to build CSOs' capacity to better use information and communication technologies (ICT) for development results.[25] DAI conducted a baseline study and mid-term evaluation of the initiative and used the findings from both assessments to adapt their offerings to better meet the needs of Cambodian CSOs. They also engaged local partners to take over CD services at the end of the project. CLA allowed the team to focus on activities that meet CSOs' needs and ensure sustainability. This example integrates the interventions **Clustering, Collective Impact**, and **Peer-to-Peer Learning.**

23. *Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting (CLA)?* (USAID Learning Lab, 2017).
24. *Program Cycle Operational Policy* (USAID, 2017).
25. *How Learning and Adapting Enabled Civil Society Innovations in Cambodia* (USAID Learning Lab, 2017).

At a Glance

USAID's Human and Institutional Capacity Development (HICD) Model

What: HICD is a USAID methodology designed to equip local counterparts with a best-practices model for developing and achieving clear performance improvement objectives to better meet the needs of constituents and stakeholders.

How: The HICD model follows a seven-step process that emphasizes using systems thinking, identifying the root causes of performance gaps, and employing an array of performance solutions designed based on the factors that affect human performance. By building in performance monitoring systems, HICD seeks to instill a cyclical process of continuous performance improvement.

Why: HICD seeks to address performance improvement by taking both a systems-focused and results-based approach. In practice, this means that multiple performance solutions are used together in a systematic manner, rather than one at a time or on an ad hoc basis.

In the HICD model, organizations are considered adaptive systems that respond to their external environments, made up of components that in turn, react to one another. Thus, performance depends upon individuals within an organization, the processes run by those individuals, and the organization's interaction with its external environment. To achieve performance excellence, an organization must bridge performance gaps on all three levels.

Seven-Step HICD Model

1. Identify Partner Organizations
2. Obtain Partner Commitment
3. Form Stakeholder Group
4. Conduct Performance Assessment
5. Prepare Performance Solutions Package
6. Implement Performance Solutions
7. Monitor Change in Performance

At a Glance
Clustering

Goal: To strengthen a sector and the organizations that operate in it by promoting networking and collaboration among actors

Who Participates: Key representatives from target organizations within a specific sector. Participation can include other stakeholder organizations such as local government or the private sector

Cost Requirements: Moderate to high depending on the support services the cluster needs

Facilitation Requirements: Will require a skilled facilitator (also called a broker) to manage the clustering process

Time Requirements: Long-term commitment

Capacity Development Stage: Nascent, Emergent, Mature

Clustering brings together organizations based on their strengths and challenges to form deliberate, sometimes formal, cohorts. Clustering focuses on the role of networks and relationships among the various parts of a cluster—not individual organizations—and promotes models of innovation and competitiveness. Clustering's far-reaching methodology can be applied to increase the strength of the system in which CSOs operate, whether regionally, nationally, or globally. Cluster composition can vary. It can comprise different types of institutions with similar needs (CSOs, private sector, local government) or it can focus exclusively on CSOs.

A key advantage to clustering is that it has the potential to create a "cohort effect"—an informal and organic support network (*Dichter et al., 2015*). Clustering also has the potential to benefit both individual organizations and the networks within which they operate. Organizations do not have to depend entirely on their internal processes and strengths, but instead contribute to and rely upon a larger network.

Clustered organizations can also improve their internal capacities by offering inter-organizational learning, experience and knowledge-sharing, in addition to providing support on direct utilization of best practices. Clustering benefits networks by improving the competitiveness or abilities of a specific sector or region. Improved competitiveness in a dynamic and global context can lead to increased innovation and the adoption of best practices. Regional and national benefits from clustering include increasing civil society's profile and functionality, contributing to an increase in economy-wide competitiveness by facilitating policy reform, and fostering private-public dialogue (*Maxwell Stamp PLC, 2012*).

Clustering can encompass many types of support, such as training, technical assistance, and mentoring. For example, a cluster training program could focus on topics such as identifying and improving both horizontal and vertical linkages or understanding operating environments. Although the clustering methodology varies depending on the target organizations, the essence of a clustering approach is networking and relationship-building. Trust must be established among participating organizations.

Clustering can be either in-person or virtual. As discussed under the E-Learning/Online Training intervention, virtual learning removes geographic limitations thereby facilitating access to higher quality experts. Similarly, virtual learning clusters enable like-minded organizations to access each other despite geographic considerations.

Illustration: Physical Clustering

Program Representasi (ProRep)[26] was a USAID project designed to strengthen democracy and good governance in Indonesia by promoting better informed and more representative legislative and policymaking processes. ProRep's assistance shifted to facilitating multi-sector policy communities or "policy clusters." This systems approach brought together CSOs, think tanks, and policymakers to collaborate in support of specific policy reforms in the sectors of education, health, and environment. These policy communities were designed to become platforms to facilitate interactions among inter-connected actors and to further inculcate an inclusive and evidence-based approach to policymaking. Clusters were designed in this context to bring together national and local-level policymakers from the executive and legislative branches, experts, and advocates to help them collaborate more effectively in improving policy or policy implementation in selected policy-focus areas. Finally, ProRep involved the media, so that clusters' positions could have an impact on the opinions of decision-makers and the public.[27]

Illustration: Virtual Clustering

CapBuilder piloted a Virtual Learning Cluster[28] model to test utilizing technology and peer learning clusters. The Virtual Learning Cluster model used four primary capacity building tools:

- Web-based teleconferenced workshops
- Goal-focused action steps to reinforce a learning topic
- Technical assistance from experienced peers
- Teleconferenced peer support group meetings

Under this model, 10 non-profits engaged in a nine-month pilot activity to build their data management capabilities. Pilot findings indicated that participants were largely satisfied with the program components and felt that their participation helped them to achieve, or at least gain the momentum to achieve their program goals. However, several of the participants raised concerns about Internet connectivity and requested other, more reliable ways to connect with each other to enhance the benefits of networking (*Marshall, 2017*).

26. USAID Indonesia Program Representasi (ProRep), *Indonesia ProRep Final Report* (April 2016).
27. Social Impact, Inc., *Final Performance Evaluation of Policy Cluster Approach* (2016).
28. Catherine Marshall, *Virtual Learning Clusters* (2017).

At a Glance
Coaching

Goal: To improve an individual's performance on the job through enhancing current skills or acquiring new skills

Who Participates: Individuals who possess specific knowledge or skillsets and individuals who seek out a specific knowledge or skillset

Cost Requirements: Varies, depends on the cost of the expert and length of the coaching series

Facilitation Requirements: Conducted mainly via face-to-face instruction, although some coaching is conducted via phone or Skype

Time Requirements: Coaching sessions are short-term and task-based. The coaching series lasts for as long as is needed, depending on the purpose of the coaching relationship

Capacity Development Stage: Nascent, Emergent, Mature

A coach works typically with individuals on a one-to-one basis; more than one person in an organization may also be coached at a time. Coaching is a task- and behavior-oriented methodology that enables an individual to develop specific skills and behaviors to address identified issues. A coach works to support, provoke, inspire, and focus a dialogue with the client and move him or her toward the desired goal. Coaching typically requires regular, personal meetings and can be one of the most effective methods of developing an individual. It can also be one of the more expensive options, albeit a high-impact one.

Coaching is most effective for fostering specific employee competencies by using performance management tools and involving the immediate manager, or when a leader or executive needs assistance to acquire a new skill to address an additional responsibility. Coaching can take different forms, as long as it meets the individual's needs.

Face-to-face meetings are most common; other contact may include, telephone, Skype, or email.

Implementing coaching is straightforward. However, the crucial element is identifying a qualified coach with a proven track record. A coach does not necessarily have to possess direct occupational experience related to the demonstrated need, unless the coaching is skills-focused, but he or she should understand the technical requirements. A coach must be an expert in human development and interpersonal dynamics and know how to empower the client to achieve defined goals.

At a Glance
Collective Impact

Goal: To bring together multi-sectoral stakeholders to implement one action plan aimed at addressing identified issues. Stakeholders are responsible for carrying out specific activities identified in the action plan

Who Participates: Multiple stakeholders with different skillsets. It is managed by one entity responsible for oversight

Cost Requirements: Varies, depends on the cost of the expert and length of the coaching series

Facilitation Requirements: Varies depending on the scope of the action plan and stakeholders involved

Time Requirements: Varies depending on the scope of the action plan and stakeholders involved

Capacity Development Stage: Mature

Collective impact is a structured approach wherein multiple stakeholders—from all sectors—unite to pursue a common agenda. It promotes collaboration across government, public and non-profit institutions, the private sector, and citizens with the aim of enacting and promoting sustainable change. Collective impact is a relatively new concept introduced in a 2011 *Stanford Social Innovation Review* article.

The *Collective Impact Framework* comprises five elements (*Kania & Kramer, 2011*):

1. **Common Agenda:** All participating organizations (government agencies, non-profits, community members) have a shared vision for social change that includes a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving the problem through agreed-upon actions.
2. **Shared Measurement System:** Agreement on the ways success will be measured and reported with a short list of key indicators across all participating organizations.
3. **Mutually Reinforcing Activities:** Engagement of a diverse set of stakeholders, typically across sectors, that coordinate a set of differentiated activities through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.
4. **Continuous Communication:** Frequent communications over a long period of time among key players within and across organizations, to build trust and inform ongoing learning and adaptation of strategy.
5. **Backbone Organization:** Ongoing support provided by an independent staff dedicated to the initiative. The backbone staff tend to play six roles to move the initiative forward: 1) Guide Vision and Strategy; 2) Support Aligned Activity; 3) Establish Shared Measurement Practices; 4) Build Public Will; 5) Advance Policy; and 6) Mobilize Funding.

Illustration: SCALE+[29]

FHI 360 employs a methodology for addressing development challenges from multidisciplinary perspectives and with stakeholders from multiple sectors to ensure local social capital is built and development is locally led. System-wide Collaborative Action for Leadership and Engagement (SCALE+) ensures inputs from myriad stakeholders, including but not limited to, local partners, government, private sector, civil society, including the media, and marginalized groups who may be most affected by the dysfunctional effects of a system. SCALE+ is implemented through five elements that may or may not occur in sequence and are supported continuously throughout project duration ("SCALE+"):

- → *Think System:* Apply a "systems lens" to reach across sectors to engage as many actors and relationships in a system as possible.
- → *Map the System:* Define issues, geographies, and vertical and horizontal linkages among stakeholders.
- → *Integrate the System:* Support all stakeholders to build social capital and form stronger networks of people who are pursuing common goals and technical excellence.
- → *Transform the System:* Employ evidence-based, adaptable technical assistance at key leverage points.
- → *Measure Results:* Ensure results are continuously collected and utilized throughout the process to assess sector-specific impacts as well as the strength of social networks for improved decision making.

Illustration: Organizing the Morocco Medicinal and Aromatic Plant Sector

In the mid-2000s, Morocco removed tariffs on imported cereal goods from the United States. This meant rural and dispersed farmers who previously lived on income from the production and sale of cereal crops would now compete with less expensive imports. To survive the economic restructuring, farmers would need to organize and diversify crop production, sales, and distribution.

The informal Medicinal and Aromatic Plant (MAP) sector had been identified as a set of agricultural products with potential growth.

Morocco was poised to develop this sector, but competing in the global economy would require capacity development and a new way of working within the changing economic context. USAID/Morocco sought to organize and develop capacity of the MAP sector using a systems approach.

Deploying the SCALE+ methodology, the team mapped the interconnected issues and stakeholders in the sector. From this analysis, the team created an eight-person intersectoral steering committee of leaders from government (Ministry of Agriculture, Higher Education), research institutions, and CSOs/NGOs involved in agricultural development. Collaboratively, this committee gathered available information, identified, and convened stakeholder groups and individuals for a Whole System in the Room (WSR) planning workshop.

More than 120 people from 11 MAP stakeholder groups participated in a three-day WSR workshop entitled, "Increasing the Value of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants—Higher Quality and New Markets." The invitation letter to participants explained that the performance of the sector depended on locally owned action and coordination, *"The sector of tomorrow depends on what we do now…to develop a coordinated road map for the future."*

At the workshop, participants quickly realized the WSR was not a traditional meeting with "expert" presentations, lectures, and small group work included as "participation." Within the first hour, participants were on their feet co-creating a visual timeline of their common past—the personal, local, and global events that had shaped the current MAP sector. Over the next two days, they continued to self-manage a series of exercises that helped them collectively analyze the present, including global trends, develop ideal-future scenarios, and identify common-ground goals (see box). Each group developed short-term (three-month) and medium-term (three-year) action plans to achieve these common goals. Finally, participants stood in front of their peers and made commitments—personal and organizational—of what they would do to implement these action plans (see box below). These commitments and the relationships forged during the workshop would be the engine for transforming the sector.

29. *System-wide Collaborative Action for Leadership and Engagement* (SCALE+).

SCALE+ to Develop the Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Sector

Stakeholders Common-Ground Goals

1. Establish organic certification and labeling.
2. Provide training, information, and research.
3. Promote commercialization and investment.
4. Foster preservation of natural resources.
5. Help shape government policies.
6. Institute insurance and risk management strategies.
7. Conduct monitoring and evaluation.

Following the WSR, a variety of MAP activities began to happen simultaneously, many without the financial or technical support of the SCALE+ team. The WSR had empowered stakeholders. To support action on the common goals, the SCALE+ team applied a combination of social change methodologies, including social marketing, education, organizational development, conflict resolution, mass communication, and advocacy.

An evaluation of the project found:

- The MAP sector was more "organized." At the beginning, the project lacked linkages and coordination among MAP stakeholders. Many stakeholders were unaware of the other organizations that work in the sector and their role in the value chain. Information flowed poorly among actors. A year later, there were indications of greater awareness of the variety of stakeholders in the MAP sector and the role they play in the value chain.
  A three-year private sector boycott of forest concessions ended immediately creating over 32,000 work days in the first two-month harvest season alone for local residents of an impoverished region.
- Facilitated technical assistance led a demonstration distillery to improve the quality of its rosemary oil allowing them to increase the sale price by 300 percent. Ownership of the site was taken over by a farmer's cooperative.
- SCALE+ built social capital within the Moroccan MAP sector. Stakeholders saw tremendous value in the relationships they had built. These relationships and connections enhanced their reputation and ability to work efficiently.

Individual Commitments for Action

1. Farmers committed to form the September 22nd Farmers Spokesperson Association to promote MAPs and share information with other farmers.
2. A university researcher committed to training university students in MAPs.
3. International buyers committed to promote the MAP sector in journals and other publications, create a MAP website, and train trainers in MAP organic certification and marketing.

At a Glance
Consultative Support

Goal: To provide targeted capacity building support

Who Participates: Usually focuses on more than one person at a time—often a team, group, board, or department—related to a specific function or task, such as service delivery or resource mobilization

Cost Requirements: Varies depending on the cost of the expert and length of consultation

Facilitation Requirements: Conducted mainly via face-to-face, although some follow up may be conducted via phone or Skype

Time Requirements: May be short-term and task-based or long term based on the results of a needs assessment

Capacity Development Stage: Nascent, Emergent, Mature

Whether provided by an individual or an agency, consultative support offers a CSO assistance or advice to address a specific issue, such as service delivery or resource mobilization. It is a common development intervention because it is quite flexible and has high-yield potential. Unlike coaching, consultative support usually focuses on more than one person—often a team, group, board, or department. Consultants bring technical expertise to advise an organization on solutions. Their support may entail complete management of a particular area or limited services performed with staff oversight. Consultative support can also be partnered with capital—for example, linked to local lending institutions or new donors—to connect CSOs to new sources of revenue, thereby further enhancing the capacity of target organizations. International organizations may choose to partner with local organizations or build local expertise to promote project sustainability, rather than hire international experts.

Illustration: Demographic and Health Survey Program[30]

USAID's Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) Program seeks to build the capacity of partner organizations to conduct data collection and analysis. Its model integrates consultative support into the activities of the recipient organization so that new skills and knowledge can be applied right away. Consultants provide support in survey design, sampling, and data processing and tabulation based on an assessment of an organization's capacity needs. This support is delivered through mentoring, coaching, and onsite and online trainings, tailored to individuals' and organizations' capacity gaps. This support is intended to transfer ownership of data collection and analysis activities from DHS staff to local organization staff over time. (*ICF International, 2017*)

Illustration: Partnering Consultation and Training[31]

USAID/Georgia implemented the Policy, Advocacy, and Civil Society Development in Georgia (G-PAC) to strengthen CS and enhance performance of civic leaders and organizations. To achieve these goals, G-PAC selected 10 regional CSOs in different parts of Georgia to take part in on-the-job and online consultations in four specific subject areas. The training sessions, followed by tailored consultations, proved to be very useful to the CSOs overall, with particular improvements in using social media for advocacy. (*IBTCI, 2012*)

30. USAID Global Capacity Building Strategy, *Demographic and Health Survey Program*.
31. USAID Mid-term evaluation conducted October 2010 through August 2012.

At a Glance
E-Learning/Online Training Courses[32]

Goal: To support target organizations in accessing information online to support their CD on an on-demand basis

Who Participates: Online instructors who possess specific knowledge or skillsets and individuals who seek out a specific knowledge or skillset

Cost Requirements: Depends on the course, though typically less than an in-person training course

Facilitation Requirements: Can be facilitated in real-time or can be pre-recorded

Time Requirements: Depends on the course/ expertise needed to develop curriculum or deliver the training

Capacity Development Stage: Nascent, Emergent, Mature

E-Learning uses electronic technologies (web, computers) to provide an educational curriculum outside of a traditional classroom or workshop. Many organizations and institutions use e-learning because it can be an effective means of information-sharing at a lower cost than traditional learning, though program designers must thoughtfully consider whether e-Learning is an appropriate platform for the knowledge and skills they seek to transfer.

The two main types of e-Learning are **self-paced** and **facilitated** (instructor-led). In a self-paced e-Learning course, a participant follows his/her own schedule, whereas in a facilitated course, an instructor conducts the e-Learning at a specified time via a web platform. A facilitated course offers the benefits of allowing online collaboration among learners through discussion forums, polls, or video conferencing. Because these are not easily available in a self-paced course, it is important to provide ample support to the learner through explanations, examples, and feedback.

E-Learning is most appropriate when training on a topic is needed in geographically dispersed locations, or when learners lack resources or the flexibility to travel. It can also be a way of engaging CSOs in politically sensitive or precarious environments where other forms of CD or support are being infringed upon. It is important to keep in mind, however, that countries with closing civic spaces may also target online platforms in their attempts to crack down on civil activity; as such, any intervention that has the potential to leave an Internet footprint needs to be accompanied by trainings and capacity building around Internet security.

Although developing an e-Learning course can be expensive, delivery costs are lower than those of a classroom training. Thus, it may be a good choice when training needs to be delivered to many learners at a low cost. It is also important to consider whether learners will have access to the necessary computer and communications equipment, including a reliable Internet connection.

32. For in-depth guidance on designing and conducting an e-Learning course, see E-learning Methodologies: *A Guide for Designing and Developing E-learning Courses* (Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, 2011).

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At a Glance
Financial Assistance

Goal: To provide organizations with capital

Who Participates: Grantmaking and grantee organizations

Cost Requirements: Dependent upon grant amount and whether financial assistance is partnered with other interventions

Facilitation Requirements: None (unless financial assistance is partnered with other interventions)

Time Requirements: Can be short term or long term

Capacity Development Stage: Nascent, Emergent, Mature

Organizations need capital to grow; providing financial assistance allows organizations to strategically identify and address areas of growth. Financial assistance can be offered either as a stand-alone intervention or in conjunction with other interventions such as technical services.

The information presented in Table 5, adapted from *Strengthening Nonprofit Capacity: Core Concepts in Capacity Building*,[33] highlights various types of financial assistance that can be provided to beneficiary organizations.

Table 6, adapted from FHI 360's *Fundraising and Marketing for CSOs*,[34] identifies the different sources of funding available to CSOs. To develop a robust fundraising strategy and identify which sources of funding are most suitable to an organization's needs, CSOs can partner with an external consultant or fundraising mentor with experience developing sustainable fundraising strategies for organizations at various stages along the maturity continuum.

33. *Strengthening Nonprofit Capacity: Core Concepts in Capacity Building, Grantmakers for Effective Organizations* (2016).
34. *Fundraising and Marketing for CSOs* (2016).

Table 5: Overview of Financial Support Packages

Type of Support	Benefits
Unrestricted support. Multiyear, general operating grants.[35]	• Provides needed unrestricted funding. • Grants are paid in full and up front; grantees use the funds to support their priorities and needs. • Allows grantees to drive the timing and pacing of capacity-building work.
Organizational capacity-building grants. Grant support focused on building specific organizational capacities (such as leadership, fundraising, communications, evaluation, collaborative capacities).	• Helps meet specific needs that may not be funded from other sources. • May help set the stage for organizational growth and development.
Organizational capacity-building grants plus technical assistance. Grant support plus technical assistance that is focused on building specific organizational capacities.	• Helps meet specific needs that may not be funded from other sources. • Grantees can drive the process of identifying capacity-building needs and designing the technical assistance engagement. • Grant funds can be used to help with implementation or follow-up after technical assistance. • Technical assistance from an outside provider can allow for a more objective approach.
Grants and/or support to build the capacity of a field, group of grantees, networks, or other collaborative efforts, instead of, or in addition to, the capacity of individual grantees.	• Recognizes the reality of multiple actors working, sometimes in siloes, to address social issues. • Provides critical funding to help strengthen collaborative efforts. • Encourages grantees and partners to work together. • Promotes long-term sustainability of civil society efforts.
Grants to technical service providers, intermediaries, or researchers. Grants or contracts to build the capacities of capacity-building providers or develop knowledge and practice in the field. Grants or funding support to developing networks of trainers for supporting broader civil society capacity efforts.	• Helps ensure that nonprofits have access to the knowledge, experience, and resources to best build their capacity. • Can offer economies of scale. • Can offer expertise the grantmaker does not have on staff.

35. In some circumstances, USAID provides such support.

Table 6: Sources of Funding for CSOs

Donor Type		Illustrative Examples	Advantage
International Donors	Government	USAID, UK Department for International Development	• Large donations • Donors are often professional and understand the issues • Clear guidelines • International experience
	Multilateral	United Nations Development Program, Global Fund for AIDS	
	Private	Gates Foundation, Ford Foundation, Open Society Foundations	
Public Foundations	International/ Secular	HIVOS, Freedom House, Global Fund for Children	• Close relationships/ personal commitment • Flexible requirements • Flexible funding
	Faith-based	American Jewish World Service, Christian Aid	
Local or Community Foundations		East-Africa Sexual Health and Rights Initiative, Ikhala Trust, Social Change Assistance Trust	• Grassroots, bottom-up approach to funding • Driven by local needs and local demand • Personal relationships and flexible funding • Promotes long-term sustainability
Corporate Funders		Bank of America Foundation, JPMorgan Foundation	• Large donations • Donors clear on what they want from the arrangement
Individuals		Members, general public	• Potentially large number of members (membership fees) • Potential volunteers • Flexible funding

At a Glance

Institutional Twinning

Goal: To build a partnership between two parties at the institutional level for mutual benefit; to increase operational capacity of organizations

Who Participates: "Supplier" and "recipient" organizations

Cost Requirements: Higher costs due to multiple support services

Facilitation Requirements: None

Time Requirements: Arrangements tend to occur over the course of years

Capacity Development Stage: Nascent, Emergent

Institutional twinning is employed to establish a partnership between two institutions (typically referred to as "supplier" and "recipient" organizations) with the aim of sustainably increasing the capacity of the recipient organization. This intervention can be used regionally, nationally, or globally. Although twinning can be categorized as both a Nascent and Emergent organizational intervention, a desk review conducted by the World Bank found that the impact of twinning is often more evident at the operational level (such as improving technology or technical skills) and less evident at the institutional level. Twinning typically combines various modes of activity such as training, short- and/or long-term technical assistance, and expert secondment to directly meet the needs of the recipient organization.

Support can also take the form of a specific acquisition, such as of computers or software. The methodology is flexible and designed to sustainably build the capacity of the recipient organization over a long time—usually over the course of several years. Because twinning is an intimate approach dependent on the relationship of the two organizations, both the supplier and recipient must be carefully selected, and the relationship parameters documented and clearly understood by both organizations. The arrangement should be flexible to meet changing needs of the recipient organization.

The supplier must possess both technical expertise and experience with development issues and organizational development.[36]

Twinning arrangements have been used and highlighted by the World Bank in its approach to developing civil society institutions in low-income countries under stress (LICUS).[37] LICUS are characterized as "having weak institutions with poor governance, in which traditional aid programs have neither been used effectively nor have produced desired results." The World Bank has identified twinning as a key element for use in LICUS, particularly successful in its ability to strengthen institutions, including research institutions and think tanks, CS training institutes, central banks, and social service providers.

36. From a project by the American International Health Alliance (AIHA), *HIV/AIDS Twinning Center, Mozambique*.
37. World Bank Institute, *Twinning as a Method for International Development: A Desk Review*.

Illustration:
USAID/PEPFAR Mozambique Partnership to Strengthen Social Work Training to Improve OVC Care and Support[38]

In Mozambique, orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) are at increased risk of contracting HIV and face great difficulty in accessing essential needs and services such as health care, nutrition, education, financial and legal support, and psychosocial care. Access to strong social support networks can make a world of difference for these children, but formal trainings for social workers that had previously been coordinated by the Ministry of Health and the National Health Institute were terminated in 2004.

To address the need for a robust cadre of skilled social workers, USAID has established a Twinning Center partnership to develop in-service training courses to improve the knowledge and skills of social workers working with OVC. Recognizing the importance of a well-developed social service sector, the Mozambique Ministry of Education Reform Program for Professional Training Unit decentralized its social work training courses and is working with the American International Health Alliance and local stakeholders to develop district- and provincial-level capacity to implement improved social service trainings.

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38. AIHA, *HIV/AIDS Twinning Center, Mozambique*.

At a Glance
Marketplaces for Capacity Development

Goal: To transform capacity building from being donor led, to CSO led by enabling organizations to determine their own capacity needs and seek out qualified local actors from which to purchase services to meet these needs

Who Participates: Any qualified actor present in the country is eligible to participate in the selling or purchasing services. At the individual level, this can include CD professionals, facilitators, trainers, and consultants; organizationally, this can include CSOs, CBOs, community foundations, INGOs, donors, governments, and businesses

Cost Requirements: Moderate to high, depending on the capacity support being sought. Facility rental may also be required

Facilitation Requirements: Varies depending on the scale of the marketplace and number of stakeholders involved

Time Requirements: Ongoing participation in the Marketplace, but discrete, task-based projects depending on capacity needs being developed

Capacity Development Stage: Emergent or Mature

The CD Marketplace is a mechanism by which local demand for CD (for example, among CSOs) finds local supply (from CD experts, trainers, facilitators, and consultants) to fulfill organizational strengthening needs. Developed by Pact in 2006 in cooperation with USAID and the Dutch nonprofit organization, SNV, the CD Marketplace transfers the demand and responsibility for capacity building activities from international donors to local actors, thereby allowing local CSOs to determine their own needs, outcomes, and directives. According to Pact, "market relationships change the behavior of organizations: after they become the customer, they get on the path to their own intentional and strategic organizational development" (*Pact, 2013*).[39]

By opening the market to diverse providers, the CD Marketplace drives down the cost of services and makes capacity building more financially accessible to a broad range of civil society actors.

Moreover, the platform encourages collaboration among a wide variety of stakeholders (business, government actors, CSOs, community foundations) across multiple sectors (health, human rights, environment, governance); this contributes to a culture of cross-sectoral relationship building and has the potential to lead to cross-cutting, intersectoral solutions to societal challenges.

Key Principles of the Marketplace

CD Marketplaces are generally demand-driven, accessible for all stakeholders, active and self-sustained by ongoing exchange of services, and adaptable to work with a variety of actors. They are grounded in the assumptions that competition drives development and will result in high quality, innovative local CD; that local organizations are committed to developing local capacity; and donors support shifting the power for CD to local organizations.

39. *Capacity Development Marketplace Handbook* (Pact, 2013).

Illustration:
Capacity Development Marketplace in the Ukraine[40]

In Ukraine, Pact engaged stakeholders in a Capacity Development (CD) Marketplace through public discussions, round tables, CD Marketplace fairs, and regional presentations. After a few years of implementation, organizations began to utilize the CD Marketplace to sell and purchase services.

Moreover, organizations began to engage in internal thinking regarding their organizational development needs. The Marketplace now includes annual forums, an online portal NGO Marketplace, and a voucher system supported by Pact and its partners.

Phases of CD Marketplace Implementation

Preparation	• Conduct Viability Assessment • Prepare analysis of existing CD providers • Determine the scope of Marketplace implementation
Marketplace Design	• Convene a CDMarketplace startup group for participatory strategy development • Develop a financial system (banks, voucher system) • Incorporate transparency mechanisms to allow for customer feedback
Implementation Options	• Face-to-face: CD Marketplace fairs/expos for service providers to share offerings with service seekers • Online: CD Marketplace website with consultant and organizational profiles, announcements of tenders, and so on
Sustainability Assurance	• Incorporate a system of governance over the Marketplace • Work with donors to attract funding for Marketplace sustainability and service purchasing

40. *Capacity Development Marketplace Handbook* (Pact, 2013).

At a Glance
Mentoring

Goal: Support mechanism; a holistic and empowering approach oriented toward providing task-based, skill-focused, directed and time-bound support

Who Participates: Individuals who possess specific knowledge or skillsets and individuals who seek specific knowledge or skillsets

Cost Requirements: Personnel time only

Facilitation Requirements: The coaching and mentoring activity is conducted mainly face-to-face, with some preparatory work and diagnostics that involve collection of relevant information about the CSO's previous activities

Time Requirements: Continuing relationship that can last for a long period of time

Capacity Development Stage: Emergent

Mentoring pairs a seasoned individual with specific knowledge/expertise with a less experienced individual. Mentoring can offer targeted support as needed, respond to specific challenges, or help individuals re-examine their own ideas and find their own solutions. Mentors share tacit knowledge that has a bearing on what the individual is experiencing within the context of an organization. For real mentorship to succeed, there needs to be chemistry between the mentor and mentee.[41] Studies show that even the best-designed mentoring programs are no substitute for a genuine, collegial relationship between mentor and mentee. Mentoring can occur at any level, but may be more prominent in Emergent organizations that are networking, implementing best practices, and positioning themselves to become more mature organizations.

According to Management Mentors, mentoring is an effective approach to develop leaders or a talent pool as part of succession planning and to develop employees in ways that complement traditional acquisition of specific skills/competencies (*Management Mentors, 2015*). Mentoring programs are generally a long-term investment designed to provide individuals the opportunity to learn from industry or organizational leaders who are high performing, well-known, and/or have a track record of enhancing performance.

Mentoring can take various forms. Whether via phone, over email, or through visits to the mentee's workplace, it should be tailored to the mentee's needs. Distance mentoring (also referred to as virtual, remote, or tele-mentoring) may be an option when the costs of face-to-face meeting are prohibitive. A distinct benefit of distance mentoring is that it can introduce both parties—the mentor and the mentee—to practices in other countries or regions (*Phillips-Jones, 2003*).

Identifying qualified mentors is crucial to getting successful results. A mentor may be found at a similar CSO in a more advanced stage of maturity or in the private sector. Marketplaces can serve as an additional source for mentorship services as well. Regardless of the source, the mentor is someone who can provide knowledge, experience, and open doors to otherwise out-of-reach opportunities (*"Coaching and Mentoring – The Difference," 2015*).

41. Anthony K. Tjan, *What the Best Mentors Do* (Harvard Business Review, February 27, 2017).

At a Glance

Networking Events/Exposure Visits/Conferences

Goal: To increase the knowledge base and foster an environment wherein participants can network and engage with each other

Who Participates: Like-minded people with common goals. Participants would likely have similar knowledge and capacity levels

Level of Cost: Low; costs associated with facilitating a training event, possible facilitator fee

Facilitation Requirements: Minimal; networking events can be facilitated by people of all levels

Time Requirements: Networking events usually last one to three hours; exposure visits' duration depends on the objectives and can range from a half a day to one week

Capacity Development Stage: Nascent, Emergent, Mature

An aim of conferences, exposure visits or networking gatherings is to promote the development of relationships among groups or individuals who share similar interests and participate in shared events. Such gatherings provide a space for development practitioners to connect and share knowledge and ideas—in other words, to network.

An exposure visit is a small-scale meeting that enables a small group of people from one organization to visit, observe, and learn from others doing similar work at a peer organization. Exposure visits root new learning in first-hand experience and observation, stimulating the spread of good practices and sparking innovation (*Pearson, 2011*).

Other, larger gatherings, such as conferences or events can strengthen existing professional networks and reach broad audiences at a relatively low cost. Any event that brings together like-minded stakeholders is useful for generating social capital among several (prospective) partners for the purpose of building a network. Exposure visits and networking events do not have to have geographical limits; they can be conducted on a regional or global scale, physically or virtually.

At a Glance
Peer-To-Peer Learning

Goal: To create a forum where individuals or organizations sharing similar skillsets or capacity levels are able to share ideas and knowledge for a mutually beneficial outcome

Who Participates: Individuals or organizations

Cost Requirements: Travel costs associated with convening peers

Facilitation Requirements: Trained facilitator is recommended in certain circumstances.

Time Requirements: Varies based on organizations and objective

Capacity Development Stage: Nascent, Emergent, Mature

Peer-to-peer (or practitioner-to-practitioner) learning brings individuals with similar skills and responsibilities together to share tools and resources and exchange lessons learned, with the intention of applying this learning to their organizations. By design, it fosters a safe environment where participants can test ideas and learn from each other's experiences. Peer-to-peer learning can strengthen coordination within a sector by building participant awareness of other projects that may offer opportunities for collaboration or coordination, or strategies they might build on. In this way, peer-to-peer learning can be effective at building and reinforcing networks.

Peer-to-peer learning can take many forms; from ongoing communities of practice (CoPs) that convene regularly, to one-off meetings among different country offices within an organization; to exchange visits where staff from one organization visit a similar group to observe how it operates; to an event during which several organizations or teams within an organization meet to share their work.

A peer-to-peer learning intervention is most appropriate when there is a scarcity of cross-learning opportunities among organizations that are conducting similar activities. Peer learning is most effective when learning objectives are clear and peer engagements are structured to maximize these objectives.[42] That is why, whether bringing participants together physically or virtually, it is best to engage a trained facilitator who can guide participants through sharing, reflecting, and problem-solving activities. In addition, it is important to factor in time for participants to process the learning and plan how to apply it when they return to their home organizations.

Illustrations:
ICNL: Partnership for HIV-free Survival

Peer-to-peer learning is used by diverse organizations to build knowledge on a wide range of topics. The International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) provided peer-to-peer fellowships and grants to allow CSO leaders in Yemen to visit similar organizations in Lebanon and Egypt to learn about advocacy models from 2010 to 2013. In 2013, ICNL published the final report[43] detailing the activity's accomplishments, many of which it attributed to peer interaction. In 2016, the Partnership for HIV-Free Survival project brought together staff from their Kenya and Tanzania country teams for a knowledge exchange visit in which they shared data and progress and visited sites, then participated in periods of reflection and breakout discussions on key learning topics. Each country team then came up with action plans for applying their ideas and new knowledge moving forward.[44]

42. *A Guide to Peer-to-Peer Learning: How to make peer-to-peer learning and support effective in the public sector (DRAFT)* (M. Andrews and N. Manning. Effective Institutions Platform, 2016).
43. *Ibid.*
44. Wolster P., Deka S. Stern A., *Tanzania-Kenya Knowledge Exchange for the Partnership for HIV-Free Survival: Reflections and recommendations*, Technical Report (USAID Assist Project, Bethesda, MD: University Research Co., LLC CURC, 2016).

Like clustering, a crucial element of peer-to-peer learning is a broker/facilitator (perhaps a consulting organization) who manages the process. For instance, Collaboration for Impact (CFI) is an organization that teaches others to respond to complexity through effective collaboration. CFI models its support around a Collective Impact Framework and employs a methodology encompassing five key elements, one of which is the utilization of a "backbone organization(s) with staff and specific set of skills to serve the entire initiative and coordinate participating organizations and agencies."

The role of the backbone organization is solely to coordinate the various dimensions and collaborators involved in the initiative. Supporting backbone infrastructure is essential to ensuring the collective impact effort maintains momentum and facilitates impact.[45]

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45. *The Collective Impact Framework*, Collaboration for Impact.

At a Glance

Resource Hubs

Goal: To provide CSOs tools, resources on best practices, and access to experts

Who Participates: CSOs, expert consultants, implementing partners (IPs)

Cost Requirements: Cost of hosting a web platform, maintaining the site and updating its content; or cost of maintaining the facility if resource hub is in person

Facilitation Requirements: May need to train CSOs to use and maintain the resource hub

Time Requirements: Time for a developer and designer to set up the portal, and for CSOs to learn how to use and maintain it

Capacity Development Stage: Nascent, Emergent, Mature

A resource hub is an online or in-person platform or centralized convening space that offers CSOs information, resources, and tools. It may include e-Learning courses, sector news, and technical papers as well as a platform for users to share data and experiences. For any organization looking to improve by borrowing best practices, resource hubs can be especially useful. Depending on the hub's sponsor(s), access may be free-of-charge and open to the public or require a fee. Even if free, individuals and organizations may be asked to enter information and register to allow the sponsors to better understand the hub's audience. At its best, a hub serves as a repository of information, a platform for collaboration, a central resource-management tool, and place to house and disseminate best practices.

It is important that a hub be maintained and the content updated to engage users and meet their needs. To do so, sponsors must promote ownership by local actors and users so that after projects close out, the hub continues to generate a return on the investment.

Illustration: Open Development Cambodia[46]

Open Development Cambodia (ODC) is an "open data" website developed by the East-West Management Institute (EWMI) to serve as a centralized location for up-to-date, accurate information about Cambodia and its economic and social development. Its free-to-use, open data platform guarantees materials and information are available to all users, with the hope that the data will facilitate research and communication among the public, private companies, civil society, and governments.

ODC provides users with real-time information on a variety of development topics of relevance to Cambodian stakeholders, including issues related to land, the environment, the economy, infrastructure, aid and development, governance, urbanization, and social development. It also tracks current and past legislation, links to various news outlets for up-to-date developments in the country and region, and offers a variety of maps and data toolkits customizable for use by a variety of civil society groups. ODC promotes transparency and accountability in Cambodia's development sector and encourages CS collaboration and participation in decision making by making data readily available to all stakeholders.

46. *Open Development Cambodia* (East-West Management Institute, 2015).

Illustration: Kenya Civil Society Portal for Health[47]

The Kenya Civil Society Portal for Health, created by the FANIKISHA project, is an online platform that offers resources to CSOs and serves as a discussion forum on current local capacity building approaches. Resources available through the portal include free e-Learning courses and institutional strengthening standards, tools, and policies. It is also an "online marketplace" of institutional strengthening experts in Kenya. Experts are available to CSOs through the online portal, as well as through periodic face-to-face marketplace events; all have been vetted to ensure they have the requisite experience for providing technical expertise to CSOs. Through the online portal, CSOs and experts can interact directly with each other and agree on services to be provided by technical experts. This marketplace is founded on the idea that CD is most successful when it is demand-driven and integrated with CSOs' day-to-day work and programming. FANIKISHA trained CSOs on use of this portal to ensure they could take full advantage of it according to their needs.

Illustration: Moldova Partnerships for Sustainable Civil Society[48]

The Moldova Partnerships for Sustainable Civil Society project worked to provide resources to CSOs by creating a database of capacity-building experts and trainers, enabling CSOs to save time and effort accessing information on trainings and available CD trainers. The database also allows CSOs to upload information on their own programming and to share resources with one another. One CSO utilizing the platform issued invitations to environmental CSOs to join a national Thematic Working Group to share experiences—a form of peer-to-peer learning in which individuals and organizations built their own capacities to identify and overcome challenges by learning from others.

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47. *Kenya Civil Society Portal For Health* (FANIKISHA Project, 2012).
48. *Moldova Partnerships for Sustainable Civil Society* (FHI 360).

At a Glance

Social Networking

Goal: To help CSOs build networks and share information

Who Participates: Individuals and organizations

Level of Cost: Cost of consulting external experts to develop a social media strategy, plus cost of generating/monitoring media content

Facilitation Requirements: Moderator to generate and manage content

Time Requirements: Varies based on extent of social media goals

Capacity Development Stage: Nascent, Emergent, Mature

Online social networking via popular platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube can help CSOs reinforce networks for support and information sharing. It can serve to push information out, share good practices among CSOs in a sector, promote greater transparency and accountability, and help organizations engage with beneficiaries, especially segments of the population who are hard to reach through traditional media. Furthermore, it can help create dialogue and social cohesion around an issue, which is especially relevant for advocacy work.

Counterpart International's *Guide to Strengthening Civil Society through Social Media* explains how CSOs can utilize popular international, regional, or country platforms. The *Guide* provides specific ideas tailored to the most popular platforms: for example, if a CSO posts about one of its activities on its Facebook page, fans of the page may begin asking questions via Facebook. At that point, the CSO could launch a Facebook group to share information on the program, address community concerns, and connect with individuals and other organizations for collaboration. In addition, many social media platforms have programs designed for nonprofits, with resources and advice on how to use their platforms to engage their target audience(s).

It takes investment in both technical and human resources to build a social media strategy and online presence, as well as to maintain online engagement in an organization's work, and thus, requires buy-in from a CSO's leadership.

Given the significant resource investment, it can be a valuable area in which to engage technical assistance through expert consultative support. Some implementers have delivered trainings on utilizing social media, which often cover topics such as using social media for advocacy, developing content, and marketing.

Illustration: Promoting Active Citizen Engagement (PACE)[49]

The Promoting Active Citizen Engagement (PACE) program was a three-year (2011–2014), USAID-funded project in Lebanon with the primary goal of strengthening the capacity of CS through civic advocacy and citizen participation. PACE worked throughout Lebanon to reach broad constituencies, targeting particularly vulnerable groups, in partnership with local organizations. PACE worked in conflict-prone and marginalized regions to form coalitions of CSOs to promote administrative decentralization and empower municipalities to better meet the needs of local constituents. PACE utilized strategic social media tactics as a tool for citizen journalism, mobilization, monitoring, and advocacy.

49. *Promoting Active Citizen Engagement* (Management Systems International, 2011).

At a Glance
Training Workshops/Boot Camps

Goal: To increase participants' knowledge/skill base and foster an environment where they can network and engage with each other

Who Participates: Like-minded people with common goals; participants would likely have similar knowledge and capacity levels

Level of Cost: Low to high; costs associated with logistics for and facilitation of the event, for example, meeting space, facilitator fees, equipment (computers, projector), materials, food

Facilitation Requirements: Knowledgeable, experienced trainer(s); boot camps also require experts in their respective fields

Time Requirements: Duration depends on the objectives, content, and skill level of participants; can range from a half day to one week

Capacity Development Stage: Nascent, Emergent, Mature

Training gathers a selected group of participants at a single event so that they can learn or improve skills or gain knowledge in a specific discipline. Typically training addresses issues of common concern to a target group. Training may take many forms, from hour- or day-long events focused on a single skill, to multi-day, intensive boot camps that develop skills in a larger context, to week-long conferences on innovation or policy. The training may cater to several individuals from a single organization or to a small or large number of individuals from multiple organizations.

Workshops

Workshops can be a cost-effective approach to increasing knowledge and building skills. Unless they include an application component and follow-up opportunities, however, the long-term effects of such stand-alone events may be fleeting. The effectiveness of workshops can be increased by embedding training activities into long-term programs such as an ongoing series or using a range of capacity building interventions in tandem, such as coaching and mentoring (*UN Environment Programme, 2006*).

To optimize the effectiveness of training, workshops should:

- use appropriate and professional pedagogic design, including opportunities to practice learned skills;
- provide follow-up support to trainees to facilitate implementation of knowledge and skills acquired;
- anchor content in a diagnosis of institutional and organizational capacity gaps and/or formal assessment of participant training needs, and
- select participants to meet relevant criteria (*The World Bank, 2008*). In addition, the facilitation style should employ interactive methodologies to accommodate different types of learners, and the learning material must be relevant to the participants.

Limited measurement information can be gleaned from training workshops. Measurement is often limited to knowledge testing, or in more comprehensive cases, knowledge, attitude, and practice (KAP) studies. A KAP study is a strategically timed assessment following an intervention aimed to measure changes in knowledge, attitude, and practice. As it relates to a training workshop, changes in knowledge can be measured immediately following the conclusion of the training.

At a pre-determined time, training participants can be surveyed to understand their attitudes toward the training topics, and how they are utilizing the knowledge they gained during the training workshop.

Boot Camps

Boot camps are intensive, multi-dimensional, days-long events that blend training with field experience, combining the power of self-directed learning with that of group learning. Instead of a standard workshop's in-person presentation in a classroom environment complemented by group exercises and take-home materials, the core boot camp experience combines expert instructors with extensive one-to-one support from mentors, and peer-driven learning from team exercises.

Boot camps often require participants to attend prerequisite webinar courses to prepare before the event. The event itself includes hands-on work, individual projects, one-on-one tutoring, team projects, tutorials, presentations, and guest speakers. Most importantly, the experience not only teaches participants the fundamentals of the topic, but also teaches them how to be resourceful and continue learning once they return home.

Given the common lines of work shared by individuals who attend boot camps, they also provide a networking opportunity. Participants can form connections that become long-term, knowledge-sharing relationships.

Illustration: Startup Arewa[50]

Startup Arewa organizes CD boot camps for aspiring tech entrepreneurs in Nigeria. These boot camps cover a range of topics relevant to innovation-driven entrepreneurship, and each training is provided by a professional tutor. Startup Arewa's approach is not limited to boot camps and instead reflects an integrated approach. Boot camp participants can also attend other initiatives such as mentorship or capacity building programs ("What We Do," Startup Arewa).

Illustration: University of Michigan in Bratislava[51]

An NGO Leadership Workshop hosted by the University of Michigan in Bratislava, Slovakia, in 2015 was designed to gather leaders of CSOs in countries whose authoritarian regimes had recently collapsed. This workshop, which included CSO leaders from over 20 countries, focused on building managerial capacity and skills in vision and strategy formation, communication with stakeholders, financial management, resource mobilization, and proposal writing.

50. *Startup Arewa* (2017).
51. *The Weiser Center for Emerging Democracies and the William Davidson Institute* (University of Michigan, 2015).

Section 4: Measurement and Learning

Similar to applying interventions at different stages of organizational maturity based on identified capacity gaps and strengths, CSO capacity assessment tools—primarily those presented for Nascent organizations—can be used across different stages. This section recommends tools that are most appropriate for measuring capacity and the impact of interventions at each of the three stages of organizational growth.

Measurement and learning capture an organization's progress on the continuum of maturity, based on interventions that help to build capacity (as discussed in Section 3). USAID's HICD methodology offers recommendations on how to prepare a performance strengthening plan to address performance issues and advance CSOs along the organizational maturity spectrum. We have included a summary of this guidance at the start of this section; Annex 3 also includes the HICD template for a sample performance strengthening plan.

Performance Strengthening Plans

When developing performance strengthening plans based on assessment results, program designers should take into consideration the following recommendations:[52]

- → CSOs should review the assessment results with their assessment facilitator and a cross-section of the organization's stakeholders.
- → Assessment results—and the corresponding plans—should focus on the root causes of performance gaps to address and performance strengths to enhance, not on their "symptoms."
- → The facilitator should design a performance strengthening plan in collaboration with those CSO staff identified as committed and available to work on the CD process.
- → CSOs should have decision-making power over the action steps that they would like to implement, keeping in mind their CD budget as well as the availability of local service providers to engage in delivering some of the CD interventions. However, not all action steps will require outside service delivery; some may be as basic as "simple adjustments to processes or policies."[53]
- → CSOs should also commit to dedicating their own resources (human, space, and funds—if available), where feasible, to carrying out the action steps.
- → These actions are formalized into a performance strengthening plan, with corresponding milestones, individuals responsible for various steps, and performance indicators to measure progress.
- → The process of developing the plan should take no more than a few weeks. However, implementing the plan may take months or years.

52. Recommendations are adapted from the *HICD Handbook* (USAID, 2010).
53. *Ibid*, p. 19.

Nascent Organizations

There are many tools to measure the impact of interventions targeting Nascent organizations. Although these tools vary in methodology and use, they all focus on related measures such as the functionality of internal systems, overall operations, and human capabilities. More detail on each tool described below, as well as links to external resources, is included in Annex 2.

→ **USAID's Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA)** facilitated tool is widely used by Nascent organizations. It describes standard characteristics of a well-managed organization, assesses the current state of its functions measured against the standards, and helps an organization create an improvement plan to achieve these standards. Its standard indicators measure output-level results and reflect pre-determined interventions and donor data needs. Thus, the resulting capacity-building interventions that emerge in this approach may seem donor-directed because the "identified needs" at the assessment stage are based on pre-determined capacity areas—those included in the OCA tool—with minimal to no input from target organizations. Program designers instead may want to consider one of the many iterations of the OCA available online, including Pact's and Root Change's OCA tools, which allow for more direct input from CSOs, such as the OCA tool design phase. For instance, the facilitator's guide for both of these online versions include step-by-step instructions for how to work with CSOs for these groups to define their own capacity areas, and thus, have a greater role in shaping the process.

→ **McKinsey Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT)** is a self-assessment tool that helps nonprofit organizations evaluate their mission and vision, strategy, organizational skills (such as planning and fundraising), human resources (including board, staff, and volunteers), systems and infrastructure, organizational structure, and culture. NGOs commonly use this tool to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement in capacity, as well as to measure changes in capacity over time.

→ **TCC Group Core Capacity Assessment Tool (CCAT)** is a for-fee online survey that measures organizational effectiveness in four "core competencies": leadership, adaptability, management, and technology,[54] as well as aspects of organizational culture. Because the pool of respondents is limited to an organization's leadership—senior management and board members—CCAT may be considered less participatory, the benefits and costs of which program designers should weigh when planning CD programming. Unlike the standard OCA tool, CCAT focuses not on performance of organizational functions (such as administration, HR, or financial management), but rather on how well an organization approaches learning, leadership, adapting to change, and prioritizing decisions.

→ **Financial Management Tool (FinMAT)** is a no-cost, organizational self-assessment tool that measures financial management capacity, which some program designers may find particularly useful at certain points of the program cycle. The tool helps groups assess their financial management capacity, identify areas for improvement, develop specific action plans to address shortcomings, and monitor improvement. It is meant to be used by organizations that manage their own finances and can be conducted at the headquarters level as well as at field offices. FinMAT works through an interactive Excel spreadsheet that provides a platform for collecting and summarizing technical information about an organization's financial management systems and practices. Having a self-calculating Excel worksheet can save time and make it much easier for facilitators to present assessment findings. A detailed manual and the tool, developed by Management Sciences for Health, can be downloaded in English, French, and Spanish.

54. The term technology is not applied here in the literal sense. CCAT considers technology the resources that an organization uses to function and be effective, such as human resources, skills, facilities and materials.

Discussion

Experts in the CD field point out that an OCA can serve as both a tool for measurement and learning, as well as a capacity intervention in and of itself for the target organization, especially when CSOs take the lead in designing the capacity areas to be assessed (*Root Change, 2009; Pact, 2012*). For instance, participating in an OCA can promote open communication, learning, and professional development for staff at different levels across the target organization. Furthermore, contributing to an OCA allows these staff to not only reflect upon and assess their organization's performance, but also play an active role in charting its future via action planning—thereby promoting their sense of ownership in the process and commitment to playing a role in its success (*Root Change, 2009*). OCA action plans (also known generically as an institutional or performance strengthening plan) typically include milestones to track progress, and target organizations may choose to "re-OCA" (or re-assess their capacity) periodically to demonstrate improvement. Because the action plan requires tracking the target group's performance milestones over time, individual staff may develop their abilities in performance monitoring by taking the lead on particular indicators. Program designers should take all of these advantages into consideration when envisioning and planning their CD activity.

There are certain limitations to OCA that must be recognized and mitigated by program designers who choose to use this tool. For instance, although OCA recommends the use of an outside facilitator, organizations without access to such a facilitator (or without an awareness of the OCA facilitator's manual) may use it as a self-assessment, which monitoring and evaluation (M&E) experts often question as less rigorous than an externally led evaluation (or assessment). Program designers should emphasize at the activity outset the importance of using an outside facilitator. Furthermore, upon reassessing a CSO for the first time, such as one to two years after the initial assessment, OCA facilitators will often observe a capacity "dip" in a group's overall score due to the fact that 1) during the initial self-assessment, stakeholders inflated their organization's ratings out of apprehension over loss of funding, or 2) during the re-assessment, stakeholders spend more time considering their organization's capacities and are more open regarding its true deficits and strengths. Program designers can help CSOs anticipate this phenomenon by advising them of it in advance.

Illustrative Indicators

Illustrative indicators that CSOs and program designers can use to measure CD of Nascent organizations include those in Table 7.

Table 7: Illustrative Indicators that Measure Nascent Interventions

Output	Outcome	Impact
• Convene a CD Marketplace startup group for participatory strategy development • Develop a financial system (banks, voucher system) • Incorporate transparency mechanisms to allow for customer feedback	• Improved management practices • Increased human capacity to maintain systems • Strengthened inter-operational systems	• Clear governance for relevant organizations • Organizational capacity assessment score or pre-award survey score (such as a Non-U.S. Pre-Award Survey-NUPAS) • Reduced operational risk and increased compliance

Nascent Stage Case Study: Building Local Capacity In Civil Initiative Support

Organization: FHI 360

Tool Used: Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA)

FHI 360 used an adapted version of the OCA as part of its ongoing USAID-funded Jordan Civic Initiatives Support (CIS) project (2013–2018) to support technical capacity building of local CSOs working to cultivate a strong civil society in Jordan. The tailored OCA, called the Institutional Capacity Assessment Tool (ICAT), was used twice with most USAID CIS grantees at two intervals: initial baseline assessment at the beginning of their grant, and for a post assessment conducted around the end date of their grants. Some organizations that were engaged in different programs received three assessments to evaluate progress over the life of project. In addition to measuring partner capacity, the assessments provided partner-specific information that guided the technical assistance FHI 360 provided.

FHI 360 credits the repeated OCAs and ongoing technical assistance for facilitating appropriate capacity building support. One direct result has been increased participation of female project managers and volunteers among partner organizations—one partner has engaged more than two times as many female volunteers in Year 2 compared with Year 1.

The FHI 360 team tailored the OCA tool framework to cover seven key domains, each with sub-areas to suit the Jordan context. The seven domains focus on organizational development (governance and legal structure, financial management and internal control systems, administration and procurement systems, human resources systems, program management, project performance management, organizational management and sustainability). The tool was also adapted to integrate questions related to disability rights in each of these seven sections, and for organizations whose core mission includes disability rights, an eighth dimension was added that addressed this issue thoroughly.

The process included a two-day facilitated self-assessment session on the premises of the organization that included representation of board members and staff at all levels. Each section was scored on a scale of 1–5, with 1–1.9 labeled as low capacity, and 4–4.9 being strong capacity. The facilitated sessions were followed by a third-party validation component, which allows for an external appraisal of the CSO to measure the quantitative and qualitative improvements they make and reduces any potential gaps or bias in the results caused by the learning process of the CSO or organizational turnover that may happen between the “pre” and “post” application of the ICAT.

USAID CIS then shared results with the CSO to define their capacity development priorities and the nature of technical assistance needed to address these gaps. For each partner an individual outcome-based capacity development plan (CDP) was developed to ensure technical assistance addressed identified gaps.

To date, and for the nine post ICATs that were completed, improvements in partner capacity ranged from 4 percent to 40 percent depending on the initial capacity of the organization.

Emergent Organizations

Measurement tools for program designers and managers to track interventions for Emergent organizations can have a broad scope; indicators can measure the functionality of internal systems while measuring outcome-level results. Emergent organizations become less focused on "how many" (output) as they transition toward "how well" (outcome). Aspects of quality and value generation in their relevant sector are increasingly prioritized. Environmental forces and actors (and their interests) are further prioritized to increase organizational responsiveness to the environment. The Organizational Performance Index, fully outlined in Annex 2, is a measurement tool that falls within this category and that program designers should consider for Emergent organizations.

- **The Organizational Performance Index (OPI)** centers on processes and the extent to which outputs of CD (such as those measured by an OCA) support positive changes in the way organizations "deliver services, relate to their stakeholders and react to changes in the external environment." (*Pact Organizational Capacity Assessment Handbook*) OPI measures four areas: effectiveness (achieving results and meeting standards), efficiency (delivering services and enhancing reach), relevance (mobilizing resources and increasing social capital), and sustainability (engaging stakeholders and learning) (Using Organizational Performance Index). It looks at OCA-type factors, such as an organization's use of work plans and budgets, but expands on these to include characteristics such as an organization's use of social capital. OPI, originally developed by Pact, has been modified by USAID to incorporate Agency terminology and increase emphasis on measuring how capacity inputs impact program outcomes and cost efficiency. Although the OPI may be used independently, it is most powerful when used alongside existing Capacity 1.0 tools. This partnering of tools is conducive to a more holistic measurement—focusing both on internal capacity (output of CD activities) and change in performance (outcome of CD activities).

Another tool that program designers can consider for measuring outcomes of CSOs at the Emergent stage, not annexed to this manual, is:

- **Participatory Organizational Evaluation Tool (POET), Education Development Center and Pact with UNDP.** POET is two concepts rolled into one: a tool and a process. As an organizational capacity assessment tool, CSOs use POET to measure and profile organizational capacities and consensus levels in seven critical areas. As an organizational development process, CSOs, as part of a cohort, use POET to build capacity across the cohort by bringing staff together in cross-functional, cross-hierarchical groups for open exchange; to identify divergent viewpoints to foster growth; to create consensus around future organizational CD activities; and, to select, implement and track organizational change and development strategies. The POET can be employed across the three organizational maturity stages. When used for individual organizations, the POET can be applied both for Nascent and Emergent organizations. Alternatively, when the POET is employed within a cohort, it is best suited for Emergent or Mature organizations.

Discussion

Although tools such as OPI provide program designers with a method for measuring a broader set of CD areas, Emergent interventions target dimensions less amenable to standard measurement and, therefore, are more difficult to measure and generalize from one organization to the next. For example, consider an intervention that helps build learning networks. There is no standard set of criteria to define a learning network, and organizations define and employ learning networks in various ways. Generally, they enable people and organizations to exchange experiences and horizontally strengthen capacities. Connecting people for knowledge sharing and learning has a positive impact on their ability to improve organizational performance and achieve their goals. However, given the varied nature of learning networks, no standard measurement tool exists to assess the CD achieved through these networks.

→ **Complexity-Aware Monitoring.** Alternatives to traditional performance monitoring and evaluation are being developed to enable organizations to measure less traditional or more complex interventions. This approach, which is gaining traction especially within the USAID community, is called Complexity-Aware Monitoring.

Complexity-Aware Monitoring applies three key principles:

- it synchronizes monitoring with the pace of change;
- it attends to performance monitoring's three blind spots;[55] and
- it considers relationships, perspectives, and boundaries (*Complexity-Aware Monitoring Discussion Note (Brief)*).[56]

Complexity-Aware Monitoring allows organizations to effectively monitor activities in the absence of specific indicators, or where cause and effect are not clearly understood.

Examples for program designers to consider include:

→ **Outcome Mapping (OM)** is a useful tool for assessing impacts of an intervention on actors beyond the primary intended beneficiaries. The OM process starts with the project team describing the anticipated changes in behavior, relationships, or actions among intended beneficiaries, as well as among other individuals or groups that may be influenced by the intervention according to the intervention's theory of change. Qualitative methods are then used to intentionally monitor changes according to the projected changes. This method seeks to assess contribution (rather than attribution) of an intervention to any observed changes. In the case of a capacity building intervention highly tailored to the needs of a specific organization, OM might be useful in both defining anticipated changes and tracking those changes ("Resources" and "Outcome Mapping").

An example of how Outcome Mapping is utilized is a project in Rwanda funded by the Embassy of Sweden in which four international Civil Society partners and more than 25 local Civil Society groups employed OM as an alternative to logical frameworks for their democracy and human rights and peacebuilding activities. This transition, which moved away from traditional end-of-term reporting of quantitative results, and toward a learning-based management approach that aimed for transformative change over time, involved all staff and encouraged implementers and decision-makers to reflect on what worked and what did not, and to adapt accordingly. Reflective sessions comprising implementers and community members were regularly held to discuss and reflect on whether activities were having expected effects and allowed for a better understanding of the effects of outputs rather than focusing on the outputs themselves.[57]

55. The three identified blind spots are a broader range of outcomes associated with the intervention of system; alternative causes from other actors and factors; and the full range of non-linear pathways of contribution.
56. *Complexity Aware Monitoring: Discussion Note* (USAID, 2016).
57. Bjuremalm, Helena and William Sjöstedt, *Flexibility, learning and ownership: new trends in democracy assistance, results management and evaluation* (International IDEA Discussion Paper 19/2016).

→ **Outcome Harvesting:** Outcome Harvesting does not measure progress toward a result, but instead collects outcome-level evidence (largely defined as changes in behavior) and "works backwards" to determine how an intervention might have contributed to these changes.

Outcome Harvesting is useful in situations when it is difficult to define most of what an intervention aims to achieve, or even what specific actions will be taken over a multi-year period. Outcome Harvesting consists of six steps as described in Table 8.

Table 8: Outcome Harvesting Process[58]

Stage	Key Actions Taken
Design the harvest	• Identify useable questions to guide the harvest. • Agree on information to be collected and included in the outcome description. • Agree on the changes in the social actors and how the change agent influenced them.
Gather data and draft outcome descriptions	• Glean information about changes that have occurred in social actors and how the change agent contributed to these changes. • Write preliminary outcome descriptions with questions for review and clarification by the change agent.
Formulate outcome descriptions	• Engage with change agents to review the draft outcome descriptions, identify and formulate additional outcomes, and classify all outcomes.
Substantiate	• Elicit views of independent individuals knowledgeable about the outcome(s) and how they were achieved.
Analyze and interpret	• Organize outcome descriptions through a database. • Analyze and interpret the data. • Provide evidence-based answers to the useable harvesting questions.
Use findings	• Propose points for discussion to harvest users, including how the users might make use of findings.

Illustrative Indicators

Illustrative indicators for program designers and managers to measure CD of Emergent approaches can include those in Table 9.

58. Wilson-Grau, Ricardo and Heather Britt, _Outcome Harvesting_ (New York, NY: Ford Foundation, 2012).

Table 9: Illustrative Indicators Measuring Emergent Interventions

Output	Outcome	Impact
• Service delivery standards established • Service delivery targets established • Number of groups trained in conflict mediation/resolution skills or consensus-building techniques • Number of consensus building forums • Number of USG-supported activities designed to promote or strengthen the civic participation of women • Number of human rights organizations trained and supported	• Quality and scale of service delivery • Number of USG-assisted consensus-building processes resulting in an agreement	• Result of service delivery/ intervention on target beneficiaries • Changes in societal conflict and instability • Changes in the state of the NGO sector's sustainability over time

Mature Organizations

Interventions at this stage aim to strengthen an organization's interactions with its external environment and peers; accordingly, measurement of Mature interventions moves beyond internal operations to focus on measuring an organization's connectivity to larger systems (such as community and government). Systems mapping is most useful as a snapshot for measuring and tracking system changes. Program designers will also find Network Analysis, such as the Social Network Analysis (SNA) methodology, helpful.

→ **Social Network Analysis** consists of mapping relationships to assess where organizations lie in terms of power and connections. This information can be used to identify central individuals and organizations, as well as those isolated from knowledge sharing, then to build targeted capacity-strengthening initiatives that maximize existing partnerships and improve knowledge-sharing ties. These tools can also be used to establish a baseline and monitor the development of networks over time. Root Change, which has pioneered social network analysis tools, has suggested that an organization's connections to its network are a good proxy for organizational capacity, as measured by typical OCA-type performance indicators; however, more research is needed to test the use of network analysis in this way *(Bloom, 2013)*.

→ **Systems Mapping.** USAID recommends that program designers and CSO managers use systems mapping, such as its "Five Rs" line of inquiry,[59] as a means of identifying and understanding how relevant actors within a bounded, local system work together to achieve a particular result. The system in question usually encompasses actors at a higher level than just a single organization, such as across a sector or civil society.[60] For instance, one example of a local system might be the crime and violence prevention sector, in which USAID partners and sub-awardees, local communities, media, government, CSOs, law enforcement, the legal community, and educational institutions all play a role in attaining the desired outcome of decreased crime and violence. Using systems mapping as a measurement tool, program designers can discern the role and relationships of an actor (such as a particular CSO) within a system—including how influential that actor is[61]—in a snapshot of the system at that particular moment. Revisiting the systems-mapping exercise, such as after investing in efforts to strengthen relationships, implementers could then measure whether that particular actor's role has changed or its influence has increased.

59. *Results, Roles, Relationships, Rules, and Resources: The Five Rs Framework in the Program Cycle* (USAID Learning Lab, 2016).
60. USAID, 2014.
61. Eva Schiffer, *Introduction to Net Mapping* (USAID, 2015).

Other tools program designers can use to measure outcome of Mature approaches, not annexed to this manual, include:

→ **Key Informant Interviews of Experts.** This free, qualitative method permits interviewers to collect information on "the what" and "the why" of organizational performance and sector standing. It is very effective and can be tailored to the context.

Panel of Experts refers to a static panel of experts questioned at intervals regarding strength and capacity. This method has been used to assess the media sector and could be adapted for application to well-known or influential organizations that such experts would recognize and have enough information to assess. USAID's CSO Sustainability Index (CSOSI)[62] is one example of an expert panel. The CSOSI evaluates the overall level of development of the CSO sector through measuring seven different dimensions:

1. Legal Environment
2. Organizational Capacity
3. Financial Viability
4. Advocacy
5. Service Provision
6. Infrastructure and
7. Public Image

As noted above, network connections and social capital have been proposed as proxies for organizational effectiveness (*Root Change, 2013*). There is room for testing this in various sectors and applying it to networks as a whole, rather than to individual organizations.

Illustrative Indicators

Illustrative indicators that program designers and managers can use to measure CD of Mature organizations can include those described in Table 10.

For a list of the resources incorporated in this *Guide*, the next section. For a more detailed look at USAID's HICD Methodology and various assessment tools for measurement and learning, see this *Guide's* Annexes.

Table 10: Illustrative Indicators Measuring Mature Interventions

Output	Outcome	Impact
• Processes created to increase consensus and foster coalition and networks • Collaboration formally established among target organizations • Leadership recognized • Inter-institutional coordination meetings organized	• Improved information sharing among organizations • Consensus reached among different agencies on important topics • Quality and appropriateness of policies	• New policies, plans and programs *adopted* • New policies and strategies *implemented*

62. CSOSI methodology, USAID.

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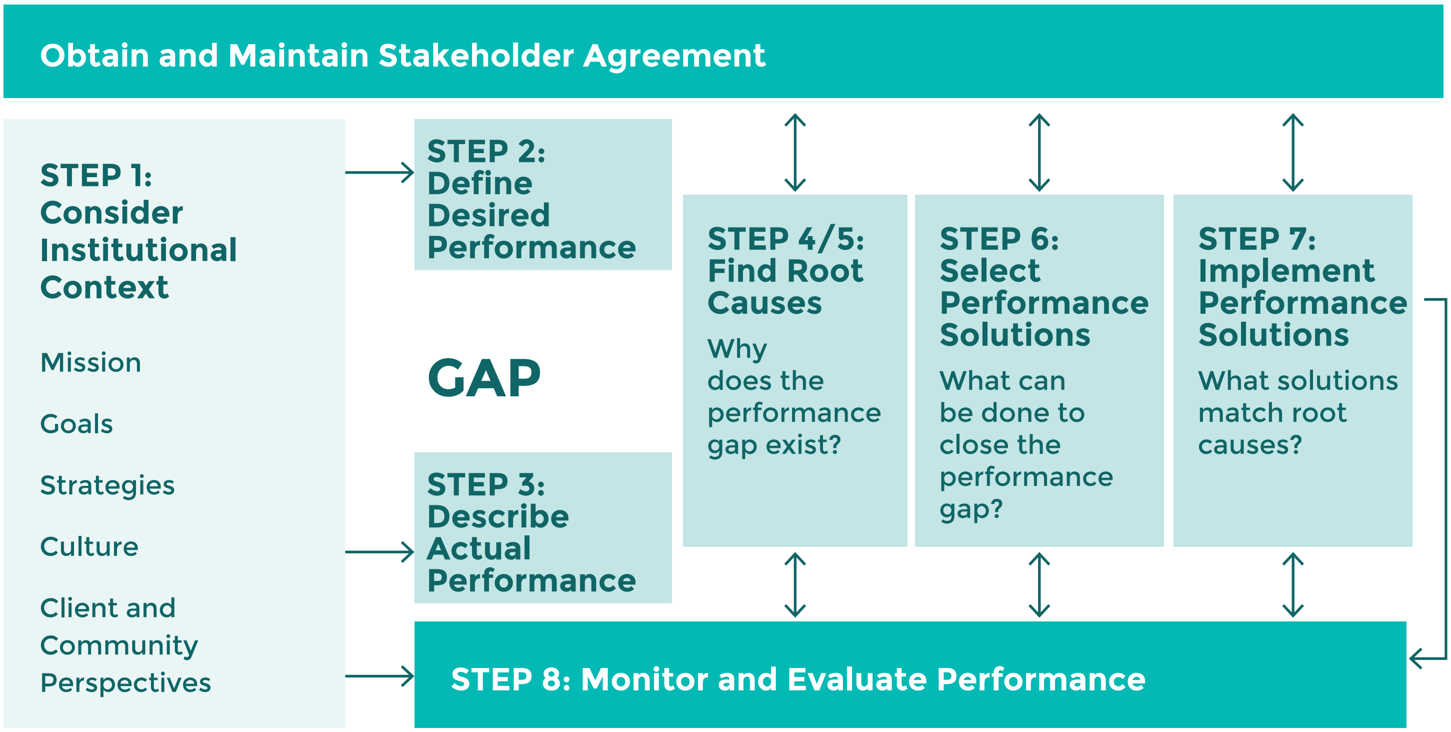
Annexes

Annex 1: USAID's HICD Methodology[63]

The HICD framework is based on the following Performance Improvement (PI) model that provides a systematic process for analyzing and improving performance.



Step 1: Consider the institutional context of the performance problem and get stakeholder agreement. Examine the total performance system in which the organization functions, including the mission, goals, strategies, and culture of the organization, and the perspectives of clients and communities. Foster and maintain stakeholder agreement on the objective of the HICD process and the plans for addressing performance problems.

Step 2: Define desired performance in measurable terms if possible. Desired performance takes into account international or national standards and the perspective of stakeholders. The description of desired performance creates a manageable set of objectives for the process.

Step 3: Describe actual performance. The description of actual performance as it relates to the desired performance is based on observations and interviews of staff members and clients and on reviews of records and other documents.

63. *Human and Institutional Capacity Development (HICD) Handbook* (USAID, 2010)

Step 4: Measure or describe the performance gap. The difference between desired and actual performance is the performance gap.

Step 5: Find the root causes of the performance gap. Analyze the reasons for the gap and identify the most basic reasons, or root causes. Root causes should be linked to the performance factors that affect people in doing their work: information; resources; incentives; knowledge/skills; capacity; and motives. Linking the root causes of performance gaps to specific factors helps HICD practitioners generate solutions that address the root causes.

Step 6: Select performance solutions. Consider recommendations for performance solutions to address the root cause of performance gaps and the related performance factors; then, rank and select these performance solutions according to cost, benefit, or other criteria.

Step 7: Implement performance solutions and track actual results. With support from stakeholders, as needed, the partner organization implements the selected performance solutions reinforcing transparency and managing the change process by consistently communicating the intended results of the HICD initiative to staff and stakeholders.

Step 8: Monitor and evaluate performance. The partner organization, in consultation with its stakeholders, keeps the solutions on track and evaluates performance on an ongoing basis to re-measure the performance gap and assess the effect of the solutions.

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Annex 2:
Capacity Development Measurement Tools

Although the following select measurement tools may be used regardless of where an organization falls on the CD continuum, some are more effective for the stage indicated. This compendium of tools is not exhaustive.

Nascent Organizational Measurement Approaches

At a Glance
Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) Tool

Type: Participatory self-assessment tool

Goal: Assess capacity in areas critical for effective organizational management; identify strengths and weaknesses, set future priorities and action plan

Application: Organizational learning and strategic action planning; donor partner selection, baseline and monitoring, may be used to assess a single organization or across a pool of partners to understand baseline capacity and capacity development over time

Cost Requirements: Free facilitator guides and pre-designed OCA surveys available online; fees vary for hiring external facilitator

Who Participates: Selected personnel across all departments, board member representative recommended

Facilitation Requirements: Internal or external facilitator with level of expertise in leading participatory sessions

Time Requirements: Typically, between 2 to 4 days

Overview

The OCA is an interactive self-assessment process that brings together staff across departments and levels to consider current internal capacities and functions through discussion-driven review and rating. It is not intended to be a scientific method; its value is in its collaborative, self-assessment process. The OCA focuses on the organization's internal capacity linked to structures, systems, policies, procedures, and practices. The OCA most often reviews seven components of organizational effectiveness, shown in the blue box, divided into 45 statements framed as measurable best practices in management and program implementation.

This process helps an organization identify strengths and weaknesses and set future priorities and action plans. Although the work toward team understanding and consensus on capacity is highly valuable, the process of action planning completed by the group at the close of the OCA is also a significant result. According to USAID, "The action planning is the most important part of the process, not the self-assessment scores" (*Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool: Facilitator's Copy*).

What is Measured?

Components of Organizational Effectiveness

1. Governance
2. Administration
3. Human Resource Management
4. Financial Management
5. Organizational Management
6. Program Management
7. Project Performance Management / Sustainability

There is no single correct way to administer the OCA, which can range from the use of a pre-designed online survey completed by staff, to several-day workshops either focused on the seven components or based on staff-identified internal factors, to externally facilitated processes that engage staff at certain points in the process. The OCA employs a guided self-assessment methodology that encourages active participation of staff. Bringing together different-level staff from different departments fosters team building and organizational learning. Group assessment of capacities is determined either through individual surveys that are then scored and tallied or through a process of discussion toward consensus. The framework can be linked to a capacity scale from 1.0 (limited capacity) to 4.0 (strong capacity) or capacity descriptions such as "basic," "moderate," and "robust." Free online facilitator guides are available for administering the OCA as are pre-designed online OCA surveys. A facilitator may complement group meetings or workshops with internal and external information sources and individual interviews.

During the last stage of the OCA, the group develops an action plan to address organizational weaknesses that emerge during the self-evaluation, as well as to achieve stated goals and advancement.

What Will the Assessment Results Tell You?

The OCA can be used by organizations for a wide range of purposes, including the following (*Pact, 1996*):

- → Serve as a diagnostic instrument to determine an organization's stage of maturity and identify specific changes needed to strengthen the organization's systems and governance.
- → Establish a baseline measure of the organization's existing structure and capabilities.
- → Monitor and evaluate progress toward the organizational development objectives.
- → Complement financial audits and program impact reports to provide a comprehensive evaluation of organizational viability or potential for growth.
- → Obtain a rapid assessment or "snapshot" of the organization by administering selective questions

If an OCA is completed periodically, it can answer the question "How have the organization's internal systems, policies and procedures changed because of CD activities?"

What Organizations Can Use the OCA?

Donors can use the OCA as an assessment for screening and selecting partners, for designing effective capacity building efforts for individual partners or a pool across a sector, and at baseline and endline to track partner organizational development for M&E as well as responsive management.

Methodology

General characteristics of two of the guiding OCA frameworks—those of USAID and of Pact—are outlined below using a selection of excerpts from a range of materials.

USAID OCA[64]

Typically, a full initial OCA takes two to three full days, depending on whether the NUPAS[65] -related items are included. OCA workshop should have inclusive participation of representatives from all levels within the organization (management, staff, and, sometimes, board members).

Self-Assessment Discussions

The methodology is a guided self-assessment that encourages active participation. The OCA is facilitated by USAID staff or contractors who help guide the partner organization through the process and ask probing questions to stimulate deeper discussions. Participants discuss institutional abilities, systems, procedures, and policies in various capacity areas. USAID generally recommends addressing all seven capacity areas:

1. Governance
2. Financial management
3. Administration
4. Human resources
5. Project management
6. Project performance management
7. Organizational management and sustainability

The facilitator and participants meet and discuss each area to determine where the organization sits along the continuum of implementation. Facilitators ask open-ended, probing questions to encourage group discussion. The group works to reach agreement on a set of "scores" based on statements clustered under capacity areas that reflect different capacity levels.

Scoring

Each level of capacity is determined by "answering" the series of questions/criteria. The scoring is guided by the participants' understanding of how their organizational processes work. The OCA tool includes a standard scoresheet with a "notes" column for entering justifications, examples, quality issues, and gaps. Staff reach a consensus on scores on a scale from 1 to 4: "low," "basic," "moderate," and "strong." The scores help to set priorities for the actions and are not used to judge performance. Facilitators use the information from the scoring and rationale sheets to define the issues and actions. The organization reviews or adjusts the problem statement and builds on the suggested actions to define action steps, responsibilities, timeframe, and possible technical assistance needs.

Action Planning

According to USAID, action planning is the most important part of the process, not the self-assessment scores. Through this the partner organization sets the priorities for addressing its weaknesses and the path forward.

The OCA tool includes a recommended format that can be modified for the action plan—a table that summarizes the results. It shows the action items that correspond to each subsection number. An initial priority is assigned to each action plan item using a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 as the highest priority). The participants agree on planned start and end dates, an internal lead person, and other key internal people tasked with moving the action item forward. They should also estimate the resources and technical assistance needed for each action item. The format also includes a final column, which is used later for monitoring the status of action plan items.

In the final plenary sessions, the participants present the action plan section by section and consider whether there is broad agreement or any changes should be made to the priorities, scheduling, responsibilities, or resources needed.

64. A range of guides and facilitator information can be found at the USAID *Learning Lab website*.

65. Organizations interested in assessing in more depth their financial management and compliance with U.S. Government requirements have the option of employing an OCA version that includes the Non-U.S. Pre-Award Survey (NUPAS). The NUPAS uses a scoring feature that assesses an organization's ability to program and manage USG funds by determining: (1) whether the organization has sufficient financial and managerial capacity to manage USAID funds, (2) the most appropriate method of financing, and (3) the degree of support and oversight necessary to ensure accountability of funds. The NUPAS is the recommended tool for a responsibility determination below a threshold dollar value for direct grants and cooperative agreements to non-U.S. organizations. Although the OCA has a standardized, participatory methodology that promotes collaboration and ownership of the process, the tool is flexible enough to incorporate additional input; in addition, several variations of the OCA exist, tailored to diverse target users.

OCA Follow-Up and Monitoring
To elevate the status of the planned CD activities, it is a good practice for an organization to build the action plan into its overall annual work plan or strategic plan or the work plan for a USAID-supported project. Repeating the OCA at the middle and end of a project can contribute to the efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of partner organizations by identifying changing CD priorities and demonstrating progress.

Pact "Classic OCA"

Step 1: Partner Preparation
Meetings are convened with the leaders of the organization to introduce the methodology and receive their buy-in. The facilitators and the organization's leaders jointly identify the goals and process and agree on the expectations of the process. The partner organization commits the time necessary to complete the Classic OCA by scheduling the appropriate number of sessions. The plan for using OCA results is drafted to ensure that there is sufficient support to engage in CD after the assessment.

Step 2: Tool Design - Customization of Indicators
A Pact OCA tool is custom-designed for and by each organization or group of organizations, reflecting their specific reality. Each organization develops its own capacity areas, known as statements of excellence, which will be assessed during a two- to three-day structured brainstorming workshop.

Step 3: Guided Self-Assessment and Results Processing
Pact convenes a two- or three-day workshop during which selected participants from the organization (or the whole organization for smaller entities) engage in a facilitated discussion and score each capacity area.

The participatory assessment itself is conducted by a facilitator in a workshop setting and can be completed in one full day (approximately six to eight hours), or in two half-day sessions. Participants score each indicator/statement of excellence using a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 representing "strongly disagree." Score data are entered into the OCA Online system or an Excel spreadsheet with OCA formulas that calculate capacity and consensus.

These results are presented to participating organizations in the form of OCA results packages or reports, and provide the basis for analysis, priority setting, and forward planning by the assessment team.

Step 4: Results Debrief and Data-Guided Action Planning
Following presentation and review of results, the team develops an action plan to support strengthened organizational development. Data-guided action planning begins with the organization's interpretation of the data, which ensures the contextualization and validation of results (one day). Based on the conclusions agreed upon by the participants, they develop an action plan (one day). Through action planning, participants reach consensus on their most pressing organizational challenges and identify plans and resources to help them address those challenges.

Step 5: Institutional Strengthening and Continuous Learning
The partner organization implements activities outlined in the Institutional Strengthening Plan (ISP) with Pact's support. The organization engages in periodic learning and feedback activities (at staff meetings or dedicated events). Re-assessment using the OCA process can take place once every year or two years.

Organizational Development Stages
For monitoring and evaluation and for other purposes, Pact notes OCA results can be used to categorize NGOs into four distinct stages of development according to their competence in the seven components of organizational effectiveness (*Pact, 1996*):

→ **Nascent**: The organization is in the earliest stages of development. All the components measured by OCA are in rudimentary form or non-existent.

→ **Emerging**: The organization is developing some capacity. Structures for governance, management practices, human resources, financial resources and service delivery are in place and functioning.

→ **Expanding**: The organization has a track record of achievement; its work is recognized by its constituency, the government, the private business sector, and other NGOs active in the same sector.

- **Mature**: The NGO is fully functioning and sustainable, with a diversified resource base and partnership relationships with national and international networks.

An organization might be at different stages of development for each component.

Sources of Information

- *USAID Learning Lab*
- *Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool: Facilitator's Copy*, For Organizations Funded by USAID, USAID, 2009.
- *Organizational Capacity Assessment for Community-Based Organizations*, USAID, 2012.
- *Building NGO Capacity Using the Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool*.
- Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) Facilitator's Guide Version With NUPAS Items, (USAID 2014).
- Pact Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) Handbook, A Practical Guide to the OCA Tool for Practitioners and Development Professionals, (March 2012).
- *Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA), Capacity Building Series*, Capable Partners Program, Botswana, FHI 360.

At a Glance
McKinsey Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT)

Type: Pre-designed, online survey self-assessment tool

Goal: Gather information to identify organizational strengths and weaknesses; leads to internal discussions on future priorities and action plan for organizational strengthening

Application: Internal capacity assessment and organizational learning; support for additional internal consideration and planning

Who Participates: Selected personnel from among staff, leadership, and board

Cost Requirements: Online survey free of charge

Facilitation Requirements: Internal-staff survey administrator with no expertise required

Time Requirements: The survey takes approximately 1.5 hours to complete

Overview

The McKinsey OCAT is a pre-designed, free online survey[66] with a structured platform an organization can use to assess their operational capacity and identify strengths and areas for improvement. Unlike the more participatory OCA format, the McKinsey tool is not tailored or customized to the organization, and there is no staff discussion or group consensus-seeking prior to survey completion. Instead it is a quantitative data-driven information-gathering platform that provides "insights" in a computer-generated report to facilitate internal conversations and decision making about actions to make the organization stronger. Group "consensus" on capacities is statistically determined based on clustering of responses.

Compared with the standard OCA, this survey can be completed in approximately 1.5 hours. In addition, there is no need for a skilled facilitator to guide OCA workshops, since no skillset is required for the internal administrator to initiate the survey. The OCAT survey does require a broadband Internet connection and a modern standards-based Web browser, such as Chrome, Safari, Firefox, or Internet Explorer (version 8 or higher).

A staff administrator initiates the survey online and invites participants who are asked to provide their views of how well the organization performs in regard to a range of capacity dimensions.

What is Measured?

Dimensions of Organizational Effectiveness

1. Aspirations
2. Strategy
3. Organizational Skills
4. Human Resources
5. Systems and Infrastructure
6. Organizational Structure
7. Culture

66. McKinsey OCAT.

What Will the Assessment Results Tell You?

Participants score a comprehensive range of sub-components on a 4-point scale assessing capacity against established best practices. Once the survey is completed reports are generated that map the current level of performance and consensus of respondent views. This information is intended to support follow-up conversations and decision making about actions to make the organization stronger.

What Organizations Can Use the McKinsey OCAT?

The OCAT has been used by thousands of funders and nonprofits to assess their organizational capacity and identify strengths and prioritize areas for improvement. More than 70 organizations have requested permission to replicate the OCAT, post it on their websites, or distribute it among their own constituents. The McKinsey OCAT has been translated into 11 languages.

Methodology

A staff administrator registers the organization online at mckinseyonsociety.com/ocat/ and launches the survey by inviting selected participants from among the board, leadership, and staff to complete it within a designated timeframe. The pool of survey respondents should not include all staff, but rather the leadership team, some or all of the board, and additional key staff members. McKinsey instructs that "respondents should be individuals who can respond insightfully to questions regarding the overall capacity of the organization."

Survey participants rate a range of capacity dimensions, including: aspirations, strategy, organizational skills, human resources, systems and infrastructure, organizational structure, and culture on a 4-point scale assessing capacity against established best practice:

- clear need for increased capacity
- basic level of capacity
- moderate level of capacity and
- high level of capacity

Each score in each sub-category is associated with a description of functional qualities and procedures that distinguish a level of CD.

Reports

Once the survey is complete, a unique report is generated that provides an aggregate view of how the respondents believe the organization is performing. Reports highlight such elements as the average and distribution of responses by question as well as the level of consensus on each question. Reports map each capacity against the current level of performance and consensus, supporting group identification of "strengths to build upon," "areas to improve," and "areas to build alignment." A respondent can access an individual report that illustrates their own unique conclusions by contrasting the responses with those of his or her peers.

Debriefing discussion

The results of the OCAT provide a foundation for continued consideration of the organization's capacity supported through debriefing discussions. It is advised that each respondent review the aggregate responses and their individual results in advance of the debrief discussion. During this discussion the organization can use the OCAT results as a "jumping off point" to examine overarching themes, strengths, and weaknesses, and determine specific actions to build further on areas of strength and address gaps

Source of Information

→ McKinsey Organizational Assessment Tool: mckinseyonsociety.com/ocat/

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At a Glance

Financial Management Tool (FinMAT)

Type: Organizational self-assessment tool, individually completed or participatory

Goal: Gather information on organization's financial management capacity; identify areas for improvement and develop action plans to implement changes; reach consensus and buy-in for improvement processes; establish a baseline from which to monitor improvement

Application: Option 1: Rapid assessment, individually completed process as preparation for an internal audit or to receive new external funds; Option 2: Participatory process as part of a broad organizational process of strengthening financial management

Who Participates: Option 1: One financial manager or external consultant; Option 2: Inclusive team of program and finance staff; other managers and stakeholders informed and engaged in assessment and action planning processes to different degrees

Cost Requirements: Free online manual and Excel-based tool

Facilitation Requirements: Internal staff with knowledge of the financial systems and processes: An external consultant with financial expertise

Time Requirements: Option 1: Several hours or several days, depending on organization size; Option 2: Several-days of meetings, site review and workshop, on or off site

Overview

The Financial Management Assessment Tool (FinMAT) is a no-cost organizational self-assessment tool that helps organizations assess their financial management capacity, identify areas for improvement, make specific action plans to address shortcomings, and monitor progress.

An interactive Excel spreadsheet provides a platform for collecting and summarizing technical information about an organization's financial management systems and practices. A detailed manual[67] and the tool developed by Management Sciences for Health, can be downloaded in English, French, or Spanish.[68]

A "critical aspect"[69] of the FinMAT assessment process is the reliance on evidence: concrete documentation or observable fact. Evidence is the foundation for determining future improvements and action planning. These data are collected based on documents and established guidelines, interviews, and site inspections.

What is Measured?

Components of Financial Management

1. Organization and Personnel
2. Budgeting
3. Accounting and Record Keeping
4. Purchasing and Procurement
5. Payroll
6. Timely Payment and Invoicing
7. Cash Management
8. Stock, Inventory and Fixed Assets
9. Audit
10. Use of Information

67. *FinMAT: The Financial Management Tool* (Management Sciences for Health, 2010, Accessed February 18, 2018).
68. *Ibid.*
69. *FinMAT* manual, pg. 14.

What Will the Assessment Results Tell You?

FinMAT is not intended as a formal audit tool. The process provides information for organizations to: assess current financial management capacity, identify changes that would improve effectiveness, and develop an action plan to implement those changes. Specifically, the tool assesses 10 components of financial management, broken into subcomponents assessed as: Pre-Basic, Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced.

The tool can be applied in two ways. Option 1 is used to prepare either for an internal audit or to receive new external funds. This process is done by a single internal financial manager or an external consultant, who determines levels of capacities based on evidence through interviews, document review and site visits. Option 2 is a more participatory process meant to be completed as part of an organizational effort to strengthen financial management.

What Organizations Can Use FinMAT?

FinMAT is meant to be used by organizations that manage their own finances and can be conducted at the headquarters level as well as field offices.

Methodology

Option 1

Option 1 is a rapid assessment of an organization's financial management competence implemented in several hours or several days, depending on the size of the organization being assessed. The implementer should have a background in finance, accounting, and business management to best assess the evidence.

Option 2

Option 2 is a more participatory process to be completed as part of an organizational effort to strengthen financial management by engaging a team of program and financial staff. It can be led by a manager or an external consultant. The team gathers evidence through staff interviews, document review, and site visits. The team then convenes participatory workshops during which the group works to reach a consensus on each capacity criterion question to determine CD levels.

The same Excel spreadsheet is the tool for both options and is easy to use, with three fundamental parts:

1. a tab for each component capacity with "yes/no" questions associated to capacities of subcomponents,
2. summary form that notes capacity levels of each sub-component and pie charts to represent aggregate component score, and
3. an action plan form (to copy as many times as needed).

Action Planning

For Option 1, the process assessment lead analyzes the data and produces a list of specific actions that will address the findings of each component. If led by an outside consultant, staff should be engaged to prioritize components and actions to take, assign responsibilities, and determine deadlines. Then the lead presents the plan to the organization.

For Option 2, the data collection team develops the action plan guided by assessment outcomes. Based on sorting and review, an organization may prioritize general areas or components first, and then develop the Action Plan around the prioritized areas. A participatory process, the team lead supports discussion to "unearth" the real reasons for the weaknesses.

Implementation and Follow-Up

The action plan should be institutionalized in activities of the organization's planning, budgeting, and monitoring systems. In addition, a point person should be assigned the responsibility of ensuring the action plan is implemented. Follow-up should be ongoing, and periodic meetings can be convened with a core team to measure progress and make any necessary adjustments to the plan.

Using the original assessment as a baseline, periodic FinMAT assessments can be completed—at six months or a year—to measure progress and see if any other areas of weakness are identified.

Sources of Information

→ FinMAT: The Financial Management Tool, Management Sciences for Health, 2010 projects.msh.org/resource-center/publications/upload/FinMAT-2010.pdf.

→ Free manual and tool accessible at projects.msh.org/resource-center/finmat.cfm.

NOTES

Emergent Organizational Measurement Approaches

At a Glance
Core Capacity Assessment Tool (CCAT)

Type: Pre-designed, online self-assessment survey tool

Goal: Assess capacity needs and strengths, from the viewpoint of leadership; provide information on prioritized action plan and for "data-driven" decision making

Application: Organizational learning and strategic planning; benchmarking/peer comparison; for donor or funding foundations to assess long-term capacity-building needs of grantees after award

Cost Requirements: $350 for a single organization; multi-organization package fees charged per organization at a discounted rate as the pool increases

Who Participates: Senior staff and board members

Facilitation Requirements: Internal survey "lead"; certified CCAT staff can support the process for a fee

Time Requirements: Survey completion typically takes 30–45 minutes

Overview

The Core Capacity Assessment Tool (CCAT)[70] is a for-fee online survey that measures organizational effectiveness in four "core competencies": leadership, adaptability, management, and technical,[71] as well as aspects of organizational culture. The pool of respondents focuses on an organization's leadership—senior management and board members—and does not generally include broad staff participation.

The assessment is not focused on performance of organizational functions, such as administration, human resources, or financial management. Rather, effectiveness is a measure of how well an organization approaches aspects such as learning, leadership, adapting to environmental change, or prioritizing decisions.[72]

Of the core capacities CCAT assessed, the standards of leadership and adaptability are the most critical in distinguishing effective organizations from those that are less so.

Results of the CCAT focus on identifying strengths and weaknesses within these processes as well as opportunities for improvement, while providing information for "data-driven" decisions.

What is Measured?

Core Capacities

1. Leadership
2. Adaptability
3. Management
4. Technical

As well as: Organizational Culture

70. CCAT (TCC Group, 2015).
71. The term technology is not applied here in the literal sense. CCAT considers technology as the resources that an organization uses to function and be effective, such as human resources, skills, facilities, and materials.
72. *Ibid.*

What Will the Assessment Results Tell You?

Although the CCAT provides an important opportunity to aggregate and analyze leadership views within the four capacities model, the absence of a broad pool of staff from the survey and recommended follow-up processes excludes a layer of views, experiences, and considerations from outside the leadership. It excludes the wider staff pool from the process of assessing and learning from the assessment. This limits staff "ownership" of findings or plans as well as buy-in to resulting actions or organizational adjustments. In addition, if used by funders, this leadership-focused view might not reveal layers of issues or advantages in the more day-to-day operations that might be relevant in designing an effective capacity-building plan.

Pairing the CCAT with a participatory OCA or the McKinsey online OCAT could broaden an assessment process to provide an important platform for wider staff engagement in the assessment process and generate complementary information on organizational function. Also, pairing could generate valuable comparative information between the broad assessment of organizational function and that of the core capacities from the viewpoint of leadership. For benchmarking, a series of self-selected comparison reports can be generated from a CCAT database with information from more than 5,000 organizations.

What Organizations Can Use CCAT?

The CCAT was created by the TCC Group as an assessment tool for nonprofit organizations and has been used by thousands of organizations. The online survey and resulting reports are available for $350 for a single organization. Multi-organization packages are available with fees charged per organization at a discounted rate as the pool increases. A CCAT certified facilitator can be hired to support the survey process as well as interpret data, and develop an action plan.

Webinars or onsite trainings are available to train staff in facilitation—also for a fee.

In addition to being a tool for individual organizations, a pool CCAT package may be purchased by donors or funding foundations and made available to grantees to determine their long-term capacity building needs. It is not recommended, however, as a screening tool for partner or grantee selection.

Methodology

The CCAT measures four capacity areas—leadership, adaptivity, management, and technical—separately and as interconnected elements of organizational effectiveness. Leadership and adaptive capacities are considered the most critical in distinguishing effective organizations. The organizational culture (history, structure, and group beliefs and values) is also considered and seen as something that influences and is influenced by the quality of function in the core capacities.

The core capacities assessment is paired with an assessment of the organization's life cycle, or stage of development. This is viewed on a continuum of growth: start-up (core program development), growing (infrastructure development), and mature (impact expansion). Here, too, the capacities of leadership and adaptability are seen as most critically affecting an organization's ability to drive advancement.

Survey Process

An internal organizational lead[73] is selected to administer the CCAT survey and download reports. Information is entered into the system describing an organization's budget, staff size, area of focus, and so on. CCAT-certified facilitators can be hired to support the process.

73. *New User Guide. CAT Organizational Leads*, TCC Group.

TCC offers facilitator training webinars periodically and remote or onsite trainings for groups of four or more.

The CCAT is generally taken by all senior staff and at least two to three board members. Selected individuals are invited[74] and asked to complete the CCAT 146-query survey that measures an organization's effectiveness in relation to four core capacities—leadership, adaptability, management, and technical capacities—as well as organizational culture. The organizational lead is notified via email when the pool of respondents has completed the survey and that the CCAT report is ready to be accessed online. Individual responses are confidential, and results are presented in aggregate.

Report, Interpretation, and Planning

The CCAT report provides an analysis of an organization's status in the four core capacities based on data gathered from the organization's leaders. The tool focuses on identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement within the core capacity areas. It includes information on interpreting the results, as well as scores for each capacity area, and recommendations for building organizational capacity. Scores are presented based on a 300-point scale: Less than 190 – challenging; 190 to 229 – satisfactory; 230 and greater – strong. Data from the report can be leveraged as a checklist for change and a means to track the organization's future growth and development.

The CCAT report provides a life-cycle score that reflects an organization's current stage of development. A life-cycle score provides recommendations for strengthening and guidance on where to focus capacity building efforts for the greatest impact. The report also presents a "Prioritized Capacity Building Plan" component, identifying select sub-capacities and pairing those with recommendation statements. The action plan should be institutionalized in activities of the organization's planning, budgeting, and monitoring systems. In addition, a point person should be assigned the responsibility of ensuring the action plan is implemented.

Follow-up should be ongoing, and periodic meetings can be convened with a core team to measure progress and make any necessary adjustments to the plan.

Sources of Information

- → *www.tccccat.com/*
- → *A guide for the organizational lead can be accessed online*
- → *A brief guide for respondents*

74. *A brief guide for respondents*.

At a Glance

Organizational Performance Index (OPI)

Type: Pre-designed, facilitated self-assessment tool

Goal: Measure whether investments in organizational capacity development have resulted in measurable observable improvements in internal processes and systems and also have had an impact on organizational performance and project outcomes

Application: Organizational learning and strategic planning; benchmarking

Cost Requirements: Free of charge. An "open source" document available online provided that the user maintains the tool's integrity and cites Pact as the original author. Free facilitator guides and pre- designed surveys available online at ; fees range for hiring external facilitator

Who Participates: Selected personnel across all departments, board member representative recommended

Facilitation Requirements: Internal or external facilitator with level of expertise in leading participatory sessions

Time Requirements: Typically, half-day for the first application; 1–2 hours to update annually

Overview

The Organizational Performance Index (OPI) was developed by Pact and modified by USAID to incorporate USAID terminology and increase emphasis on measuring how CD activities impact program outcomes and cost efficiency as a result of capacity inputs. Note that staff should NOT change the domains, subareas or evidence or the language in any section of the OPI, as this will invalidate the tool. However, the final page of the tool allows for the development of custom domains or subareas by staff.[75]

Although the OPI may be used independently, it is most powerful when used alongside existing Capacity 1.0 tools. This partnering of tools is conducive to a more holistic measurement—focusing both on internal capacity (output of CD activities) and change in performance (outcome of CD activities).

OPI focuses on performance or outcome-level results, centering on processes and the extent to which outputs of CD (such as those measured by OCA) support positive changes in the way organizations "deliver services, relate to their stakeholders and react to changes in the external environment" (*Pact Organizational Capacity Assessment Handbook*).

Measurement Domains

1. Effectiveness (achieving results and meeting standards)
2. Efficiency (delivering services and enhancing reach)
3. Relevance (mobilizing resources and increasing social capital)
4. Sustainability (engaging stakeholders and learning)

75. *Pact's Organizational Performance Index Measurement Tool* (USAID Learning Lab, 2015).

OPI does not measure attribution because many factors influence the CD outcomes measured by OPI, including government actions, the activities of other donors, and other local activities. Rather, the OPI focuses on contribution to change in organizational performance. Any identified change in performance is detected against previous organizational performance; there are no peer measures in the OPI. Accordingly, OPI data should not be used for intra-organizational or cross-country comparison. The OPI does not examine organizational systems, policies, practices, and procedures; pairing the OPI with a Capacity 1.0 assessment tool that does can prove very fruitful. The OPI does consider technical performance, but it is not ideal for deep analysis of a specific technical area.

What Will the Assessment Results Tell You?

Organizations that use the OPI should expect to understand change at the outcome level; any change will be measured against prior performance assessments. Organizations that choose to use the OPI to assess organizational performance against targets will receive results for the entire organization's work; results cannot be extrapolated for a specific grant. For example, if an organization receives funding from USAID in addition to multiple other donors, it cannot assess its organizational performance for the USAID grant alone.

OPI data can be analyzed to answer questions such as:

- In which OPI domains and sub-areas is the organization improving its performance?
- In which OPI domains and sub-areas is organization performance unchanged?
- Are there patterns in how organizational performance has improved?
- Are there external factors that have influenced change in organizational performance (either positively or negatively)?
- How have project activities contributed toward improved organizational performance?
- How might project activities over the coming year be tailored to support improved performance?[76]

What Organizations Can Use OPI?

OPI is best used by organizations that feel they have strong systems and governance and want to focus capacity measurement on the outcomes of their systems. Organizations that wish to assess both internal organizational capacity and outcomes of their systems should partner the OPI with a Capacity 1.0 tool. Organizations that receive USG funding should access the OPI tool through the USAID links to ensure they are utilizing the correct tool. Organizations that wish to assess community and government performance in addition to their organizational performance can utilize tools that were developed from OPI.[77]

Methodology

OPI maintains a standardized yet flexible format; it allows for the addition of more domains or sub-domains without compromising tool integrity, scoring, or findings; however, users cannot remove any of the four core domains. The OPI template can be downloaded from the link listed below. This template contains the four domains and corresponding sub-areas with a scoring matrix of levels 1–4. The reviewer should score each domain based on available evidence and document in writing (in the template) the evidence used as the basis for the corresponding score. As an example, the template for scoring effectiveness follows.

76. *Using Organizational Performance Index* (USAID Learning Lab, 2015).
77. *Ibid.*

Scoring

An organization must show evidence of all aspects of a level to receive that score. Until there is evidence of meeting all requirements for a score of 3, the score is a 2. No partial scores or averages can be given; the reviewer can score whole numbers only. The reviewer should aspire to reach consensus with the assessed organization, but ultimately the score should reflect the reviewer's decision.

Sources of Information

- Pact. *Organizational Performance Index (OPI)* Handbook, January 2015.
- USAID. *Using Organizational Performance Index*, April 2015.
- *Kenya review of orgs that completed OPI and their increased effectiveness.*
- USAID. *Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting: Framework and Key Concepts*, September 2016.

OPI Scoresheet

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 2	Level 4
	The organization is in the process of developing outcome-level targets for all of its programs and services.	The organization has set clearly defined outcome-level targets for all of its programs and services.	The organization has met over 50% of outcome-level targets for all of its programs and services.	The organization has met over 75% of outcome-level targets for all of its programs and services.
Effective organizations measure and analyze outcome-level results to best serve beneficiaries.	Evidence:	Evidence:	Evidence:	Evidence:

Mature Organizational Measurement Approaches

At a Glance
Social Network Analysis

Type: Online tool

Goal: Map relationships within and among individuals, groups/organizations. Measure and monitor collaboration among people/organizations

Application: Measure and monitor collaboration among people/organizations. Demonstrate to stakeholders, partners, evaluators, and funders how your collaborative activity has changed over time and what progress was made in regard to how community members and organizations participate

Cost Requirements: Depending on scope of assessment, can be done internally or outsourced; some mapping software is available free of charge

Who Participates: Members of the target group answer surveys online. The SNA Manager stores the data and imports

Facilitation Requirements: The SNA Manager identifies who will be asked to participate in the survey and is responsible of for data management.

Time Requirements: Varies based on scope

Overview

Social Network Analysis (SNA) is a methodology for measuring and mapping network relationships. It is also a conceptual framework that applies you to graphically describe patterns of people's interactions.

For organizations, individuals, groups, and so much more, SNA can be a powerful approach to understanding their various relationships. Possibilities of network analysis application are almost endless—network analysis can examine audience connections, innovation diffusion, disease outbreaks, sales—anything where there is an interaction between two or more network players.

Mapping is not a strategy unto itself—it is a tool to better see patterns, boundaries, and gaps in relationships.[78] It is best applied to informing an organization's strategies, not create them.

What is Measured?

Core Capacities

1. Leadership
2. Adaptability
3. Management
4. Technical

As well as: Organizational Culture

78. usaidlearninglab.org/lab-notes/mapping-communities.

What Will the Assessment Results Tell You?

SNA can be applied to groups, organizations, or systems to:

- Identify organizations and groups that play central roles.
- Identify bottlenecks and isolated organizations and groups.
- Spot opportunities to improve knowledge flow.
- Target opportunities where better knowledge sharing will have the most impact.
- Raise awareness of the significance of informal networks.[79]

A typical social network analysis provides:

- A relationship map that shows the connections based on responses to the questions between specific designated individuals in a network.
- Quantitative metrics that indicate the key people in a network, people who bridge subgroups within a network, people well positioned to move information across a network, or the overall connectivity of a network. These metrics can provide baseline data with which to compare changes over time.[80]

What Organizations Can Use SNA?

SNA is best suited for organizations interested in understanding their peers and the environment in which they operate. It could be especially useful for donors that seek to build capacity at the sector level.

It is important to note when this tool might pose a risk to civil society groups that wish to remain under the radar. In countries where the government is infringing on civil society activity, information obtained through a social network analysis could lead to official crackdown on various civil society groups as a way to quash dissent.

As with e-Learning, any tool that leaves a traceable footprint must be accompanied by capacity building aimed at developing stringent security systems.

Methodology

The SNA process involves conducting surveys and/or interviews to understand relationships within a defined group or network of people. Data are then entered into a software tool (some are free of charge and available to the public; others are proprietary), which enables responses to be mapped.

There are three key stages involved:

1. **Identification of the Target Network.** SNA can be applied to entire sectors or to cohort organizations. Prior to commencing SNA, the assessor must have a clear understanding of which actors are being assessed.
2. **Data Collection.** The assessor should collect background data through interviewing identified focal points within the target organization(s) and key players regarding specific needs and problems. Following secondary data collection, the assessor should develop the survey and any interview guides, and use these tools to interview the individuals in the network to identify relationships and knowledge flows. The effectiveness of SNA lies in knowing what information to gather to allow for attribute mapping. Effective questions typically focus on a variety of factors that allow the assessor to understand relationships, decision making, and information flows.

79. Ben Ramalingam, *Tools for Knowledge and Learning* (Overseas Development Institute, 2006).
80. Patti Anklam, *Using Organizational Network Analysis*, Information Architected, Inc.

3. **Data Mapping.** The assessor can use a mapping tool to visually describe the network. An abundance of mapping software is available. Note that it is crucial to identify the attributes to be mapped before data collection begins to ensure the questionnaires reflect these attributes. The assessor can then review the map and any problems or opportunities it highlights. This review can be participatory and include other stakeholders.[81]

Source of Information

→ **PARTNER** (which stands for Program to Analyze, Record, and Track Networks to Enhance Relationships) is a social network analysis tool designed to measure and monitor collaboration among people/organizations. The tool, recommended by USAID, is free (sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation) and designed for use by collaboratives/coalitions to demonstrate how members are connected, how resources are leveraged and exchanged, the levels of trust, and to link outcomes to the process of collaboration. The tool includes an online survey that you can administer to collect data and an analysis program that analyzes these data. usaidlearninglab.org/library/partner-tool-0

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Annex 3:
Performance Solutions Package Template

USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Performance Solutions Package Template
Recommended Performance Solutions, Indicators and Results

[Institution]:
Form Completed by: [Name] Date [MM/DD/YY]

Performance Areas/Issues	Recommended Performance Solutions	Priority (H,M,L)	Timing (Qtr.)	Responsible Party(ies)	Budget	USAID Approval and Date	Performance Indicators	Actual Progress Against Indicators (Results)

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