Technical Organizational Capacity Assessment: **Social Marketing**

Technical Capacity Assessment Tool and Facilitator's Guide

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CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

CBO	community-based organization
CS	capacity strengthening
GMP	Good Manufacturing Practices
IMS	Integrated Merchandising Solutions
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
KAP	knowledge, attitudes, and practices
MOU	memorandum of understanding
NGO	non-governmental organization
RFP	request for proposals
SM	social marketing
SMO	social marketing organization
SOP	standard operating practices
TOCA	technical organizational capacity assessment
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The purpose of the social marketing (SM) technical organizational capacity assessment (TOCA) tool is to assess an organization's ability to implement effective social marketing programs by looking at its overall approach, management systems, and program components. It builds on the strengths of other social marketing assessment tools developed by the Sustaining Health Outcomes through the Private Sector (SHOPS) Plus project, the Performance of Routine Information System Management (PRISM) tool developed by JSI, and others.

BACKGROUND

The SM TOCA can help local organizations assess their technical capacity in different technical areas of social marketing based on global best practices. Measurement against these criteria will help them to assess their current capacity to implement effective social marketing programs, identify key areas that need strengthening, and highlight their program successes.

The standards used in this assessment tool are in some ways basic. If the organization intends to use this assessment tool over time, they should be encouraged to raise the standards once they have met all the standards as defined. Consulting with subject matter experts to create a 2.0 version of this assessment tool could be effective in helping them strive to continuous organizational improvement.

One of the challenges of using this assessment tool is that there are different technical approaches to family planning and not all organizations are trying to achieve technical excellence in all areas. Some may be more focused on clinical service delivery and quality assurance while others may focus on community mobilization and demand creation activities. With this in mind, we have developed different modules for different 'Capacity Areas' and it is up to the organization and the assessor to decide which modules should be assessed.

STRUCTURE

The SM TOCA tool is comprised of 26 indicators in eight sections. The indicators were selected according to what are considered critical indicators around the marketing mix and key areas for financial analysis and monitoring learning and evaluation. As this is focused on technical capacity, any generic organizational indicators were excluded. Social marketing organizations that focus on clinical services and social franchising would want to consider using the family planning TOCA which includes quality assurance indicators for services. However, the basic marketing indicators included in this TOCA are appropriate whether the organization is marketing products or services.

FACILITATION INSTRUCTIONS

The primary means of information collection is by interview or review of records and/or documents. Each standard refers to specific marketing documents or practices that can be objectively verified, usually through document review, but also through staff and stakeholder interviews.

COMPLETING THE TOCA

The assessor should record findings immediately as they are observed. In some cases, there may be disagreement between key informants about whether a standard has been met, or between the assessor and the organization's staff. In such cases, the assessor has the final decision but should indicate why the evidence provided does or does not meet the criteria for the standard.

Where a score of 2 or 3 is given, indicating partial meeting of the standard, the assessor should indicate what the organization would need to show to achieve a score of 4, meaning the standard is fully met. This will be useful to the organization later, so it is clear what needs to be addressed to achieve the highest rating.

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RATING SCALE

Scale	Description
1	Does not meet the standard
2	Meets <50% of the standard
3	Meets >50% of the standard
4	Fully meets standard (100%)

WEIGHTING OF THE SCORES

In recognition of the fact that some criteria are more important than others, the social marketing TOCA also includes a weighting system in which indicators that are deemed to be critical to successful social marketing are weighted high, essential ones are weighted medium and important, and not critical indicators are weighted as low. If the assessor wants to apply the weights to the raw scores, the following weights should be used:

Description	Weight
Low	Multiply raw score by 1
Medium	Multiply raw score by 1.25
High	Multiply raw score by 1.5

Having weighted scores for each section and an overall score may provide some guidance to the organization on where to focus capacity strengthening efforts and how much progress has been achieved since the last TOCA assessment. The numeric score is less important than the trend or improvement over time.

SOCIAL MARKETING TOCA TOOL

ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

Organization Name	
Primary Point of Contact	Name: Title: Telephone: Email:
Names of Assessors *(ideally, no more than 2)*	
Date of Assessment	
Completed by	Name:

TECHNICAL ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

	Capacity/Sub-Capacity	Standard	Means of Verification	Weighting	Rating (1, 2, 3, 4)	Justification of Score Awarded
1.0	**Social Marketing**					
1.1	Product Quality/Procurement	The SMO[1] procures commodities from prequalified vendors using GMP, ISO, or higher standards.	Product procurement tenders, organization's procedures manuals, organization's donor agreements	High		
		The SMO tracks lots on product cartons and keeps records of lots in sales documentation to recall products if necessary.	SOPs, testing reports, product shipping cartons	Medium		
		The SMO has established standard operating procedures for safe handling and packaging of products to ensure product quality and integrity that covers storage and transportation of products.	SOPs, warehouse/packaging unit procedure manuals	Medium		

[1] Please see the abbreviations list at the beginning of this tool for a full list of terms used.

	Capacity/Sub-Capacity	Standard	Means of Verification	Weighting	Rating (1, 2, 3, 4)	Justification of Score Awarded
		The SMO requires its suppliers to submit products for lot testing for product quality and to contractually require defective lots to be replaced. The SMO requires that the suppliers use quality assurance labs certified by ISO, WHO, national, or a similar entity, and products are tested to WHO, ISO, or GMP standards.	Product tenders, SOPs, lot testing results	Medium		
		The SMO has policies for proper storage and disposal of expired and damaged pharmaceuticals, including collection of expired products from resellers.	SOPs, warehouse manuals	Low		
1.2	Marketing: General	The SMO uses an evidence-based marketing plan to guide both brand promotion communications and generic behavior change communications with specific targets for priority and underserved segments, including women. There is a marketing plan for each product, and they	Marketing plans	High		

	Capacity/Sub-Capacity	Standard	Means of Verification	Weighting	Rating (1, 2, 3, 4)	Justification of Score Awarded
		articulate strategies for each element of the marketing mix.				
1.3	Marketing: Product	The SMO has a process for identifying new product opportunities and rationalizing its product portfolio that considers health need (including underserved groups), gender considerations, market demand, and profit or funding potential.	Marketing plans, research studies, launch plans, funding proposals	Medium		
		The SMO has one or more products in its portfolio with high brand equity, with positive attitudes of consumers towards the brand, and high brand awareness.	Brand audits, KAP surveys, qualitative research	Medium		
		The SMO periodically assesses consumer perceptions of its products and strategically manages product positioning and image.	Brand audits, qualitative research, KAP studies, marketing plans, brand image upgrades	Medium		
1.4	Marketing: Price	The SMO has a formal process for reviewing its prices to consumers and to the trade at least once a year.	Marketing plans, internal memos, price sheets, cost recovery strategies	High		

	Capacity/Sub-Capacity	Standard	Means of Verification	Weighting	Rating (1, 2, 3, 4)	Justification of Score Awarded
		In setting or revising its prices, the SMO considers ability to pay, trade margins, prices of competitors, inflation, the SMO's costs of goods sold, gender, and SMO sustainability objectives.	Marketing plans, internal memos, price sheets, cost recovery strategies	Medium		
1.5	Marketing: Distribution	The SMO monitors product availability through retail outlet surveys and analyzes by area or channel, and this information is used to develop distribution strategies.	Retail outlet surveys, IMS or Neilsen reports, marketing plans	Medium		
		The SMO uses both indirect selling through distributors and wholesalers and its own salesforce to balance efficiency with targeted selling.	Project records, marketing plans, distribution agreements	Medium		
		The SMO uses monitoring and management tools to supervise and incentivize its sales force and ensure alignment with the distribution strategy.	Marketing plans, incentive schemes, supervision reports, internal reports, and memos	High		
		The SMO develops partnership opportunities with other NGOs, government partners,	Marketing plans, partnership agreements,	Low		

	Capacity/Sub-Capacity	Standard	Means of Verification	Weighting	Rating (1, 2, 3, 4)	Justification of Score Awarded
		CBOs, etc., in order to expand the reach of its distribution.	distribution agreements, MOUs, etc.			
1.6	Marketing: Promotion	The SMO makes effective use of research to measure exposure, understanding, and retention of communications for planning effective and efficient campaigns.	Marketing plans, qualitative research, reach and recall surveys, media plans	Medium		
		The SMO follows consistent processes to develop communications products that include use of creative briefs and pretesting. These processes ensure promotion of positive gender norms in all SMO communications.	Creative briefs, qualitative research, pretesting results, marketing plans	High		
		The SMO consistently selects communications products and channels that reflect the preferences and behavior of the target consumer segments.	Marketing and communications plans, media plans	Medium		
1.7	Finance	The SMO uses financial software which uses a clear chart of accounts and a system for tracking expenses by source of funding and product.	Financial reports generated by SMO software	High		

	Capacity/Sub-Capacity	Standard	Means of Verification	Weighting	Rating (1, 2, 3, 4)	Justification of Score Awarded
		Handling of cash from sales revenues is minimized and is deposited directly into dedicated bank accounts or tracked separately using financial software.	SOPs, bank records, financial reports	Medium		
		The SMO has a plan for improving cost recovery that considers targeted subsidies, cross-subsidies, price increases, and improved cost management.	Strategic plans, business plans, cost recovery plans, marketing plans, financial reports	High		
1.8	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning	The SMO routinely collects data on product sales and project activities that are well documented, analyzed, and quality assured.	Project reports, marketing plans, etc.	Medium		
		The SMO collects data on distribution and promotion activities that is disaggregated by sex and uses this to inform programming decisions.	Performance monitoring reports, marketing plans, progress reports, internal reports	Medium		
		The SMO identifies relevant operational research issues and implements (or contracts)	Marketing plans, research reports, research briefs	Low		

Capacity/Sub-Capacity	Standard	Means of Verification	Weighting	Rating (1, 2, 3, 4)	Justification of Score Awarded
	research to answer the research questions.				
	The SMO has and uses the technical capacity to draft a technical SOW, issue a request for proposals, and evaluate technical proposals from research firms for qualitative and quantitative research studies.	Research scopes of works, RFPs, etc.	High		

NEXT STEPS AFTER CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

DATA ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY REPORT

The assessment methodology described in the sub-section above will generate qualitative and quantitative data. The facilitators should process and analyze the quantitative scores using a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet pre-designed for this purpose to facilitate summarizing the data into frequency tables and graphs.

The facilitator should also review discussion notes and comments to analyze the reasons and justification assigned to the scores as well as to identify strengths and gaps. Any areas of disparities or contradictions for further discussion and clarification with the management and staff of the organization should also be noted for further discussion during the debrief. In some cases, the facilitators may have to point out where there are gaps between the organization's perceived capacity and associated scoring and global industry standards and best practices. During the debrief, such discussions may lead to adjustments in self-assessment scores.

Following the verbal debrief and any corrections, the facilitator will summarize the information into a written report to be shared with the organization. The summary report may include scores per capacity area, key strengths, gaps, and issues requiring clarification.

CAPACITY STRENGTHENING PLANNING MEETING

Once the written assessment report is final, the facilitator should meet with the organization's management and staff to prioritize capacity needs, discuss capacity strengthening (CS) interventions, and prepare CS plans. Ideally, the planning meeting should be convened within a week after the assessment meetings.

During the meeting to develop the capacity strengthening plans, the facilitator will present and discuss the assessment report, clarify any areas of disparity, prioritize capacity needs, discuss appropriate interventions for each need, assign appropriate capacity strengthening indicators, and prepare a capacity strengthening plan.

The facilitator and participants should group the capacity needs by category (staffing skills, technical capacities, structures, systems, policies, equipment/tools, strategies, etc.).

In most cases, the organizations will identify many capacity needs, so the organization will have to prioritize them. The facilitators and participants will agree on a prioritization criterion to apply. The following are some questions to consider when prioritizing needs:

- What resources in time and money are available internally and from funders to support the capacity strengthening?
- Does the targeted funder have any restrictions on funding specific activities?
- How long would it take to implement the recommended intervention?
- What are the easy, quick-win needs that can be achieved in a few months?
- Which interventions would have a multiplier effect if/when implemented?
- Which interventions will do the most to improve the performance of the organization?

For each prioritized capacity need, the team will discuss and assign appropriate interventions (actions that should be taken to resolve the issue). The intervention assigned will depend on the type of capacity being addressed. Some capacity needs may require a combination of actions. Here are examples of some of the general interventions at different levels of capacity:

- **Individual level:** Training, coaching, mentoring, peer-to-peer learning for staff
- **Organizational level:** Improvements to organizational systems and processes, technical assistance, financial assistance, knowledge management
- **Local system level:** Policy change advocacy, market reforms, product or service regulation, social change advocacy, leveraging other efforts, networking/partnerships

Ideally, there will be a balance between capacity strengthening at different levels. Too much investment in individuals' capacity runs the risk of not staying with the organization if those individuals leave the organization. Too much investment in organizational systems without training the staff who need to use the improved systems might also mean the organization doesn't realize the intended benefits. If market regulations are a major constraint to increasing the organization's capacity, then working at the systems level might be appropriate.

Once the team has selected the priority gaps to address, then they can prepare a capacity strengthening plan. The capacity strengthening plan can include details about the capacity needs the organization will address using its own resources and those that would require financial support from the project. Whenever possible, the capacity strengthening plan should be completed at the planning meeting, or if time does not permit, the meeting can assign a specific staff member to work with the facilitator to complete it after the meeting. Below is an example of one item in a capacity strengthening plan:

SAMPLE CAPACITY STRENGTHENING PLAN

Priority Capacity Gap	Suggested Intervention	Expected Output	Indicators	Resources Needed	Responsibility
• The SMO does not have a resource mobilization plan. Fundraising activities are ad hoc. Currently, the organization has funding from only one source, which ends in Dec. 2023.	• SMO will hire a business development expert to support the review and implementation of the resource mobilization plan and lead the new business development function.	• SMO has a qualified manager responsible for resource mobilization and new business development. • The Resource Mobilization or Business Development Manager will lead the development and implementation of a resource mobilization and financial sustainability strategy.	• Fundraising (grant applications) success rate • Ratio of restricted and unrestricted income • Number of funding applications the SMO submits in a given period	• Four months • Recruitment specialist • Fundraising expert • $25,000	• Executive Director • Resource Mobilization or Business Development Manager

IMPLEMENTING CAPACITY STRENGTHENING PLANS AND TRACKING PROGRESS

Once finalized, the organization should begin implementing the capacity strengthening plan with coaching and mentoring by the project staff. The project staff will support the organization to track and report progress on the selected capacity strengthening indicators. Regular reviews of progress should be scheduled to ensure the plan is achieving the intended results and sufficient progress is being made. If the social marketing organization has taken true ownership of the plan, progress may be revisited multiple times across multiple projects and sources of capacity strengthening.