

BUILDING INNOVATION-COMPETENT ORGANIZATIONS: ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT TOOL (OCAT)

PURPOSE

To regularly assess changing organizational capacity to the point where an organization or institution was deemed 'Innovation competent.'

A key aim during the scale-up process is to transfer capacity to other organizations, preferably local ones that remain in-country over the long term. IRH's goal was to create 'Standard Days Method® (SDM)-competent' organizations, in a given technical or management area, with an understanding that once competency was built and responsibility transferred for specific activities, IRH could focus capacity building on a new round of resource and user organizations that were not yet SDM-competent.

For example, IRH's technical assistance to PSI offices in DRC, Mali, and Rwanda helped these country-level PSIs to become SDM-competent and graduate from technical assistance. By mid-point in the scale-up phase IRH no longer had active TA partnerships; PSI could handle training, promotion, and procurement with little support from IRH. In the early scale-up years, IRH's technical assistance to local NGOs that wanted to add the SDM into their FP programs (e.g., IPPF affiliates in Mali and Rwanda, local NGOs in Guatemala, DRC, and India), also led to NGOs competent in service provision, training, commodity resupply, and community outreach.

The FAM Project monitored capacity building and graduation of targeted organizations over a five-year period in different SDM program areas necessary for SDM sustainability at scale.

From the Benchmark Tables we know that by the end of the scale-up phase in the five countries, 66 organizations were deemed SDM-competent and had graduated to full resource organization status.

HOW IT WAS DEVELOPED AND USED

An experiential-evidence-based approach was used by IRH to assess whether an organization should be deemed SDM-competent based on interactions with staff in different resource and user organizations. IRH staff gathered information on the capacity of organizations from a variety of sources, including discussions with management and technical staff during meetings, observations during training, and interactions during joint technical efforts to integrate SDM into materials, procurement lists, FP service delivery programs, etc. An additional information source was how often a partner requested assistance from IRH for help in achieving a specific activity.

Due to the complexity and range of SDM competencies needed during scale-up, a written Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT) was never developed. Technical and program management competencies and related capacity-building efforts needed to be tailored to each organization. Different organizations required different capacities, depending on the role they were playing in scaling up, and whether they focused on training, social marketing, demand creation, service provision and supervision, procurement, and/or norms setting. This tool was developed through a review of the key competencies that

were deemed important for distinct types of organizations. To IRH's knowledge, the OCAT worksheet presented here is the first such worksheet developed for scaling up a new FP method.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Not all competencies (or areas of competency) need to exist in any one organization, including the MOH; some capacity areas may be externally resourced, e.g., media efforts.
- Once 'graduated' an organization remains SDM-competent or can relapse into needing technical assistance again. This is because staff, including program managers, trainers, champions, leaders, transfer or leave organizations and project/donor bases shift. Relapses also occur when the external environment changes and organizations need to adapt to remain viable. Because of this, monitoring is needed to ensure that built capacity is sustained within an organization.
- Training is a big piece of building capacity. We have learned that getting SDM into training curricula creates a foundation. Ensuring that SDM is treated equal to other FP methods during training delivery is not assured and needs to be monitored. This is especially true in an environmental context of promotion of long-acting and permanent methods.

VALUES

Conducting regular organization capacity assessments relating to innovation scale-up involves initially assessing and then monitoring how organizations (leaders, managers, trainers and norms-setting policies) value the innovation. Likewise, during the capacity-building process attention needs to be paid to ensuring organizations understand and apply the inherent values in the innovation. Organizational values will influence the scale-up process and ultimately determine scale-up outcomes.

KEY REFERENCES & RESOURCES

New Partners Initiative Technical Assistance Project (NuPITA). Building NGO Capacity to Implement High-Quality Programs Using the Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool. John Snow Inc. 2011

Fertility Awareness-Based Methods (FAM) USAID Evaluation 2011 Self Assessment. January 2011. Washington, D.C.: Institute for Reproductive Health, Georgetown University for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).



ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT TOOL (OGAT) FOR INNOVATION SCALE-UP

	Yes	Partial	No	Comments
MANAGEMENT CAPACITY				
Organizations are “innovation-competent” if they have...				
✓ ability to lead or shepherd the scale-up process in collaboration with other stakeholders				
✓ policies within the organization that facilitate scale-up (e.g. support for key values, such as informed choice or gender equality)				
✓ skilled staff with experience in capacity building, advocacy, MLE or research				
✓ capacity and motivation to do policy and advocacy for the innovation				
✓ MIS and reporting systems that include the innovation				
✓ MLE system that addresses innovation				
✓ an efficient supervision structure for the innovation				



	Yes	Partial	No	Comments
TECHNICAL CAPACITY				
Organizations are 'innovation competent' if they have the ability to...				
In-service Training				
✓ prepare accurate training plans and materials specific to the innovation				
✓ deliver training, including counseling practicum and use of case study materials				
✓ evaluate training participants' knowledge; apply evaluation findings to improve performance				
Service delivery supervision				
✓ observe and assess skills of provider performance				
✓ provide supportive feedback to improve performance and address potential biases				
✓ undertake whole-site supervision: systematic monitoring of commodity availability and stock out history, availability of IEC materials, correct recording of services (e.g. FP users)				



	Yes	Partial	No	Comments
Monitoring, learning & evaluation				
✓ compile and use service statistics data to track expansion progress, identify issues and make mid-course adjustments				
✓ apply evaluation tools, compile findings, and use findings to monitor quality of services and/or use				
Health workforce education institutions (Pre-service training)				
✓ apply knowledge underlying the innovation (ex. the biological basis for SDM effectiveness and mode of action)				
✓ identify and utilize technical resources related to innovation				
Organizations developing and distributing IEC materials and implementing mass media campaigns				
✓ integrate technically correct and appealing images and messages related to innovation into print materials				
✓ develop technically correct and appealing messages for mass media applications				
Organizations involved in commodity procurement				
✓ Ability to make realistic commodity projections, using the NUMs guide or historical data				



	Yes	Partial	No	Comments
Organizations using social marketing to increase access of FP products				
✓ Ability to develop creative briefs that accurately reflect innovation and correct misconceptions				
✓ Ability to develop messaging based on formative research findings				
✓ Ability to develop media spots to promote sales				
Development of sales strategy for a new method/SDM				
✓ determine market price based on willingness-to-pay studies				
✓ support new product expansion using strategies such as deploying retail promoters to promote sales to retailers				

