POCKET GUIDE FOR ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Reflect & Learn
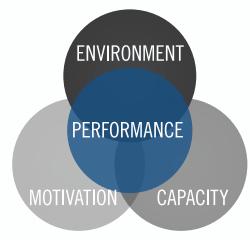
UNIVERSALIA

DATA SOURCES

CONDUCTING A QUICK ASSESSMENT

This guide is intended to provide a framework for rapid organizational assessment (OA) during brief (one to two day) visits to an organization. For in-depth assessments, more comprehensive instruments are available on the Reflect & Learn website (www.reflectlearn.org).

This guide provides some key concepts for you to reflect on as you analyze the organization's enabling environment, motivation, capacity and performance. Use these concepts in writing your organizational assessment report.

ENVIRONMENT

PERFORMANCE

MOTIVATION   CAPACITY

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Every organization should attempt to meet its goals with available resources while ensuring sustainability over the long term. "Good performance" means the work is done effectively, efficiently and remains relevant to the stakeholders. Characterize organizational performance by answering the following questions:

How effective is the organization in moving toward the fulfillment of its mission?

• organizational performance (outputs and outcomes, major achievements, general level of organizational productivity defined according to the organization's mission and values, utilization of results)
• staff performance (clients served, quality of services/products)
• performance of programs and services

How efficient is the organization in moving toward the fulfillment of its mission?

• costs in relation to services provided
• staff productivity (turnover, absenteeism, outputs)
• administrative system efficiency

Has the organization kept its relevance over time?

• adaptation of mission
• meeting stakeholder needs
• adaptation to environment

How financially viable is the organization?

• diversification of sources of funding
• meeting financial targets (for profit organizations)
• having contingency funds (not-for-profit organizations)

ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Organizations do not exist in a vacuum. Each organization is set in a particular environment, which provides multiple contexts that affect the organization and its performance. Characterize the organization's enabling environment using the following guidelines.

Describe and assess the administrative/legal environment within which the organization operates:

• policies
• legislation
• regulations

Describe and assess the social/cultural environment within which the organization operates:

• norms and values
• beliefs
• attitudes in society
• literacy

Describe and assess the external political environment within which the organization operates:

• form of government
• distribution of power
• access to government resources
• allocation decisions
• political will

Describe and assess the economic environment within which the organization operates:

• GDP, inflation, growth, debt
• wage/price structure
• community economics
• hard currency access
• government funding distribution

ENABLING ENVIRONMENT (CONTINUED)

Describe the **technological and ecological** environments within which the organization operates:

• infrastructure, utilities
• geography
• technological literacy
• information technology
• climate

Describe and assess the major **stakeholders** of the organization:

• clients
• donors
• beneficiaries
• government bodies
• other institutions

What is the impact of these environmental forces on the mission, performance and capacity of the organization?

THE RESEARCH PRESENTED HEREIN WAS SUPPORTED BY:

ORGANIZATIONAL MOTIVATION

No two organizations are alike. Each has a distinct history, vision/mission, culture and incentive/reward system. Characterize the level of organizational motivation as determined by the following components.

Analyze the organization's history:

• establishment
• major awards/achievements
• major struggles
• changes in size, program, leadership
• major projects and funding

Understand the organization's mission:

• evolution of mission statement
• organizational goals
• role of mission in shaping the organization, giving it purpose and direction
• articulating research and research products that are valued

Understand the organization's culture:

• attitudes about working
• attitudes about colleagues, clients or stakeholders
• values, beliefs
• underlying organizational norms that guide the organization

Understand the organization's incentive/reward system:

• key factors, values, motivations to promote productivity
• intellectual freedom, stimulation, autonomy
• remuneration, grant access, opportunity for advancement
• peer recognition, prestige

How does motivation affect organizational performance? In what ways do the history, mission, culture and incentive system positively and negatively influence the organization?

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Organizational capacity underlies an organization's performance. Capacity is understood as the five interrelated areas detailed below. Characterize the organizational capacity using the following conceptual guidelines.

Assess the strengths and weaknesses of strategic leadership in the organization:

• leadership (managing culture, setting direction, supporting resource development, ensuring tasks are done)
• strategic planning (scanning environment, developing tactics to attain objectives, goals, mission)
• business models

Assess the strengths and weaknesses of financial management:

• financial planning (operating expenses, forecasts of the future monetary needs and requirements)
• financial accountability (rules for member use of financial resources, transparent/verified system)

Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the organizational structure within the organization:

• governance (legal framework, decision-making process, methods for setting direction, external links)
• operational (roles and responsibilities, coordination of labour, coordinating systems)

Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the organizational infrastructure:

• facilities management (adequate lighting, clean water, electricity)
• technology management (equipment, information systems, hardware/software, library)

Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the following systems, processes or dimensions of human resources:

• planning (recruiting, selecting, staffing, orienting)
• developing (performance management, monitoring, evaluation)
• career management (career development, training)
• maintenance (health/safety issues, gender issues, quality of working life)

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT, PLEASE CONSULT UNIVERSALIA'S REFLECT & LEARN WEBSITE AT WWW.REFLECTLEARN.ORG

Reflect & Learn