

Overview of UNDP's Capacity Assessment Methodology

Capacity Development Group
Bureau for Development Policy
United Nations Development Programme
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UNDP Capacity Assessment Methodology – Context

Draws upon.....

- Capacity development and capacity assessment documents, case studies and reviews from UNDP, the UN system, partner organizations and the private sector
- Technical review provided by representatives within UNDP, the UN system and partner organisations
- 50 + applications to date

Remains a continuous learning process for all of us......



UNDP Capacity Assessment Methodology: Introduction

A **capacity assessment** is an analysis of desired capacities against existing capacities; this generates an understanding of capacity assets and needs and serves as input to formulating a capacity development response.

UNDP has developed a systematic yet flexible methodology for conducting a capacity assessment. This methodology consists of:

- 1) The UNDP Capacity Assessment Framework
- 2) A process for conducting a capacity assessment
- 3) Supporting tools

UNDP Capacity Assessment Methodology – What's New?

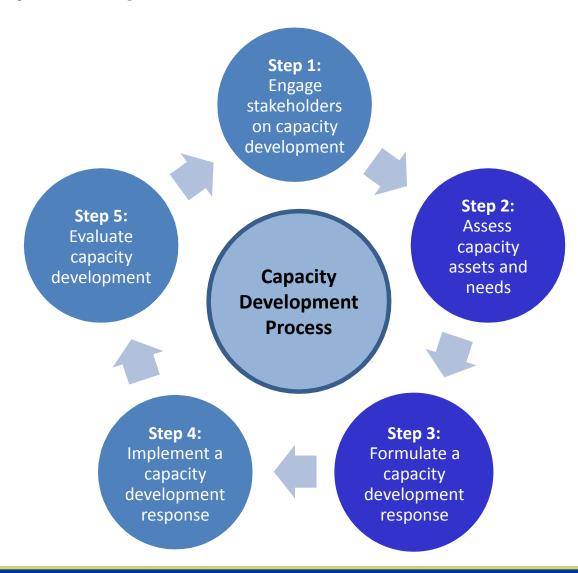
- Brings rigor and a systematic process for assessing existing capacities and needs and formulating a capacity development response
- Provides a structure for discussion about the scale and scope of a capacity assessment and more generally about a capacity development agenda
- Provides resources and tools to support a capacity assessment including content for assessing the various cross-sections of point of entry, core issue and functional capacity

UNDP Capacity Assessment Methodology – What's Different?

- Focuses on capacity... as a complement to other types of assessment, e.g., organizational, functional, risk
- Emphasizes the link with capacity development responses...
 tries to move beyond "analysis paralysis" people are happy to
 stay in the analysis phase... most have skills in this area,
 accountability for results is limited... it's a safe area
- Establishes indicators... the indicators used to assess capacity become the benchmarks against which to measure progress



UNDP Capacity Development Process





UNDP Definition of Capacity Development

Capacity Development: The process through which individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time



UNDP Definition of Capacity Assessment

Capacity Assessment: An analysis of desired_capacities against existing capacities that offers a systematic way of gathering critical data & information on capacity assets and needs and serves as input for the formulation of a capacity development response



Capacity Assessment and Capacity Development... Key Design Questions

Capacity for Why?

Capacity for Whom?

Capacity for What?

W N D P

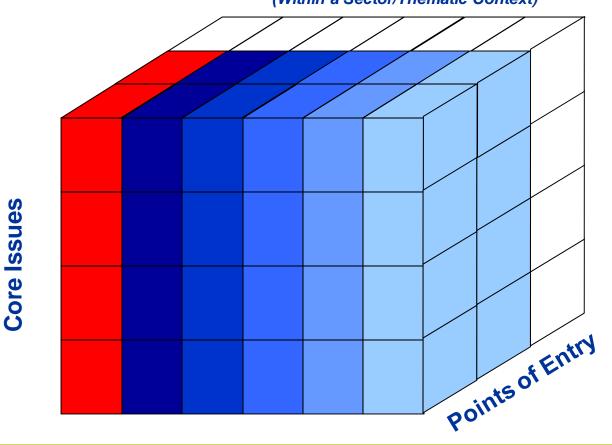
UNDP Capacity Assessment Framework

Technical Capacities

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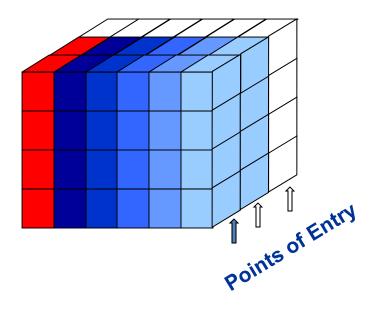
Functional Capacities

(Within a Sector/Thematic Context)





UNDP Capacity Assessment Framework – Points of Entry

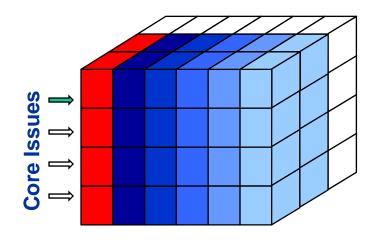


Example: Enabling
Example: Enabling

- Enabling Environment
- Organizational level
- Individual level

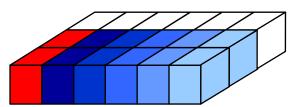


UNDP Capacity Assessment Framework – Core Issues



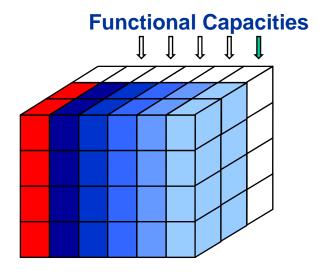
- Institutional Arrangements
- Leadership
- Knowledge
- Accountability

Example: Institutional Arrangements as a Driver of Design

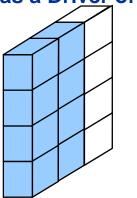




UNDP Capacity Assessment Framework – Capacities



Example: Capacity to Evaluate as a Driver of Design



Technical Capacities

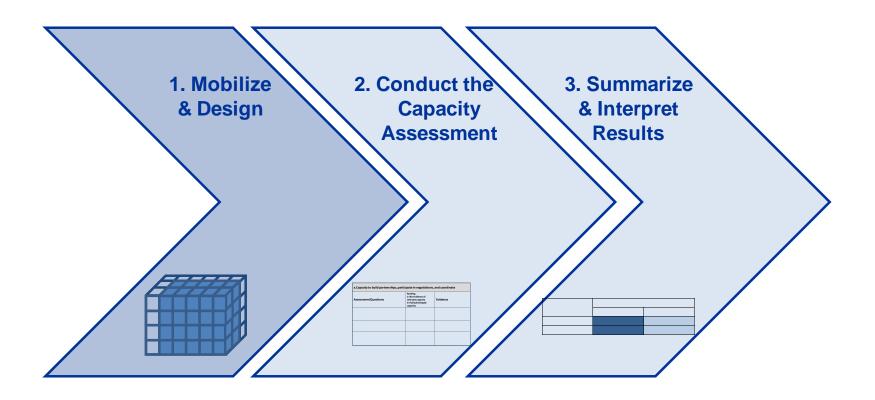
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- Functional Capacities
 - Engage Stakeholders
 - Assess a Situation and Define a Vision and Mandate
 - Formulate Policies and Strategies
 - Budget, Manage and Implement
 - Evaluate



UNDP Capacity Assessment Process

1. Mobilize & Design





Mobilize & Design – Key Activities

- 1. Engage stakeholders throughout the process to ensure ongoing success
- 2. Clarify objectives and expectations with primary clients
- 3. Adapt the UNDP Capacity Assessment Framework to local needs
- 4. Determine the data & information collection and analysis approach
- 5. Determine how the assessment will be conducted
- 6. Plan and cost the capacity assessment

W N D P

Mobilize & Design – Team Composition

- **Context**: context experts bring understanding of the political and socio-economic landscape in which the assessment is conducted
- **Content**: content providers bring detailed and technical knowledge of the sector or theme under assessment, as well as knowledge of the functional (and technical) capacities to be assessed
- Process: a methodology facilitator can help manage the process.
 This facilitator should be able to manage discussions around the scale and scope of the capacity assessment, the adaptation of the UNDP Capacity Assessment Framework, the execution of the assessment, including data collection techniques to be used, and the interpretation of assessment results



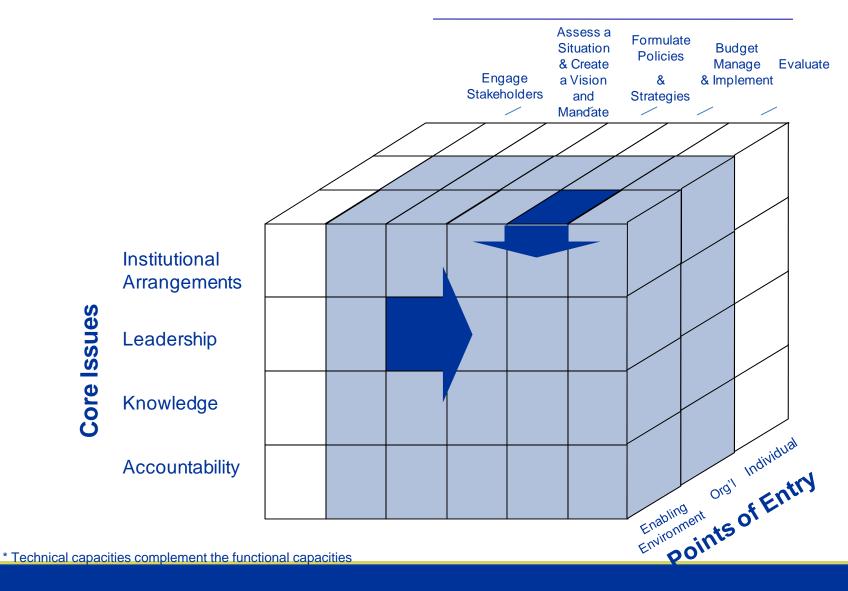
Mobilize & Design – Design Considerations

- Select one cross-section to all 40 cross-sections
- Amend or replace core issues and capacities as needed
- Go into more depth on any given cross-section, e.g., split 'Budget, Manage & Implement' into three subcapacities
- Customize according to how much time is available for the assessment; if there is only limited time, conduct a high-level assessment or narrow the scope

A capacity assessment can be as 'light' or 'heavy' as needed



Mobilize & Design – Drivers





Mobilize & Design – Quantitative Data vs. Qualitative Information

Quantitative Data

Advantages

- May be seen as more 'legitimate' than qualitative information
- Makes it easier to compare the level of capacity across core issues and capacities

Disadvantages

 Risks being used for comparison purposes that are not necessarily valid

Qualitative Information

Advantages

- Can provide context for the quantitative data
- Can be used to create a repository for 'institutional memory'
- Provides an opportunity to elaborate on and contextualize capacity gaps

Disadvantages

 More difficult to compare capacity levels across core issues and capacities



Mobilize & Design – Sources of Data & Information

- Stakeholders: can provide facts and figures, as well as opinions and insights
- Politicians, researchers and other opinion leaders: information pertaining to broader socio-cultural, political and economic trends
- Managers and employees of an organization: insights on what works in their organization and where difficulties lie & nuances between the formal organizational set-up, rules and procedures and the way things are practiced on a day-to-day basis
- Customers or the public at large: information on their level of satisfaction with service delivery

Tap multiple sources of data & information to obtain a balanced view

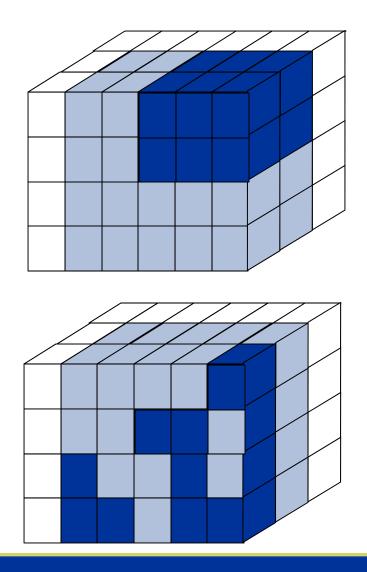


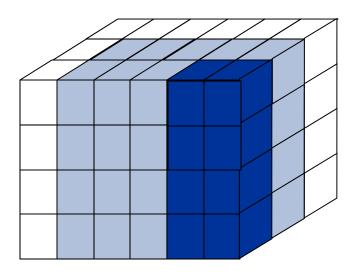
Mobilize & Design – Collection Techniques

- Self-assessment instruments
- Semi-structured, one-on-one interviews
- Questionnaires
- Focus group discussions
- Surveys of end users, e.g. client satisfaction surveys
- Workshops



Mobilize & Design – Scoping Options







Mobilize & Design – UNDP Capacity Assessment User's Guide

— Contents

- 1. Introduction to key concepts
- 2. Assess capacity assets and needs
- 3. Formulate a capacity development response
- 4. Operational Guidelines
- 5. Questions and indicators by core issue
- 6. Frequently asked questions

Mobilize & Design – Questions and Indicators

Among the capacities assessed – abilities to foster ownership, manage relationships with key external stakeholders, including ability to negotiate; develop, communicate and give direction on vision, mission, and values; develop a system for overall management; and create an environment that motivates and supports individuals.

Functional Capacities

Engage Stakehold	ders
Overall Question:	Do authorities have the capacity to manage relations with domestic and external stakeholders inclusively and constructively?
Additional Questions:	 Do authorities have the capacity to: Identify all relevant stakeholders? Foster ownership of CD policies, legislations, strategies and programmes? Negotiate with domestic and external donors?

Indicators

- Existence of influential and outspoken champions for ownership and CD
- Quality (e.g. transparent, participatory, engaged, respective) and frequency of dialogue between and among domestic and external stakeholders
- Ability of authorities to effectively represent government (national or local) to external interests
- Clarity of leadership philosophy to domestic and external stakeholders ...

Mobilize & Design – Questions and Indicators

Core Issue Leadership – Organisational Level

Among the capacities assessed – abilities to foster ownership, manage relationships with key external stakeholders, including ability to negotiate; develop, communicate and give direction on vision, mission, and values; develop a system for overall management; and create an environment that motivates and supports individuals.

Functional Capacities

Engage Stakeholders

Engage Stak	cenoiders
Overall Question:	Does the organisation's leadership have capacity to manage relations with key stakeholders inclusively and constructively?
Additional Questions:	 Does the organisation's leadership have the capacity to: Identify all relevant stakeholders? Develop and maintain regular relations with political authorities of the appropriate executive and legislative areas? Develop and maintain partnerships and networks with important stakeholders, e.g., citizens, NGOs, interest groups, industry, other public authorities?

Indicators

- Existence of influential and outspoken champions for ownership and capacity development.
- Organisational ownership of policies, goals and structure.
- Ability of management to effectively represent the organisation to external interests.
- Clarity of leadership philosophy to internal and external stakeholders.



Capacity Assessment Worksheet – Sample #1

Pillar # 2	Revitalize the National Economy					
Objective # 1	Strengthening Fiscal Policy and Financial Management					

a. Capacity to Formulate Policies and Strategies								
Assessment Questions	Ranking 1=No evidence of relevant capacity 5=Fully developed capacity	Evidence						
Do authorities have knowledge of fiscal policy, exchange rate policy, generally accepted accounting principles?	1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5	Replace this text with details.]						
Do authorities have capacity to formulate policies / financial management procedures based on national priorities?	1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5	Replace this text with details.]						
Do authorities have the ability to be gender-sensitive in formulating fiscal policy/financial management?	1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5	Replace this text with details.]						

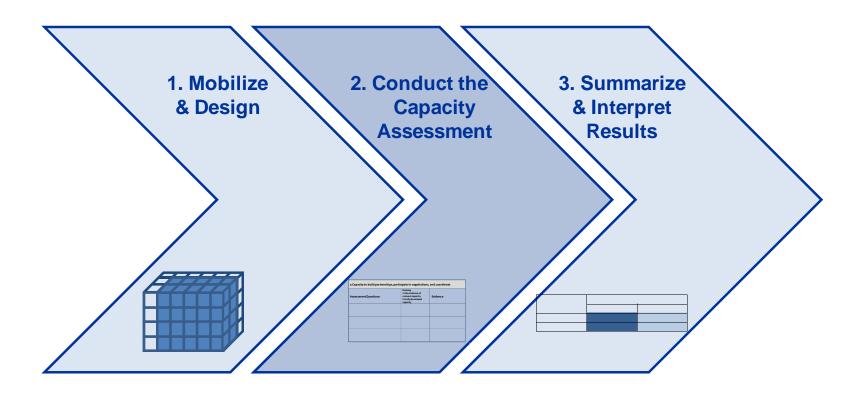
Capacity Assessment Worksheet – Sample #2

Development Issue: Leadership The organization's leadership has capacity to develop and implement frameworks, processes and systems for overall management of policy, strategy and programme, including budget formulation and management; and programme implementation.						
Guide Questions:	Strengths					
Potential Indicators:						
	Areas for Improvement					
Evidence						
 Score/Rating: No evidence or only anecdotal evidence of a strategy/approach; A strategy/approach exists. The strategy is planned and implemented. A strategy/approach is planned, implemented and reviewed on the basis of benchmarking data and adjusted accordingly. An approach is planned, implemented, reviewed on the basis of benchmarking data, adjusted and fully integrated into the organisation. 						
Current Capacity Rating/Score	Current Capacity Rating/Score Desired Capacity Rating/Score					



UNDP Capacity Assessment Process

2. Conduct the Capacity Assessment





2. Conduct the Capacity Assessment – Key Activities

- 1. Determine Level of <u>Desired Capacity</u>
- Create a common understanding of the ranking scheme used
- Agree on the timeframe over which desired capacity is to be achieved
- Be ambitious but realistic

- 2. Assess Level of **Existing** Capacity
- Organize an info session to explain methodology
- Answer questions articulated during 'Mobilize & Design'
- Assign a ranking to existing capacity

Conduct the Capacity Asssessment – Options for Defining Capacity Levels

Option # 1 Same quantitative ranking P		Pros: Easy and quick to apply			
	scheme for all capacities	Cons: Not specific to any capacity type			
		or category			
Option # 2	Different quantitative	Pros: More detailed insights			
	ranking scheme for	Cons: No specific insights on capacities			
	different types of capacity	within any type of capacity			
Option # 3	Different quantitative	Pros: Provides detailed insights on			
	ranking scheme for each	specific capacities within each capacity			
	question	type			
		Cons: Time consuming to develop and			
		execute			



Defining Capacity Levels – Option #1

- 1. No evidence of relevant capacity
- 2. Anecdotal evidence of capacity
- 3. Partially developed capacity
- 4. Widespread but not comprehensive capacity
- 5. Fully developed capacity

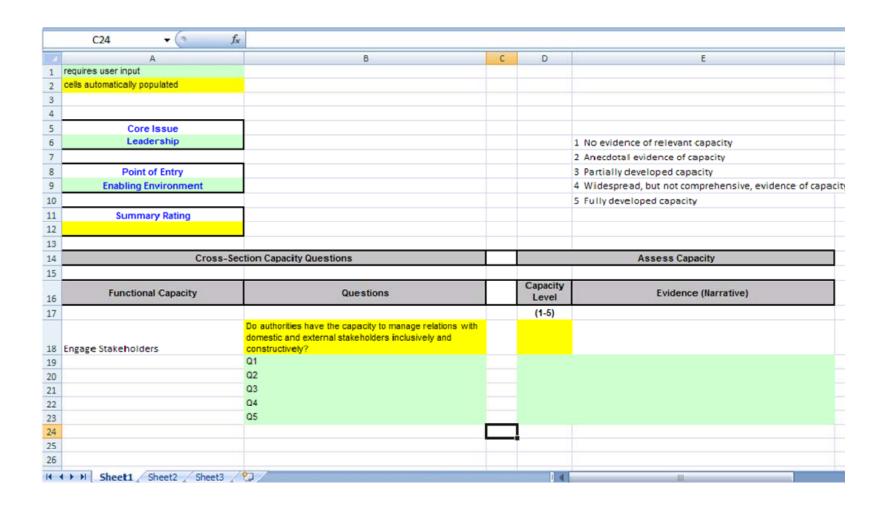


Defining Capacity Levels – Option # 2 P3M3 Project Management Maturity Levels

Maturity	Project Management						
Level 1 initial process	The organisation recognises projects and runs them differently from its ongoing business. (Projects may be run informally with no standard process or tracking system)						
Level 2 repeatable process	The organisation ensures that each project is run with its own processes and procedures to a minimum specified standard. (There may be limited consistency or co-ordination between projects)						
Level 3 defined process	The organisation has its own centrally controlled project processes, and individual projects can flex within these processes to suit the particular project.						
Level 4 managed process	The organisation obtains and retains specific measurements on its project management performance and runs a quality management organisation to better predict future performance.						
Level 5 optimised process	The organisation runs continuous process improvement with proactive problem and technology management for projects in order to improve its ability to depict performance over time and optimise processes.						



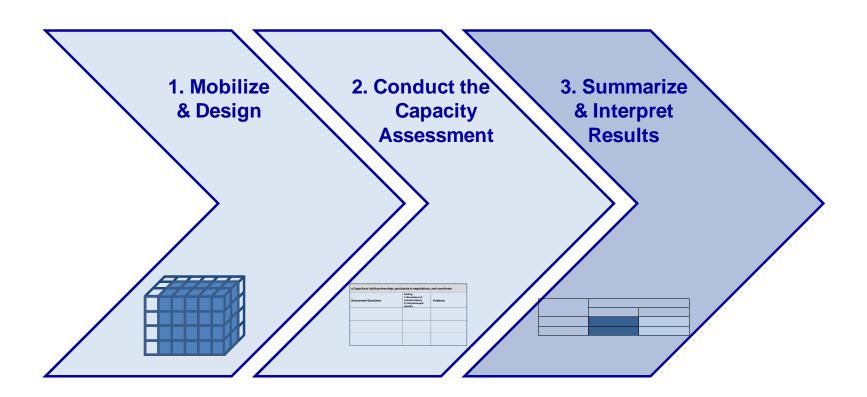
UNDP Capacity Assessment Supporting Tool





UNDP Capacity Assessment Process

3. Summarize & Interpret Results





Summarize & Interpret Results – Illustration

Core Issues	Budget	Manage	Implement	Avg	
Leadership	3.4	3.0	3.2	3.2	
Knowledge	1.3	1.7	1.5	1.5	

- 1. Gap between desired and existing leadership capacities is relatively large across all capacities assessed
- 2. Gap on knowledge is less significant

Core Issues	Budget	Manage	Implement	Avg	
Leadership	4.0	1.0	1.3	2.1	
Knowledge	4.2	1.3	1.4	2.3	

- Gap in capacity to budget may need improvement
- 2. However, gaps in capacity to manage and implement are relatively small



Summarize & Interpret Results – Using the UNDP Excel-based Supporting Tool

	Functional Capacities									
Core Issues	Assess a Situation		ation	Famoudata						
	_	Engage and Define takehol- a Vision &		Formulate Policies &		Budget, Manage &				
	ders		Mandate		Strategies		Implement		Evaluate	
	Desired Level	Existing Level	Desired Level	Existing Level	Desired Level	Existi	Desired Level	Existing Level	Desired Level	Existing Level
01. Institutional Arrangements	4.00	3.00	3.25	1.89	trative		3.35	2.10		
02. Leadership			3.25	Illus	llu				3.21	2.29
03. Knowledge	3.70	2.50	\ _				3.36	2.35		
04. Accountability	3.50	2.44					2.90	1.80		
05. Human Rights			3.25	1.75					3.29	1.57
Overall	3.73	2.64	3.25	1.92	3.50	2.40	3.20	2.08	3.25	1.93



Capacity Assessment – Expected Results

- Leads to insights regarding existing capacity assets, needs and priorities
- Informs the formulation of capacity development strategies
- Does not necessarily generate "surprises"
- Can help confirm priorities and build consensus → moving forward off of a common platform



Capacity Assessment – Lessons Learned

- Adapt to the local context and to suit local needs
- Build in enough time for mobilizing stakeholders and designing the assessment
- Ensure sufficient time for the collection of data & information
- Ensure local ownership
- Be creative
- Leave the prioritization of a capacity development response and follow-up actions to the end



Capacity Assessment – Good Practices

- Consider capacity assessments as a normal part of good management that can assist stakeholders in enhancing capacity and improving performance and that can add value to the processes of needs identification, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, rather than treating them as stand-alone activities
- Ensure that any assessment is nationally and/or locally led, although external facilitation is the most effective way to make the assessment as objective as possible
- Engage stakeholders from the outset to ensure appropriate design and buy-in, and where appropriate, to encourage self-assessment
- Budget for capacity assessments as an ongoing part of institutional reform and change management
- Use capacity assessments to galvanize interest for change and to promote organisational learning and empowerment
- Incorporate lessons learned on an ongoing basis into a capacity assessment by taking an iterative approach to the overall process
- Remain flexible, ensuring optimal use of existing information sources while taking opportunities to build synergies with other ongoing initiatives/processes
- Encourage an open and honest assessment process to ensure fairness and acceptance of the assessment's procedures and results



Considerations in Conducting a Capacity Assessment

- Assessment fatigue
- Skepticism about value and validity of results emerging from a capacity assessment
- Suspicion that capacity assessments are being used by senior management for re-profiling or retrenchment
- Disconnect between capacity assessment and formulation of capacity development strategies: basing strategy formulation on "guesstimates" of capacity gaps
- Facilitation level: too much may lead to "coached" outcomes; too little may result in a "wish list" of capacity development strategies

- "Zoom in" on the issues
- Importance of building consensus

- Assessments for overall development effectiveness
- Focus on the link between assessment results and capacity development strategies
- Endogenous process, ownership



Other Assessment Approaches

- Business Process Re-engineering: analysis of process flow to identify key steps, decision points and bottlenecks, and redesign the process
- Functional Review: before a capacity assessment to review functional activities to determine where a function could best be exercised
- Horizon Scan: review of development trends and dynamics and the policy environment (enabling environment) and its internal procedures etc. (organisational level)
- MDG Needs Assessment: the 'what', required to achieve the MDGs;
 can be conducted in conjunction with a capacity assessment
- Organizational Design: an analysis of an organization's vision, formal structure, roles and responsibilities and culture



Other Assessment Approaches (cont.)

- Performance Assessment: assessment against a set of predetermined criteria of the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which an organization or an individual carries out a particular activity or range of activities
- Risk Assessment: to define operational and financial risks, e.g. for implementing partners
- Stakeholder Analysis: mapping of key stakeholders and their position viz. an entity's objectives
- SWOT: analysis of strengths & weaknesses (organizational level) and opportunities & threats (enabling environment). Variation on a capacity assessment
- Training Needs Assessment: collection and analysis of organizational, occupational and individual competencies critical to performance



Supplementary Capacity Assessment Methodologies – Select List

Methodology / Tool	Purpose
General	
Venture Philanthropy Partners (McKinsey) Capacity Assessment Grid	Assess non-profits' organizational capacity, including identifying strengths and areas for improvement, measuring changes in capacity over time, and drawing out different views within the organization
EFQM Excellence Model	Comprised of nine main aspects requiring consideration in any organizational analysis, grouped into Enablers and Results
Thematic	
UNDP Civil Society Organization Capacity Assessment Tool	Assess CSO commitment to UNDP principles of participatory human development and democratic governance Assess CSO capacity for project management
UNDP Generic Participatory, Result-oriented Self Assessment (PROSE) Tool for CSOs engaged in policy advocacy	Assess in-depth the capacities of CSOs in Africa to engage in policy analysis, policy dialogue, policy advocacy, and the monitoring and review of the performance of public policies
OECD/DAC Joint Venture on Procurement	Offer a standardized instrument which developing countries and donors can use to assess the quality and effectiveness of national procurement systems
UNDP Aid Effectiveness	Adaptation of the UNDP capacity assessment methodology to support assessment of capacity to manage aid effectively
Sector	
OECD/DAC Good Practice Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	An analytical and participatory approaches to strategic decision-making that aim to integrate environmental considerations into policies, plans and programmes and evaluate the inter linkages with economic and social considerations
UNDP GEF National Capacity Self Assessment	Assess functional capacities from an environmental perspective, as input into environmental and overall policy and programme planning

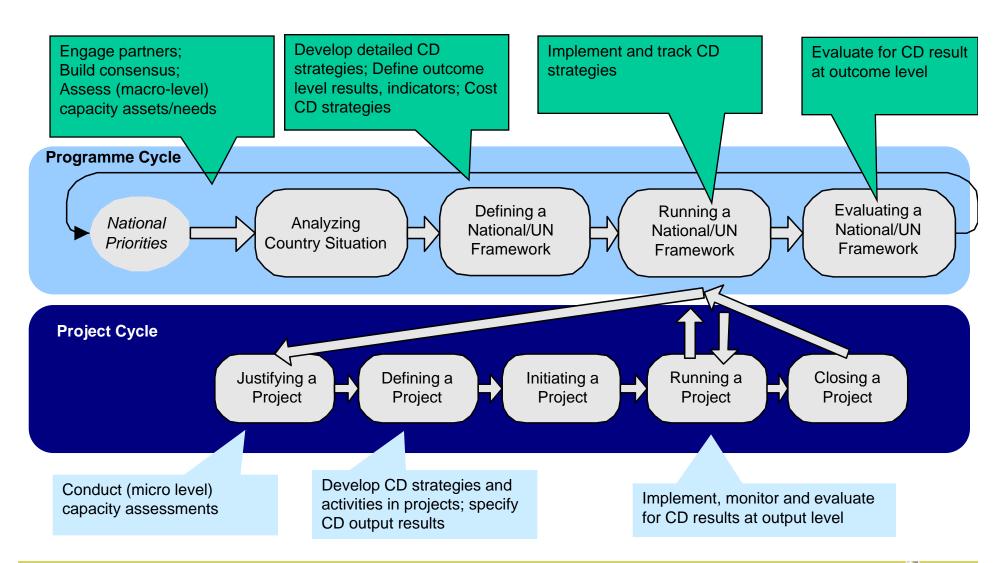


Core Issues and Capacity Development Responses

- 1. Institutional Arrangements: e.g., support to functional reviews and the design of human resource management systems, monetary and non-monetary incentive mechanisms and results-based management.
- 2. Leadership: e.g., support to visioning, systems thinking and strategic planning exercises; promotion of peer-to-peer mentoring; coalition building and negotiation skills development; design of career management systems.
- 3. Knowledge: e.g., support to education reform strategies to incorporate human development needs into curriculum reform; facilitation of partnerships for investment in reforming post-secondary education; support to south-south learning solutions.
- 4. Accountability: e.g., design and support to monitoring and evaluation systems and independent partner review mechanisms; promotion of public information disclosure policies and legislation; support to civic education.

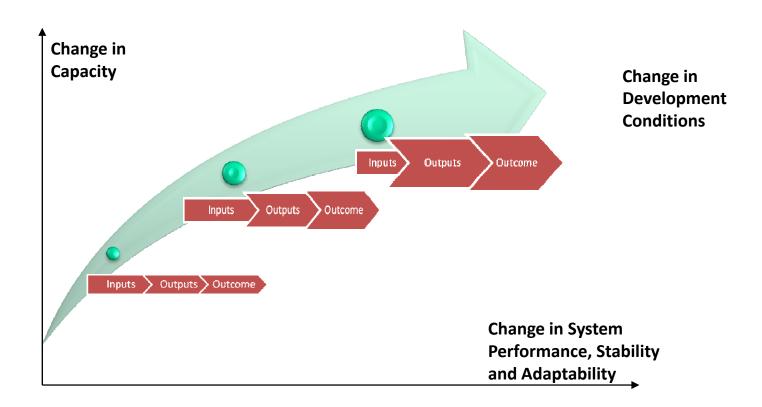


Capacity Development in the Country Programming Cycle



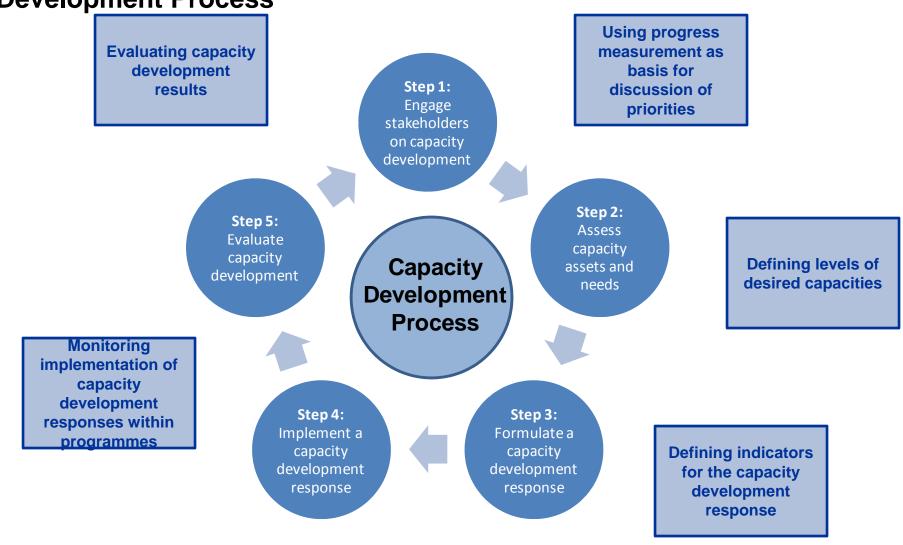
Measuring Capacity Development

An improvement in capacity accelerates achievements of development goals



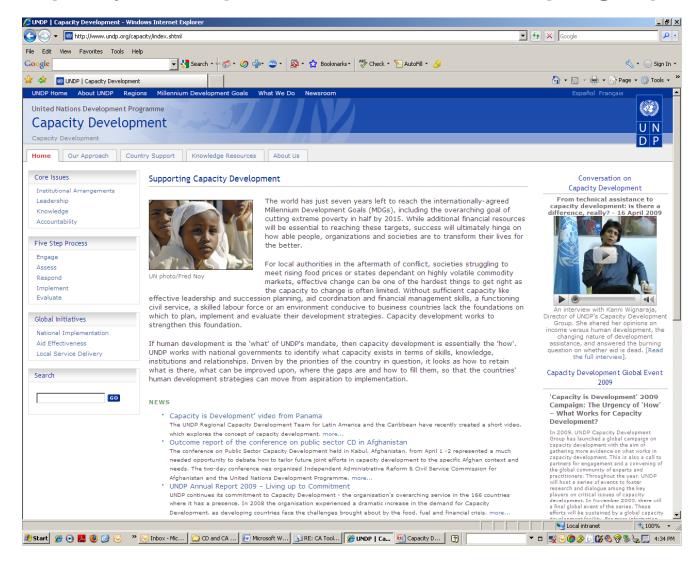


Using Capacity Assessment throughout the Capacity Development Process





UNDP Capacity Development Website: www.undp.org/capacity





UNDP Capacity Assessment Services

UNDP and its network of partners support national stakeholders with advocacy, policy advisory and implementation services in the following areas:

- 1. Provision of a UNDP Capacity Assessment Methodology, including a User's Guide and Supporting Tools, for use by UNDP staff and national partners.
- 2. Engagement in exercises to determine the scope of the assessment and support to implementing it, including adapting the methodology to specific contexts.
- 3. Engagement in analysing findings and formulating capacity development responses.
- 4. For countries that decide to use more than one methodology, assistance in comparing the UNDP methodology with other assessment frameworks, such as the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers, Human Rights-Based Approach, Post-Conflict Needs Assessments and the UNDG Capacity Assessment Methodology; and facilitation of such combined assessments.
- 5. Facilitation of learning sessions on capacity assessments at global, regional and country levels for UN/UNDP staff and national partners.



UNDP Capacity Development Resources

Thematic Applications of the UNDP Capacity Assessment Methodology

- Procurement
- Aid Effectiveness
- Trade
- HIV/AIDS
- Disaster Risk Reduction
- Electoral Systems

UNDP Capacity Development Resources (cont.)

Theoretical and Case Study Publications

- Capacity for Development: New Solutions to Old Problems
- Developing Capacity through Technical Cooperation
- Ownership, Leadership, and Transformation: Can We Do Better for Capacity Development?
- Action Brief on Capacities for Integrated Local Development
- Action Brief on Brain Gain
- Action Brief on Ethics and Values in Civil Service Reforms

Practice Notes

- Practice Note on Capacity Development
- Practice Note on Capacity Assessment
- Practice Note on Supporting Capacities for Integrated Local Development
- Practice Note on Capacity Development during Periods of Transition

UNDP Capacity Development Resources (cont.)

Concept Notes on Capacity Development Responses

- Institutional Reform and Change Management: Managing Change in Public Sector Organizations
- Incentive Systems: Incentives, Motivation and Development Performance
- Leadership Development: Leading Transformations at the Local Level
- Knowledge Services and Learning
- Mutual Accountability Mechanisms: Accountability, Voice and Responsiveness
- Multi-Stakeholder Engagement Processes

Concept Notes on Capacity Development Applications

- Capacity Development and Aid Management
- Procurement Capacities

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UNDP Capacity Development Resources (cont.)

Resource Guides and Tools (Selection)

- UNDP Capacity Assessment User's Guide and Supporting Tool
- A Review of Selected Capacity Assessment Methodologies
- UNDP Procurement Capacity Assessment User's Guide and Supporting Tool
- Resource Catalogue on Measuring Capacities: An Illustrative Guide to Benchmarks and Indicators

Training materials (For UNDP Staff)

- Self-paced online course on Capacity Development
- Self-paced online course on Capacity Assessment

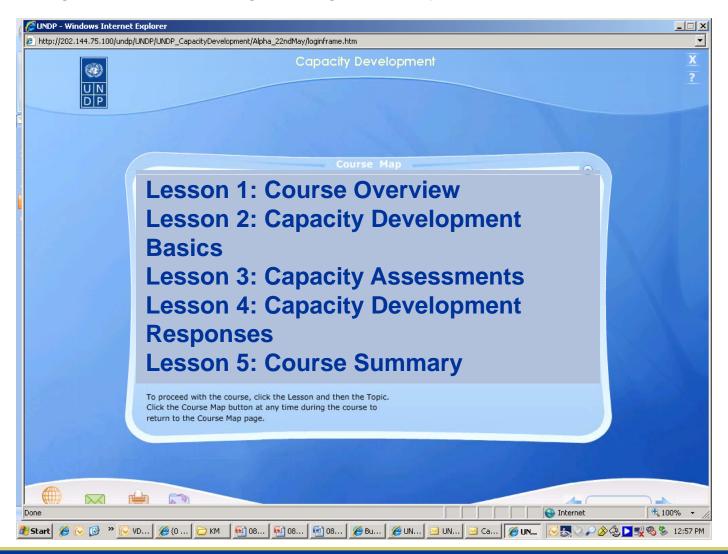
Network

Capacity Development Network and Community of Practice



Online Course on Capacity Development

(through UNDP Learning Management System)





Online Course on Capacity Assessment

(through UNDP Learning Management System)

