Organizational Assessment Review Overview and Rubric

Introduction

The Organizational Development group within MSI has been leading an effort to revamp MSI's Organizational Development (OD) toolkit. One part of the process is to review existing tools that will allow the group to agree on basic assessment tool(s) and inform whether and how the team would develop a new tool. In order to reach this goal, the group agreed on a schedule and developed consensus on scope and methodology. In addition, the group agreed on attributes of OD tool(s) and approaches to look for in the review process as well as technological approaches. Utilizing this report as a spring board for the development of MSI's OD toolkit, the group convened several times to discuss findings, note various observations and agree upon next steps.

Methodology

MSI developed a scoring system based on the Organizational Development (OD) tool attributes that the group identified as most important for the tool to have. The desired attributes in turn became a starting point when examining existing tools and looking at what works well as well as new ideas to incorporate for the future tool. The scoring guide was revised several times before the final version was determined. The scoring was done by a primary reviewer with support from advisors. The primary reviewer scored three tools, and then had a check-in with one of the advisors to verify the scores before scoring the remainder of the tools. Once the scoring process was complete, the primary reviewer and advisors reconvened to ensure the consistency of the scoring across all tools, to review rationales of scores, and address outstanding questions.

The reviewer analyzed 20 organizational capacity assessment tools and accompanying guidelines as well as information gathered from online resources. The reviewer, utilizing the rubric included at the end of this report, scored the tools according to the outlined characteristics. Notes were included in the scoring guide providing justification for the scores. The report generated a ranking of the tools in a table format, displaying the maximum score (out of 108) as well as the percentage/index of each tool to provide numerical overview.

There were some limitations to the scoring process. At its onset, the team agreed upon the level of analysis for the scope of the exercise as it was conducted for an internal audience and meant to serve as guidance for the development of MSI's OD toolkit in line with MSI values and principles. In addition, MSI did not have a complete set of materials for all tools.

General Themes

During the scoring process there were several themes that emerged. Most of the tools were Excel based but the use of Excel varied. For some tools, it was used only to calculate scores and generate a final score while for other tools it was used to generate results and present graphs for analysis. Overall, there was a lack of online use. In addition, most tools lacked external validation as well as an in depth discussion around the evidence or research base of the tools. The design of the tools also varied, however. Of the 20 tools reviewed, more than half were designed as maturity models.

Tools by Sector

The distribution of tools across sectors varied. Most of the tools in this review process were geared towards NGOs and the public sector.

Assessment Style

Assessment style varied across the tools. A facilitated, participatory approach was the most common.

Score Distribution by Category

Scores varied across the six categories. In general, tools scored highest in the purpose and scoring categories.

Category	# of tools out of 20 scoring above 80% in each sub category
Purpose	13
Scoring	7
Comprehensiveness	2
Design Quality	0
Delivery Approach Quality	4
Potential for Action/Change	3

Scoring Guide

Goal/Purpose

This effort reviews the major organizational assessment tools currently being utilized within the public, private and independent/civil society sectors. By employing a scoring system that rates each assessment tool via six major attributes, the top two tools per sector are identified. Once done, these 'top ranked' tools will be shared with MSI's internal group for consideration and potential inputs as a new MSI organizational assessment tool and corresponding process is developed.

Definitions

Organization refers to the organization being assessed.

Domain is the major pillar within which the assessment takes place. Collectively, these domains frame the assessment and signal the tool's level of emphasis and scope. As seen in the OCA tool below, an example of the domain would be "1. Governance and Legal Structure."

Characteristic refers to a set of specific elements that constitute a domain. For example in USAID's OCA tool below, there are five characteristics that the organization will be assessed against as it corresponds to the Governance and Legal Structure area.

Scoring Scale refers to the numeric or qualitative scoring system that allows characteristics to be rated. From USAID's Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) tool (below), this would refer to the area outlined in red.

1.1 Vision and Mission

Subsection Objectives: Assess the clarity of the organization's statements of its purpose and values and how they have been shared and applied

Resources: Vision statement; mission statement; and board, senior manager, and staff questionnaires or interviews

	Low Capacity	Basic Capacity	Moderate Capacity	Strong Capacity
1.1 Vision and Mission	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
	Vision and mission statements are • Not written • Written, but not clear and specific • Written, but no longer relevant to the organization's current purpose or aspirations • Not considered in decisions on priorities and actions • Not included in staff orientation and public communication materials	Vision and mission statements are written, but • Vague and general • Partly relevant to organization's current purpose or aspirations • Not usually considered in decisions on priorities and actions • Not usually included in staff orientation and public communication materials	Vision and mission statements are written and • Reasonably clear and specific • Relevant to the organization's current purpose or aspirations, but may need some updating • Usually considered in decisions on priorities and actions • Included in staff orientation and public communication materials	Vision and mission statements are written and • Clear and specific • Relevant to the organization's current purpose or aspirations • Consistently considered in decisions on and actions • Included in staff orientation and public communication materials

Appreciative approach refers an approach that is collaborative and participatory and that is based on understanding the strengths of an organization: focusing on what is working well within the organization, as opposed to focusing on weaknesses or gaps.

Sector refers to parts of the economy concerned with providing services as controlled by the government (public); individuals and companies for profit (private); and individuals and organizations that are not-for-profit (civil society).

Attributes refer to the six major areas under which each organizational assessment tool is rated. Under each attribute, there are a number of prioritized statements that, in essence, comprise it. Both the attributes and its statements were identified by the MSI working group as important elements to score and could collectively generate the rating of a top tool.

How to Score

This section provides instructions for how to score each of the tools. There are two objective measures, followed by subjective scoring of key attributes.

Sector

Mark whether the assessment is designed for…

- Public sector: Government agencies, departments, or units at national, state, district, or municipal level

- Private sector: For-profit businesses

- Non-profit sector: Civil Society Organizations, Faith-Based Organizations, etc.

How is it Administered?

Mark whether the assessment is a…

- Self-Assessment: The organization completes the assessment of themselves, on their own, without a facilitator or external consultant. The organization manages the process, conducts the analysis, and generates any follow-up results.

- Facilitated Self-Assessment: The organization completes a self-assessment as supported by an external facilitator. The facilitator manages the process of the assessment and supports he organization in its analysis, and any follow-up results.

- External Assessment: An external consultant completes the assessment of the organization. The consultant manages the process, conducts the analysis and may generate suggested follow-up actions. This is more like an audit.

- Blended Approach: Self-assessment with external assessment done in parallel.

Attributes of Capacity Assessment Tools

These attributes will be scored on a scale of 1 to 4 (1 = Poor; 2 = Fair; 3 = Good; 4 = Excellent).

1) **Purpose**: The tool's use and potential outcomes are clearly explained.

   - The tool's purpose and expected results are clearly explained.

   - The type of organization which the tool is designed to assess is explicit.

   - The tool possesses complementary guidance, which enables its use and facilitates expected results (i.e., instructions on how to use, tailor or adopt the tool).

2) **Scoring**: The scoring scale is adequate, clear, and minimizes bias.

   - The scoring scale is user-friendly and can be used consistently across the tool's rubric.

   - Scoring scale range is adequate to enable representative ratings (e.g., if only a checklist, then it's poor; if gradation is too small [1-3], then not sufficient to measure change; if gradation is too large [1-100] then it is too complex to score readily).

   - Anchors (e.g., adequate, fair, good) are distinct in meaning and facilitate inter scale points that are distinguishable and minimizes scale-use bias.

3) **Comprehensiveness**: The tools' completeness in terms of its domains and organizational characteristics.

- The domain categories and any sub-categories are adequate to facilitate a comprehensive assessment of the organization in its environment.

- The organizational characteristics represent the corresponding domain.

- Each organizational characteristic is distinct in definition and demonstrates progressive sages of organizational performance.

- The organizational characteristics are of sufficient quality and quantity to facilitate any tailoring and customization as required by the organization (i.e., little or no need to create new characteristics, regardless of type of organizations and contexts)

- Organizational characteristics include concrete examples, descriptions, or benchmarks that are appropriate for the organization's context (particularly in the case of maturity models).

- There is a high likelihood that by going through the process of using the tool, the organization will be able to reflect on its own growth and development.

- There is an appropriate balance between comprehensiveness of the assessment and the amount of time required to complete it. (e.g., the organization would feel the time was well spent because the assessment was so valuable).

4) **Design Quality**: The assessment tool is well designed and rigorous.

- The tool has been designed based on good/sound evidence/research.

- The tool has been externally tested and/or validated.

- The language/reading level and any graphics used in the tool are easy for both participants and facilitators to understand.

- The tool appears to be easy to use across multiple types of organizations and will produce consistent outcomes for organizations in similar stages of development.

5) **Delivery Approach Quality**: The process for using the tool is simple and generates participation.

- The assessment process is intended to facilitate engagement and participation from the members of the organization.

- The assessment process helps the organization recognize past accomplishments and future possibilities.

- The assessment is available via a variety of options: online, electronic (MS word/excel/PPT), or, hard copy (pen/paper).

- The process can successfully be carried out or replicated by the organization.

6) **Potential for Action/Change**: Use of tool can generate optimism within the organization and produce results that lead to a clear path for action/change.

- The tool is part of a larger change management / organizational development (OD) approach (versus being a stand-alone tool), that orients the organization regarding change before the assessment, and facilitates this change after the assessment is complete.

- The tool produces results that would readily lead to analysis (e.g., scores can be automatically converted into visually appealing graphics).

- The tool facilitates a transition from the assessment phase to the action phase (i.e., planning, implementation, learning and adjustment).

- The tool helps the organization and its people understand where to invest in organizational strengthening in order to achieve its mission and its own performance goals.

- The tool enables the organization to assess its potential to change.