

# PROGRES

## Program for Organizational Growth, Resilience, and Sustainability

User Guide | December 2014



Stronger health systems. Greater health impact.



# Table of Contents

Acronyms.....	3
Acknowledgments.....	4
Definitions.....	5
1. Introduction .....	7
1.1 About Management Sciences for Health .....	7
1.2. The Program for Organizational Growth, Resilience, and Sustainability (PROGRES).....	7
1.3 Purpose of PROGRES .....	8
2. Why Conduct an Organizational Capacity Assessment? .....	11
2.1 Who Should Use PROGRES .....	11
3. Using PROGRES to Assess an Organization’s Capacity .....	12
3.1 Understanding the Three Phases of Assessment .....	12
3.2 Providing Feedback .....	15
3.4 Developing the PROGRES Report .....	17
3.5 Implementing and Monitoring the Action Plan .....	17
3.6 Scheduling Follow-Up Assessments .....	17
4. Useful Tips for Facilitators .....	18
5. Annexes.....	19
Annex 1: Sample Agenda for an Organizational Capacity Assessment.....	19
Annex 2: Key Illustrative Documents for Review, by Domain.....	20
Annex 3: Template for a Capacity-Building Action Plan .....	23
6. References .....	24

## Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
GAAP	Generally Accepted Accounting Principles
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IFAD	International Fund for Agriculture and Development
KM	Knowledge Management
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSH	Management Sciences for Health
NPO	Not-for-Profit Organization
OCA	Organizational Capacity Assessment
OCAT	Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool
OD	Organizational Development
PROGRES	Program for Organizational Growth, Resilience, and Sustainability
TOR	Terms of Reference
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

## Acknowledgments

We wish to express our sincere gratitude to the leadership of Management Sciences for Health (MSH), specifically President and CEO Dr. Jonathan Quick and Vice President Larry Michel, and the Innovation Challenge (INCH) Fund committee for providing the resources in support of the development of PROGRES, the MSH master organizational capacity assessment tool. This program will facilitate organizational capacity assessment and identify the arenas for capacity-building interventions for improved health outcomes.

Special thanks to the team of experts from MSH who developed PROGRES (the Summit members), led by Henry Kilonzo (Kenya), Wycliffe Ouma (Kenya), Dr. Daraus Bukenya (Kenya), Sam Mulyanga (Kenya), Stephen Marrietta (Kenya), Andrew Anguko (Kenya), Christine Kiecha (Kenya), Judith Seltzer (US), Dr. Kahabi Isangula (Tanzania), Temesgen Workayehu (Ethiopia), Dr. Reshma Trasi (US), Jerusha Govender (South Africa), Stephanie Calves (US), Emmanuel Atuma (Nigeria), and Elizabeth Walsh (US). We thank you for your sacrifices and commitment, which ensured this innovative process was completed within the stated time frame.

In addition, we appreciate the five organizations that played key roles in hosting us in their countries and committed their time to participate in the assessment process as we tested the relevance of the program: Africa Health Project (Nigeria), State Agency for the Control of HIV/AIDS (SACA) – Niger State (Nigeria), Omega Foundation (Kenya), and LENEPWHA and GROW (Lesotho). Thank you very much.

Thanks also to our colleagues from MSH who reviewed the program in Pretoria: Kerry Lee (South Africa), Monita Baba Djara (US), and Musa Salami (Nigeria). Your critical reviews of the program caught missing details and redundancies. We thank you.

The program could not have been finalized without the moral support we received from colleagues on MSH project teams in Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, Nigeria, and Ethiopia. We appreciate your roles in keeping us motivated.

Henry Kilonzo

## Definitions

Key Term	Definition	Source
<b>Advocacy</b>	A strategy used by civil society organizations (CSOs), activists, and even policymakers to influence policymaking. Advocacy is about creating or reforming policies and also about effectively implementing and enforcing them.	Sprechmann, S. and Pelton, E. <i>Advocacy Tools and Guidelines: Promoting Policy Change</i> . Atlanta: Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere Inc., 2001.
<b>Capacity-building</b>	Any action that improves the effectiveness of individuals, organizations, networks, or systems—including organizational and financial stability, program service delivery, program quality, and growth.	Management Sciences for Health. <i>Challenges Encountered in Capacity Building: A Review of Literature and Selected Tools</i> , Position Paper No. 1, April 2010. Accessed at <a href="http://www.msh.org/sites/msh.org/files/as2_technicalbrief_1.pdf">www.msh.org/sites/msh.org/files/as2_technicalbrief_1.pdf</a> [December 2014].
<b>Cooperative Agreement</b>	An award of financial assistance that is used to enter into the same kind of relationship as a grant and is distinguished from a grant in that it provides for substantial involvement between the federal agency and the recipient in carrying out the activity contemplated by the award.	USG Grants Glossary. Accessed at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/general-support/glossary.html#G">www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/general-support/glossary.html#G</a> [12 December 2014].
<b>Grant</b>	An award of financial assistance, the principal purpose of which is to transfer a thing of value from a federal agency to a recipient to carry out a public purpose of support or stimulation authorized by a law of the United States (see 31 U.S.C. 6101(3)). A grant differs from a contract, which is used to acquire property or services for the federal government's direct benefit or use.	USG Grants Glossary. Accessed at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/general-support/glossary.html#G">www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/general-support/glossary.html#G</a> [12 December 2014].
<b>Institution/organization</b>	An entity such as a CSO, government ministry, government department, or government program.	As defined by the authors of this user guide, to clarify readers' understanding of how "institution" and "organization" are used in this document.

Key Term	Definition	Source
<b>M&amp;E framework</b>	A comprehensive system for monitoring and evaluation, usually developed during the design phase of a project or program; it usually includes a logical framework/log frame/logic model/results chain, as well as indicators, data collection instruments, a data management system, and reporting templates.	Adapted from International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD). <i>Managing for Impact in Rural Development: A Guide for Project M&amp;E</i> . Rome: IFAD, 2001.
<b>Mission Statement</b>	Explanation of why an organization exists—its overall purpose. The mission statement also describes the organization's current efforts, in the most general sense.	Adapted from Galer, J. B., Vriesendorp, S., and Ellis, A. <i>Managers Who Lead: A Handbook for Improving Health Services</i> . Cambridge, MA: Management Sciences for Health, 2005.
<b>Organizational development (OD)</b>	A discipline aimed at improving the effectiveness of organizations and their members, by means of systematically planned interventions and a planned process of developing an organization to become more effective in accomplishing desired goals.	DCT, <i>Organisational Development Portfolio</i> . Accessed at <a href="http://www.dct.co.za/portfolio-1.htm">www.dct.co.za/portfolio-1.htm</a> [12 December 2014].
<b>Performance Monitoring Plan/ M&amp;E plan</b>	A plan that outlines the M&E requirements for a program or project (i.e., indicators, data sources, data collection instruments, data analysis methods, reflection, and learning events) with roles, responsibilities, time frames, and a budget.	Adapted from International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD). <i>Managing for Impact in Rural Development: A Guide for Project M&amp;E</i> . Rome: IFAD, 2001.
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Individuals and groups who have an interest or concern in the outcomes and success of an organization's activities.	Adapted from Galer, J. B., Vriesendorp, S., and Ellis, A. <i>Managers Who Lead: A Handbook for Improving Health Services</i> . Cambridge, MA: Management Sciences for Health, 2005.
<b>Vision Statement</b>	An articulation of the future of the organization and the community it serves. It defines how the organization wants to evolve and what the organization wants to become or achieve over the long term. The vision provides a picture of a desired future.	Adapted from Galer, J. B., Vriesendorp, S., and Ellis, A. <i>Managers Who Lead: A Handbook for Improving Health Services</i> . Cambridge, MA: Management Sciences for Health, 2005.

# I. Introduction

## I.1 About Management Sciences for Health

Management Sciences for Health (MSH) is a global health nonprofit organization that uses proven approaches developed over 40 years to help leaders, health managers, and communities in developing nations build stronger health systems for greater health impact. We work to save lives by closing the gap between knowledge and action in public health. Since our founding in 1971, MSH has worked in more than 150 countries with policymakers, health professionals, and health care consumers to improve the quality, availability, and affordability of health services. Working with governments, donors, nongovernmental organizations, the private sector, and health agencies, MSH responds to priority health problems such as HIV & AIDS; tuberculosis; malaria; maternal, newborn, and child health; family planning and reproductive health; and chronic non-communicable diseases such as cancer, diabetes, and lung and heart disease. Through strengthening organizational capacity, investing in health systems innovation, building the evidence base, and advocating for sound public health policy, MSH is committed to making a lasting difference in global health.

## I.2. The Program for Organizational Growth, Resilience, and Sustainability (PROGRES)

The Program for Organizational Growth, Resilience, and Sustainability (PROGRES) (an organizational capacity assessment tool [OCAT]) was developed by MSH through its Innovation Challenge Fund. PROGRES is a participatory organizational assessment process that helps civil society organizations (CSOs) and government institutions identify areas requiring support to foster sustainability and resilience. PROGRES can also be adapted for use by organizations working in areas outside of health.

Assessing and analyzing an organization's abilities and needs can help determine priorities to improve operations and performance. It is important to view an organizational capacity assessment (OCA) as an opportunity for learning and development through assessment, rather than evaluation (which implies making a value judgment). This assessment tool will help an organization identify its strengths and weaknesses and stimulate discussion about particular organizational capacity areas among staff and other stakeholders, with the ultimate goal of improving performance.

PROGRES draws from and builds upon existing institutional strengthening tools developed and used by MSH while implementing USAID-funded projects in Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, South Africa, and Nigeria. They include:

- the FANIKISHA OCAT, developed by the FANIKISHA Institutional Strengthening Project in Kenya
- the Institutional Capacity Building OCAT, developed by the Tanzania Institutional Capacity Building Project
- the Leadership, Management & Governance (LMG) OCAT, developed by the LMG/Ethiopia Project
- the Building Local Capacity OCAT, developed by the Building Local Capacity for Delivery of HIV Services in Southern Africa Project
- the Health Organizations Capacity Assessment Tool, developed by Nigeria's Prevention and Organizational Systems AIDS Care and Treatment Project

PROGRES gathers data on an organization's capacity along a broad range of performance parameters. It then formulates these into 11 organizational capacity domains: 7 core and 4 optional domains. Assessment of the latter will depend on the mandate of the organization being assessed. These domains include:

### **Core Domains**

1. Governance and Leadership
2. Finance, Operations, and Administration
3. Resource Mobilization
4. Human Resources Management
5. Program Management
6. Communications
7. Monitoring and Evaluation, and Knowledge Management

### **Optional Domains**

8. Advocacy, Networking, and Alliance Building
9. Service Delivery and Quality Assurance
10. Coordination and Collaboration
11. Grants and Sub-grants Management

Each domain has subdomains with three to six ideal practices within each subdomain. The domains and subdomains in the assessment are designed to be adaptable according to the organization's context.

### **Sustainability Factors**

In this time of local ownership and scaled-back resources, it is imperative that organizational performance be linked with organizational sustainability. MSH separates sustainability into three distinct areas: institutional, financial, and programmatic. PROGRES allows organizations to see how the domains contribute to each area of sustainability; the program illuminates where organizational stunting occurs, so that capacity-building efforts can focus not only on underperforming domains but also on those domains that are impeding an organization's sustainability.

The correlation of the core domains and subdomains with each area of sustainability is presented in Table 1.

## **I.3 Purpose of PROGRES**

MSH recognizes that measuring, monitoring, and evaluating changes in organizational capacity over time are critical to the growth, resilience, and sustainability of an organization. Thus, in 2014, MSH developed PROGRES for assessing CSOs and government institutions working in health and health-related areas. The tool is designed to assess organizational capabilities to enhance performance toward achieving organizational goals. In addition, it:

- provides baselines of the major institutional capacity domains so that areas of relative weakness can be identified and prioritized
- measures an organization's capacity before a capacity-building program is implemented
- monitors and quantifies an organization's capacity-building efforts over time
- provides evidence of what works and does not work in organizational capacity-building
- generates a score for each of the three areas of sustainability (institutional, financial, and programmatic), which will be used in creating an action plan to address identified areas of weakness



Table I: Attribution of Core Domains and Subdomains by Area of Sustainability

	Institutional sustainability	Financial sustainability	Programmatic sustainability
<b>CORE DOMAINS</b>			
<b>Governance and Leadership</b>			
Governing Body Formation	●		
Governing Body Function	●		
Strategic Leadership	●		
Succession Planning	●		
<b>Finance, Operations, and Administration</b>			
Financial Policies and Procedures		●	
Financial Management System		●	
Budget Management		●	
Accounting and Record-keeping		●	
Financial Reporting		●	
Internal Control Systems		●	
Payroll		●	
Purchasing and Procurement		●	
Cash and Bank Management		●	
Inventory and Asset Management		●	
Annual External Audit		●	
Operations and Administration	●		
Finance Staffing and Competency		●	
<b>Resource Mobilization</b>			
Resource Mobilization Planning and Implementation	●		
Resource Diversification	●		
Resource Monitoring		●	
<b>Human Resources Management</b>			
Human Resources Policy and Procedures Manual	●		
Organizational Structure and Job Descriptions	●		
Staff Recruitment and Retention	●		
Staff Training and Development	●		
Performance Management	●		
Compensation Management	●		
Human Resources Data Management System	●		
<b>Program Management</b>			
Program Design			●
Program Planning and Monitoring			●
Program Risk Plan			●
Program Sustainability			●

	Institutional sustainability	Financial sustainability	Programmatic sustainability
<b>Communications</b>			
Communications Strategy and Plan	●		
Branding and Marketing Plan	●		
Communications Capacity	●		
Internal and External Communications	●		
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation, and Knowledge Management</b>			
M&E Planning			●
Data Management			●
Data Quality			●
Data Analysis and Use			●
Periodic Evaluations			●
Knowledge Management			●
<b>OPTIONAL DOMAINS</b>			
<b>Advocacy, Networking, and Alliance Building</b>			
Advocacy Planning and Implementation	●		
Networking and Alliance Building	●		
<b>Service Delivery and Quality Assurance</b>			
Information and Education about Service Delivery			●
Service Delivery Targets			●
Service Improvement and Learning			●
Service Delivery Standards			●
<b>Coordination and Collaboration</b>			
Coordination Platforms	●		
Coordination Roles	●		
Strategic Engagement and Support to Stakeholders	●		
<b>Grants and Sub-grants Management</b>			
Grants Management Policies and Procedures		●	
Grants Management System		●	
Capacity Development of Subgrantees			●

## 2. Why Conduct an Organizational Capacity Assessment?

OCATs such as PROGRES may be conducted for a variety of reasons, including identifying priorities for capacity-building and measuring changes in organizational capacity over time (e.g., before and after capacity-building interventions).

The analysis of capacity-building data collected at baseline and periodically thereafter provides:

- baseline data on CSO and government institutional capacity before capacity-building interventions are implemented
- clear definitions of organizational capacity; data from subsequent assessments can be compared with baseline data
- information that can be utilized to develop an action plan to help the organization progress to a higher stage of capacity and sustainability
- evidence of demonstrable changes in the capacity and sustainability of an organization as a result of capacity-building interventions
- regular monitoring data on an organization's capacity that can be used to make decisions. For example, an organization might use such information to ensure the technical assistance it is receiving is at an appropriate level and continues to address its needs.

### 2.1 Who Should Use PROGRES

PROGRES was developed to be administered by or with a broad range of CSOs<sup>1</sup> and governmental and other organizations to measure organizational capacity. It can also be used by development organizations and agencies, including government line ministries.

---

<sup>1</sup> Narrowly defined, “civil society” refers to the wide diversity of not-for-profit, nonstate organizations as well as community-based associations and groups (distinct from both governmental and the business sectors) that advance a collective or public good or common interest. These organizations are also referred to as not-for-profit organizations (NPOs), nongovernmental organizations, charities, and voluntary associations or organizations. “Civil society” can also be defined very broadly to include the private sector. Examples of CSOs include community groups, labor unions, indigenous groups, charitable organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations, and foundations.

## 3. Using PROGRES to Assess an Organization's Capacity

### 3.1 Understanding the Three Phases of Assessment

The assessment process is participatory and is conducted through a multipronged approach that combines a review of background documents (desk review), interviews, onsite organizational systems review, and group discussions led by a designated facilitator. Sessions after the first can be either self-administered or conducted by a facilitator. The assessment features three phases, described below.

#### *Phase I: Pre-Assessment*

##### **Step 1: Meeting with CSO or institution senior management**

Initial preparatory meetings that introduce PROGRES and its requirements ensure buy-in and ownership of the assessment process and results and identify change champions. During these meetings:

- Designated facilitators and the participating organization agree on the assessment participants, who should represent a mix of all competency skills, levels, and departments; the assessment date; and the venue for the assessment (it is always preferable to conduct the assessment at the location of the organization being assessed).
- Participants agree on the aims and objectives of the OCA, the agenda (see Annex 1 for a sample), and the documents to be prepared in advance for the assessment. See Annex 2 for a suggested list of documents, by domain, to be reviewed.

The team members who are chosen to participate in the assessment should include at least one representative from each key department, including human resources, finance, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), program implementation, and resource mobilization, as well as other relevant departments (if they exist). In addition, participants should represent all levels of the organization (i.e., senior and middle management, professional staff, and general staff).<sup>2</sup> Ideally, at least one board member and the chief executive officer (CEO) or director should also participate. The ideal group size is around eight participants to facilitate manageable discussions and encourage contributions from all participants. It is possible for an assessment to be conducted with a larger group, although the work will proceed more slowly. In small organizations, it may be preferable to involve everyone.

##### **Step 2: Training the Facilitators**

Three facilitators are recommended, one from the organization being assessed and two from outside the organization. An orientation for the facilitators is conducted over about two days to ensure all content and processes are covered. The orientation addresses use of the assessment tool, the types of organizational documents to be reviewed, the assessment process, and facilitation skills. Facilitators must:

- set clear objectives
- set ground rules and instructions
- determine the amount of time for each discussion and ensure comments are focused
- encourage participation from all levels
- ensure objectivity by following the PROGRES user guide
- be prepared, and know the relevant documents
- facilitate data capture

---

<sup>2</sup> A suggested distribution of participants is one-third at a senior level, one-third midlevel, and one-third junior level.

By the end of phase 1, the pre-assessment phase, the group should have:

- facilitators who are prepared to lead the PROGRES assessment
- a list of participants
- an agreed-upon agenda
- a common understanding of the assessment program and key documents for review (examples in Annex 2)
- agreed-on session dates and other logistics
- documents in hand for review
- identified change champions

### *Phase 2: Review of Systems in Each Domain*

The assessment is conducted in a participatory manner. Using documents such as those listed in Annex 2, the facilitators and staff from the CSO or government institution who are responsible for each domain review the systems and assess the level of development and use of documents, policies, and practices/behaviors related to each domain. A review of relevant policies, procedures, and other pertinent documents related to each subdomain guide the facilitator and the CSO staff to document evidence of existing capacity strengths and weaknesses within the organization. See Annex 2 for examples.

After the document review, the facilitators and CSO or government institution staff discuss the results and agree on the level of performance in each subdomain. PROGRES defines five stages of capacity: A rating of one represents the least capacity (no evidence of capacity), and a rating of five represents the highest level of capacity. The group should select the stage they feel most accurately reflects the state of the organization at the time of the assessment. This score is presented during the consensus workshop.

### **Creating A Comfortable, Safe Environment**

It is important for phase 2 of the assessment to be conducted in an environment in which different viewpoints are respected and participants are comfortable with speaking freely. To ensure this, the assessment should take place in a private, adequately spacious, and comfortable place that is conducive for a group discussion (e.g., in a circle).

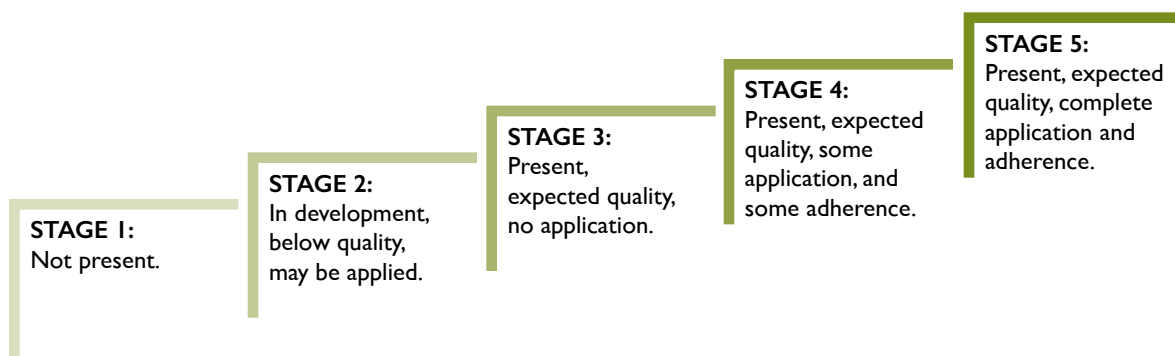
The session should start with introductions and an icebreaker. The facilitators should introduce themselves and explain the purpose of the assessment: To help the organization learn, grow, and develop. Facilitators should take care to stress that it is not an evaluation (and make sure participants are familiar with the difference: They will identify what the organization is doing, not how well it is doing it. See section 1.2.). Participants should have the opportunity to ask questions and agree on ground rules before the assessment begins.

Technical terms should be explained using simple language. The program was developed in English, and if the organization's predominant language is other than English, a facilitator with strong language translation capabilities should be consulted.

The facilitators need to be mindful of overly domineering and vocal participants and should ensure that everyone (including more junior staff and less confident participants) has a chance to contribute to the discussion.

The facilitators should be attuned to the energy levels and mood of the group and if these drop, to introduce an energizing exercise.

Figure 1. The five stages of capacity in the PROGRES assessment



### Phase 3: Consensus Workshop

Next, the facilitators and staff from the CSO or government institution conduct a workshop attended by all staff and key stakeholders. During the workshop, the persons responsible for different capacity domains present their findings about the stage the organization is in along with the evidence gathered during the review of systems in that domain. The facilitators guide the domain representatives in discussions about the reasons behind their decisions, based on the evidence contained in the checklists and means of verification mentioned above. In this activity, the facilitators should ask probing questions to stimulate discussion among all workshop participants about whether the organization is at the suggested stage (or not). All members of the organization finally agree on a consensus score for each subdomain that is recorded in the assessment.

*It is important to note that the staff representing the organization being assessed take the lead in determining the relative capacity-level scores.* The facilitator simply guides the discussion and does not determine the final ratings. This approach ensures that the CSO or government institution owns the results and thereafter can commit to addressing the identified capacity gaps.

Ultimately, the consensus workshop produces an overall score linked to a stage of capacity for each domain. Details about scoring are given below.

#### Tips for Good Data Capture

- Enquire for evidence
- Know the organization's context to be able to understand and summarize key points
- Be comprehensive but focused when capturing information
- Maintain focus on discussion and good listening skills

### Details about Scoring driving the PROGRES Assessment

#### Step 1: Rate the Organization's Domains and Subdomains

The facilitators explain the rating scale presented above, introduce the first domain and associated subdomains, and read in full the description of the five levels of capacity (scored 1 through 5) for each subdomain before asking the participants to discuss scores. The CSO staff present documented evidence for each subdomain and domain to support their scoring decisions.

#### Step 2: Review and Discuss the Scores

The facilitator leads all participants in a discussion about each subdomain score. If no one disagrees about any of the scores for the subdomains, there is consensus, and the consensus score can be recorded in the tool for each subdomain. If there are questions or concerns, the experts within the specific domain address them and

provide evidence to support claims for raising or lowering the score. Evidence on the presence, quality, and use of the systems is based on review of key documents (examples in Annex 2). If participants make changes to their scores, the facilitators should note all relevant comments in the tool, located in the comments column next to the consensus score.

Discussions of each domain should conclude after 30–45 minutes (depending on the number of subdomains). At the end of the discussion of each domain, the facilitator should guide participants in identifying any improvements or changes that could be made to the way the organization works under particular subdomains. These should also be noted in the relevant comments section of the tool.

### **Step 3: Data Entry, Verification, and Analysis**

PROGRES employs an Excel workbook that consists of one worksheet per domain. It is formatted to automatically calculate the scores for each domain and subdomain upon entering consensus scores for each subdomain. The worksheet also automatically calculates the organization's sustainability score for each of the institutional, financial, and programmatic areas featured in Table 1. Thus, data are captured in real time, and feedback is provided to the participants at the end of the assessment. After participants have agreed on the subdomain scores, the score (a selection between 1 and 5) is entered into the consensus score column of the tool.

By the end of the assessment, the group will have:

- reviewed organizational documents related to all domains
- conducted a review of each domain
- identified the capacity strengths and gaps of the organization being assessed
- conducted the consensus workshop to agree on the domain scores
- reviewed the dashboards that summarize scores for each domain and subdomain, and each of the three areas of sustainability

## **3.2 Providing Feedback**

### *Feedback on the Organizational Capacity Scores*

Providing feedback is a critical part of PROGRES. Feedback on the organizational capacity scores can be shared with participants at the end of the consensus workshop since the scores are calculated in real time. The facilitator helps the organization understand the meaning and implications of the scores.

### *Feedback on the Assessment Process*

Feedback on the assessment process is provided by both the facilitators and the participants. It focuses on several parameters, including the choice of participants for the pre-assessment, amount of time for the assessment, documents reviewed, assessment methodology, the assessment form, and all participants' experiences throughout the assessment period. This feedback is critical for improving the planning and delivery of future assessments, as well as for the continuous improvement of PROGRES.

### 3.3 Creating an Action Plan for Capacity-Building

The assessment is followed by a session for creating a capacity-building action plan. By reviewing the dashboards in the tool, participants can see at a glance which dimensions of organizational capacity are most in need of improvement. Subsequently, the PROGRES participants and other key stakeholders in the organization review the findings and discuss appropriate steps to improve areas of weakness and build on areas of strength, taking into consideration the comments and suggestions that arose during the assessment. This also helps determine priorities for capacity-building.

The illustration below is a simple template that could be used to develop the action plan. In creating the action plan, identify the desired deliverables or outputs, necessary resources, and the person(s) in the organization who can support the delivery and monitoring of the plan. Monitoring and status notes about the action plan can be entered as often as desired in the last column. A full-size template can be found in Annex 3.

<b>Objective:</b>							
<b>Outcome:</b>							
Domain	Capacity Gaps Identified (by subdomain)	Proposed Priority Actions	Deliverable or Output	Resources Required	Persons Responsible	Time Line	Status and Notes N=Not started IP=In progress C=Completed

At the end of the feedback process and action planning, the group will have:

- reviewed dashboard and domain scores, their meaning, and implications for the organization
- prioritized the domains and subdomains needing capacity development
- completed a capacity-building action plan



### 3.4 Developing the PROGRES Report

Upon completion of the assessment and action plan, time should be set aside for the facilitator to prepare a capacity assessment report of the assessment findings, including the scores and comments under each subdomain. The template below may be used to develop the PROGRES report. The report should be prepared within one week of completing the assessment and then shared with assessment participants from the CSO or government institution for validation and ownership before it is finalized and approved.

#### Outline for the PROGRES Report

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| I. Cover page                                  | IX. Discussion of findings               |
| II. Table of contents                          | ▪ Strengths in performance               |
| III. Acknowledgments                           | ▪ Gaps in performance                    |
| IV. Executive summary                          | ▪ Capacity-building needs                |
| V. Introduction/background of assessment       | X. Annexes                               |
| VI. Description of organization being assessed | ▪ List of senior management participants |
| VII. Assessment process                        | ▪ Assessment agenda                      |
| ▪ Definitions                                  | ▪ PROGRES assessment                     |
| ▪ Methodology                                  | ▪ Capacity-building action plan          |
| VIII. Findings                                 |  |
| ▪ Illustrative and supporting graphics         |  |

### 3.5 Implementing and Monitoring the Action Plan

The capacity-building action plan can succeed only with careful and active monitoring. It is necessary to:

- clearly document findings during the assessment to ensure that the organization's current priorities are identified and taken into account during action plan development.
- identify a change champion to support the implementation and monitoring of the action plan.
- schedule regular meetings, preferably monthly, to review progress on the action plan.
- communicate work plan adjustments, if required, to the change champion during regular review meetings (at least quarterly).
- identify specific challenges to the action plan early on, to ensure they receive support.

### 3.6 Scheduling Follow-Up Assessments

An annual follow-up capacity assessment using PROGRES is recommended, starting within 12 months after the commencement of the implementation of the capacity-building action plan. For every follow-up assessment, the same process and methodology should be used. Organizations may decide to self-administer the program based on the experience gained from the first or subsequent assessments.

## 4. Useful Tips for Facilitators

- Inform senior management that the assessment is a prime opportunity to hear from their staff.
- Remember to link the pre-assessment meeting to the PROGRES assessment process during the opening session.
- Ensure there is adequate time for all participants to understand the questions and terms used.
- Use encouraging terms to validate participants and move the discussion along. Examples are: *I think I get a better picture...Could you give an example...I hear you saying that...The impression I get...Based on what you have said...Reflecting on the discussion we had...*
- Don't emphasize the scores but rather focus on the stages of capacity-building, and describe capacity as a progression of skills, practices, and behaviors. Otherwise, participants may interpret their assessment results in a negative way.
- In some cases, participants may try to state that they are in between two stages. In these instances, the facilitators must guide them to commit to one specific stage. A review of evidence can help with clarifying the stage.
- The facilitators should be impartial and objective, ask participants probing questions, and request supporting evidence to bolster their decisions regarding capacity stages.
- It is important that facilitators are familiar with the respective subdomains (e.g., all participants need to understand the difference between a vision statement and a mission statement, and know the elements of a good strategic plan).
- Allow space for organizational participants to revise and give their scores again. Remember that different organizations use different terminologies. Allow the participants enough time to think and discuss.
- Ask all participants to refrain from providing specific feedback in a particular domain or subdomain while they are participating generally in the overall assessment.
- Be prepared with creative ways to make the exercise interesting when introducing terms and domains.
- Have a polite way of verifying that documents and systems are in place. Politely inquire about this practice in the organization.
- When necessary, refer to the documents provided beforehand.
- Remember that you may not always have the answer. Keep emphasizing that your role is to help the organization move to the next stage.

## 5. Annexes

### Annex I: Sample Agenda for an Organizational Capacity Assessment

#### Workshop objectives

1. Introduce and familiarize participants with the capacity-building approach
2. Develop a shared understanding of the assessment methodology and PROGRES
3. Conduct and facilitate the assessment
4. Share preliminary highlights and/or results from the assessment
5. Discuss next steps and time lines

#### Day 1

Time	Agenda Item	Responsible
09:30–10:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Welcome</li> <li>▪ Introductions of organization staff and PROGRES facilitators</li> <li>▪ Brief presentation from the organization being assessed, with an emphasis on its strategic plan</li> </ul>	Partner organization
10:00–10:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Objectives</li> <li>▪ Expectations and fears</li> <li>▪ Ground rules</li> </ul>	Facilitator
10:15–10:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Brief introduction to PROGRES capacity-building program</li> <li>▪ Introduction and overview of the program</li> </ul>	Facilitator
10:30–11:00	Review of performance in various domains and scoring: collection of relevant evidence and documents	All
11:00–11:15	<i>Health break</i>	All
11:15–13:00	Review of performance in various domains and scoring: collection of relevant evidence and documents	All
13:00–14:00	<i>Health break</i>	All
14:00–16:00	Review of performance in various domains and scoring: collection of relevant evidence and documents	All
16:00	Wrap-up and close	Facilitator

#### Day 2

Time	Agenda Item	Responsible
09:00–09:15	Welcome and recap	Facilitator
09:15–10:45	Consensus workshop	Facilitator
10:45–11:00	<i>Health break</i>	All
11:00–12:00	Consensus workshop	All
12:00–14:00	<i>Health break</i>	All
14:00–16:00	Sharing of preliminary results, discussion of priorities, and development of prioritized action plan	Facilitator
16:00–16:30	Next steps and time lines	Facilitator
16:30–16:45	Wrap-up and close	Partner, facilitator

## Annex 2: Key Illustrative Documents<sup>3</sup> for Review, by Domain

Core Domains	
GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP	FINANCE, OPERATIONS, AND ADMINISTRATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Constitution</li> <li>▪ Registration documents</li> <li>▪ Board manual</li> <li>▪ Board evaluation tools</li> <li>▪ Board evaluation reports</li> <li>▪ Strategic plan</li> <li>▪ Board minutes</li> <li>▪ Board appointment letters</li> <li>▪ Financial statements</li> <li>▪ Strategic plan</li> <li>▪ Annual operation plan</li> <li>▪ Resource mobilization strategy/plan</li> <li>▪ Succession plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Financial and procurement policies</li> <li>▪ Payment vouchers</li> <li>▪ Cash book</li> <li>▪ Donor contracts</li> <li>▪ Donor financial reports, financial statements</li> <li>▪ Asset register</li> <li>▪ Payroll</li> <li>▪ Staff files with curriculum vitae and job descriptions</li> <li>▪ Annual audit reports</li> <li>▪ Management reports</li> <li>▪ Engagement letters</li> <li>▪ Budget variance reports</li> <li>▪ Audit reports and management letters</li> <li>▪ Chart of accounts</li> <li>▪ Financial management system</li> <li>▪ Asset management and disposal policy</li> <li>▪ Operations and administration policy</li> <li>▪ Approved financial reports</li> </ul>
HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT	RESOURCE MOBILIZATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ HR policies and strategies</li> <li>▪ HR structure and job descriptions</li> <li>▪ Strategic plan</li> <li>▪ Organogram</li> <li>▪ Personnel files</li> <li>▪ Recruitment files</li> <li>▪ HR data management system</li> <li>▪ Staff performance reports</li> <li>▪ Staff development plans</li> <li>▪ Payroll</li> <li>▪ Pay slips</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Resource mobilization plans and strategies</li> <li>▪ Resource mobilization operational plans</li> <li>▪ Organogram and job descriptions</li> <li>▪ Funding pipelines</li> <li>▪ Donor matrix</li> <li>▪ Donor scoping reports</li> <li>▪ Contracts and MOUs</li> <li>▪ Financial statements</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> These are suggested documents. Other documents identified by the facilitators or organizational participants during the pre-assessment meeting may be included and reviewed.

Core Domains	
COMMUNICATIONS	PROGRAM MANAGEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Communications policy</li> <li>▪ Communications strategy</li> <li>▪ Branding and marketing plan</li> <li>▪ Websites</li> <li>▪ Intranet</li> <li>▪ Publicity materials, flyers, brochures</li> <li>▪ Organogram</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Baseline/formative evaluation reports</li> <li>▪ Situational analysis reports</li> <li>▪ Program start-up plans</li> <li>▪ Program work plans</li> <li>▪ Work plan review reports</li> <li>▪ Program documents and proposals</li> <li>▪ Program management guidelines</li> <li>▪ Risk plans</li> <li>▪ Program quality plans</li> <li>▪ Close-out plans</li> <li>▪ Advisory committee minutes</li> <li>▪ Work plan status matrix and reports</li> <li>▪ Program internal and external review reports</li> <li>▪ Individual staff work plans</li> </ul>
MONITORING AND EVALUATION, AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Relevant results frameworks</li> <li>▪ Project M&amp;E plans</li> <li>▪ M&amp;E guide</li> <li>▪ M&amp;E budget</li> <li>▪ M&amp;E work plan</li> <li>▪ M&amp;E reports</li> <li>▪ Project progress reports</li> <li>▪ Data management system and filing system</li> <li>▪ Knowledge management system and plan</li> <li>▪ Data analysis matrices</li> <li>▪ Audience analysis</li> <li>▪ Data collection reports</li> <li>▪ Data quality assessment and audit reports</li> <li>▪ Data quality improvement plans</li> <li>▪ Project review meeting reports or minutes</li> <li>▪ Research protocols</li> <li>▪ Mid-term reports (where applicable)</li> <li>▪ End-of-project report (where applicable)</li> </ul>	

Optional Domains	
<b>ADVOCACY, NETWORKING, AND ALLIANCE BUILDING</b>	<b>SERVICE DELIVERY AND QUALITY ASSURANCE</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Advocacy strategies</li> <li>▪ Advocacy action plans</li> <li>▪ Organogram</li> <li>▪ Research reports (advocacy issues)</li> <li>▪ List of membership networks</li> <li>▪ Reports of networking activities</li> <li>▪ Policy briefs, fact sheets, briefing cards, advocacy audiovisuals, memos, petitions</li> <li>▪ Advocacy reports, materials, acknowledgment documentation</li> <li>▪ Situational analysis reports and situational analysis consultative meeting reports</li> <li>▪ Audience analysis worksheets</li> <li>▪ Advocacy process reports on messaging</li> <li>▪ Annual advocacy budgets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Brochures or informational materials specific to services provided</li> <li>▪ Program review reports or minutes</li> <li>▪ Outdated and reviewed materials</li> <li>▪ Distribution lists</li> <li>▪ Client survey report</li> <li>▪ Standards and protocols</li> <li>▪ Quality assurance reports</li> <li>▪ Reports or minutes initiating or developing service improvement</li> <li>▪ Report or documentation on analysis of best practices</li> <li>▪ Service delivery protocols, guidelines, standards; program progress technical reports</li> <li>▪ Reports or documentation on changes made based on learning</li> </ul>
<b>COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION</b>	<b>GRANTS AND SUB-GRANTS MANAGEMENT</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ List of coordination platforms</li> <li>▪ List of members and participants in those platforms</li> <li>▪ Draft or final Terms of Reference for the forums</li> <li>▪ Agendas and minutes of meetings</li> <li>▪ Reports of issues addressed or feedback</li> <li>▪ Reports or minutes initiating or developing TOR</li> <li>▪ Minutes of joint planning, action, and technical working groups</li> <li>▪ Organization's coordination mandate document; policy documents; reports and minutes of coordination meetings</li> <li>▪ Strategic or operational plans showing activities in line with mandate; partner meetings' attendance lists</li> <li>▪ List of stakeholders and groupings; minutes or report of meetings with stakeholders</li> <li>▪ Reports of assistance or support given to stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grants management manual</li> <li>▪ Financial statements</li> <li>▪ Organogram</li> <li>▪ Staff training records</li> <li>▪ Grants and subgrants management system</li> <li>▪ Contracts and MOUs</li> <li>▪ End-of-project reports</li> <li>▪ Grants closeout plans</li> </ul>



## 6. References

Management Sciences for Health. *Challenges Encountered in Capacity Building: A Review of Literature and Selected Tools*, Position Paper No. 1, April 2010. Accessed at [www.msh.org/sites/msh.org/files/as2\\_technicalbrief\\_1.pdf](http://www.msh.org/sites/msh.org/files/as2_technicalbrief_1.pdf) [12 December 2014].

USAID from the American People. *Country Ownership and Organizational Capacity Building: Beyond Principles to Practices*. Arlington, VA, 2012.

Zimmerman, M.A. "Psychological Empowerment: Issues and Illustrations." *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 1995, 23(5):581–99.