

Strengthening Capacity for preparing National HIV and STI Strategic Frameworks in Pacific Islands Countries

A project of the Pacific HIV and STI Response Fund (Stream 5 - Regional Priorities)
Implemented by Burnet Institute in partnership with SPC



Planning Team Capacity Assessment Tool

Introduction

This resource was prepared for the Pacific by Suzanne O'Neill and Bruce Parnell.

Sources for development of this include publications of the Constellation for AIDS Competence; The World Bank's AIDS Strategy Action Plan; and the Global HIV and AIDS Monitoring and Evaluation Team.

This tool does not aim to assess the capacities of individuals, like a test. It does not aim to provide a "pass" or "fail" score. It is about the capacity of the whole country. Within that country wide capacity, some people will contribute different skills, interests and time.

It identifies what capacities are already strong, so that the country can draw on those capacities for the next stages.

It also identifies what capacities are weak, and even some capacities that don't exist in the country. This is important information to use for working out what further technical assistance and other support may be required.

It also provides some scores, so that the tool can be revisited in the future and we can all see what has improved and what still needs development.

As countries work through this tool, the process should also improve understanding of what is a National Strategic Framework and why a range of different capacities is required.

A skilled facilitator can assist the planning team to go through this capacity assessment, and should ensure that the team retains a sense of purpose and enjoys going through this within a set time

frame. We suggest one full day with a group of up to ten people. If there are more people, you might like to split into smaller groups. Time will then be required for reporting back as a whole group.

The three purposes of this Capacity Assessment

1. To promote discussion about what capacities are needed to coordinate ongoing development of the National Strategic Framework
2. To assess the current state of those capacities in the country
3. To identify what capacities require strengthening, in the short term or over the next phase of the National Strategic Framework

What happens in the Capacity Assessment?

1. Mapping the profile of the National Planning Team (this occurs prior to the workshop).
2. Workshop. A one day workshop to identify national capacities in six Skill Sets:
 - i. Leading the planning process
 - ii. Analyzing the evidence
 - iii. Identifying and prioritizing strategies and programs for the future
 - iv. Monitoring and evaluating the strategy
 - v. Financing the strategy
 - vi. Assessing the quality of the national strategic framework
3. Identifying, in the same workshop, how the team's capacity can be improved, with support from the Project and from Regional Partners

The process: before the workshop

1. Mapping the profile of the National Planning Team

Before the one day workshop, the Strategic Planning Facilitator should answer the following questions. The answers will provide a profile of the team membership.

1. Who is on the National Planning Team?
(include contact details for all members of the planning team)
2. What organisations are represented?
(Ministry of Health, Other ministries, Non-Government Organizations, Faith based organisations, Technical experts in different fields)
3. Where do these organisations work? (geographic locations)
4. Who do these organisations work with (primary audiences/beneficiaries)?
5. What is the primary focus/purpose of each organisation's program?
6. What expertise does each member bring?
7. What authority does each member hold?
8. Identify the relationship of the National Planning Teams members to the NCM, if there is one – or to other coordination mechanisms, such as the CCM or NAC or CDO
9. What budget is required to support the participation of each member in this process? Can the member's organisation contribute? If not, where will resources be found?
10. What is each member's availability and commitment to support the process over the proposed timeframe?

The Capacity Assessment Workshop (one day)

Participants and facilitators

The Capacity Assessment will be conducted by a group of stakeholders from the country itself.

This workshop will be facilitated by a skilled facilitator, ideally someone who is not themselves on the planning team. Their role is to promote discussion and lead the team to some decisions. This will be more difficult if the facilitator is a member of the planning team.

The stakeholders might include:

- National AIDS Coordinator
- Ministry of Health staff
- Ministry of Finance staff
- Ministry of Police (or Corrections)
- Non-Government Organisations working on HIV and STIs
- Community Based Organisations working on HIV and STIs
- Faith based organisations with an interest in HIV and STIs
- People from vulnerable groups, if it is known who these are
- Young people
- People living with HIV (if there is a national network)

Process for Capacity Assessment

1. A copy of this Capacity Assessment Tool is provided to each participant.
2. The stakeholders group, if large, should be split into two groups (ideally 5-10 participants in each group).
3. Each group considers one Skill Set at a time. (If there are two or three groups, they could each work on a different skill set, so that all skills sets are covered in the time available).
4. The group members should discuss each skill set as though they are themselves members of the National Planning Team. For each statement, the issue of concern is the capacity of the whole country, not just of individuals in the planning team.

For each Skill Set:

1. A member of the group reads out the criteria for making a score (to remind the group what the scores mean)

Score 1: No capacity at all

Score 2: Yes, we have some capacity

Score 3: We have full capacity

DK: Don't know, or not relevant to our country

2. The group facilitator reads out the capacity to be discussed (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, etc)
3. Another member of the group reads out all the dot points which describe that capacity.
4. The group discusses all the dot points, talking about strengths and weaknesses within the country as a whole, experiences they have been through, and stories they have heard about these dot points.
5. The group makes some notes under the right hand column, "How would you strengthen the country's capacity?" To do this, discuss the skills and knowledge across the country. Discuss what actions you could take, as individuals or as a group, to build your team's capacity in areas where the team is weak; and to maintain or strengthen capacity in areas where the team is strong. In some cases, you may decide you will need external support to develop these capacities.
6. After this, the group decides a score for that capacity (1.1,1.2,1.3, etc)
7. If there are two or more groups, then both groups should report back after a break, and discuss together as one large group what they can agree on, and what they don't agree on.

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	Indicator	1 <i>No</i>	2 <i>Some</i>	3 <i>Full</i>	Don't Know	How would you strengthen the team's capacity?
SKILL SET 1 – LEADING THE PLANNING PROCESS						
Is the National Planning Team able to work with other stakeholders to lead the planning process?						
1.1	Understanding of the purpose of the national planning team					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members have accepted the invitation to form the National Planning Team and demonstrate a willingness to work as a team. • Each member of the National Planning Team understands the purpose of the planning team and has discussed how they can work together to achieve their task. • The National Planning Team has appointed a team leader, identified roles and responsibilities of each member and established mechanisms to achieve their task (such as regular meetings, lines of communication). 					
1.2	Understanding of the purpose and process of strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of the National Planning Team have participated in previous strategic planning processes • Each member of the National Planning Team understands the purpose and process of strategic planning, is able to identify the various phases and understand their purposes. • Members are able to share the purpose and processes of strategic planning with other stakeholders, including the NAC and the Ministry of Health. 					

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	Indicator	1 <i>No</i>	2 <i>Some</i>	3 <i>Full</i>	Don't Know	How would you strengthen the team's capacity?
1.3	Capacity to identify roles and responsibilities of the regional partners					
	<p>The National Planning Team is able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meet Regional Partners to discuss working together. • understand the different roles and responsibilities of the supporting Regional Partners. • negotiate with Regional Partners according to their expertise and resources to seek assistance where necessary. 					
1.4	Capacity to engage broad stakeholder participation					
	<p>The National Planning Team is able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify the potential representatives from government and civil society who need to participate in the strategic planning processes. • coordinate representatives from government and civil society who need to participate in the planning process. • maintain good working relationships with representatives from government and civil society for their future participation in the strategic planning processes. 					
1.5	Capacity to use the Navigation Cycle					
	<p>The National Planning Team is able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set an agreed time to meet to discuss the navigation cycle with external facilitators • identify where the country currently sits in the phases of the navigation cycle • engage with regional partners where appropriate, to gain support for the next stage 					

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	Indicator	1 <i>No</i>	2 <i>Some</i>	3 <i>Full</i>	Don't Know	How would you strengthen the team's capacity?
	<p>of the navigation cycle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> gain the agreement about the navigation cycle with relevant Ministries, the NAC and other government and civil society participants 					
1.6	<p>Capacity to solve problems in the development of the Strategic Framework, as a team</p>					
	<p>Members of the National Planning Team have agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to a common purpose that the benefits of working together as a team outweighs the challenges on a mutually acceptable way of making decisions; allocating resources; working on a task; and communicating with each other and the broader group of stakeholders on a process for resolving disputes amongst the group. 					

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Rating	Indicator	1 <i>No</i>	2 <i>Some</i>	3 <i>Full</i>	DK	How would you strengthen the team's capacity?
SKILL SET 2 – ANALYSING THE EVIDENCE						
Is the team able to work with other stakeholders to collect, analyse and disseminate evidence for quality planning?						
2.1	Understand Quantitative and Qualitative evidence for planning the response					
	<p>The National Planning Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> understands what data is useful to assess the HIV and STI situation and assess the progress of the response is able to identify and map the existing sources of qualitative and quantitative evidence to inform the planning process is able to prepare a bibliography of the data sources and share this with other participants in the planning process. 					
2.2	Address gaps in evidence of the situation or the effectiveness of the response					
	<p>The National Planning Team is able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> list the gaps in the data identify how it will collect the additional data (evidence) collect additional data to provide a sound basis for review of the response. 					
2.3	Understand what the evidence means, once implementation has begun					
	<p>The National Planning Team is able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> organize a review of the current HIV response or arrange for external support to conduct a review conduct a review of the response and discuss it with other stakeholders meet with the NAC to advise them of review outcomes and recommendations for the future 					

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Rating	Indicator	1 <i>No</i>	2 <i>Some</i>	3 <i>Full</i>	DK	How would you strengthen the team's capacity?
	strategy and, with endorsement, circulate the response review to all other stakeholders for comment.					

Rating	Indicator	1 <i>No</i>	2 <i>Some</i>	3 <i>Full</i>	DK	How would you strengthen the team's capacity?
SKILL SET 3 - IDENTIFYING AND PRIORITIZING STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMS FOR THE FUTURE						
Is the team able to demonstrate that it has the mix of skills and knowledge to lead the identification of strategies and program appropriate to the evidence in the country; and draw on international 'best practice' when necessary?						
3.1	Prepare for planning the strategy					
	The National Planning Team is <ul style="list-style-type: none"> willing and interested to lead a strategic planning workshop able to plan a workshop to develop the future strategy and is able to identify whether they need external support or not able to conduct a workshop which develops the new Strategic Plan, with external support if necessary. 					
3.2	Develop a Strategic Plan based on evidence and on lessons learnt in the past					
	The National Planning Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> plans a Strategic Planning workshop which helps participants understand what has worked in the past and what are the gaps in the response delivers a Strategic Planning workshop which helps participants to understand what the evidence suggests will work in future 					

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Rating	Indicator	1 <i>No</i>	2 <i>Some</i>	3 <i>Full</i>	DK	How would you strengthen the team's capacity?
	<p>interventions, to identify gaps and to identify potential beneficiaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drafts a Strategic Plan which supports programs and processes relevant to the country and identifies intended beneficiaries. 					
3.3	<p>Develop a realistic Strategic Plan, prioritized according to available resources</p>					
	<p>The National Planning Team can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plan a Strategic Planning workshop which helps participants to prioritise the programs, and think about what resources are needed to deliver the programs. • deliver a Strategic Planning Workshop which helps participants identify the gaps between resources and programs and assess which programs are priorities, given available resources. • develop a Strategic Plan which is achievable in the timeframe and is resourced, or else identifies alternate strategies to obtain resources. 					
3.4	<p>Coordinate other stakeholders to identify roles and responsibilities of all partners</p>					
	<p>The National Planning Team can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plan a Strategic Planning workshop which helps participants understand the importance of assigning roles and responsibilities to programs so that they can coordinate their contributions • deliver a Strategic Planning Workshop which enables participants to identify their roles and responsibilities for agreed program areas. 					

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Rating	Indicator	1 <i>No</i>	2 <i>Some</i>	3 <i>Full</i>	DK	How would you strengthen the team's capacity?
3.5	Develop a Results framework					
	<p>The National Planning Team is able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand and describe the logic of a results framework • interpret the Strategic Planning workshop findings and discussions into a results framework • present a Strategic Plan to the NAC with a results framework which: describes the programs and processes relevant to the country, identifies intended beneficiaries, is achievable in the timeframe and resourced, or identifies alternate processes for resources, with designated responsibilities for programs. 					

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Rating	Indicator	1 <i>No</i>	2 <i>Some</i>	3 <i>Full</i>	DK	How would you strengthen the team's capacity?
SKILL SET 4 - MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE STRATEGY						
Is the group able to work with other stakeholders to monitor and evaluate the response – including undertaking the collection, analysis and dissemination of evidence of changes arising from implementation of the response?						
4.1	Work with stakeholders to plan realistic and appropriate indicators to monitor the Strategy					
	<p>The National Planning Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> understands the logic of an M&E framework. is able to work with relevant partners to develop appropriate indicators to measure expected change in each program area of the Strategy together with responsible partners, has developed an appropriate and realistic set of indicators for each of their programs and documents this in a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. 					
4.2	Work with stakeholders to plan realistic and appropriate Means of Verification to monitor the Strategy					
	<p>The National Planning Team is able to work with responsible partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to develop appropriate data collection and analysis methods and sources (means of verification) to capture change in each program area to develop an appropriate and realistic set of indicators and means of verification for each of their programs and documents this in a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. 					

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Rating	Indicator	1 <i>No</i>	2 <i>Some</i>	3 <i>Full</i>	DK	How would you strengthen the team's capacity?
4.3	Work with stakeholders to plan evaluation activities for measuring change under the Strategy					
	<p>The National Planning Team can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand the difference between monitoring and evaluation activities work with Regional Partners and local partners to identify realistic evaluation activities and the resources to implement them. together with responsible partners, develop an appropriate and realistic evaluation plan and document this in a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework ensure the M&E framework identifies specific evaluation activities, how they will be resourced, a timetable for activities, who is responsible, and how the data will be used to manage the national response and revise the future response. 					
4.4	Work with stakeholders to use the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework to routinely monitor and report on the response					
	<p>The National Planning Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is aware of the importance of monitoring and reporting on the response to HIV and STIs can work with stakeholders to assist them to establish regular systems and procedures for monitoring and reporting on the response to HIV and STIs, drawing on this to guide the process support stakeholders to systematically monitor and report on the response in accord with the Monitoring and Evaluation framework, 					

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Rating	Indicator	1 <i>No</i>	2 <i>Some</i>	3 <i>Full</i>	DK	How would you strengthen the team's capacity?
	<p>drawing out key lessons learnt to improve the quality of program delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> disseminate the findings of Monitoring and Evaluation to funders and to other programs. 					
4.5	<p>Work with stakeholders to use the Monitoring & Evaluation Framework to adapt the (future) response in light of measured changes</p>					
	<p>The National Planning Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is aware of how the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework can be used to review, and adapt, the response to HIV and STIs can work with stakeholders to assist them to understand the importance of measuring change and then reviewing the response to HIV and STIs supports stakeholders to systematically measure programs, adapt where necessary, look for evidence of change over time, and consider implications for the future programming. 					
4.4	<p>Work with stakeholders to use the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework to learn and share knowledge to improve the quality of programs</p>					
	<p>The National Planning Team is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> interested in learning and sharing ideas with others able to identify good practice in others and share their own practical experiences to draw out lessons learnt able to learn, share and apply lessons learnt regularly as a team and with other stakeholders, and, when necessary, seek 					

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Rating	Indicator	1 <i>No</i>	2 <i>Some</i>	3 <i>Full</i>	DK	How would you strengthen the team's capacity?
	external help to draw out lessons learnt from experience.					

Rating	Indicator	1 <i>No</i>	2 <i>Some</i>	3 <i>Full</i>	DK	How would you strengthen the team's capacity?
SKILL SET 5 - FINANCING THE STRATEGY – COSTING AND RESOURCES						
Is the group able to work with other stakeholders to cost and resource the response – including developing and acquitting budgets, and identifying appropriate resources? Can the team:						
5.1	Support stakeholders to appropriately and accurately estimate the costs of implementation and a budget					
	The National Planning Team can <ul style="list-style-type: none"> estimate the costs to deliver proposed programs prepare a cost schedule for delivering the Strategy develop a Strategic Plan which is costed and agreed by the NAC. 					
5.2	Support stakeholders to identify the resources needed for planned and ongoing programs					
	The National Planning Team can <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify what resources are needed to deliver proposed programs prepare a resources schedule which identifies the gaps between available resources and required resources, and identifies processes for additional resources to meet agreed priorities develop a Strategic Plan which identifies the 					

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Rating	Indicator	1 <i>No</i>	2 <i>Some</i>	3 <i>Full</i>	DK	How would you strengthen the team's capacity?
	current resources and is endorsed by the NAC.					
5.3	If necessary, can the team work with funders and others to securing external technical assistance to strengthen staff to deliver the response					
	The National Planning Team is able to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plan a schedule of external technical assistance to support implementation of the Strategic Plan • negotiate with external providers of Technical Support to implement elements of the Strategic Plan • routinely report to the NAC on the outputs and outcomes of technical assistance. 					
5.4	If necessary, can the team work with funders and others to secure additional funds and resources					
	The National Planning Team is able to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify alternate sources of funding (locally, nationally or externally) to implement agreed but unfunded priorities. • prepare proposals to funding bodies for agreed priorities, in partnership with responsible program partners, and with endorsement of the NAC. • advise the NAC of outcomes of funding submissions on a routine basis 					

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	Indicator	1 <i>No</i>	2 <i>Some</i>	3 <i>Full</i>	DK	How would you strengthen the team's capacity?
SKILL SET 6. ASSESSING THE QUALITY OF THE NATIONAL STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK						
Can the team:						
6.1	Use the Quality Assessment of National Strategic Framework tool to assess the quality of its strategic framework for planning, monitoring and evaluating the response.					
	<p>The National Planning Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understands the purpose of the Quality Assessment of National Strategic Framework tool (this is a separate document, not the same as this Capacity Assessment tool) • knows how to use the tool • uses the tool at the end of a Strategic Planning process and amends the Strategic Plan as relevant, prior to seeking endorsement and printing copies of the Plan for distribution to stakeholders • uses the tool to re-assess its planning at various points in the process. 					

GLOSSARY

Competency: means the ability to perform activities to the standards required in employment using a mix of knowledge, skills and attitudes¹. AIDS Competent Communities.... are those that (1) recognise the reality of HIV and AIDS; (2) build capacity to respond to HIV & AIDS; (3) exchange and share knowledge and skills; (4) reduce vulnerability and risks; (5) live to their full potential.²

Capacity has been described as 'the ability of an organisation to successfully apply its skills and resources to accomplish its goals and satisfy its stakeholders' expectations' and 'the ability to carry out stated objectives'.³ Capacity building: the development of sustainable skills, organizational structures, resources and commitment to health improvement in health and others sectors, in order to prolong and multiply health gains many times over.³

Brown *et al* define capacity building as the process that improves the ability of a person, group, organisation or system to meet its objectives or perform better. It is described as both a process and an outcome. It develops in stages and is a multi-dimensional, dynamic process. Brown *et al* suggest that in the health sector, capacity is required at four levels: health system, organisation, health personnel, individual and community. Brown *et al* note that although most commentators agree that capacity is linked to performance, its measurement is hindered by (1) a lack of common understanding of the relationship between capacity and performance (2) variation in what constitutes 'adequate' performance and (3) the influence of the external environment on capacity and performance.

Hawe *et al* described capacity building as reflected in (at least) three kinds of activities: (1) building infrastructure to deliver health programs; (2) building partnerships and organisational environments so that programs are sustained – and health gains are sustained; and (3) building problem-solving capability.⁴ They explain these aspects in detail:

- Health infrastructure or service development: refers to the Capacity to deliver particular program responses to particular health problems. Usually refers to the establishment of minimum requirements in structures, organisation, skills and resources in the health sector.
- Program maintenance and sustainability: refers to the Capacity to continue to deliver a particular program through a network of agencies, in addition to or instead of, the agency which initiated the program.
- Problem-solving capability of organisations and communities: refers to the Capacity of a more generic kind to identify health issues and develop appropriate mechanisms to address them, either building on the experience of a particular program, or as an activity in its own right.

Hawe *et al* argue that it is important for policy makers and program deliverers to be clear about which element is the focus of capacity building according to each specific situation, or whether more than one aspect is intended.

¹ IET Using competence frameworks for continuing professional development, <http://www.theiet.org/careers/cpd/competences/> accessed 5 July 2010

² Evaluation of the UNAIDS/UNITAR AIDS Competence Programme, June 2005, UNAIDS & UNITAR, (iv)

³ Intermediary Organisations Capacity Analysis: a toolkit for assessing and building capacities for high quality response to HIV, International HIV & AIDS Alliance, 2008, p3

⁴ Indicators to help with capacity building in health promotion, Penelope Hawe, Lesley King, Michelle Noort, Christopher Jordens, Beverley Lloyd, Australian Centre for Health Promotion, NSW HEALTH, 2000