



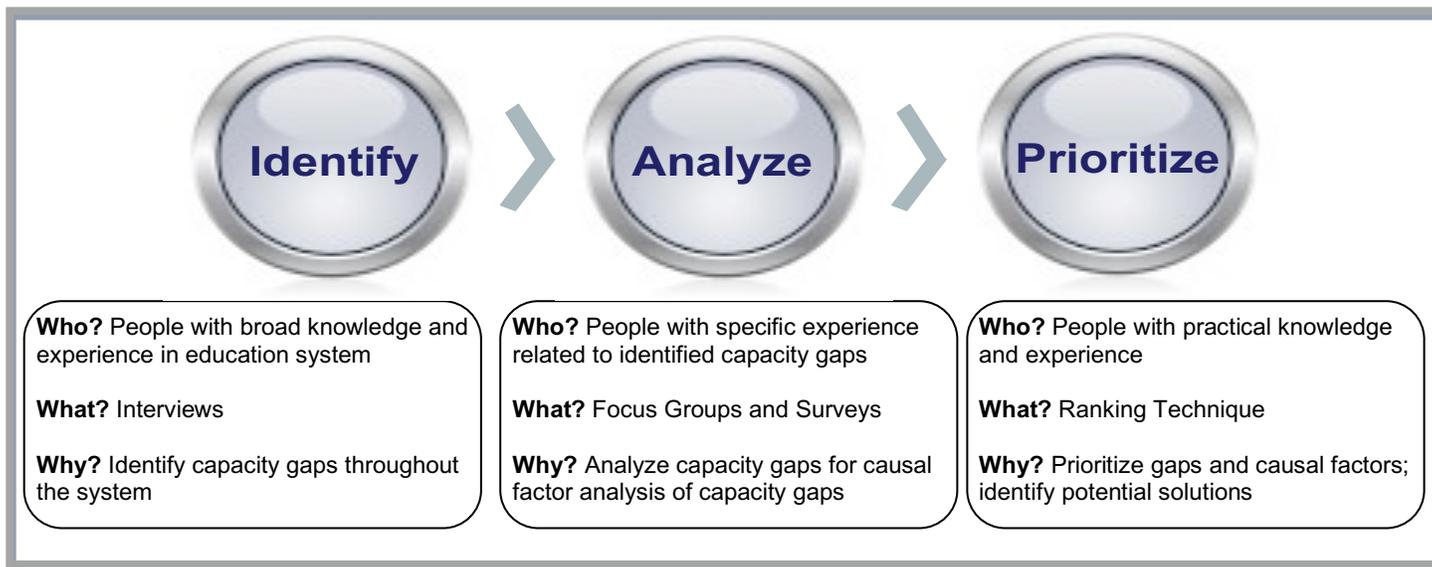
Capacity Development Assessment: *3 Key Steps and Tools*

Field Guide

DEVELOPED BY:

**THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
THE WORLD BANK GROUP**

Assessment Process Overview



TASK 1: IDENTIFY CAPACITY GAPS

- | | |
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| Activities | <p>1.1 Identify 5 to 10 people with broad knowledge and experience who are available for an interview (see Annex A)</p> <p>1.2 Interview at least 5 people using the interview guide (see Annex B)</p> <p>1.3 Summarize primary capacity gaps (see Annex C)</p> |
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TASK 2: ANALYZE CAPACITY GAPS

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| Activities | <p>2.1 Identify 15 to 20 people with specific experiences related to the identified capacity gaps from Task 1 (see Annex D).</p> <p>2.2 Conduct at least two focus groups with 5 to 7 participants in each to identify primary factors leading to capacity gaps (see Annex E)</p> <p>2.3 Summarize the primary causal factors for each capacity gap (see Annex F)</p> |
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TASK 3: MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE CAPACITY

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| Activities | <p>3.1 Conduct at least two ranking technique sessions to prioritize capacity gaps and then causal factors leading to capacity gaps and potential activities (solutions) for improving capacity (see Annex G).</p> <p>3.2 Write a recommendations report based on your assessment of capacity (see Annex H) and complete the Monitoring Summary Report (Annex I)</p> |
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TASK 1: IDENTIFY CAPACITY GAPS

ACTIVITY 1.1: Identify 5 to 7 people with broad knowledge and experience about the topic who are available for an interview (see Annex A)

Steps

1. Talk with colleagues (supervisors, peers, subordinates, etc.) about the goals of the capacity development assessment. Ask them for recommendations on who within the province (district, etc.) would have broad knowledge and experience that could assist in identifying capacity gaps.
2. Develop a list of at least 10 people that you would like to interview with the goal of identifying major capacity gaps in the province (district, etc.).
3. Contact the individuals on your list to determine who is available and willing to participate in a one-hour interview. You want to interview people with range of perspectives and experiences, thus you probably want to interview at least 5 to 7 people.
4. Complete the checklist in Annex A.

ACTIVITY 1.2: Interview at least 5 people using the interview guide (see Annex B)

Steps

1. Review the interview guide provided in Annex B.
2. Based on the unique characteristics of your province (or district, etc.) and the people whom you will be interviewing, customize the questions as necessary. For each interview you should have a customized interview guide.
3. Review the *Interview Overview worksheet* also include in Annex B.
4. If possible, practice asking the questions included in the interview guide with a colleague before conducting the first interview. This will give you an opportunity to identify possible follow-up questions and further clarify questions that may be confusing the interviewee.
5. Conduct each of the interviews using the interview guides, taking careful notes within the space provided on the interview guide.
6. It is important to remember that at this stage the focus of the interviews is on identifying capacity gaps, not determining the causes of the gaps or solutions to improve capacity. Interviewees may provide some information on these topics, in which case you should note these suggestions in your guide but focus the interview back on identifying gaps. A one-hour interview will go quickly, so maintaining the focus of the interview is important to identifying the full range of capacity gaps in the province (district, etc.).
7. After each interview, review the notes you have taken on the interview guide and reflect on the interviewee's responses. Take careful notes of what was discussed before conducting the next interview. Type your notes, if possible.

ACTIVITY 1.3: Summarize primary capacity gaps (see Annex C)

Steps

1. After completing at least 5 interviews, it is time to summarize the primary capacity gaps identified during the interviews.
2. Use the table provided in Annex C to summarize the primary capacity gaps identified during the interviews. When possible it can be helpful to combine similar capacity gaps that were identified during multiple interviews in order to consolidate the list.

TASK 2: ANALYZE CAPACITY GAPS

ACTIVITY 2.1: Identify 15 to 20 people with specific experiences related to identified capacity gaps from Task 1 (see Annex D).

Steps

1. Talk with colleagues (supervisors, peers, subordinates, etc.) about recommendations on who within the province (district, etc.) would have experiences with one or more of the capacity gaps learned from the identification stage.
2. Develop a list of about 20 to 30 people to participate in focus groups with the goal of analyzing the capacity gaps to determine the contributing causes (causal factors).
3. Plan on conducting 2 to 4 focus groups, with each focus group having 6 to 8 participants (no more than 8 participants).
4. Contact the individuals on your list to determine who is available and willing to participate in a one-hour focus group. You want to invite people with range of perspectives and experiences to each focus group.
5. Complete the checklist in Annex D.

ACTIVITY 2.2: Conduct at least two focus groups with 5 to 7 participants each to identify primary factors leading to capacity gaps (see Annex E)

Steps

1. Review the focus group guide provided in Annex E.
2. Based on the unique characteristics of your province (district, etc.), customize the guide as necessary. If you are conducting multiple focus groups on the same topic, for consistency you will want to use the same guide for each focus group.
3. Review the *Managing Focus Groups Overview worksheet* also included in Annex E.
4. If possible, practice asking the questions included in the focus group guide with a colleague before conducting the first focus group. This will give you an opportunity to identify possible follow-up questions and further clarify questions that may be confusing.
5. Conduct each of the focus groups using the guides, taking careful notes within the space provided on the guide.
6. It is important to remember that at this stage, the point of the focus groups is on examining identified capacity gaps, not identifying new capacity gaps or selecting the solutions to improve capacity. Participants may provide some information on these topics, in which case you should note these suggestions in your guide but direct the group back on analyzing the identified gaps. You can also mention to participants that there will be a final round of meetings (ranking technique sessions) focusing on prioritizing causes (causal factors) and identifying alternative solutions, and they might part of those meetings.

ACTIVITY 2.3: Summarize the primary causal factors for each capacity gap (see Annex G)

Steps

1. After completing at least 2 focus groups, it is time to summarize the primary factors leading to the identified capacity gaps.
2. Use the table provided in Annex F to summarize the primary factors for each capacity gap.

TASK 3: MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE CAPACITY

ACTIVITY 3.1: Conduct at least two Ranking Technique Sessions (or Ranking Sessions) to prioritize capacity gaps and causal factors leading to capacity gaps (see Annexes G) and potential activities (solutions) for improving capacity (see Annexes H).

Steps

1. Talk with participants from your interviews and focus groups about recommendations on who else within the province (district, etc.) would have helpful experience and knowledge for setting priorities and finding creative, yet feasible, solutions to the identified capacity gaps.
2. Develop a list of about 15 to 20 people to participate in Ranking Sessions (these are structured focus groups, also called *nominal group technique* sessions).
3. Plan on conducting 2 or 3 Ranking Sessions, with each group having 6 to 8 participants (no more than 8 participants).
4. Contact the individuals on your list to determine who is available and willing to participate in a two-hour ranking session. You want to invite people with range of perspectives and experiences.
5. Review the *Ranking Technique Guide* provided in Annex G. This is a structured process designed to build group consensus and make decisions about priorities. Note that this process has already been customized to focus on capacity development and the necessary decisions for writing the capacity assessment recommendations report.
6. Review the *Ranking Technique Overview worksheet* also included in Annex G.
7. Conduct each of the Ranking Sessions using the guides, completing the prioritization tables also providing in Annex G.

ACTIVITY 3.2: Write a recommendations report based on your assessment of capacity (see Annex K)

Steps

1. Before starting to write your report, review your notes from each of the interviews.
2. Review your notes from each of the focus groups.
3. Review the priorities and potential solutions identified from each Ranking Sessions.
4. Review the Capacity Assessment Recommendations Report format found in Annex H.
5. Write a first draft of the report using the provided format. You should rely on the information provided by the interview and focus group participants, but at the same time you will also want to integrate your perspective given the broad knowledge that you now have on the capacity gaps within the province.
6. Ask at least 2 colleagues to review the draft report and provide feedback on how well it communicates the findings of the assessment process.
7. Prepare the final report.

Annexes A-I
Tools to Support the 3 Steps:
Identification, Analysis, Prioritization

- A: Interview Preparation Checklist
- B: Interview Guide to Identify Capacity Gaps
- C: Capacity Gap Summary
- D: Focus Group Preparation Checklist
- E: Focus Group Guide to Identify Capacity Gaps
- F: Causal Factors Summary Worksheet
- G: Ranking Technique Guide
- H: Recommendations Report
- I: Monitoring Summary Report

Annex A: Interview Preparation Checklist

INSTRUCTIONS: Complete the following checklist when identifying interview participants.

Who

Have I identified people who have knowledge and experience in relation to the delivery of services at the:

- Ministry of Education or Department of Primary Education
 - Province level
 - District level
 - School level
-
- Identified people who have knowledge and experience in relation common bottlenecks in providing services throughout the system

When

- Contacted individuals to determine availability
- If not available, requested the name of another person who could provide information

Preparation

- Sent participants any background materials that may help them answer the questions during the interview
- Do I have the time and location of the interview?
- Do I know anything (title, experiences, background, etc.) about the interviewee?
- Do I have ideas for follow-up questions for each interview question?
- What information is essential to obtain through the interview?
- What information would it be nice obtain, but not essential, from the interview?
- Are there documents I should ask for at the end of the interview (reports, files, etc.)?
- How will I take notes during the interview?
- Will I record the interview using a tape recorder? If so, have I checked the batteries in the recorder? Has the interviewee been asked if recording the interview is ok?
- How will I transcribe the interview recording (or notes)?
- Will I have time immediately after the interview to reflect on the answers and make additional notes?

Annex B: Interview Guide to Identify Capacity Gaps

INSTRUCTIONS: Use the following interview guide to interview people with broad knowledge and experience regarding education in your Province (or district, etc.). This guide is designed for Province-level purposes. However, the guide can be modified for different levels and the term *Province* can be replaced with Department, District, or School depending on who is being interviewed.

INTRODUCTION	
<p>Welcome (Where appropriate, modify the script and questions.)</p>	<p><i>Script: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. We are talking today in order to assess the capacity of the education system, from the MOE all the way to the school-level, to achieve our goals. In this interview we will focus on identifying the challenges and capacity gaps that exist. Then, in our next stage of this process, in subsequent focus groups we will work with teams to analyze the challenges and find potential ways to improve capacity.</i></p>
<p>Do you have any questions regarding our goals?</p>	<p>Notes:</p>
QUESTIONS	
<p>Q1: Based on your experiences, can you describe the two or three of the major capacity gaps that limit the ability of the <i>province</i> to achieve its educational goals?</p>	<p>Response:</p>
	<p>Follow-up Question and Response</p>
<p>Q2: Are there challenges that you would classify as</p>	<p>Response:</p>

<p><u>Institutional</u>? For example, coordination or governance issues?</p>	<p>Follow-up Question and Response</p>
<p>Q3: Are there challenges that you would classify as <u>Organizational</u>? For example, issues of strategy, structure, administration?</p>	<p>Response:</p>
	<p>Follow-up Question and Response</p>
<p>Q4: Are there challenges that you would classify as <u>Individual</u>? For example, issues of human resources, motivation, training?</p>	<p>Response:</p>
	<p>Follow-up Question and Response</p>
<p>Q5: What are the typical bottlenecks (blockages, challenges) in the delivery of services?</p>	<p>Response:</p>
	<p>Follow-up Question and Response</p>
<p>Q6: Can you give further describe one or two of these bottlenecks (blockages, challenges) with examples from your experience?</p>	<p>Response:</p>
	<p>Follow-up Question and Response</p>

<p>Q7: Are there specific functions (for instance financial administration or personnel management) where capacity could be improved within the Province?</p>	<p>Response:</p>
	<p>Follow-up Question and Response</p>
<p>Q8: Are there other challenges that you believe limit the capacity of the Province to achieve its educational goals?</p>	<p>Response:</p>
	<p>Follow-up Question and Response</p>
<p>Q9: Can you recommend anyone I should meet with in order to identify capacity gaps within the Province?</p>	<p>Response:</p>
	<p>Follow-up Question and Response</p>
<p>CONCLUSIONS</p>	
<p>Review</p>	<p><i>Script: Summarize the major capacity gaps identified from the conversation and then ask the interviewee to verify that you accurately interpreted their responses.</i></p>

Information on How to Conduct Interviews

PURPOSE

The purpose of conducting interviews is to collect information from a single person through a systematic and structured process.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

Individual interviews can often provide in-depth context, stories, and discussion related to one or more topics that are pertinent to capacity development. During the interview the interviewer can ask for elaboration or explanation with follow-up questions. Interviews also offer an opportunity for the interviewee to become familiar with the development effort and its objectives. Individuals in positions of influence may also appreciate the additional personal attention of the interview.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

ADVANTAGES

- Interviews typically allow for more focused discussions and follow-up questions.
- Individuals may offer information in interviews that they wouldn't offer in a group context.
- Interviews can be an excellent source for stories and context.
- The interviewer can observe the non-verbal behaviors of an interviewee.

DISADVANTAGES

- Time requirements for interviewers and interviewees can be significant.
- Interviews have the potential to reduce the scope and sample for data collection.
- The results of multiple interviews may contradict each other or be difficult to analyze.
- Interviewees may be biased or represent only a limited perspective on performance issues/themes.

GENERAL PROCEDURES

1. Create a list of all the **information required for making decisions** related to capacity development. Prioritize and align the list of information requirements based your objectives and the available participants for the interviews.
2. **Select interviewees** who can best provide the information you are looking for in the interviews. Experts or high level officials are often included as interviewees, but novices or those working “on the ground” should also be considered since they may know more about the daily operations, challenges, and opportunities. Most often you will want to customize each interview based on the unique information the interviewee has to offer given their position, role, or previous experiences.
3. For each interview, **create an interview guide (or protocol)** that will direct the questions that are to be asked. The guide (see sample below) ensures that all of required information is collected.
 - Provide clear directions for the interviewer.
 - Leave room in the guide for the interviewer to take notes during the interview
 - Include possible follow-up questions to help guide the discussion
4. **Schedule** a convenient time and location for the interview. The interview should take place in a friendly location where both the interviewee and interviewer will feel comfortable discussing potentially delicate topics.
5. Start the interview on time and **listen** attentively to the responses of the interviewee.
6. During the interview **take careful notes**, offering to recap the response of the interviewee whenever there may be confusion. **Follow the interview guide** carefully to ensure that you don’t have to schedule a second interview to ask questions that may have been skipped. When possible, it is often a good idea to tape record an interview in order to verify your notes after the interview is complete. Lastly, work to end at the agreed upon time.
7. Immediately following the interview **review your notes** carefully to ensure that you have accurately captured all of the relevant information. If you find any confusion this is the time to call or email the interviewee to verify information or ask for clarifications.
8. Relate the findings from each interview to **other data sources** for verification. For instance, if an interviewee quotes a news article or a research report it is typically useful to check that resource to ensure that the facts and figures provided by the interviewee

were accurate and presented without bias.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Create a friendly and open environment by using active listening techniques (such as recapping, paraphrase, taking notes, and use friendly body-language).
- Refrain from asking leading questions or cutting off the interviewee during their response. In order to avoid cutting off interviewees, it is often helpful to include potential follow-up questions as part of the interview guide.
- Listening is more important than talking when conducting an interview, so do not plan on asking too many questions.
- Ask the interviewee to respond with examples from their experience – this can be a valuable technique to differentiate between perceptions and real capacity issues.
- Take good notes during the interview (or tape record it, if the participant is agreeable).

WEBSITES

- USAID article on conducting interviews:
<http://www.wkkf.org/default.aspx?tabid=101&CID=281&CatID=281&ItemID=2813705&NID=20&LanguageID=0>
- Asking open ended and probing questions tip sheet:
http://ppa.aces.uiuc.edu/pdf_files/Asking1.PDF
- Information Brief: Developing Interview Guides
<http://www.neirtec.org/evaluation/PDFs/PreparingtoCollect5.pdf>
- Sample interview guide:
http://www.ceismc.gatech.edu/MM_Tools/NIP.html.

Annex C: Capacity Gap Summary

INSTRUCTIONS: After completing interviews with at least five knowledgeable and experienced people in your province, summarize the findings of those interviews in the chart below.

CAPACITY GAP A
Description:
Supporting Information:
CAPACITY GAP B
Description:
Supporting Information:
CAPACITY GAP C
Description:
Supporting Information:

CAPACITY GAP D
Description:
Supporting Information:
CAPACITY GAP E
Description:
Supporting Information:
CAPACITY GAP F
Description:
Supporting Information:

** Use a second copy of this form if more capacity gaps were identified during the interviews.*

Annex D: Focus Group Preparation Checklist

INSTRUCTIONS: Complete the following checklist when identifying focus group participants.

Who

- Identified people with experience in relations to each of the identified capacity gaps:
 - Capacity Gap A
 - Capacity Gap B
 - Capacity Gap C
 - Capacity Gap D
 - Capacity Gap E
 - Additional...
- Identified people who will be able to provide information regarding the factors causing the capacity gaps.
- Identified people that represent a variety of perspectives on the issues (for instance, School, District, Province, and Department perspectives).

When

- Contacted individuals to determine availability
- If not available, requested the name of another person who could provide information

Preparation

- Sent participants any background materials that may help them answer the questions during the interview
- Do I have the time and location of the focus groups?
- Do I know anything (names, title, experiences, background, etc.) about the participants in the focus groups?
- What information is essential to obtain from the focus groups?
- What information would it be nice to obtain, but not essential, from the focus groups?
- How will I take notes during the focus group?
- Will I record the focus group? If so, have I checked the batteries in the recorder? Has the participants been asked if recording the focus group is ok?
- How will I transcribe the focus group recording (or notes)?
- Will I have time immediately after each focus group to reflect on the answers and make additional notes?

Annex E: Focus Group Guide to Identify Capacity Gaps

INSTRUCTIONS:

Use the following focus group guide for meetings with people who have experience regarding one or of the identified capacity gaps.

INTRODUCTION	
Welcome <i>(Where appropriate, modify the script and questions.)</i>	<i>Script: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this focus group today. We have interviewed a number of provincial colleagues to identify capacity gaps and now we want to determine the factors that are leading to these gaps. We are not here to debate or solve the capacity gaps, though if you have suggestions for how to improve capacity please note it on a sheet of paper and we will collect those ideas at the end of the session.</i>
Do you have any questions regarding our goals of the focus group?	Notes:

QUESTIONS	
<p>Q1: One of the identified capacity gaps is <i>[insert gap A]</i>. Of the nine common factors leading to capacity gaps on your handout, which do you find are most responsible for the current gap?</p>	Response:
	Follow-up Question and Response
	Response:
	Follow-up Question and Response
	Response:
Follow-up Question and Response	
<p>Q2: A second of the</p>	Response:

<p>identified capacity gaps is <i>[insert gap B]</i>. Of the nine common factors leading to capacity gaps on your handout, which do find are most responsible for the current gap?</p>	
	Follow-up Question and Response
	Response:
	Follow-up Question and Response
	Response:
	Follow-up Question and Response
	Response:
Q3: A third identified	Response:

<p>capacity gaps is <i>[insert gap C]</i>. Of the nine common factors leading to capacity gaps on your handout, which do you find are most responsible for the current gap?</p>	
	Follow-up Question and Response
	Response:
	Follow-up Question and Response
	Response:
	Follow-up Question and Response
	Response:
Q4: The fourth	Response:

identified capacity gaps is <i>[insert gap D]</i> . Of the nine common factors leading to capacity gaps on your handout, which do you find are most responsible for the current gap?	
	Follow-up Question and Response
	Response:
	Follow-up Question and Response
	Response:
	Follow-up Question and Response

Note: If you have time remaining you can cover or more remaining capacity gaps. If, however, you are short on time then start the next focus with the capacity gaps you were not able to include in this discussion.

CONCLUSIONS

Script: Summarize the major factors identified during the conversation and then ask the focus group members to verify that you accurately interpreted their responses.

Focus Group Handout

Nine Categories of Common Causal Factors Leading to Capacity Gaps

Performance Capability

Do we have the right people in the right jobs to achieve desired results?

Knowledge and Skills

Do people know what to do and are they able to do it?

Motivation and Self – Confidence

Do people have the motivation and confidence to achieve desired results?

Expectations and Feedback

Do we formal and informal mechanisms to help people know how they are performing?

Environment, Tools and Processes

Do we have what is necessary to achieve desired results? For example, policies, guidelines, data systems, computers.

Incentives, Rewards and Recognition

What we encourage good performance and recognize the achievement of desired results?

Resources

Do we have the resources to achieve the desired results? For example, budget, time, personnel, buildings, books.

Goals, Strategy and Organizational Culture

Does everyone know what we are trying to achieve and how we will achieve it? Do we have shared norms, habits, and beliefs?

Coordination within and among ministries and government agencies

Are the government agencies coordinating appropriately?

Annex F: Causal Factors Summary Worksheet

INSTRUCTIONS:

Complete the following worksheet based on the information attained during the focus groups.

CAPACITY GAP A	
Causal Factors	Description of causal relationship
<input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge & Skill	
<input type="checkbox"/> Motivation & Self-Confidence	
<input type="checkbox"/> Expectations & Feedback	
<input type="checkbox"/> Environment, Tools & Processes	
<input type="checkbox"/> Incentives, Rewards & Recognitions	
<input type="checkbox"/> Goals, Strategy, and Organizational Culture	
<input type="checkbox"/> Performance Capability	
<input type="checkbox"/> Resources	
<input type="checkbox"/> Organizational Culture	
<input type="checkbox"/> Coordination within and among ministries and government agencies	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other...	

Continue worksheet for each capacity gaps: A, B, C, etc.

Annex G: Ranking Technique Guide

INSTRUCTIONS:

Use the following Ranking Technique guide for (a) prioritizing identified capacity gaps, and (b) linking potential interventions (solutions) to improve capacity to the causal factors associated with capacity gaps. Before beginning the Ranking Session provide participants with the *Sample Ranking Technique Handout* included in this Annex, as well as the Summary Worksheets from both the previous Interviews and Focus Groups.

Step 1: Introduction

Inform the participants that the goal of the session is to make several important decisions in a collaborative manner. Everyone will have an equal opportunity to provide input into each decision, though at times individuals may disagree with the decisions of the group. Nevertheless, it is important to respect the opinions of others.

Likewise, the goal of the session is NOT to debate or challenge the capacity gaps or causal factors identified by previous participants. Though individuals may disagree with one or more of these, the goal of session is to expand on these inputs and make decisions about what should happen next.

Step 2: Prioritize Identified Capacity Gaps

1. Present the **identified capacity gaps** from the interviews to the group.
2. Give the group members an opportunity to **ask any questions** or to discuss anything that helps to improve clarify on identified capacity gaps.
3. Ask the group members to take some time to think about the gaps and to **write down** how they would prioritize the capacity gaps, listing the top three gaps in priority order starting with the highest priority.
4. On a turn-by-turn basis, ask each group member to take some time to **share their top priority** with the group. As each group member shares his/her response, write it down on a flip chart. Invite the group member to elaborate on their response, describing the criteria they applied in setting their priorities. Ask participants to scratch items from their individual lists as they are added to the flipcharts (to avoid duplication).
5. Once all group members have given highest priority, go around the room again and ask each group member to **give their second highest priority**. Remind participants that they can advocate for other participants to agree with their priorities by justifying their choices during their opportunity to elaborate.

6. Once all group members have given highest priority, go around the room again and ask each group member to **give their third highest priority**.
7. **Hang up the flipchart sheets** next to each other, so that all of them can be seen at the same time, and by all group members.
8. Ask each group member to identify their **two highest priority capacity gap** now that they have seen and heard the priorities of others.
9. Reading from the flipcharts, mark the **number of participants** who identified each of the capacity gaps as their top priority.
10. Those gaps with the highest aggregated value constitute **the top priorities for the group**.

Step 3: Prioritize Causal Factors and then Identify Potential Interventions

1. Using the information provided by the previous focus groups, provide the current focus group with the **identified causal factors** leading to each of the highest priority capacity gaps from Step 2 above.
2. Give the group members an opportunity to **ask any questions** or to discuss anything that helps to improve clarify on identified causal factors.
3. Starting with the highest priority capacity gap, ask the group members to take some time to think about the identified causal factors and to **write down** how they would prioritize the causal factors for the capacity gap, listing the top three factors in priority order.
4. On a turn-by-turn basis, ask each group member to take some time to **share their top priority** causal factor with the group. As each group member shares his/her response, write it down on a flip chart. Invite the group member to elaborate on their response, describing the criteria they applied in setting their priorities. Ask participants to scratch items from their individual lists as they are added to the flipcharts (to avoid duplication).
5. Once all group members have given highest priority, go around the room again and ask each group member to **give their second highest priority** causal factor. Remind participants that they can advocate for other participants to agree with their priorities by justifying their choices during their opportunity to elaborate.
6. Once all group members have given highest priority, go around the room again and ask each group member to **give their third highest priority**.
7. **Hang up the flipchart sheets** next to each other, so that all of them can be seen at the same time, and by all group members.

8. Ask each group member to identify their **two highest priority causal factor** now that they have seen and heard the priorities of others.
9. Reading from the flipcharts, mark the **number of participants** who identified each of the causal factor as their top priority.
10. Those gaps with the highest aggregated value constitute **the top priorities for the group**.
11. **Repeat** the Ranking Session to identify the highest priority causal factors for both the **second and third highest priority capacity gaps**.
12. When the highest priority causal factors are identified for each of the high priority capacity gaps, ask the group members to **identify potential interventions** that could be used to address the causal factors and improve capacity. Through open brainstorming ask participants to think of creative activities to improve capacity. Provide the participants with the **Potential Intervention Handout** included in this Annex as a foundation for identifying interventions linked to the high priority causal factors.

Information on How to Conduct Ranking Technique Sessions

PURPOSE

The Ranking Technique is used to build consensus and prioritize issues. It is a type of structured focus group. It is commonly known as Nominal Group Technique, but we are using the simpler term of Ranking Technique here.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

The Ranking Technique can be a valuable tool for facilitating group decision-making. This technique provides a structured process for working with group members to prioritize their ideas, concerns, or other inputs to the decision in a format that is both inclusive and consensus-building. You can use the technique to prioritize both capacity gaps and the potential interventions that could close those gaps.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

Advantages

- The Ranking Technique is **structured**.
- **Everyone** in the group is given an opportunity to contribute, but no one person can dominate the group process.
- Can be used effectively with **small groups** (3 – 9 participants) **or medium groups** (10 – 29 participants).

Disadvantages

- May feel somewhat **mechanical** to some participants.
- Hard to implement effectively with **large groups** (30+) unless very carefully planned beforehand.

GENERAL PROCEDURES

1. Present the **single topic** for the session to the group. For example, the group members could be presented with a context for why the group is meeting, and asked to “identify what results you should be accomplishing but are not able to at this time”, “list all of the things that could be improved about...” or to “think of all the things that could be causing...”. **Only one key question** should, however, be used in a session in order to maintain a clear focus and objective.
2. Give the group members an opportunity to **ask any questions** or to discuss anything

that helps to improve clarify on the topic and focus of the session.

3. Ask the group members to take some time (generally a few minutes) to think about the topic and to **write down** their responses. Encourage group members to write down their thoughts in a bulleted, abbreviated format since these will be shared with others.
4. On a turn-by-turn basis, ask each group member to take some time to **share one** of their responses with the group. As each group member shares his/her response, write it down on a flip chart. Invite the group member to elaborate if appropriate.
5. Once all group members have given one response, go around the room again and ask each group member to **give a second, and then a third response**. Continue this process until all answers have been written on the flipchart sheets. Ask participants to scratch items from their individual lists as they are added to the flipcharts (to avoid duplication).
6. Hang up the flipchart sheets next to each other, so that all of them can be seen at the same time, and by all group members. **Assign a letter** to each discrete contribution on the flipchart sheets. Each item on the flipcharts should have a unique letter, to facilitate discussion.
7. Give each group member a stack of index cards. Ask each group member to identify, for example, the three to five responses that they feel are **most important**, identifying each response on a separate index card by the letter it has been assigned on the flipchart.
8. Next, ask the group members to **rank order (or prioritize)** the five responses they selected in order of priority, from one to five (five being the highest priority, and one being the least high priority). They should do this by writing the rank order value of each response next to the letter for the response on their index card. When done, ask the group members to reorganize their index cards in alphabetical order.
9. Reading from the flipchart, read through the list of responses in alphabetical order. As you read out the letter corresponding with a response, **ask each group member to state the rank (if any)** that they gave it.
10. Aggregate all the ranks for each response on the flip chart. Those responses with the highest aggregated value constitute **the top priorities for the group**.
11. If necessary, a second round of rankings can be done to further reduce the responses to a group decision.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Each Ranking Session that you conduct should last between 30 minutes and four hours. Each session should deal with only one key question presented to the participants.
- Arrange to have the following supplies available at the group meeting site: Flip chart, masking tape, markers, paper, index cards, pens/pencils
- If you are working with a larger group, you can assign individual participants to smaller groups, assigning each group a leader.

WEBSITES

- Using Nominal Groups: http://ppa.aces.uiuc.edu/pdf_files/NomGroup1.PDF
- The Nominal Group Technique:
http://syque.com/quality_tools/toolbook/NGT/ngt.htm (This web site from Quality Tools includes a worked example of the technique being implemented).

Causal Factor Prioritization Worksheet

PART A INSTRUCTIONS:

The Ranking Technique allows you to prioritize the identified capacity gaps. To begin the session, ask participants to discuss the criteria they would use to prioritize capacity gaps (e.g., long-term impact, cost to close the gap, political challenges) but then let participants prioritize the gaps through the Ranking Technique without using any specific criteria. At the end of the session you should identify the top three highest priority capacity gaps and complete the form below.

PRIORITY	CAPACITY GAP
1.	
2.	
3.	

PART B INSTRUCTIONS:

Using the Ranking Technique to conduct the focus group, identify the causal factors that most significantly contribute to each of the high priority capacity gaps.

For each priority causal factor, then ask the focus group to brainstorm potential interventions that could be used to improve capacity by addressing each causal factor (see Handout at the end of this Annex).

CAPACITY GAP 1	
Priority Causal Factor	Potential Interventions to Improve Capacity
1.	
2.	
3.	

CAPACITY GAP 2	
Priority Causal Factor	Potential Interventions to Improve Capacity
1.	
2.	
3.	

CAPACITY GAP 3	
Priority Causal Factor	Potential Interventions to Improve Capacity
1.	
2.	
3.	

Potential Intervention (Activities, Solutions) Handout

Sample Interventions for Common Causal Factors Leading to Capacity Gaps

Performance Capability

Recruitment, outsourcing, succession planning, job rotations, cross-training, staff retention, etc.

Knowledge and Skills

Classroom training, e-learning, job aids, on-the-job training, orientation, etc.

Motivation and Self – Confidence

Mentoring, coaching, team building, job rotations, etc.

Expectations and Feedback

Performance reviews, reference manuals, retreats, monthly meetings, etc.

Environment, Tools and Processes

Workplace design, process changes, color coding, labeling, technology, etc.

Incentives, Rewards and Recognition

Award programs, employee of the month, financial incentives, etc.

Resources

Restructuring, workforce planning, career ladders, cost reductions, etc.

Goals, Strategy and Organizational Culture

Strategic planning, needs assessment, risk management, communications, change management, ethics training, work place etiquette programs, etc.

Coordination within and among ministries and government agencies

Communications, policies, procedures, retreats, monitoring systems

Annex H: Recommendations Report

INSTRUCTIONS:

Complete each section of the following report format based on the information collected throughout the Assessment of Capacity Gaps.

SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Description: A one page summary that identifies the primary findings of your assessment and recommendations regarding which capacity gaps and causal factors should be addressed.

SECTION 2: BACKGROUND

Description: Information on your Province and the unique challenges it faces with regards to education -- typically no more than one page.

SECTION 3: METHODS

Description: A short description of what techniques were used to collect information (e.g., interviews, focus groups, surveys), who participated, and what other information did you hope to collect but were unable. The length depends on the size of Province.

SECTION 4: PRIORITY CAPACITY GAPS

Description: Using the Capacity Gap Summary Worksheet and the priority gaps selected during the Ranking Session, summarize the priority capacity gaps. Include in the summary of each capacity gap, (i) information that validates the existence of the gap, (ii) the influence of the gap on the achievement of educational goals, as well as (iii) a discussion of why the gap was considered a priority by the focus group members.

SECTION 5: CAUSAL FACTORS

Description: Using the Causal Factors Summary Worksheet and the priority causal factors selected by the Ranking Session groups, summarize the priority causal factors and potential interventions for each of the high priority capacity gaps. Include in the summary, (i) information that validates the linkage of the causal factor to the capacity gap, (ii) the influence of the causal factor on the capacity gap, (iii) a discussion of why the causal factors were considered priorities by the focus group members, as well as, (iv) the possible advantages and disadvantages of each identified potential intervention linked to the priority causal factors.

SECTION 6: RECOMMENDATIONS

Description: Based on the information that you collected throughout the assessment process, and your experiences in facilitating the interviews and focus groups, you should now make recommendations that can inform decisions makers on what steps should be taken next to improve capacity. You can use the following chart to help guide your considerations.

Feasibility:

- i. Logic order
- ii. Technical complexity
- iii. Maturity of idea
- iv. Resources needed

Expected Impact:

- i. Efficiency in utilization of scarce resources towards set goals & objectives
- ii. Equity in accessibility of educational services
- iii. Quality of health services

Based on your assessment your recommendations should include:

- a. The priority order in which capacity gaps should be addressed.
- b. The causal factors that should be addressed for each capacity gap.
- c. What interventions should be considered by decision makers when determining how to improve capacity.

IMPROVING CAPACITY: RECOMMENDATIONS		
Feasibility	Low	High
Impact		
Low		
High		

Annex I: Monitoring Summary Report

INSTRUCTIONS:

Beyond preparing a Recommendations Report, it will be important to share information in a systematic way among the different levels of government. A reporting structure that can be used for monitoring purposes at all levels is below. By using a standard template for monitoring, it will be possible to aggregate data across levels. This will help stakeholders have a picture of capacity issues across the education sector at the school, district, provincial or national levels, and ultimately contribute to better decision-making. Information in the form below should be transferred to a central office for aggregation and oversight. An electronic version of this form is available in Excel in the electronic version of this packet.

This is a sample form and should be modified as agreed by the teams using this reporting mechanism.

MONITORING SUMMARY REPORT	
Questions	Response
Organization Name	
Organization Location (Mailing Address, City, Province)	
Organization Level (school, district, province, national, other)	
Date of Report Submission (Date-Month-Year)	
Name of Submitter (First Name – LAST NAME)	
Contact information (telephone and email)	
Description of how information was collected	

and prioritized (Summary of who collected the information, how and when it was collected, who provided information)	
Other comments	
1st Priority Need	
Type of need (Choose from among list of Causal Factors)	
Summary description (1 sentence)	
Detailed description (1-2 paragraphs about need)	
Risks of not addressing need (Note any known or anticipated risks.)	
Baseline situation about need (What is the current status? What is not working? What is working?)	
Targeting (What should the improved situation be? Under what timeframe?)	
Recommendations for interventions to address need (List recommended ideas on how to address	

need.)	
Feasibility issues in addressing need (List any concerns about the likelihood of success in addressing the need? Note any obstacles.)	
Timetable recommendations for addressing need	
Resource needs (List an initial range of expected resources required and type of resources to address the need.)	
Describe any known activities that others are conducting to address the need. (Example, what are donors doing? Are there other related activities ongoing?)	
Who should be involved in addressing the need? (List and describe different levels of involvement.)	
Political, cultural, or other considerations	
Lessons from previous attempts to address the need, if any. (Describe known lessons.)	

Lessons from other Lao PDR organizations (e.g., in other provinces, etc.) in addressing a similar need	
What is the requested action from the oversight organization receiving this form?	
Add questions	

Complete this form for each identified need

Optional and Supplemental Tools

A: Sample Survey

B: Survey Development and Implementation Overview

Survey*

** The development of a survey may be an option for large provinces where conducting focus groups would not enable broad enough participation or if participants would not be able to meet for a focus group. The survey process is more limiting than the focus group for gathering information on the factors leading to capacity gaps and thus the survey process should be used only when focus groups are not feasible. Because it is difficult to develop and administer a survey well, it is best to work with a survey expert when considering using surveys.*

INSTRUCTIONS:

Below is a sample survey that can be customized to address the capacity gaps identified during the interviews and meet the unique requirements of your province. The Survey Development Overview is also included in this annex and it can provide useful information on many aspects of conducting a successful survey as part of your capacity assessment.

Sample Survey

This is a sample only. If using a survey, it should be developed by a survey expert.

Instructions: Based on multiple interviews we have identified a number of capacity gaps within our province. In order to identify feasible activities to improve the province's capacity in relation to these gaps, we would like for you to complete the following survey to help us determine the factors that are currently leading to the identified capacity gaps.

CAPACITY GAP A: [insert a short description of a capacity gap identified in the interviews]							
<p>Q1: Which of the following are factors leading to the capacity gap?</p> <p><i>See the attached handout for descriptions of each factor</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge & Skill <input type="checkbox"/> Motivation & Self-Confidence <input type="checkbox"/> Expectations & Feedback <input type="checkbox"/> Environment, Tools & Processes <input type="checkbox"/> Incentives, Rewards & Recognitions <input type="checkbox"/> Alignment of Goals, Strategy and Organizational Culture <input type="checkbox"/> Coordination within and among ministries and other government agencies <input type="checkbox"/> Performance Capability <input type="checkbox"/> Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Other...						
<p>Q2: Of the factors you identified in Q1, how would you prioritize them in relation to their influence on the capacity gap?</p>	<p><i>Highest Priority</i></p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p><i>Lowest Priority</i></p>						
<p>Q3: Can you describe a situation from your experience that illustrates the highest priority factor leading to the capacity gap?</p>	<p><i>Describe example situation here:</i></p>						
<p>Q4: Based on your experience, how frequently does the highest priority factor lead to the capacity gap?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Yearly <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely						
<p>Q5: Given limited resources, how important is it to you that this capacity gap gets addressed in the next year?</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: left;">Not Important</td> <td style="width: 60%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: right;">Very Important</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2 3 4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> </tr> </table>	Not Important		Very Important	1	2 3 4	5
Not Important		Very Important					
1	2 3 4	5					

Continue survey for each capacity gaps: A, B, C, etc.

Survey Handout

Nine Categories of Common Causal Factors Leading to Capacity Gaps

Performance Capability

Do we have the right people in the right jobs to achieve desired results?

Knowledge and Skills

Do people know what to do and are they able to do it?

Motivation and Self – Confidence

Do people have the motivation and confidence to achieve desired results?

Expectations and Feedback

Do we formal and informal mechanisms to help people know how they are performing?

Environment, Tools and Processes

Do we have what is necessary to achieve desired results? For example, policies, guidelines, data systems, computers.

Incentives, Rewards and Recognition

What we encourage good performance and recognize the achievement of desired results?

Resources

Do we have the resources to achieve the desired results? For example, budget, time, personnel, buildings, books.

Goals, Strategy and Organizational Culture

Does everyone know what we are trying to achieve and how we will achieve it? Do we have shared norms, habits, and beliefs?

Coordination within and among ministries and government agencies

Are the government agencies coordinating appropriately?

Survey Development and Implementation Overview

PURPOSE

To collect information from a large number of people – typically located in multiple locations -- regarding their perspectives on both current and desired performance.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

In developing capacity you will often want to use a survey to collect information. Surveys can be a useful tool since (i) they are relatively easy to develop, (ii) survey data can usually be clearly transformed into useful information, and (iii) surveys can be distributed to large and small groups without much effort. Using different types of survey questions and response scales you can gather a variety of useful information for making decisions.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

Advantages

- A survey allows you to capture the **perspectives of multiple groups** on a variety of performance-related topics.
- Surveys can use a **variety of formats**, for example you can ask a few questions or many questions; also, you can ask open-ended or closed-ended questions.
- Surveys can use **several of response formats**. For instance, Agree-to-Disagree, Daily-to-Rarely, or Satisfied-to-Dissatisfied.

Disadvantages

- Survey data is **frequently confused with performance data**. It is important to remember that survey data relies on the *perceptions* of those completing the survey. Thus, while a respondent may indicate that their perception is that performance is high, the reality may be that performance is low. Nevertheless, knowing the perceptions of those participating in capacity development is essential to making informed decisions.
- Getting a sufficient **response rate** (in other words, the percentage of completed surveys) can be challenging.
- Surveys do not give you the opportunity to ask **follow-up questions** to respondents (unlike interviews or focus groups).

GENERAL PROCEDURES

1. Make a **list of decisions** that the completed survey responses are intended to inform. This will prevent you from asking questions that don't get used subsequent decision-making.
2. Identify the **target audience** for the survey. You can also use multiple versions of a survey to target different audiences or stakeholders.
3. Identify **questions** to include in your survey. Questions should focus both on the results to accomplished through capacity development as well as the potential activities or resources that could be used to achieve those results. [Note: In the *Tips for Success* section there are many tips on how to write successful survey questions.]
4. For each question determine the appropriate **responses format**. Multiple sections within a single survey can also use **different response** formats, you just have to clearly communicate those changes to the participants completing the survey. Some possible response formats include:
 - Agreement 5 = Agree, 1 = Disagree
 - Satisfaction 5 = Satisfied, 1 = Not Satisfied
 - Frequency 5 = Daily, 1= Never
 - Number 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 times in the last week
 - Range 1 to 99; 100 – 199; 200 – 299
 - Categories Attapeu, Bokeo, Bolikhamsai, or Champasak
 - Yes/No 1=Yes, 2=No
 - Priority Rank order the following list
 - Gap Two responses, one for current level and one for desired level
 - Open Participants write in their response
5. **Pilot test** your survey with participants that are representative of your target audience. When participants have completed the draft survey, calculate the results to ensure that you can use the information attained from each question. Typically you will find that the responses to some questions do not provide the useful information you were looking for and thus changes to the survey have to be made.
6. Surveys can be done in a variety of formats and you should **select an appropriate media** for your target audience. Online surveys can easily be created, distributed, and analyzed using Internet based tools. Paper-based surveys can also be effective, especially if members of your target audience may not have access to technology or necessary computer skills for completing an online survey. You should therefore

select the format that you believe will give you the highest return rate of completed surveys.

7. Set a target **response rate** for your survey before sending it out. Ideally you would like for more than 50% of the surveys you send out to be completed, and the higher the return rate the more confidence you can have that the results of your survey represent the perspectives of target audience.
8. Until you reach your target response rate, **send reminders** to persons who have not completed the survey.
9. **Analyze the survey data** in a way that will provide the most useful information for making decisions. Sometimes you may want to provide average response scores, at other times you may want to compare responses across multiple questions. Make these decisions based on what is of the most value to the audience who will use the survey results to make decisions.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Implementation Tips

- Pilot test any survey questions with representatives from the target audience.
- If you have diverse audiences, don't try to write one survey that fits all audiences.
- Plan to follow-up with participants who have not completed the survey after a few days to remind them of the importance of their participation.

Tips for writing good survey questions

- Assure a common understanding
- Start with the more interesting questions for the audience
- Don't try to impress participants with big words
- Don't write leading question
- Avoid double negatives or questions with multiple meanings
- Stay focused: don't ask more questions than you require for making decisions
- Put your questions in a logical order (e.g., use sections or topic areas to organize questions)
- Verify that questions make sense for both response columns (or current and desired)
- Don't let your survey get too long (e.g., it should take participants no more than 15 minutes to complete)

WEBSITES

- Good introduction to survey design.

<http://www.mapnp.org/library/evaluatn/questnrs.htm>

- An inexpensive and easy to use survey development and deployment tool.

www.surveymonkey.com