ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT REPORT

2012

Collectif Arc en Ciel

Contents

Introduction

This document presents a report on the Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) exercise that was carried out through a collaboration process by the NGOs TIPA, SAFIRE, Mission Verte, CUT & Collectif Arc en Ciel during the second half of 2012. One of the main objectives of this report is to share with other non-state actors the experience with such an exercise so that others can profit from the benefits that an OCA can produce.

The five NGOs decided to assess their organizational capacity in order to identify strengths and areas for improvement within their organizations. The participation of several NGOs from different fields of intervention (education, rehabilitation, environment, health, stigma and discrimination) brought added value to this pilot exercise and to the analysis process as it provided a broader and more general perspective on the efficiency of NGOs in the dissemination of their services.

The exercise was also an initiative that adds to the efforts of NGO capacity building in Mauritius. In participating in the assessment, the five NGOs are positioning themselves as examples for other organizations on how to strengthen their organizational capacity. Further, the OCA served as a means of networking and cooperation between the participating NGOs.

The document firstly presents an overview of OCA tool and its objectives. In the second section, there is a brief description of how the process was carried out. The third section presents the outcomes of the exercise while the final section concludes by evaluating whether the objectives were met and by proposing recommendations for future exercises of this type. Individual reports were produced by each NGO with a detailed analysis of their own results and are available on demand.

1. Definition & Objectives

The Organizational Capacity Assessment is a tool designed to help non-profit organizations to assess their state of affairs in the different areas of their organization; identifying what is working well (their strengths) and opportunities for improvement. The result of this assessment should be the input of an action plan that will help the organization to improve its effectiveness, and thus enhance its ability to have a more prominent impact in its area of intervention.

It is very important to involve as many parts as possible in the OCA so that more point of views and opinions are taken into consideration in the analysis and evaluation process. Therefore all stakeholders that have an interest in the activities, project, and programme of the organization should take part in it. Among those, it can be cited NGO members and staff, including executive committee (board) members, sponsors, clients, constituencies, partners, collaborators and supporters.

At the same time, the realization of the OCA exercise should be taken as a learning process for all those who participate in the process. By taking part in the OCA, different stakeholders will become aware of the different areas and tasks that an NGO should work on to achieve its mission in the most effective way.

In brief, the main objectives of the present Organizational Capacity Assessment exercise were to:

1. Assess the organizational capacity of the participating organizations
2. Be the input of an Action Plan in order to improve their effectiveness
3. Be an example for other NGOs of how to strength their organizational capacity
4. Serve as a means of networking and cooperation between the participating NGOs

2. Process Description

The assessment sheets used in this OCA exercise have been modified from the template from *setoolbelt*[1] with the indicators (scale) being taken from *Pact World*[2]. In total, three versions of the assessment sheet have been produced (see annexes): Regular version, Simplified version and Children version.

The regular version being very detailed and extensive (163 questions), a simplified version with 45 questions was worked out in order to facilitate the participation of different stakeholders. Each organization had the regular version filled in by their executive committee (board) members and the management and administrative staff. The simplified version was filled in by facilitators/educators/field officers and external stakeholders such sponsors, clients, partners, collaborators and supporters. Both regular and simplified versions were composed of a series of questions that should be rated using the following scale:

0   Not applicable or I don't know.
1   NEVER/DEFINITIVE "NO"
2   RARELY: demonstrated capacity is limited
3   SOMETIMES: capacity evident but lacking in critical areas
4   USUALLY: adequate capacity in most areas
5   OFTEN: good capacity with only minor improvements required
6   ALWAYS/DEFINITIVE "YES": strong capacity

The questionnaire was filled in by participants online or on a hard copy. Some of the participating NGOs conducted group sessions for the filling-in of the questionnaire in order to clarify the questions with participants and also to motivate them during the exercise. It is to be noted however that each participant was asked to fill in their own questionnaire.

Children being at the centre of the action of two of the participating NGOs, it was essential to obtain their feedback on the work carried out with them and on the services offered to them. As a result, TIPA and SAFIRE designed a third version (children version) in order to carry out the assessment with its beneficiaries in a more effective way. The questionnaire was used to identify what the children knew about the organizations and to give them the opportunity to assess the services that are provided to them. Open ended questions were used in the children version in order to facilitate the process and the answers were gathered by means of interviews.

All three versions were divided in seven main areas:

A. **Governance**: questions related to the board (executive committee), mission and goals, organization leadership, and legal status of the organization
B. **Management Practices**: questions related to the organizational structure and culture, planning, programme development and reporting, administrative procedures, risk management, and information systems
C. **Human Resources**: questions related to human resources development and management, and work organization within the NGO
D. **Financial Resources**: questions relate to accounting, budgeting, stock control, financial reporting, and diversification of income base
E. **Service Delivery**: questions related to sectorial expertise, stakeholder commitment and ownership, and assessment of the organization's services
F. **External Relations**: questions related to stakeholder relations, inter-NGO, government and funder collaboration, public relations, and media relations
G. **Sustainability**: questions related to programme/benefit sustainability, and organizational, financial and resource base sustainability of the organization

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[1] http://www.setoolbelt.org/resources/6
[2] http://www.pactworld.org/galleries/resource-center/Intro%20to%20OD%20First%20Edition.pdf

3. Outcomes

After four weeks carrying out the OCA with the different stakeholders, all data from the regular and simplified versions was compiled for a common analysis. Averages were calculated per question and per area and were divided per NGO and also per stakeholder group within each NGO. Finally, an overall average was calculated for each individual NGO.

In general, three evaluations could be done by analysing the data from the regular and simplified versions:

A. Measure the knowledge of the stakeholders in the different areas of the organization

B. Assess the organizational capacity of the organization

C. Measure the satisfaction of different stakeholders regarding several aspects of the organization

While analysis A could be carried out with all the stakeholder groups, analysis B and C didn't present the same level of accuracy for all groups. Some participants answered some questions assuming to know the answer when in fact they didn't know it. In such cases, although we could analyse whether the stakeholders are well informed about that specific question, the organizational capacity of the organization regarding that point was not really being assessed. For example, one of the questions was whether the NGO is registered with the concerned authorities. Although all five participating NGOs are registered, some stakeholders answered that the NGO is not registered. This clearly shows that better communication needs to be done regarding this aspect. However, this should not be interpreted in the sense that lack of capacity exists concerning the registration of the NGO with the concerned authorities. Another example would be the question related to the availability of clear and transparent financial reports. While sponsors could correctly rate this question, other stakeholders that do not receive these reports on a regular basis rated this point as lacking in organizational capacity while the real issue, if any, lays on the communication of such reports to these specific stakeholders.
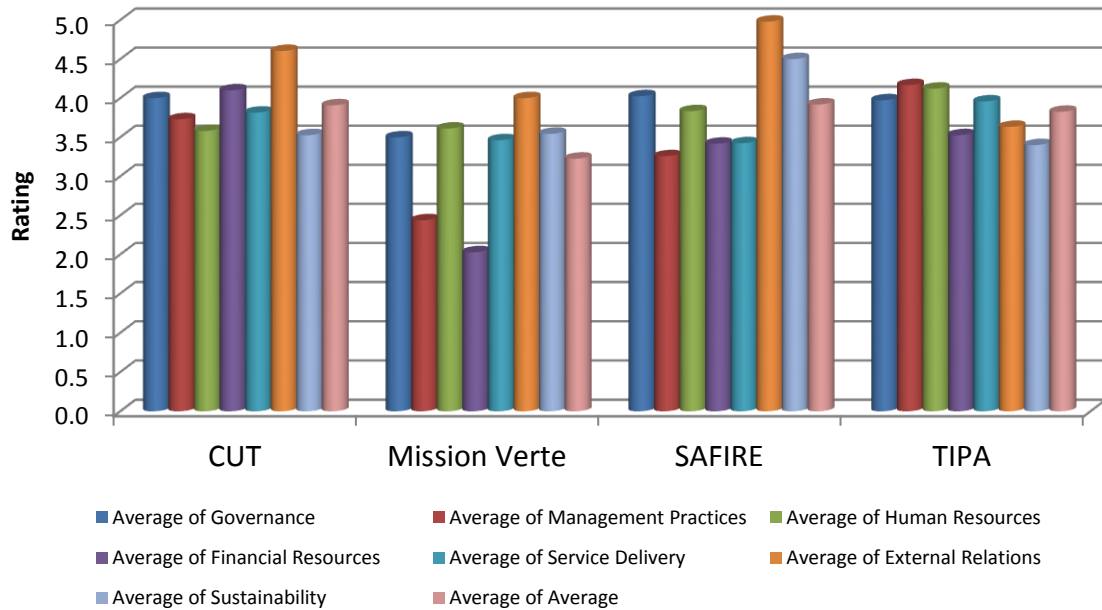
As a result, in order to assess the real organizational capacity of the organizations, we believe that it would be more relevant to use the OCA filled in by the stakeholders that have a deeper knowledge of the organization in general, i.e.: management and administrative team and executive committee (board). Data from other stakeholders, on the other hand, can be used to assess the organizational capacity mainly regarding area E: *Service Delivery*.

Data for the children version was analysed in a different way due to the specificities of this version. The analysis can be found in the individual reports of TIPA and SAFIRE.

The graphs below give an overall view of the ratings per area and per NGO. Figure 1 shows the overall organizational capacity rating per each area in each one of the participating NGO according to the data gathered from the regular versions of the OCA.[3] While all NGOs, with the exception of TIPA, ranked highest in the area of *External Relations*, the areas with lowest raking vary: CUT and TIPA ranked the lowest in *Sustainability*, while Mission Verte ranked the lowest in *Financial Resources*, and SAFIRE, in *Management Practices*. TIPA highest ranking according to this version was in the area of *Management Practices*.
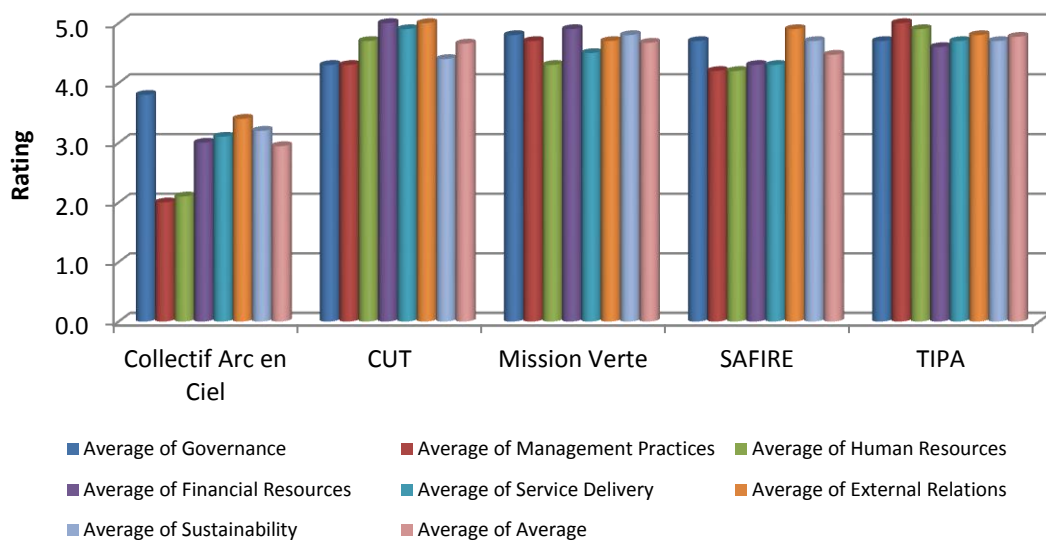
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[3] At the moment of the analysis, Collectif Arc en Ciel had not finalized the OCA with all their stakeholders.

Figure 1: REGULAR VERSION – Overall Analysis

Legend:
- Average of Governance
- Average of Management Practices
- Average of Human Resources
- Average of Financial Resources
- Average of Service Delivery
- Average of External Relations
- Average of Sustainability
- Average of Average

From figure 2 it can be seen that the data gathered from the simplified versions show that the highest ranking areas were *Governance* for Collectif Arc en Ciel, *Financial Resources for CUT and Mission Verte, External Relations* for CUT and SAFIRE, and *Management Practices* for TIPA. While, the lowest raking areas were *Management Practices* for Collectif Art En Ciel[4], CUT and SAFIRE, *Governance* for CUT, *Human Resources* for Mission Verte and *SAFIRE, and Financial Resources* for TIPA.

Figure 2: SIMPLIFIED VERSION – Overall Analysis

Legend:
- Average of Governance
- Average of Management Practices
- Average of Human Resources
- Average of Financial Resources
- Average of Service Delivery
- Average of External Relations
- Average of Sustainability
- Average of Average

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[4] Collectif Arc en Ciel had only one participant for the simplified version of the OCA at the time this report was written.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

As it can be observed in the previous section, it's difficult to draw any general observations for the overall situation of NGOs in Mauritius regarding their organizational capacity. While it can be said that most of the NGOs have a high raking in the area of *External Relations*, the areas that need attention and improvement vary from NGO to NGO and need to be further analysed in a detailed report. The main objective of the current report being to evaluate the OCA exercise as a whole, rather than the results of each NGO, this section will rather focus on the achievements of the objectives of the exercise as well as recommendations for future exercise of this type.

Indeed, it can be said that the present OCA has been a fruitful exercise and has achieved its four main objectives. Firstly, it provided the participating NGOs with important information and insights on areas that need improvement within their organizations and it also pin pointed their strengths so that they can capitalize on them. It further provided important information for adjustments of their activities, programme and processes. Secondly, it brought awareness to many within the organizations of the tasks that they should engage in as NGOs that seek to improve their impact on their beneficiaries, serving therefore as a learning tool. Furthermore, it represented an important initiative in the area of non-state actor capacity building in Mauritius and it was also a great opportunity to enhance and improve the cooperation between the participating organizations which could exchange best practises in different organizational areas. The exercise was also the first opportunity for cooperation between some of the NGOs and opened the doors for other collaborations – some of which have already started. Lastly, the OCA showed to the participating NGOs that better communication should be done regarding different aspects of the functioning of their organizations to different stakeholders.

The participating NGOs intend to carry out such an exercise once a year in order to evaluate the progress in the areas that need their attention and also to continue monitoring their overall organizational capacity. The idea is also to invite more NGOs in future exercises. It will be interesting and productive to compare results and share best practises between NGOs working in the same area of intervention.

In order to increase the effectiveness of the process and improve its yield, three recommendations are put forward:

1. A different set of questions should be worked out for each one of the stakeholder groups in order to better reflect their specificities. As a result, relevant answers will be gathered from all the questionnaires filled in as the participants will be asked questions for which they have knowledge. In this way, their feedback and views will be better evaluated and will help analyse areas of strengths and weaknesses with regards to aspects by which they are directly concerned. Moreover, the number of questions for the simplified version should be reviewed as 45 questions seem to make the questionnaire too long for many of the participants of the exercise.

2. A space for free comments should be added to each question so that additional information can be given in case of need. This will add an important qualitative aspect to the OCA and will enable participants to complement their answers, giving better accuracy to the analysis and evaluation process.

3. For some of the groups, it could be better if the questions would be discussed in group. In this way, there would be a single answer per group which could measure the real capacity of an NGO for a certain point rather than measuring how informed people are about the subject. Moreover, by doing the exercise in group, the goal of the OCA to be a learning tool would be achieved in its full potentiality as the lack of knowledge about some issues would be addressed on the spot.

Annexes

OCA Regular Version

A	GOVERNANCE
1	**Board**
a	Board provides overall policy direction and oversight
b	Board provides accountability and credibility
c	Board is capable of carrying out key roles such as policy formulation, fund raising, public relations, financial oversight and lobbying
d	Board is composed of committed members who represent the varied interests of the stakeholders.
e	Mechanisms are in place for the board to obtain appropriate input from stakeholders
f	Board executes its role of advocate for the community
2	**Mission/goals**
a	NGO has clearly articulated mission/goals
b	NGO' s mission is understood by all the stakeholders
c	Strategies are aligned with mission
d	Strategies take the form of clear objective statements as to how they can be achieved
e	Implementation plans are jointly developed by senior management, staff and other appropriate stakeholders
3	**Legal status**
a	NGO is registered according to relevant legislation
b	NGO benefits from the best financial and legal status permissible under the Mauritian law
4	**Stakeholders**
a	NGO is able to identify key stakeholders
b	There is recognition of the stakeholders as partners
c	Feedback from users and other stakeholders is integrated into the planning process
d	Stakeholders are involved in the review of NGO' s mission and strategies
5	**Leadership**
a	Board and senior management have a clear understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities as providers of overall direction
b	Leadership style of senior management is participatory
c	Senior management is accountable to key stakeholders
d	Leadership is accessible to all stakeholders
B	**MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

1	**Organizational structure and culture**
a	NGO has an organizational structure with clearly defined lines of authority and responsibility
b	Management policies are in place to ensure regular audits of organizational development
c	Management policies reflect legal and constitutional provisions on equity as defined in the Constitution
d	Evaluation processes are in place to check the coherence between mission and operating culture (the way NGO operates)
e	Systems are in place to ensure appropriate involvement of all levels of staff in decision making
f	NGO has policies and procedures in place to ensure accountability to key stakeholders
2	**Planning**
a	Inputs from appropriate stakeholders are taken into account during planning
b	Implementation plans reflect a strategic plan
c	Implementation plans are updated
d	Resources are planned for and allocated properly.
e	Flexibility exists to adjust plans as a result of the monitoring process.
3	**Personnel**
a	Selection criteria for staff are in place
b	Recruitment process is clearly defined
c	Recruitment processes are transparent and competitive
d	Job descriptions are clearly defined
e	Staff is deployed according to job descriptions
f	Management encourages mutual respect among staff
g	Recourse procedures for staff exist (complain mechanism).
4	**Program development**
a	Stakeholders and staff are involved in program design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation
b	Program design incorporates monitoring, evaluation and reporting activities
c	Program modifications reflect use of monitoring, evaluation and reporting findings
5	**Administrative procedures**
a	Administrative procedures and manual exist
b	Administrative procedures are adhered to
c	Procedures and operating manuals are updated
6	**Risk management**
a	Systems are in place to minimize misuse of resources of the organization.
b	Regular audit of inventory is conducted

c	Annual external audit reports include a review of management practices
d	Recommendations on management practices in annual external audit reports are implemented
7	**Information systems**
a	Systems exist to collect, analyze and report data and information.
b	Trained personnel are in place to manage information systems.
c	Systems are used to process, disseminate and solicit feedback of information.
8	**Program reporting**
a	NGO has the ability to produce appropriate reports.
b	NGO regularly prepares activity reports.
c	NGO regularly prepares evaluation reports.
d	NGO publishes and disseminates information on its operations.
e	Report formats are flexible, varied and respond to stakeholder information requirements.
C	**HUMAN RESOURCES**
1	**Human resources development**
a	Human resources development planning is in place
b	Staff training is based on capacity, needs and strategic objectives.
c	Opportunities exist to integrate skills acquired in training into the work environment.
d	Job appraisals are performance based and fair
e	Job promotions are performance based and equitable
f	Personnel policies reflect legal and constitutional provisions on equity
2	**Human resources management**
a	Job descriptions are documented and updated
b	Job descriptions are respected
c	Clearly established links exist between staff capacity and the NGO mission.
d	Salaries are clearly structured and competitive
e	Other benefits policy is documented and implemented
f	NGO conforms to standard tax and labour regulations and requirements.
g	Supervision occurs on a regular basis.
h	Grievance and conflict resolution procedures are used when necessary.
i	Health and safety policy is in place
3	**Work organization**
a	Staff meetings are held regularly.

b	Staff participates in management decisions.
c	Team work is encouraged
d	Information is shared freely among all staff members.
e	Staff are encouraged to take initiative and be self-motivated
4	**Diversity**
a	Diversity of the community is reflected in the composition of the board and staff
D	**FINANCIAL RESOURCES**
1	**Accounting**
a	Financial procedures and reporting systems are in place
b	Account categories exist for separating project funds.
2	**Budgeting**
a	Budgeting process is integrated into annual implementation plans.
b	Financial unit responsible for the preparation, management and implementation of the annual budget exists.
c	Annual financial projections are made
d	Annual budget is implemented.
e	Budget is controlled on an ongoing basis.
3	**Stock control.**
a	Stock control systems exist
b	Stock controls are followed
c	Procurement systems are in place
d	Procurement systems are being used
e	Internal audits are conducted on a regular basis.
f	External audits are conducted on a regular basis.
g	Expenses by sector are controlled
4	**Financial reporting**
a	Annual financial report is prepared by a registered firm of auditors.
b	Report includes a balance sheet.
c	Report includes attachments.
d	Report is reviewed by the fiscal committee of the board
e	Report is used for planning and review purposes.
f	Annual financial report is published and disseminated
5	**Diversification of income base**

a	NGO has multiple funders.
b	A cost recovery/income generation plan is in place
c	NGO has the ability to tender for contracts.
d	NGO has a strategy to diversify funding sources.
E	**SERVICE DELIVERY**
1	**Sectoral expertise**
a	Relevant sectoral expertise exists within the organization.
b	Expertise is recognized by the full range of stakeholders.
c	NGO is capable of adapting program and service delivery to changing needs of stakeholders.
2	**Stakeholder commitment/ownership**
a	Program priorities are based on actual need
b	Program priorities and services are defined in collaboration with stakeholders.
c	Programs are efficient, adequate, cost effective and timely.
3	**Assessment**
a	There is a collaborative development of indicators together with concerned stakeholders.
b	Indicators have been identified for each program objective
c	Baseline and impact data are analysed regularly.
d	Results of impact evaluations are used to make adjustments to the program
e	Results are disseminated as appropriate/relevant.
4	**Marketing and awareness building**
a	Programs are actively marketed to stakeholders.
b	Organization actively educates and builds awareness among stakeholders.
F	**EXTERNAL RELATIONS**
1	**Stakeholder relations**
a	NGO is seen as credible by stakeholders.
b	NGO is seen as a valuable resource by stakeholders.
c	NGO-stakeholder relationship is one of partnership for a common purpose
2	**Inter-NGO collaboration**
a	NGO networks and shares resources with national and international NGOs.
b	NGO plays a role in promoting coalitions/networks.
c	NGO participates in advocacy activities.
3	**Government collaboration**

a	NGO has contacts with decision makers.
b	NGO is able to engage policy makers in dialogue
c	Exchange of resources occurs between NGO and government.
d	NGO activities and recommendations are integrated into government's development plans.
4	**Funder collaboration**
a	NGO has diversified contacts within the funding community.
b	NGO is seen as credible by funders.
c	NGO is seen as a valuable resource by funders.
d	NGO has opportunity to engage in open and frank dialogue with funders.
5	**Public relations**
a	NGO engages in public relations.
b	NGOs objectives and goals are understood by stakeholders.
c	NGO has a positive image among stakeholders.
d	Information is disseminated on the NGOs activities.
6	**Local resources**
a	NGO has relations with the private sector for technical expertise, material and/or human resources.
b	NGO participates in community partnerships.
c	Structures are in place to facilitate working relations between NGO and civil society.
7	**Media**
a	NGO has a strategy to work with the media
b	NGO has attracted positive media attention.
c	Media consults the NGO on relevant issues.
G	**SUSTAINABILITY**
1	**Program/benefit sustainability**
a	Programs are supported by those being served.
b	Sense of ownership of benefits by the community.
c	Program activities can continue due to changes in community.
d	NGO has developed systems for continuation of its program in the medium and long-term.
e	NGO has developed programmatic phasing-out strategies.
f	NGO ensures that skills transfer takes place
3	**Organizational sustainability**
a	NGO has a shared vision of its role in society.

b	NGO is a member of key NGO networks.
c	NGO shares information in a proactive manner.
d	NGO participates in advocacy to influence the direction of change
e	NGO has linkages with international NGOs, education institutions, government entities, research institutes, civic institutions and the private sector.
f	NGO has capacity to review structures in response to organizational development needs.
g	NGO is aware of legislation affecting the NGO sector.
h	NGO influences NGO-enabling environment.
3	**Financial sustainability**
a	NGO has the ability to access diversified resources to contribute to its activities.
b	NGO has a fee for services and/or other cost recovery mechanisms built into service delivery where appropriate
c	NGO has a fund raising strategy.
d	NGO has capacity to implement the fund raising strategy.
e	Local fund raising opportunities have been identified
f	NGO has capacity to develop proposals and respond to tenders.
4	**Resource base sustainability**
a	Local resource base has been identified
b	Resource diversification plan is in action.
c	Plans to access additional resources to finance activities exist.

OCA Simplified Version

A	GOVERNANCE
a	Board is capable of carrying out key roles such as policy formulation, fund raising, public relations, financial oversight and lobbying.
b	NGO has clearly articulated mission/goals and they are understood by all the stakeholders.
c	NGO is registered according to relevant legislation.
d	Feedback from users and other stakeholders is integrated into the planning process & stakeholders are involved in the review of NGO's mission and strategies.
e	Senior management is accountable to key stakeholders and Leadership is accessible to all stakeholders.
B	MANAGEMENT PRACTICES
a	NGO has an organizational structure with clearly defined lines of authority and responsibility.
b	NGO has policies and procedures in place to ensure accountability to key stakeholders.
c	Stakeholders and staff are involved in program design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
d	Systems are in place to minimize misuse of resources of the organization and organizational abuses.
e	Recruitment processes are clearly defined, transparent and competitive.
f	NGO regularly prepares and disseminates activity and evaluation reports which respond to stakeholder information requirements.
C	HUMAN RESOURCES
a	Clearly established links exist between staff capacity and skills and the NGO mission.
b	Supervision occurs on a regular basis.
c	Human resources development planning is in place and staff training is based on capacity, needs and strategic objectives.
d	Staff meetings are held regularly.
e	Staff participates in management decisions.
f	Diversity of the community is reflected in the composition of the board and staff.
D	FINANCIAL RESOURCES
A	Financial procedures and reporting systems are in place.
B	Audits are conducted on a regular basis.
C	Annual financial report is prepared and disseminated.
d	NGO has multiple funders.
E	SERVICE DELIVERY
a	Relevant sectorial expertise exists within the organization.
b	NGO is capable of adapting program and service delivery to changing needs of stakeholders.
c	Program priorities are based on actual field needs, and program priorities and services are defined in collaboration with stakeholders.

d	Programs are efficient, adequate, cost effective and timely.
e	There is a collaborative development of indicators together with concerned stakeholders.
f	Programs are actively marketed to stakeholders.
F	**EXTERNAL RELATIONS**
a	NGO is seen as credible and as a valuable resource by stakeholders.
b	NGO networks and shares resources with national and international NGOs.
c	Exchange of resources occurs between NGO and government.
d	NGO-stakeholder relationship is one of partnership for a common purpose.
e	NGO engages in public relations.
f	NGO participates in community partnerships.
g	NGO has attracted positive media attention.
G	**SUSTAINABILITY**
a	Programs are supported by those being served.
b	There is a sense of ownership of benefits by the community.
c	NGO ensures that skills transfer takes place.
d	NGO shares information in a proactive manner.
e	NGO has the ability to access diversified resources to contribute to its activities.

OCA Children Version

A	GOVERNANCE
a	Do you know why the facilitator comes to work with you? Why?
b	Does the TIPA staff listen to what you have to say? In what way?
B	MANAGEMENT PRACTICES
a	Does the TIPA staff take into consideration your demands and needs? How?
C	HUMAN RESOURCES
a	Do you think the facilitators know their work well? Why do you say so?
D	FINANCIAL RESOURCES
a	Do you know who gives the money needed to TIPA to carry out the activities? Who?
E	SERVICE DELIVERY
a	Does the facilitator sometimes ask you what activities you would like to do? Give an example.
b	Are you satisfied with the activities proposed by the facilitator? Why? Does the facilitator propose the same activities to you all the time?
c	What would you like the facilitator to improve in his/her programme?
F	EXTERNAL RELATIONS
a	Do you know other organisations like TIPA? Which ones?
G	SUSTAINABILITY
a	Do you wish for the facilitator to continue working with you? Why?