What is an Organizational Needs Assessment?

A systematic exploration of your organization’s and/or program’s performance
ONA can be helpful . . .

- Prior to embarking on a strategic plan
- During high stress & challenges
- When engaging in org develop consult
- Prior to an executive search
- Prior to the development of a new program
Findings from the ONA

• Can be used to identify key organizational needs
  - Thus supporting effective planning and implementation of appropriate internal capacity building activities
A Monitoring Framework

For organizations to measure its progress and development over time
An Holistic Approach...

• Looking at the whole organization
  - How its different parts inter-relates

• An effective way to identify developmental priorities which are not always obvious in the midst of day-to-day work pressures
Levels of Awareness

- Insight on the stages of development of the organization
- Organization’s strengths & weaknesses related to its development stage
- Compare organization against general practices for high functioning standards
An ONA is Essential

In strengthening the capacity of an organization to move effectively in achieving their mission and goals.
And . . .

An essential part of an internal capacity building process that helps an organization take charge of its own development
Drafting Your Course . . .
Framework that Drives Organization’s Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External Environment</th>
<th>Organization Capacity</th>
<th>Organization Motivation</th>
<th>Organization Performance</th>
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</table>
Four Markers . . .

1. “GAP” Analysis
2. Identify Causes of Performance Problems and/or Opportunities
3. Identify Priorities & Importance
4. Identify Possible Solutions & Growth Opportunities
## Organization’s Performance Format

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<tr>
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<td>Political</td>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>Efficiency</td>
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<td>HR</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Relevance</td>
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<td>Financial</td>
<td>Incentives &amp; Rewards</td>
<td>Financial Viability</td>
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<td>Stakeholder</td>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
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<td>Inter-org links</td>
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Methods & Analysis
ONA Techniques

- Questionnaires
- Direct Observations
- Consult with persons in key positions or with specific knowledge
- Review of literature
- Interviews
- Focus Groups
- Tests
- Records & Report Reviews
- Work Samples
Assessment Tool Domains

- Org Infrastructure
- Fiscal System
- Marketing/PR
- CBA & Training Needs
- Community Involvement
- HIV/AIDS & Substance use

- Org Description
- Board of Directors
- Fund Development
- HIV Prevention & Care Programs
- HIV-Positive Individuals
- HIV/AIDS & Stigma
An Inquiring Mind . . .

1. Problems or deficits
2. Impending changes
3. Opportunities
4. Strengths
5. New directions
6. Mandates - internal or external
Identify Causes of Performance Problems & Opportunities

• Requires detailed assessment & analysis of organizational infrastructure:
  - Board of Directors
  - Administration
  - Human Resources
  - Programs
“Gap Analysis”

The Difference

Checking actual performance against existing standards, or to set new standards

• Current Situation:
  - The organizational goals, climate, & internal & external constraints
“Gap Analysis”

The Difference

• Desired or Necessary Situation:
  - Identify desired or necessary conditions for org/program success.
  - Also looking at Job Tasks & Standards
  - Identify critical tasks necessary - not just current practices
  - Distinguish actual needs from perceived needs, wants
Identify Priorities & Importance... 
“looking at the findings”

• Examine in view if their importance match the organization’s:
  - Goals, realities, & constraints

• Are the needs real, worth addressing, have importance/urgency in view of the organization’s needs & requirements
ASSESSMENT TOOL
ASSESSMENT TOOL

ACTIVITY...

• DOMAINS
  - Program Demographics (all groups)
  - Organization Resources
  - Organizational Capacity
  - Fiscal Management & Resource Devel
  - Community Capacity & Collaboration
  - HIV Prevention Community Planning
SWOT

STRENGTHS

WEAKNESSES

OPPORTUNITIES

THREATS
Assessing Your Organization’s Objectives and Needs
Stages of Organization’s Readiness...

Embryonic - Little awareness of recognition of the need to take a strategic approach to planning.
Stages of Organization’s Readiness...

**Developing** - Little recognition of the need to take a strategic approach. Individual staff may have strategic thinking and planning capabilities but they are not identified or used.
Moderately Developed - Recognition of the need to take a strategic approach. A few/some staff has strategic thinking and planning capabilities but they are not used by the organization in guiding its conservation work.
Stages of Organization’s Readiness...

Well-developed - Organization is trying to take a strategic approach. Some staff has strategic thinking and planning capabilities but they are not used to their maximum potential by the Organization.
Stages of Organization’s Readiness...

Exemplary- Organization takes a strategic approach. Some staff has strategic thinking and planning capabilities and these are valued and used.
Things to ponder on...

- Actual needs are not always the same as perceived needs, or wants

- Look for what is really needed - people may not know what is really needed, but have strong opinions about what they want
More to ponder on...

• The difference between the cost of a proposed solution against the cost of not implementing the solution
  - What are the cost if no solution is applied
  - What are the costs of conducting activities to change a situation?
Resources

- ENHANCING ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE - A Toolbox for Self-assessment by the International Development Research Centre
- Non-profit Organizational Assessment Tool
- Organizational Self-Assessment Tool by the Technical Assistance for Community Services
- Organization Assessment Guide - Canadian International Development Agency
- NGO Manager - Organizational Assessment Tool
The Office of Minority Health Resource Center

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Or fill out our online form

To request publications, articles, and database searches on minority health topics, call us toll free at 1-800-444-6472

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