

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS REGARDING IMPLEMENTATION OF CAPACITY INITIATIVES

QUESTIONS

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This annex contains supporting information to **Parts I and II** of the guidelines dealing with “How to Get There.” The development of an implementation strategy for a capacity initiative invariably begs some questions. The questions could equally apply to starting any major initiative, including a preliminary capacity assessment itself. In all cases, judgement and common sense are required in order to set the right parameters around any capacity assessment/development process, or the development of implementation strategies.

1.0 WHO PREPARES THE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY?

As noted at the outset of these guidelines, it is the government entity, national organisation or other formal or informal entity responsible for the capacity initiative that must develop the implementation strategy. Ownership must be vested with those that must implement the capacity initiative and live with the results. The process of developing the strategy would optimally be participatory and consultative, involving as much as possible all parties who would have a stake in the process and the outcomes. This participation can be secured in a number of ways, as discussed throughout these guidelines. The UNDP and other donors may be engaged to support the development of the strategy through a formal project or programme documents, or through other forms of preparatory assistance.

2.0 WHAT DOES AN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY LOOK LIKE?

Every initiative strategy, while obviously very unique and different, can be presented in a similar format and will ultimately take the form of a document. Invariably, the final document will include both the “what” and “how” components of the capacity initiative and will be the basis for decisionmaking, implementation, monitoring and control, and evaluation. All relevant capacity issues are addressed in the implementation strategy.

There does not need to be a major distinctions in general format or structure between the systems and the entity level implementation strategies. Although separate documents may be prepared, they can generally follow a similar documentation structure

Documented implementation strategies can generally follow a similar format, whether developed for the initiative as a whole at a systems level, or for each major entity closely involved with the implementation of the initiative. Furthermore, lower-level strategies can be developed for subsystems within systems, for subprogrammes within a programme, as well as for suborganisational units within entities.

At the end of this annex we have included: a high level capacity development strategy for a public administration reform initiative (which addresses capacities at the systems, entity and individual levels); and a pro-forma table of contents of what an implementation strategy for a major capacity assessment/ development implementation initiative might contain. The results of the capacity assessments at each stage of the strategic management life cycle are documented in a logical sequence. The chapter on implementation strategy (how to get there) is the core of the document as all necessary information on the envisaged implementation is contained here. Other chapters cover management, setting up of internal team structures, coordination with donors, resource mobilisation and the like. This general format can also be adapted to those entities that would also develop their own implementation strategies directly in support of the initiative.

3.0 HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO DEVELOP?

This is not an easy question to answer. A national organisation would normally set up a formal project to develop the implementation strategy (or one for an entity) as it would for carrying out analyses during any of the previous life-cycle assessments. As with any project, there would be time-quality-cost parameters. Time would depend on the planned quality of the target document (and this is based on the scope of the envisaged capacity initiative, availability of and access to information, number of parties and individuals that would need to be involved in the process) and the resources that are available to carry out the work. The development of a capacity development implementation strategy may take anywhere from a several weeks (for a small, narrowly focussed entity) to several months or more (for a complex, multi-sectoral systems level initiative).

The common management errors made in development of such strategies either fall into: (1) over-simplifying the process and doing it too quickly, thereby rendering a poor quality product; or (2) carrying out excessive analysis or going into too much detail, which protracts and adds costs to the process. These are common mistakes and usually result in a failed attempt to produce the right document at the right time. Determining the right amount of time to develop a quality product requires careful "project" planning.

4.0 WHAT AUDIENCES ARE THE STRATEGY DOCUMENT PREPARED FOR?

Prime Audience

- ▲ **political decision makers** (ministers, legislative assemblies)
- ▲ **senior government executives and managers responsible for implementation**
- ▲ **internal funding entities** (e.g., ministries of finance, economics, etc.)
- ▲ **external funding entities** (such as multi-lateral and bilateral donor organisations, the IMF/World Bank, private sector sources)
- ▲ **primary client community for the initiative** (or typically their representatives)
- ▲ **cooperating entities** (e.g., other ministries, levels of government on whom implementation success will depend)
- ▲ **other implementors of the initiative** (all staff that will be a key part of the implementation process)

This is another often asked question, or in some cases not asked at all. It is nonetheless important to know for whom the implementation strategy document is to be prepared. There will likely be multiple audiences, each with a different interest in its development. The audiences of the strategy document are not always the same as the stakeholders for the envisaged capacity initiative, however.

The produced strategy document would normally only be prepared for a **prime audience** of decision makers and other key parties that would be seen to be critical to approval and support, as noted in the box.

The implementation strategy may be prepared for other **secondary audiences** who, although not critical to the implementation process, may facilitate it. These might include: other national and government entities; the general public (or selected communities in the civil society); media organisations; and policy research and academic organisations. This raises the point that different versions of the

same document might be prepared for different audiences. For example, it is unlikely that the general public or media organisations would want all of the detail that is contained in the full implementation strategy. In these cases a higher level summary or synopsis would suffice.

5.0 ARE THERE OTHER REASONS TO DEVELOP THE STRATEGY?

Up to this point, the message has been given that it is the **product** (the capacity development implementation strategy) that is of prime concern. While this is true, the **process** in developing the outputs of each stage of the initiative, and especially the implementation strategy, is very important. Certain process related reasons add to the need to develop the implementation strategy:

- ▲ the process forces the system (its players) and the key entities themselves to take an objective, unemotional and critical look at themselves in its entirety.

- ▲ the process can be used as a means of **communicating** ideas and concepts to others, to expand awareness and understanding of the initiative, resulting in a greater likelihood of acceptance and buy-in and eventual successful implementation.
- ▲ the process is often a good forum to resolve organisational and/or inter-personal **conflicts** which might otherwise continue.
- ▲ the process is an excellent means of “**team-building**” for those that must manage and implement the initiative.
- ▲ the process provides excellent opportunities for broader **participation** of all stakeholders, to secure their inputs through consultation and consensus-building.
- ▲ the process can be applied to address other **sensitive issues** (e.g., “neutralizing” a particular view or pressure which might otherwise take the initiative in the wrong direction, or serve personal ambitions at the expense of the broader community or good).

6.0 HOW IS THE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS STARTED?

Once the mission and concept for the capacity initiative has been accepted, there is a serious intent to implement. Implementation depends on the development of sound strategy and action plans. The development of the strategy is not a trivial task, and should be approached in a managed and controlled manner. This means that a team must be set up, authorities and resources provided and formal approval mechanisms instituted. The box on the right provides an indication of actions that might be taken to start the process of strategy development. The degree to which these actions are taken is indicative of the level of commitment that the government or national organisation has. Each country and national organisation will have its own culture, constraints and realities. Efforts must be made to adapt an appropriate process to existing capacities and capabilities.

Key Actions to Start the Capacity Strategy Development and Implementation Process

- ▲ **Issuance of a decree or some other edict which formally establishes it**
- ▲ **Setting up of a high level steering or coordination committee**
- ▲ **Develop an action and resourcing plan for developing the strategy**
- ▲ **Establishment of a high level initiative management team and positions**
- ▲ **Staffing the executive position with a qualified and credible individual**
- ▲ **Staffing other positions with qualified staff**
- ▲ **Establishing a coordination mechanism**
- ▲ **Select and adapt appropriate methodologies**
- ▲ **Design the strategy “target document”**
- ▲ **Other actions as needed**

7.0 HOW IS THE STRATEGY PROCESS MANAGED AND CONTROLLED?

Important Do's and Don'ts

DO:

- ▲ Clearly set priorities
- ▲ Manage risk and expectations
- ▲ Use as a means to team-build
- ▲ Use to establish initiative identity
- ▲ Use for awareness and education
- ▲ Flush our champions
- ▲ Be participatory & consultative

DON'T:

- ▲ Bite off more than can be chewed
- ▲ Ignore the detractors
- ▲ Fall into the detail trap
- ▲ Mismanage expectations
- ▲ Get into motherhood and rhetoric
- ▲ Ignore any other risk

Starting the process, noted above, gives a good idea as to how the process should be managed. In many cross-sectoral transformational capacity initiatives (e.g., governance), a programme management team is "institutionalized" at a high and central level of government, with coordinating subunits at decentralized levels. Typically, such units may take on "ministerial" or "secretary" rank, reporting to a Prime Minister, a senior minister, cabinet, or a national assembly. Again, much depends on the local situation and the political profile that the envisaged initiative might have. For example, institutionalized teams might take on such titles as: **change management unit**, **programme support unit**, **programme coordination office**, etc. It is key that such units have formally established mandates and authorities. As a possible "start-up" unit, it is often beneficial to develop a "business plan" which sets out the unit's mission, objectives, activities, resourcing, monitoring and control mechanisms and the like.

In addition to basic programme management and coordination functions, other important capacities include: resource mobilisation and resource management (budgeting, control), quality management, communications and public relations, monitoring and evaluation.

AN EXAMPLE OF A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY (PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM)

KEY OUTCOMES	SOME SPECIFIC "FUTURE" INDICATORS
SOUND GOVERNANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ greater transparency of government operations ▲ greater accountability of government institutions and managers ▲ restructuring of machinery of government ▲ redefined role of government ▲ alternative, more cost-effective delivery of government service
STRONG SUPPORT TO MARKET ECONOMY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ enabling legal infrastructure and regulatory framework ▲ government as a provider of enabling policies and services, not producer ▲ integration and coordination of economic policy ▲ promotion of internal and external trade and investment ▲ alliances and partnerships with business and organisations
LOW COST OF GOVERNMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ short term reductions in expenditures ▲ sale of non-producing government assets ▲ consolidation of common internal services ▲ redeployment and rebalancing of the civil service
HIGH LEVELS OF EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ move to client service and service delivery culture ▲ performance measurement and programme evaluation ▲ decentralisation, organisational renewal ▲ training and development, increased morale ▲ increased delegations that let "managers manage"
HIGH LEVEL OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND CONTROL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ new budgeting and expenditure management systems ▲ better systems of accounting and audit ▲ delegations of authority and clear-cut accountability structures ▲ business plans for all major operations
IMPROVED CREDIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ stronger communications and public relations ▲ increased understanding of the role of government ▲ well defined mission and vision for government ▲ greater public participation

PRO-FORMA STRUCTURE OF A CAPACITY IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- ▲ Overview of the Programme
- ▲ National Priorities and Constraints
- ▲ Programme Management Methodology

Capacity Assessments are summarized here

SITUATION ASSESSMENT

- ▲ Overview
- ▲ Major Needs and Change Processes
- ▲ Major Strengths and Weaknesses
- ▲ Major Opportunities and Risks
- ▲ Evaluation of Alternative Future Scenarios

Capacity Needs are summarized here

MISSION

- ▲ Overview—Mission and Vision
- ▲ Principal Stakeholders
- ▲ Measures of Achievement—Outcomes
- ▲ Guiding Principles
- ▲ Management Values

Capacity Needs can be summarized here

OBJECTIVES

- ▲ Overview
- ▲ Description of Objectives and Supporting Actions
- ▲ Legal and Regulatory Environment
- ▲ Linkages to National Priorities
- ▲ Key Stakeholders and Other Participants

Capacity building and strengthening is detailed here

IMPLEMENTATION

- ▲ Implementation Approach
- ▲ Planning Horizon and Priorities
- ▲ Planning Assumptions
- ▲ Factors Critical to Success
- ▲ Methodologies
- ▲ Programme Activity Framework

PRO-FORMA STRUCTURE OF A CAPACITY IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY (CONTINUED)

- ▲ Master Schedule and Description of Phases
 - Who Does What
 - Phases—Activities—Outputs—Accountabilities
- ▲ Programme Management and Team Structure
- ▲ Communications and Public Relations
- ▲ Coordinating Mechanisms
- ▲ Donor Participation and Coordination
- ▲ Documentation and Information Management
- ▲ Review and Approval Processes
- ▲ Performance: Monitoring, Control and Evaluation
- ▲ Fall-back and Contingency Plans
- ▲ Programme Sustainability
- ▲ Outstanding Issues

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- ▲ Budget Requirements and Forecasts
- ▲ Sources of Funds and other Resources
- ▲ Resource Mobilisation
- ▲ Expenditure Management Plan and Accounting

BUSINESS CASE

ANNEXES

Explicit cross-references to UNDP and other inputs detailed here