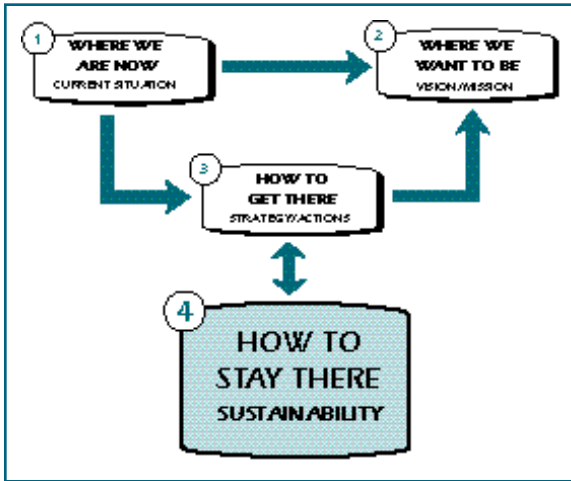


7.1 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?



THIS CHAPTER discusses the important considerations of sustainability—what happens after a capacity initiative has been implemented.

A main question to be asked once a capacity initiative has been implemented is: **what happens next?** This is a good question. Some initiatives take on a continuing life of their own, and are institutionalised somewhere within the system, usually in the lead entity. Other initiatives break apart with its constituent pieces rolling into ongoing or routine operations of the various entities that implemented the capacity development changes.

A danger in many situations lies in the **over-bureaucratisation** of the capacity initiative which, as an organisational entity, becomes a permanent fixture of the land-

scape—it takes on a life of its own, continuing to be dependent on substantial (and invariably, external) resources. As such, it may become resistant to further change and eventually unsustainable. Therefore, an important part of the capacity planning process is to determine how the initiative (its mission, objectives, outcomes) can become sustainable, how it can remain relevant by responding to changes in the system as and when they occur, and how it would no longer need external assistance.

This becomes the challenge of **sustaining capacities** at the different levels within the overall system, across the different dimensions within the key entities, and with individuals that will continue to be part of new situation created by the capacity development initiative. A great deal of research has been carried out on this subject, and there is ample literature available in the public domain. This subsection of the guidelines highlights some of the key mechanisms that can be put in place to ensure that the “new situation” and associated capacities can be sustained.

In the discussions that follow, there is not always a very clear line of distinction between the systems and entity levels, or between the entity and individual levels. In fact, in sustaining capacity outcomes and the overall new system or future which has been achieved, it is important to see that the boundaries of systems, entities and individuals overlap considerably. Many of the techniques, methodologies and concepts associated with sustainability are applicable at all levels, although some are more appropriate at one level as opposed to another. However, for the sake of presentation, these are nonetheless grouped according to the perspectives of three levels.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY: FROM A SYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE

The greatest investments made during the capacity development implementation stage are at primarily the entity and individual levels. If a situation can be achieved whereby entities and individuals can embrace a process of gradual change—enough to keep up to and meet changes within the overall system (or enabling environment), and require only marginal resources that can be generated from within the system—then it might be said that the system and its constituent entities have become stable and sustainable (a sort of dynamic equilibrium). And in this context, if they are sustainable, they then continue to be relevant, meeting (or supporting the meeting of) goals, the ongoing objectives and its stakeholders, and ultimately sustainable human development.

- ▲ **Strategic Management and Sustainability**
- ▲ **Governance and Sustainability**
- ▲ **Systems Level Teamwork & Coordination**

[1] Strategic Management and Sustainability

Sustainability in a systems context can be assured in the first instance through the institutionalisation of **strategic management** with its supporting capacities at two levels: (1) at a systems level that continues to maintain or update the overall policy framework (e.g., a central agency of government, or a central policy ministry), and (2) at each major entity level within the system. Strategic management is in effect the strategic management life cycle which continues in a dynamic, continuous way, rather than being done every few years.

Many of the activities identified in Chapter 4 would be carried out on a routine basis or as and when circumstances warrant. Assessing the current situation becomes an ongoing activity. Developing, confirming and/or updating vision and mission are also done on an ongoing basis (annually and more frequently if needed). Strategic management at the systems level is in effect the management of systems change. Success depends on:

- ▲ strengthening and sustaining the **participatory** processes; ensuring that all stakeholders within the system are involved, participate or consulted on a regular basis.
- ▲ continuing trends of **decentralisation, deconcentration and devolution**, where the systems services, programmes or outputs are delivered as close as possible to the recipients (clients).
- ▲ continuing trends of **delegation and empowerment** to those responsible for the production and delivery of outputs, services and decisionmaking.
- ▲ maintaining flexible and responsive **legislative and regulatory** environments, that allow entities, rules and relationships to adapt quickly to changing circumstances.
- ▲ strengthening and maintaining the **transparency and accountability** of decisionmaking processes at all levels within the system.

- ▲ ensuring meaningful access to information and the sharing of information to as broad a stakeholder community, and other interested parties, as possible.
- ▲ supporting the placement and cost-effective operation of and access to (tele)communications networks and channels.

[2] Governance and Sustainability

For developmental capacity initiatives that are cross-sectoral in nature and which derive from public policy, sustainability depends on sound governance. Dimensions of sound governance include democratic, effective and efficient legislative, judicial and executive processes and institutions. At the executive level, strategic management at a systems level can be ensured through such measures as:

- ▲ effective linkages and integration between the executive and legislative apparatuses of government, which ensures strong linkage across the policy-programme-budgeting-expenditure management functions.
- ▲ effective executive decisionmaking and decision support (e.g., at the cabinet level, or the highest level of programme leadership).
- ▲ the implementation of integrated results-oriented budgeting and financial management systems.
- ▲ the implementation of performance management systems at the aggregate or government level.
- ▲ the implementation of mechanisms to strengthen communications and the relationships (processes) between the public and private sectors, and between the government and civil society.
- ▲ the implementation of policies that ensure alternative programme and services delivery, involving any combination of government, agency, private sector, partnerships, NGOs, and so on.

All of the measures noted above, plus others, have the net effect of institutionalizing adaptative change and sustainability and continuously developing corresponding capacities at the systems level. This enables the system to respond and adapt to change on a continuous, cost-effective, and non-disruptive basis. All of this at the systems level enhances the sustainability of any capacity initiative which may be part of the system.

[3] Systems Level Teamwork and Coordination

In implementing major capacity initiatives and sustaining their results, it is essential from the outset to entrench two essential elements of successful change. First, the covering decisionmaking and accountability structures and processes must facilitate, not inhibit the development of coordinated responses to complex issues which invariably cross ministry, institutional, geographic and/or sectoral lines. Second, the work culture of the entities involved in the initiative must support an ethic of teamwork which transcends traditional entity or organisational "silos."

Simply put, capacity related decisions which are coordinated across the complex range of interests which are affected will be better decisions. A work culture which instinctively approaches problem-solving as a team challenge will be richer and more productive. Those involved in the decisionmaking processes and who participate in team problem-solving will appreciate the improved quality of their work and their work life. This can and should be done internally within an entity, as well as across multiple entities within the particular system.

It is a simple matter to espouse the virtues of strengthened capacities for coordination and teamwork, another to implement and sustain them. To achieve this over time requires concerted attention to both the formal and informal coordinating mechanisms of the organisation. Formal coordinating mechanisms comprise the structures and processes linked to decisionmaking and management systems at both the entity and at the systems levels. Informal coordinating mechanisms are those aspects of the work culture which entrench an ethic of teamwork at all levels.

Beyond formal systems and processes, a range of informal mechanisms exist which can augment an entity's capacity to problem-solve in a team and coordinated manner. These are reflected in the work culture and occur only where the entity takes the necessary steps to promote teamwork.

- ▲ **Teamwork:** Fostering an ethic of teamwork is essential during the programme management life-cycle stages (especially during implementation). The pace, scope and complexity of the decisionmaking environment preclude coordination being achieved through structures and processes alone.
- ▲ **Best Practices:** There are a several "best practices" practiced by team-oriented entities and for multiple entities working together. First, and likely foremost, is leadership by example. The work culture cannot be shaped by edict or directive. If an entity's leadership is seen to be paying lip service to the team approach, then teamwork will not occur at other levels. The commitment must be real and the practice of teamwork evident at the highest levels.
- ▲ **Incentives and Disincentives:** The way in which entities internally and across the system apply incentives and disincentives, both monetary and non-monetary, illustrates the degree to which teamwork is valued. During the capacity development implementation stage, where there is likely considerable resistance, it is essential to compensate those who implement team problem-solving approaches. Non-monetary incentives also positively affect morale and employee commitment.
- ▲ **Managerial Style:** In a team environment, managers do not accept solutions which have not taken cross-sectoral or systems related issues into account. Instead, they will work with managers in those affected entities to assemble the necessary systems level problem-solving team. Moreover, managers will encourage their employees to retain these contacts and involve them in future problem-solving efforts.

- ▲ **Systems Level Networking:** Systems level networking provides another sign of team-orientation. This occurs informally, often on a routine basis, among groups of individuals with related jobs across the entire entity, and for all entities across the system. Networking enriches job experience by tapping into the experience and skills of others.
- ▲ **Systems Level Mobility:** Mobility across the system also signifies that an ethic of teamwork has evolved. In the traditional structures (e.g., bureaucratic government organisations), employees tend to spend their careers in one or a very few places. Managers actively protect intraentity promotional opportunities by discouraging any attempts to recruit externally. In a team environment, interchange across the silos is routine and is viewed as contributing to the revitalisation of the entity and the system as a whole.

All of the above can be made sustainable over an extended period through good human resources planning and management practices, providing good technological support (access to information, information systems, networks and wider telecommunications infrastructures), and cross-systems communication and consultation.

7.3 SUSTAINABILITY: FROM THE ENTITY PERSPECTIVE

All of the capacity development/strengthening activities discussed throughout these guidelines, if done on a recurring basis, according to an overall strategy and plan, will ensure a relevant and sustainable entity operation. Ongoing activities, especially those dealing with capacity strengthening, become an ongoing activity. At the entity level, this is sometimes referred to as the “learning organisation.”

This gets back to strategic management at the entity level, and the incorporation of relevant systems and team concepts, as noted above, into the management and organisational culture of the entity. Implementation strategies associated with restructuring the entity (e.g., changing its legal status, delayering, hiving off nonessential functions or units, outsourcing, etc.) go a long way to enhancing the sustainability of the entity. However, recent experiences show also that methodologies and practices associated with **change management** and **performance management** are also particularly successful approaches to sustainability, and these are briefly described below. Additional aspects of sustainability at the entity level are described from the perspective of the individual, later on in this section.

[1] Change Management

Sustainability from the perspective of the entity is enhanced through the entity's capacity to identify and respond to change quickly, efficiently and effectively. Experience has shown that a series of conditions must be present in the entity for this to happen (listed in the box), and this applies to both formal and informal organisations.

Other conditions might apply, and these would be subject to unique or local circumstance, culture and history. Each of the three major categories of staff within the organisation have a role to play in respect of managing change and ensuring sustainability. The role of **senior management** is to identify the changes that need to occur (leadership). These are the individuals that determine where the organisation is going to continuously meet emerging and future needs.

The role of the **middle manager** is to translate the vision of senior management into tangible, attainable objectives that employees can address to deliver while organising work so that the day to day operations continue during the transition. This level of the organisation can often feel squeezed or pulled in different directions. Without information and direction from the top, with the pressure to focus on multiple priorities and the pressures of upset employees, middle managers can feel deserted, blamed or misunderstood.

Employees are charged with attaining the objectives of their supervisors or managers by focusing their efforts on specific tasks or priorities. In order to perform this role, they need certain capacities (as discussed later) plus the meaningful support of management.

[2] Performance Based Management

Performance based management is very closely allied with budgeting and expenditure processes of the entity. It obliges the entity and its managers to reorientate their thinking and their management style. Rather than controlling how budgets are spent, senior management of the entity (and external funding agencies of the entity) will indicate what it expects in return for the allocated funding. The emphasis changes from **how** the funds are spent to **why** the funds are spent. Often, many entities

Enhancing Sustainable Change

- ▲ **have employees involved in decision making**
- ▲ **offer meaningful work**
- ▲ **allow employees to take responsibility for their work**
- ▲ **use self managing teams not dependant upon leaders**
- ▲ **have fewer layers**
- ▲ **support employees owning certain areas of expertise**
- ▲ **employees taking responsibility for their development**
- ▲ **have a focus on human resources as an investment**
- ▲ **have an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust**
- ▲ **build existing strengths and dimensions of capacity**
- ▲ **have a continuous need for learning**
- ▲ **support a balance between home and work**
- ▲ **reward superior performance**
- ▲ **have smaller managerial groups**
- ▲ **encourage diversity as a creative force**
- ▲ **encourage entrepreneurialism**
- ▲ **do not discourage or unduly penalize risk taking**
- ▲ **are open to internal/external (constructive) criticism**

operating within the context of the programme or the system (e.g., various ministries or departments in a government) coordinate their performance and budgeting management systems to a common standard, allowing for sharing of information and integration of programme activities.

Having agreed to a standard of performance, managers must have a greater degree of managerial flexibility in achieving those standards—controls are less rigid. In return for this greater freedom to reallocate resources to achieve the standard of performance required, managers are held accountable both for the level of performance achieved and for the resources expended. This may be fundamental change in management style, in corporate culture, and as such it must be expected that the management system will require an extended settling in period. Typically, the implementation of a performance based management system is a lengthy process, and such systems will have been designed and implemented in entities as part of the implementation stage (e.g., the dimension of “processes” at the entity level).

7.4 SUSTAINABILITY: FROM THE INDIVIDUAL'S PERSPECTIVE

Individuals within entities devote a certain percentage of their time to a continuous process of upgrading skills and learning others. Training and management development become synchronised with the dynamic process of strategic management within the entity and at the higher strategic management level. Many of the items discussed in the preceding apply at the individual level, and do not need to be repeated here. However, some emphasis can be given to the following, which go a long way to sustaining the capacities of the individual to function effectively after implementation:

- ▲ **Education and Training** (e.g., skills development, retraining, continuous learning, on-the-job training, apprenticeship and mentoring, access to facilities)
- ▲ **Incentives and Security** (e.g., pensions, rewards, day-care, maternity leave, promotion, recognition)
- ▲ **Performance and Accountability** (e.g., for results and outputs, performance contracts, individual and managerial accountability)
- ▲ **Management Development** (e.g., for leadership, executive management)
- ▲ **Team/Network Environments** (e.g., for team-work based activities, communications, cooperation, morale, support systems, group performance)
- ▲ **Access to Information** (e.g., getting the information they need, when they need it, having access to facilities such as workstations, telecommunications).