THE INFLUENCING CAPACITY ASSESSMENT GUIDE FOR PACIFIC CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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RAISING PACIFIC VOICES

REINFORCING PACIFIC CIVIL SOCIETY
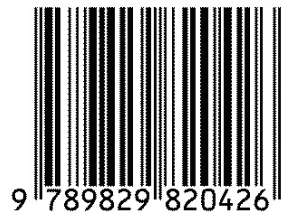
EUROPEAN UNION

OXFAM

PACIFIC DISABILITY FORUM

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Influencing Capacity Assessment Guide has been developed as part of Oxfam in the Pacific's Raising Pacific Voices (RPV) project. The RPV project focuses, in part, on strengthening national level civil society organisation's institutional and influencing capacity. '**Influencing**' refers to the intentional efforts to affect policies, laws and regulations (and their implementation), budgets, company or governing practices, attitudes and beliefs to promote social justice.

This tool follows the development of another tool – the *Organisational Capacity Assessment Guide for Pacific Civil Society Organisations* (OCA Guide) which assesses organisational capacity in terms of governance, strategy and operations. The OCA Guide introduces and assesses organisational elements for advocacy, networking and collaboration. It does not go into the depth of influencing capacity – this Influencing Capacity Assessment Guide (ICA Guide) does that.

This tool is a preliminary process done in advance of delivering the Influencing Training Kit. It promotes a strengths-based approach that focuses on discussion and empowerment in order to establish a base-line from which capacity-building actions can be determined. It should inform where greater (or lesser) focus is needed in the training. A post-training evaluation (questionnaire attached to the Influencing Training package) should be measured against this baseline, as should a repeat of this capacity assessment, six months afterwards, to see the change in influencing capacity as a result of both the training and six months of influencing activity.

> **NOTE:**
>
> **The ICAT process is NOT a training – rather it is an assessment,** which should capture what is known and understood, and what is *not* known and understood. Facilitators should know that it is important not to influence the status of knowledge and understanding by providing the answers.

WHO IS THIS TOOL FOR?

This tool is for any organisation that is interested in affecting change. This assessment can be used as part of an organisational, project or programme strategic planning process. Participants can include organisational management, including Board members, staff and project staff, and volunteers *who represent the organisation*. The ICA Guide can be used for alliances of several organisations or networks that want to pursue a collaborative influencing initiative. In this case, participants should include representatives of the organisations in the alliance.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

The ICA Guide includes ten exercises that are designed to be facilitated, ideally, by an independent facilitator –the person who will be delivering the Influencing Training. The facilitator should have the skills and experience in implementing participatory and inclusive processes – offering impartial objectivity. Reassurance is

needed to ensure participants understand that it is ok not to know all the answers. The gaps in knowledge will inform the emphasis of the training to follow, and will serve as a baseline, aspects of which will be measured again after the training and six months down the line.

Each of the ten exercises provides introductory information, time-guidance[1], step-by-step guidance, extra notes, and guidance on how to record the results of the assessment. Various methods of assessment are used, such as Likert scale[2] ranking, *talanoa*[3], brain mapping and rapid audits. There is some preparation to be done in advance of each session – this is indicated in each exercise.

The entire process can take a day with refreshment breaks in between. Organisations can choose to do fewer exercises, based on their preference and needs, and can choose to split the programme over a couple of days or more. A draft programme for the ten exercises is attached as an annex.

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- ↗ Flip chart paper
- ↗ VIPP cards[4] (at least three different colours)
- ↗ Markers (at least three different colours)
- ↗ Spot stickers (optional) for ranking
- ↗ Adhesive for temporarily sticking flip-chart sheets to the wall eg. Blue Tack
- ↗ Sticky notes
- ↗ Printed self-administered evaluation forms

ASSESSING CAPACITY FOR INFLUENCING

There are ten exercises in the ICA Guide. Organisations at different stages of growth will find some exercises more relevant than others. There is no harm in doing them all as these will all provide an interesting and comprehensive insight to an organisation's current capacity for influencing. However, if there is limited time, an organisation may choose to omit the optional exercises. Exercises can be done one by one over a longer period of time, though it is advised to follow the sequence below. More established organisations may answer additional questions which are indicated in three of the ten exercises.

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1   Time for each exercise will vary depending on the organisation's capacity and shared understanding amongst participants. The exercise is complete when clarity of assessed capacity is reached.
2   A scale used to represent people's attitudes to a topic
3   *Talanoa* is the Fijian word '*Talanoa*' literally meaning 'telling stories without concealment' but used for critical conversations, analytical debate and strategic and considered decisions and resolutions. Other Pacific cultures have similar words for similar types of discussion. It is *Sautalaga* in Tuvaluan, *Talanga* in Tongan. *Talatalaga* is the Samoan word. The Samoan and Tongan words have added implications referring to the process of unravelling all the elements of a particular issue – through exploring, assessment and analysis – with the aim of weaving them all back together through dialogue, coordination, collaboration and agreed conclusions, towards solutions and action. Countries should use the relevant cultural process and word for this methodology.
4   Visualisation in Participation Programme (VIPP) cards – multi-coloured paper cards of different shapes and sizes on which the participants express their main ideas in large enough letters or diagrams to be seen by the whole group

ASSESSING CAPACITY FOR:	RELEVANCE	TIME ESTIMATION
1. Understanding 'Influencing'	Required as the introductory session to ensure that all participants have a shared understanding of the term 'influencing', amongst themselves and in comparison to the Oxfam definition.	15 mins
2. Developing an influencing strategy	Required for the organisation to reflect on how influential the organisational strategy is.	20 mins
3. Level of clarity of purpose and change goal	Required for the organisation or an alliance of stakeholders to check how clear their (shared) understanding of their purpose and change goal is. This exercise must be done before progressing to the subsequent exercises.	40 mins
4. Context analysis	Required for the organisation to reflect on the level of understanding of the current context in which the organisation delivers and in relation to the organisational purpose.	30 mins
5. Policy analysis	Required for the organisation to reflect on policies that are relevant to the organisational purpose and how the organisation engages with the policy landscape.	30 mins
6. Engaging in government budget processes	Required for the organisation to understand how engaged it is with government budgetary processes.	30 mins
7. Power analysis	Required for the organisation to explore how it is positioned within relationships and alliances with all relevant stakeholders.	30 mins
8. Advocacy and lobbying	Required for the organisation or an alliance of stakeholders to summarise a range of capacity areas in one snapshot, including influencing strategy capacity and power analysis.	40 mins
9. Human resource capacity and technical expertise for influencing	Optional for the organisation to undertake an audit style exercise to understand what capacity and technical expertise it has, and does not have – for influencing.	20 mins
10. Using digital, social and conventional media	Optional for the organisation to undertake an audit style exercise to understand what experience and capacity it has for using various forms of media.	10 mins

EXERCISE 1: INTRODUCTION – UNDERSTANDING 'INFLUENCING' (15 MINS)

PURPOSE OF THIS EXERCISE:

Before starting the assessment exercises, the facilitator should establish a common understanding of the term 'Influencing'. The level of understanding of the term 'influencing' will also contribute towards the assessment.

STEP 1:

The facilitator should create groups, then ask participants what their understanding of the term is. These should be written up on flip-chart paper as they are made.

STEP 2:

Present and explain the description below – the definition used by Oxfam.

> **'Influencing'** refers to the intentional efforts to affect policies, laws and regulations (and their implementation), budgets, company or governing practices, attitudes and beliefs in such a way as to promote social justice.
>
> Depending on the national context, influencing can include:
>
> ↗ leveraging of program experience
> ↗ advocacy and campaigning (coalition building, research, policy development, lobbying, media, digital engagement)

> ↗ mobilisation (rights holders, activists, supporters, citizens)
> ↗ networking
> ↗ capacity development
> ↗ partnerships and strategic funding

STEP 3:

Facilitate a group discussion to compare the group responses with the Oxfam definition. Participants should agree to refer to one understanding of the term 'influencing', whether this is the Oxfam definition or an adaptation that includes further definition (with good justification).

RECORD:

↗ Responses from Step 1

EXAMPLE

Organisation's understanding of influencing

Oxfam's understanding of influencing

Convincing

Forcing

Sharing ideas

Affecting

Sharing of experiences/knowledge so they understand your point of view

Teaching

Interacting

Mobilising people's rights

leveraging of program experience

advocacy and campaigning (coalition building, research, policy development, lobbying, media, digital engagement)

mobilisation (rights holders, activists, supporters, citizens)

networking

capacity development

partnerships and strategic funding

MEASURE:

↗ Level of similarity and variance on understanding of the term 'influencing'

EXERCISE 2: CAPACITY FOR DEVELOPING AN INFLUENCING STRATEGY

WHAT THIS IS ABOUT:

Organisations need to be strategic for effective influencing. An organisational strategy describes *how* the organisation intends to reach its goals. This will have degrees of influence. Some organisations or networks may use influencing strategies without these being articulated explicitly in a strategic plan.

PURPOSE OF THIS EXERCISE:

To establish or revise an organisational strategy (formal or informal) and relevant programmes that would serve as an asset for influencing activity and determine where the starting point for influencing is.

NOTES:

Questions should be integrated throughout the capacity assessment as indicated below:

STEP 1:

Ask participants as a group if the organisation has a Strategic Plan that is currently being used and ask the associated questions below following their response:

↗ If there is a Strategic Plan:

   ↘ Are there specific strategies or activities for influencing or for advocacy?
   ↘ What are these?
   ↘ How is the Strategic Plan developed?

↗ If there is no Strategic Plan in place:

   ↘ How does the organisation usually plan activities?
   ↘ How long in advance are these activities planned?
   ↘ Who is part of the planning process?
   ↘ What factors are taken into consideration?

EXERCISE 3: CLARITY OF PURPOSE AND CHANGE GOAL (40 MINS)

NOTE:

More established organisations which have a strategic plan may answer additional and optional questions that assess the organisational capacity for developing influencing strategy. These are included in Exercise 4 (Step 6), Exercise 5 (Step 6), and Exercise 7 (Step 4).

RECORD:

↗ All responses
↗ All responses to optional questions

MEASURE:

↗ Evidence of organisational strategy and/or strategic interventions for influencing
↗ Level of agreement to responses to the question/level of clarity on what the influencing strategies are.

WHAT THIS IS ABOUT:

Organisations need to have a clear purpose and mission, usually articulated in the organisation's Constitution. The purpose needs to be clearly understood by all members. More specifically, the organisation's goal should define the 'change' it wants to see. All influencing strategies should be focused on the 'change goal'.

PURPOSE OF THIS EXERCISE:

To assess participants' understanding of why their organisation exists and what drives its programmes and operations. This understanding is relevant for strategic planning of advocacy targets.

STEP 1:

On the wall, stick three headings on three pieces of flipchart paper

WHAT do we want to influence?

Not sure - we need to work this out'

WHY do we want to influence?

Not sure - we need to work this out'

WHO do we want to influence?

Not sure - we need to work this out'

STEP 2:

Organisational members should write their individual responses on VIPP cards and then stick them under the relevant headings, including the option for not being sure of the answer (10 mins).
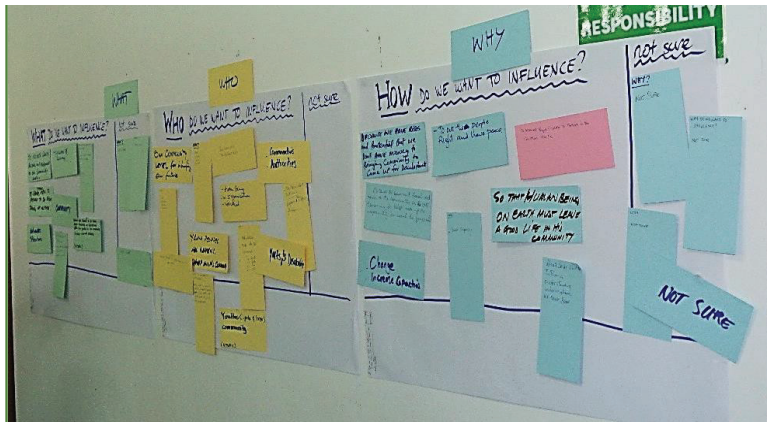
STEP 3:

A group discussion should be facilitated to review the range of responses and come to a resolution on a 'group response' (30 mins).
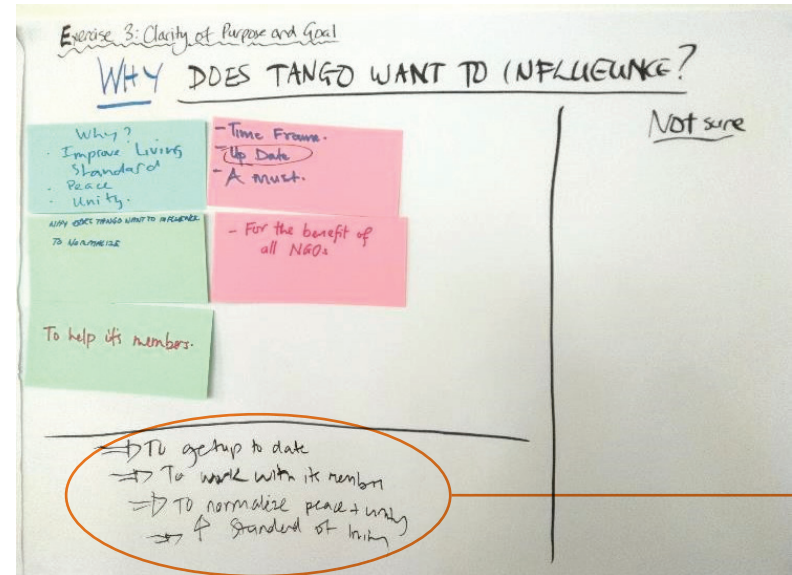
EXERCISE 4: CAPACITY FOR CONTEXT ANALYSIS (30 MINS)

RECORD:

↗ Both the individual and group responses should be recorded, including the criteria or rationale used for the group consensus responses.

NOTE:

This is also a strategic exercise, done as part of identifying the change goal that will be worked on through the duration of the training. It can be revisited later during the training, so these flipcharts can remain on the wall of the training venue for the whole duration.

MEASURE:

↗ Level of similarity and variance on understanding of purpose and change goal.
↗ Prevalence of 'not sure' responses.

WHAT THIS IS ABOUT:

Context and change go together. Change happens whether we like it or not, with many individuals involved. We need to understand the context so that we can see the opportunities, spaces, dynamics, talent and people involved that we can utilize and maximize to push for positive.

PURPOSE OF THIS EXERCISE:

To assess the potential of the organisation for influencing. It is important to know participants' understanding of the context in which the organisation works.

STEP 1:

Prepare the table below on flip-chart and stick on the wall.

| FOR THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE, WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?	BARRIERS	OPPORTUNITIES	NOT SURE [TICK]
Social and cultural issues			
Economic issues			
Political issues			
Environmental issues			

STEP 2:

Organisational members should write on their individual responses on VIPP cards and then stick them under the relevant headings, including the option of not being sure of the answers. (10 mins)
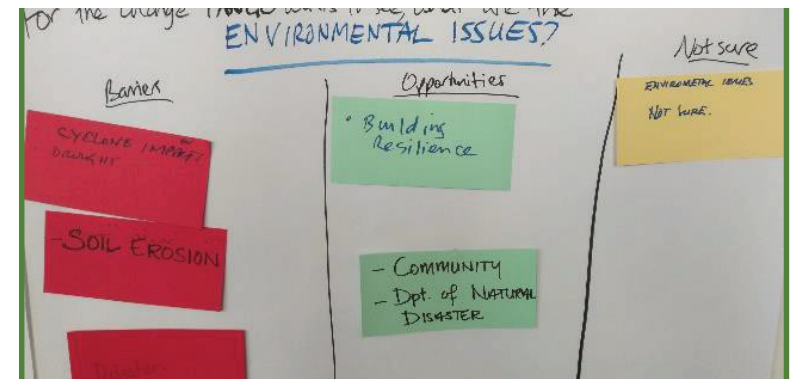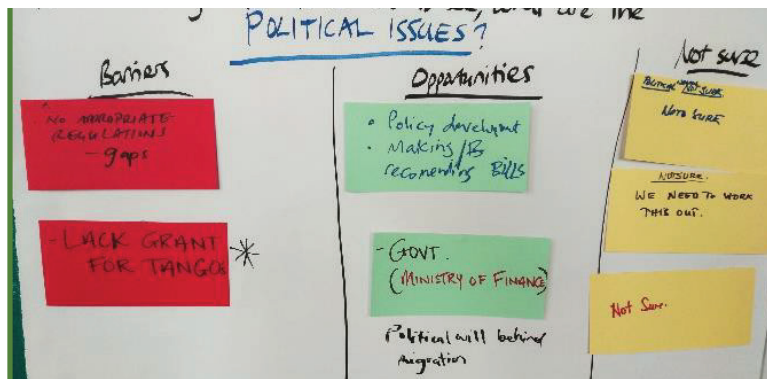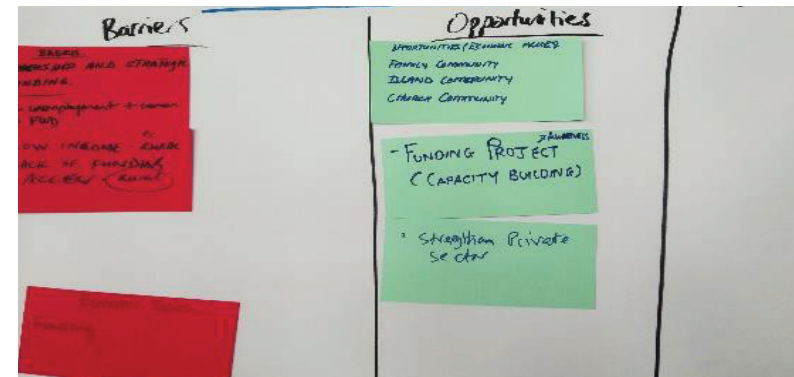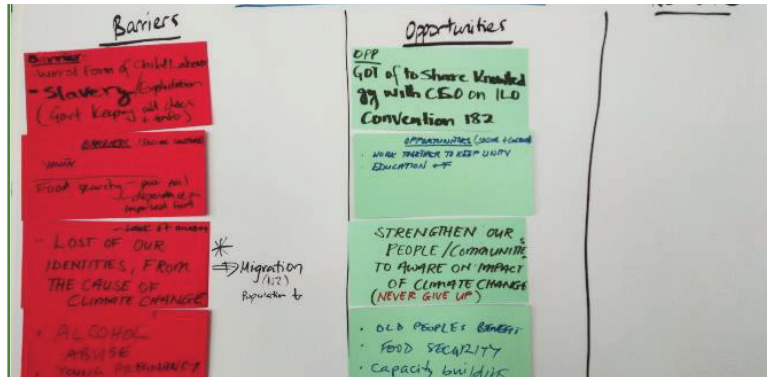
STEP 3:

Ask participants while they are writing to think about who are the most affected groups in the community (eg. women/men, people with disabilities, youths and children. Do they have specific barriers and opportunities?

STEP 4:

Ask the group for any clarifying comments and reasoning for the individual responses. What are the similarities and differences in the responses?

STEP 5:

Ask each of the groups to reach a consensus on rating themselves on the Likert scale below. Each participant can use a sticker or mark a cross to indicate their own assessed ranking.

ASSESSMENT QUESTION	VERY POOR	POOR	NEITHER	GOOD	VERY GOOD
How would you **rate your understanding of the context** – the social, economic, cultural and political factors that have relevance to what you want to influence?					

STEP 6:

[Optional for organisations which have an organisational strategic plan] Ask participants the following question:

↗ Do you have a strategic and planned intervention that addresses your contextual barriers and opportunities?

   ◯ Yes, we do [list strategy or planned activity] ....

   ◯ Not yet

   ◯ Not sure

RECORD:

↗ Write down all responses including the number of responses that indicated 'not sure'.

↗ Likert scale ranking

MEASURE:

↗ Frequency of responses populated in the table for each factor, including frequency of 'not sure' responses

↗ Level of understanding across organisation members.

↗ Organisational group rating on Likert scale

↗ Evidence of strategic intervention addressing contextual issues [optional]

EXERCISE 5: CAPACITY FOR POLICY ANALYSIS (30 MINS)

WHAT THIS IS ABOUT:

It is important to understand how policies are developed and have a good grasp of the policy environment. Organisations need to consider the functions and type of policies that exist and may be relevant to the issue or organisation's change goal.

PURPOSE OF THIS EXERCISE:

To assess organisational understanding of the policies that have impact on their change goal, which would be relevant in planning an influencing initiative.

STEP 1:

Prepare these concentric circles on a flip-chart and stick the flip-chart on the wall.
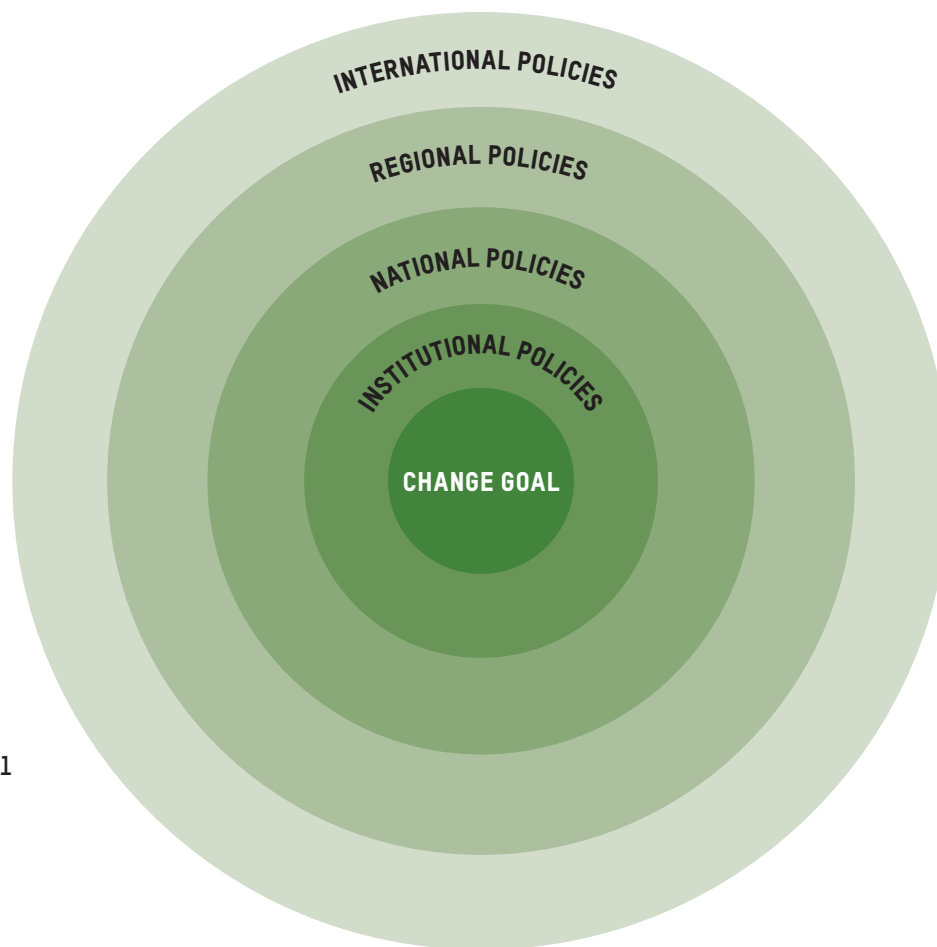
Figure 5.1

STEP 2:

Check participants' understanding of what 'policy' is – being inclusive of law, policy and other guidance and regulations.

STEP 3:

Ask organisational members to write on VIPP cards all the policies they can identify that are relevant to the change goal – or have an impact on the problem.

STEP 4:

In a plenary discussion, facilitate a discussion using probing questions to determine the level of understanding and experience relating to the identified policies.

↗ What are the most important policies for the organisation's change goal?
↗ What is the status of these policies?
↗ What are their challenges and strengths?
↗ How does the organisation engage with these policies?

STEP 5:

Ask participants to consider their level of understanding of the following, to determine an overall ranking on the Likert Scale below:

↗ Understanding how the policy relates to problem/issue (whether a policy needs to be changed, developed, enforced...)
↗ Understanding where the entry points are
↗ Understanding who the policy makers are

Each participant can use a sticker or mark a cross to indicate their own assessed ranking.

ASSESSMENT QUESTION	VERY POOR	POOR	NEITHER	GOOD	VERY GOOD
How would you rate your overall understanding of the policy analysis with regards to your change goal?					
How would you rate your understanding of where the entry points are					
How would you rate your understanding of who the policy makers are?					

STEP 6:

[Optional for organisations which have an organisational strategic plan] Ask participants the following question:

↗ Do you have a strategic approach that focuses on or uses a particular policy?

    ⭘ Yes, we do [list strategy] ....

    ⭘ Not yet

    ⭘ Not sure

RECORD:

↗ All identified policies at each level. Refer to diagram 5.1
↗ Plenary discussion notes in relation to each policy

MEASURE:

↗ Number of policies
↗ Level of understanding of the analysis
↗ Evidence of strategic intervention focused on policy change [optional]

EXERCISE 6: CAPACITY TO ENGAGE IN GOVERNMENT BUDGET PROCESSES (30 MINS)

WHAT THIS IS ABOUT:

Resources are essential for any organisation and its capacity to influence. Engaging in budget processes is one means of securing resources for the organisation or for the issue it is working for.

PURPOSE OF THIS EXERCISE:

To assess the level of organisational experience and understanding of government budget processes to draw lessons that can inform the planning of influencing work.

NOTES:

↗ This exercise can flow directly from the previous exercise (Exercise 5).
↗ If budget processes have been discussed in Exercise 5, and an assessment can be made – see 'Measure' below, the discussion in this Exercise can be skipped.

STEP 1:

If it has not been suggested already in the policy exercise, introduce the 'national budget' as one of government's most important policy documents.

STEP 2:

Without sharing the information in the box, ask the group for any responses to the following questions:

1. How are national budget and public policy processes linked?

2. What understanding do members have of how the Government budget process works?

    ↘ Where are the entry points for addressing the organisation's objectives?

3. Has the organisation had any previous experience of engaging in government budget processes?

    ↘ What have been the challenges?
    ↘ What have been the lessons learnt?

4. Is it beneficial for the organisation to engage in government budget processes? What would be the objective?

LINKAGE BETWEEN POLICY AND BUDGET PROCESSES

↗ Resource allocation is guided by policy.

↗ Affordability must influence policy making and planning at the point when the decision is made.

↗ In many countries, these processes are fragmented, leading to poor budgeting outcomes, or a massive mismatch between what is promised through government policies and what is affordable.

↗ Expenditure programs should be driven by policy priorities which are disciplined by budget realities.

Brain map capturing structured discussion to base qualitative assessment of capacity for engaging in government budgetary processes.

STEP 3:

Ask the group to reach a consensus on rating themselves on the Likert scale below. Each participant can use a sticker or mark a cross to indicate their own assessed ranking.

ASSESSMENT QUESTION	VERY POOR	POOR	NEITHER	GOOD	VERY GOOD
How would you **rate your understanding and experience of** government budget processes, and the linkage between policy and budget processes:					

RECORD:

↗ Write down all responses including the number of responses that indicated they did not know the answer.

↗ Summarise the responses.

MEASURE:

↗ Qualitative assessment based on discussion

↗ Level of understanding across members.

↗ Organisational group rating on Likert scale.

EXERCISE 7: CAPACITY FOR POWER ANALYSIS (30 MINS)

WHAT THIS IS ABOUT:

Stakeholder power analysis helps organisations understand how people affect policies and institutions, and how policies and institutions affect people. Power lies at the heart — or denial — of change. Power touches on the deepest structures that underlie society, politics, and the economy. Understanding power is fundamental for initiating relationships with stakeholders to achieve organisational objectives and supporting alliances for solidarity.

PURPOSE OF THIS EXERCISE:

To assess the organisation's understanding of and response to power dynamics amongst their stakeholders.

STEP 1:

Divide the large group into smaller groups of about four to five persons per group. Distribute copies of the Handout on Power analysis tools to each group.

STEP 2:

Remind participants of the change goal description that was identified in Exercise 3 and ask them to answer the following questions in their groups.

POWER ANALYSIS QUESTIONS	YES	NO	NOT SURE OR PARTLY
The organisation understands who all our stakeholders are			
We know <u>who</u> are the decision- makers are			
We know <u>who</u> is affected positively and negatively and who is excluded			
We know <u>who</u> has the financial and technical resources that we need			
We know <u>who</u> are the ones that might oppose or block change			
The organisation knows which stakeholders are the most important			
We know <u>which</u> stakeholders have the most power and influence; AND			
We know <u>which</u> stakeholders are less influential with less power			
The organisation understands why some stakeholders block change			
We know it is about gender, or lack of evidence, or powerful opposition forces etc			
The organisation knows who influences the decision- makers			
We know who the people are around the decision-makers who have power *over* the decision-makers.			
Please tick any of the power analysis tools (see handout) or any others that the organisation has used before	Visual power map Power mapping grid Power Cube Other		

STEP 3:

Collect and collate all responses. Discuss the reasons why groups chose their answers.

STEP 4:

[Optional for organisations which have an organisational strategic plan] Ask participants the following question:

↗ Do you have a strategy for working with your supporters, influencing your gatekeepers, and working around your blockers?

    ◯ Yes, we do [list strategy] ....

    ◯ Not yet

    ◯ Not sure

RECORD:

↗ All group answers
↗ The reasons why the choice has been made

MEASURE:

↗ Prevalence of responses in each column
↗ Qualitative assessment based on discussion
↗ Evidence of strategic intervention for addressing stakeholder power [optional]
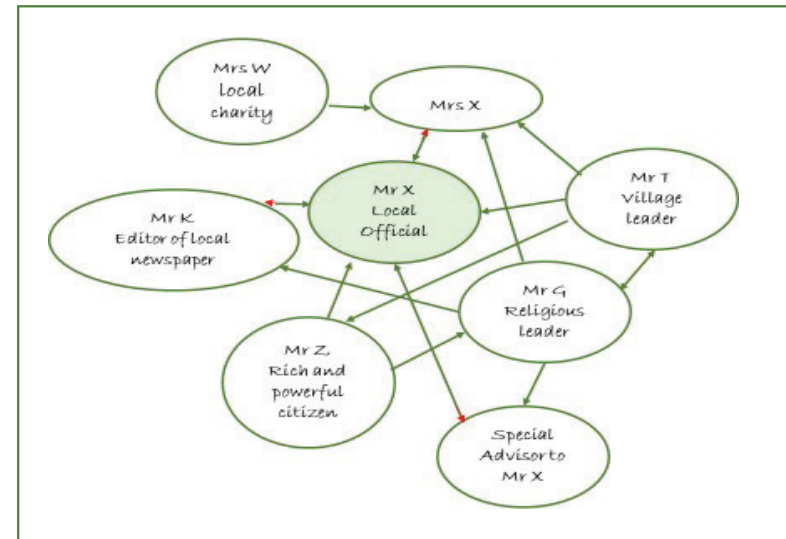
1. VISUAL POWER MAP

Depicts the stakeholders and decision-makers and the power relationships between them.

	Blocker	Floater	Champion
High Influence		2	6
	1		
Medium Influence		5	
	4		
Low Influence			3

2. POWER MAPPING GRID

Depicts the stakeholders and decision-makers and positions them according to their level of influence and whether their influence is supportive (a champion), oppositional (a blocker) or undecided (a floater).

GLOBAL

NATIONAL

LOCAL

CLOSED

INVITED

CREATED

VISIBLE
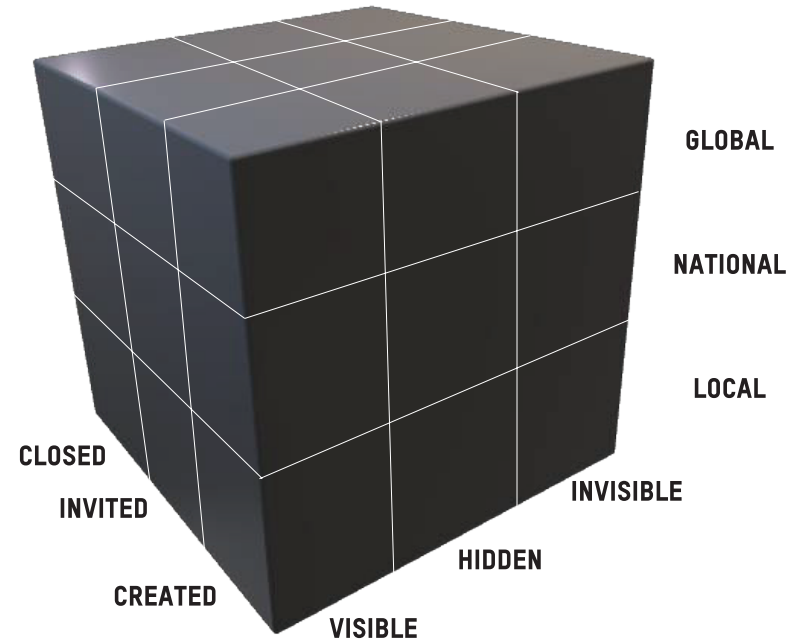
HIDDEN

INVISIBLE

3. POWER CUBE

An approach for analysing forms of power (visible, hidden, invisible), spaces for participation and citizen engagement (closed, invited, created), and for examining relations between local to national and global levels of power.

EXERCISE 8: HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY AND TECHNICAL COMPETENCE FOR INFLUENCING (20 MINS)

WHAT THIS IS ABOUT:

It is useful, when assessing capacity for influencing and planning any influencing initiative, to know the availability of human resources, what level of relevant technical expertise they have and what the gaps are.

PURPOSE OF THIS EXERCISE:

To carry out a rapid audit of the skills and capacity that the organisation can draw on for influencing work and to identify where there are gaps.

STEP 1:

Prepare the table below on flip-chart paper and stick up on the wall.

TECHNICAL SKILL AND HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY	SKILLS AND EXPERTISE ARE AVAILABLE WITHIN THE ORGANISATION (AND MEMBERS)	WE HAVE SOMEONE AVAILABLE BUT WE NEED SKILLS BUILDING IN THIS AREA	WE DON'T HAVE ANYONE WHO CAN DO THIS – AND WE WOULD NEED ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE
Strategic planning			
Program Management			
Managing partnerships and alliances (CSOs, NGOs...)			
Written /verbal communication			
Engaging with government			
Budget analysis			
Policy analysis			

TECHNICAL SKILL AND HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY	SKILLS AND EXPERTISE ARE AVAILABLE WITHIN THE ORGANISATION (AND MEMBERS)	WE HAVE SOMEONE AVAILABLE BUT WE NEED SKILLS BUILDING IN THIS AREA	WE DON'T HAVE ANYONE WHO CAN DO THIS – AND WE WOULD NEED ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE
Conducting and utilising research			
Conducting training			
External promotion through mainstreaming media, public campaigns			
Digital and social media			

STEP 2:

Individuals should write their names on Post-it notes to stick in the relevant boxes, adding description if needed (e.g. what position(s) is available, which experience has given them the skills etc.).

RECORD:

↗ All responses in each column

MEASURE:

↗ Number of skills that have human resource capacity and technical competence;
↗ Number of skills that have human resource capacity but need upskilling;
↗ Number of skills there are and identification of gaps.

EXERCISE 9: CAPACITY FOR USING DIGITAL, SOCIAL AND CONVENTIONAL MEDIA (10 MINS)

WHAT THIS IS ABOUT:

Communication is a key element of any influencing initiative. Organisational members have capacity for communicating in different ways, sometimes socially, rather than professionally. These can be important skills for use during an influencing initiative within an organization.

PURPOSE OF THIS EXERCISE:

To identify the level of organisational capacity and technical competence or any skills/capacity gaps, for promoting work externally (an essential aspect of influencing). This exercise explores untapped potential amongst organisational members.

NOTE:

This can be done as a self-administered exercise or as a group exercise. Use the printed hand-outs (Figure 9.1) to distribute to each participant for the self-administered exercise and collect and collate the final results. Or prepare the table on flip-chart paper and stick up on the wall, for participants to individually indicate their assessment for a collective visual understanding.

STEP 1:

Individuals should tick the types of media that the organisation and its members has skills and time for. Do not complete the final column at this point.

STEP 2:

In a group, the organisation should discuss and fill column 4 – whether they want to use each form of media more, and why.

RECORD:

↗ All responses in each column

MEASURE:

↗ Types of media never used by the organisation
↗ Types of media sometimes used by the organisation
↗ Types of media always used by the organisation
↗ Types of media the organisation wants to use more

EXERCISE 9: CAPACITY FOR USING DIGITAL, SOCIAL AND CONVENTIONAL MEDIA (10 MINS)

PURPOSE OF THIS EXERCISE:

To identify the level of organisational capacity and technical competence or any skills/capacity gaps, for promoting work externally – an essential aspect of influencing.

STEP 1:

Individuals should tick the types of media that the organisation and its members has skills and time for.

STEP 2:

Thinking of the organisation's change goal, complete the final column.

MEDIA USED BY THE ORGANISATION	NEVER	SOMETIMES	ALWAYS	SHOULD TANGO USE THIS MORE OR NOT? EXPLAIN WHY
Facebook				
Twitter				
Instagram				
YouTube				
Podcast				
Website or blog				
Vlog				
Email network				
Radio				
Print				
TV				

EXERCISE 10: CAPACITY FOR ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING (40 MINS)

WHAT THIS IS ABOUT:

Successful advocacy and lobbying requires several factors to be in place, and a range of specific capacities for managing the various aspects. This exercise can serve as a checklist for planning any influencing initiative to understand which aspects may need support.

PURPOSE OF THIS EXERCISE:

To assess organisational capacity to undertake the range of activities and to determine a level of environmental readiness that support effective 'advocacy and lobbying'.

NOTES:

Annex 1 – Organisational capacities should be used to inform this exercise. This exercise will inform the areas where to focus the planning for advocacy and lobbying. It will also reiterate other elements discussed earlier.

STEP 1:

Prepare the Radar Chart below on flip-chart and stick on the wall

Capacity for advocacy and lobbying
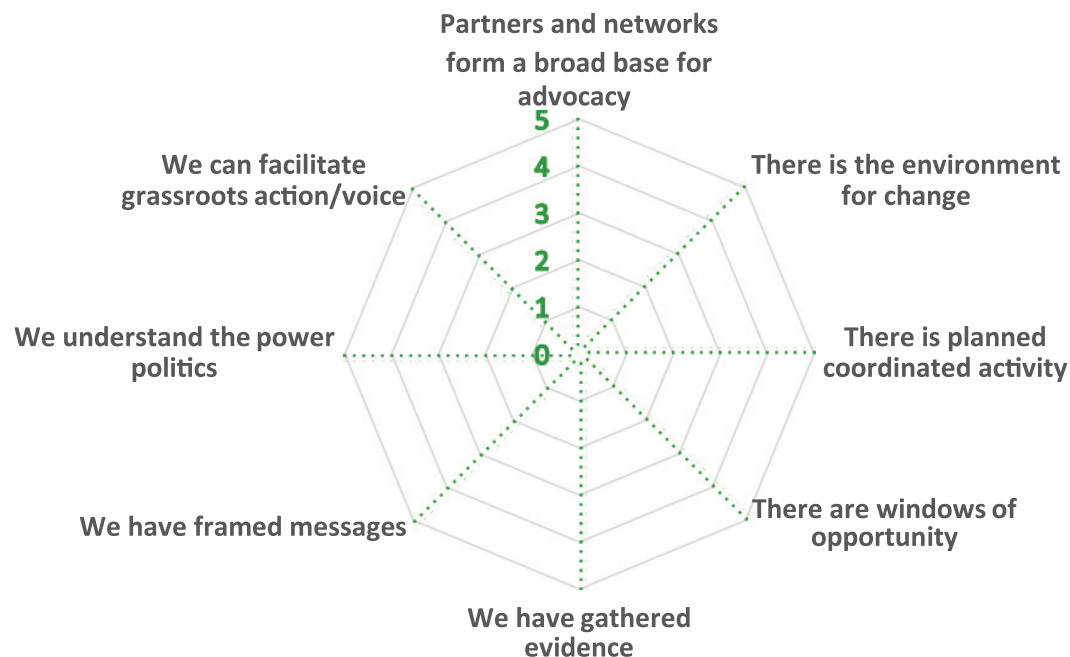
STEP 2:

Ask the organisation members to discuss and determine a ranking for each axis, qualifying why they have chosen their rank. The **Ranking Guide** should be used to assist with discussions.

A smaller group could do this exercise as a whole group discussion. A larger group may need to be divided into smaller groups and the organisational capacities can be shared between them, to rank as a first step, followed by a review and consensus agreement by the larger group afterwards.

STEP 3:

Join up the selected axis points. This should be done once again six months down the line, to measure their progress. At this point all changes should be documented as should lessons learnt in leadership behaviours etc.

RECORD:

↗ Record the qualifying reasons as well as the chart itself.

MEASURE:

↗ Strength of advocacy base (partners, networks and alliances)
↗ Level of environmental readiness for change
↗ Level of planning and coordination for influencing
↗ Level of opportunity for influencing
↗ Extent of evidence available
↗ Level of communication preparedness
↗ Extent of power analysis conducted
↗ Level of ability to facilitate grassroots action
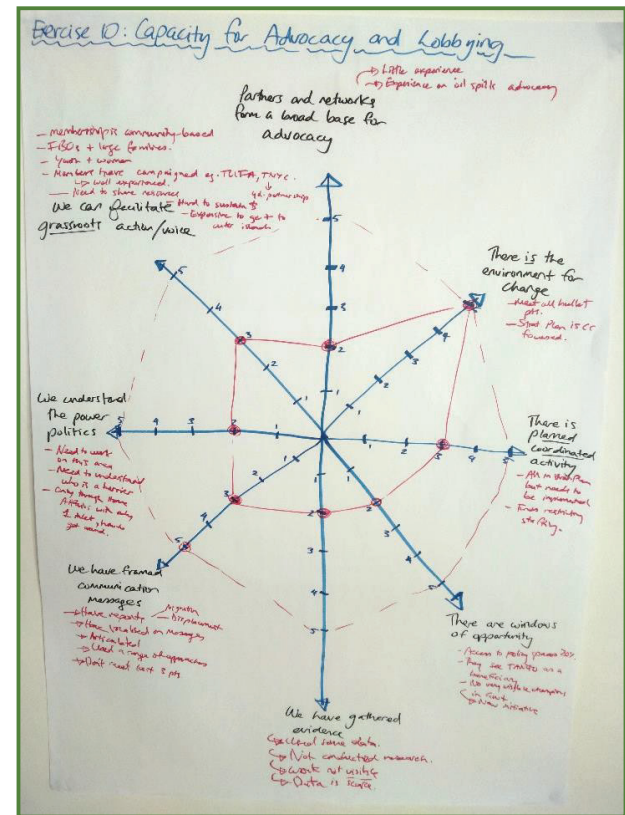
RANKING GUIDE: ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITIES FOR ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING

PARTNERS AND NETWORKS FORM A BROAD BASE FOR ADVOCACY	WE HAVE GATHERED EVIDENCE
↗ We know and engage with other organisations advocating on the same issue ↗ Our stakeholders are involved in all stages of our influencing work (consultation, planning, campaigning, monitoring etc) ↗ We report to, seek and respond to feedback from our stakeholders	↗ We have conducted research and produced documentation specifically for advocacy purposes ↗ We have gathered other research and relevant data to analyse the situation related to our influencing work ↗ We have used and presented data to support previous advocacy
THERE IS THE ENVIRONMENT FOR CHANGE	**WE HAVE FRAMED COMMUNICATION MESSAGES**
↗ The advocacy initiative is very 'topical' – there are other conversations and activity happening in support of the issue (pieces of research, publications, conferences, statements and other events) ↗ Several organisations (outside of our partnerships) have similar mandates to our organisation ↗ There is public sentiment in support of the advocacy initiative	↗ We have reports, talking points and briefs prepared on our advocacy initiative ↗ We have communication messages developed for different audiences ↗ We have articulated clear and specific recommendations for change ↗ We use a range of approaches to influence and negotiate positions ↗ We have built relations with the media ↗ We have a social media presence, across several platforms
THERE IS PLANNED COORDINATED ACTIVITY	**WE UNDERSTAND THE POWER POLITICS**
↗ We have developed an advocacy plan with goals, strategies and activities ↗ We monitor implementation of our advocacy plan ↗ We have an organisational structure with responsibilities for delivering our advocacy work ↗ We document this work and all key decisions related to our planned activity	↗ We know how to assess power and understand the influence of key actors ↗ We have used strategic approaches to address power imbalances in previous advocacy work ↗ We have worked with stakeholders as champions to support a cause

THERE ARE WINDOWS OF OPPORTUNITY	WE CAN FACILITATE GRASSROOTS ACTION/VOICE
↗ There are entry points in political systems and institutions that are available to us ↗ We have access to relevant policy spaces ↗ We have champions who are supportive of our advocacy initiative ↗ We have resources available to support our influencing work	↗ We have mobilised/can mobilise public support for advocacy goals ↗ We have planned and carried out public campaigning events ↗ We have networks at community level ↗ We have involved sections of the community e.g. Children, women and other groups in previous work

ANNEX 1: ASSESSING INFLUENCING CAPACITY TEMPLATE PROGRAM

TIME	SESSION	SUBJECT
8:00 – 8:30am	Arrival of participants	Registration Distribution of one copy of the ICAT for each participant
8:30 – 8:45am	Introduction	Welcome by Organisational Head Prayer (if appropriate) Remarks by other relevant personnel Introduction of all participants
8:45am	1	**Introduction – understanding 'Influencing' (15 mins)** Introduction Plenary discussion
9:15am	2	**Capacity for developing an influencing strategy (20 mins)** Step 1 (Plenary discussion)
9:35am	3	**Clarity of purpose and change goal (40 mins)** Exercise Plenary discussion
10:00pm	4	**Capacity for context analysis (30 mins)** Exercise Plenary discussion Likert scale ranking
10:30AM	**MORNING TEA**	
10:50am	5	**Policy analysis (30 mins)** Exercise Plenary discussion Likert scale ranking
11:30am	6	**Capacity for engaging in government budget processes (30 mins)** Plenary discussion

TIME	SESSION	SUBJECT
12:00pm	7	Power analysis (30 mins) Exercise Plenary discussion
1:00PM	**LUNCH**	
2:00pm	8	**Human resource capacity and technical competence for influencing (20 mins)** Exercise (Self-administered)
2:40pm	9	**Capacity for using digital, social and conventional media (10 mins)** Exercise (Self-administered) Plenary discussion
3:00pm	10	**Capacity for advocacy and lobbying (40 mins)** Group exercise Plenary discussion
4:00PM	**ENDS**	

ANNEX 2: EVALUATION FORM

Name of organisation: ....

Date of assessment: ....

Gender (optional):...

Of six evaluation principles, four are used to evaluate the influencing capacity assessment process:

1. **Relevance** – What is the value of the capacity assessment in relation to the organisation's work?
2. **Effectiveness** – Does the assessment process achieve an accurate understanding of the organisation's influencing capacity?
3. **Efficiency** – Is the assessment process carried out in the most efficient manner?
4. **Equity** – Did all participants benefit equitably?

1.0 Did the assessment match the technical level of participants?
1.1 What is your position or profession? ....
1.2 Have you had previous training or experience in influencing and advocacy? ....

2.0 Overall assessments to rate the capacity assessment process
2.1 Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about the capacity assessment. Tick or cross one box for each line.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NOT APPLICABLE
a) I needed to understand what our capacity for influencing is						
b) The assessment process was interesting						
c) Now I want to further build my capacity for influencing and advocacy						
d) The influencing capacity assessment was relevant to my work						
e) Now I am better informed to do influencing better						

3.0 Content of the assessment

3.1 Please rate the different parts of the process. Tick or cross one box for each line

	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	NOT APPLICABLE
a) Presentations						
b) Group work and group discussions						
c) Exercises						

3.2 Please rate the different exercises: How accurate was the assessment, resulting from the exercise?

	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	NOT APPLICABLE
1. Introduction – understanding 'Influencing'						
2. Capacity for developing an influencing strategy						
3. Clarity of purpose and change goal						
4. Capacity for context analysis						
5. Policy analysis						
6. Capacity for engaging in government budget processes						
7. Power analysis						
8. Human resource capacity and technical competence for influencing						
9. Capacity for using digital, social and conventional media						
10. Capacity for advocacy and lobbying						

3.3 Which exercise in the assessment is the most useful to you and why?

Most useful: ....
....
Why: ....
....

3.4 Which two exercises were the easiest to understand and follow?
1. ....
2. ....

3.5 Which two exercises were the most difficult to understand and follow?
1. ....
2. ....

3.6 Was enough time given for the exercises?'

Yes or No, add comments if necessary
....
....

4.0 Facilitation of the assessment
4.1 Tick or cross one box

	EXCELLENTLY	VERY WELL	WELL	FAIR	POOR
How did the facilitator perform overall?					

Please add comments if any: ....
....
....

4.2 What could be done to improve facilitation? ....
....
....

4.3 Tick or cross one box

	EXCELLENTLY	VERY WELL	WELL	FAIR	POOR
How did the facilitator perform in discussion issues and answering questions?					

4.4 Tick or cross one box

	EXCELLENTLY	VERY WELL	WELL	FAIR	POOR
Did you feel you were able to participate fully?					

4.5 Were there any issues/topics that were discriminatory or not inclusive of any group?
....

5.0 Improvements to the assessment
5.1 Do you think this assessment accurately captured the level of the organisation's capacity for influencing? Yes/no
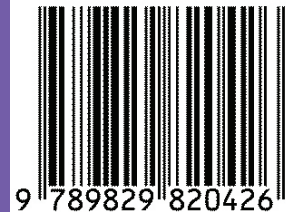If no, please say why ....
....

5.2 Please provide frank and honest comments on any part of the capacity assessment process and the various exercises
....
....

Thank-you!