



# Research and Evaluation Capacity Assessment Tool and Resource Package

## Tool Summary

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# Tool Summary

<b>Domain 1: Research and Evaluation Design</b>	
<b>Subdomains</b>	<b>Core Competencies</b>
1.1 Overall Development	Needs Identification; Evaluation Questions; Methods Selection; Gender Integration; Research and Evaluation Ethics; Protocol Writing
1.2 Sampling	Quantitative – Sites; Quantitative – Participants; Qualitative – Sites; Qualitative – Participants
1.3 Tools	Quantitative; Qualitative

  

<b>Domain 2: Fieldwork</b>	
<b>Subdomains</b>	<b>Core Competencies</b>
2.1 Team Mobilization	Recruitment; Training; Pilot; Relationships; Planning
2.2 Interviewing Techniques	Quantitative; Qualitative – Individual Interviews; Qualitative – Group Facilitation; Gender Integration
2.3 Data Collection Management	Gender Integration; Safety; Procedures; Supervision; Quality Assurance

  

<b>Domain 3: Data Management</b>	
<b>Subdomains</b>	<b>Core Competencies</b>
3.1 Primary Quantitative	Set-Up; Security and Quality; IT Support; Data Entry and Transfer; Analysis Files
3.2 Secondary Quantitative	Quality; Comparability; Data Structure
3.3 Qualitative	Technology; Naming Conventions; Data Storage and Security; Datasets

  

<b>Domain 4: Data Analysis</b>	
<b>Subdomains</b>	<b>Core Competencies</b>
4.1 Primary Quantitative	Analysis Plan; Gender Integration
4.2 Secondary Quantitative	Analytic Insightfulness; Analysis Plan; Gender Integration
4.3 Qualitative	Organization; Integration; Output and Analysis; Gender Integration

  

<b>Domain 5: Information Sharing</b>	
<b>Subdomains</b>	<b>Core Competencies</b>
5.1 Translation	Interpretation; Stakeholder Engagement; Gender Integration
5.2 Dissemination	Strategy; Writing; Visualizations; Production; Facilitation; Action Planning

  

<b>Domain 6: Organizational Capacity</b>	
<b>Subdomains</b>	<b>Core Competencies</b>
6.1 Organizational Management	Action and Commitment; Organizational Objectives; Relationships; Adaptation and Self-Renewal
6.2 Human Resources Management	Personnel Policies; Job Descriptions; Staffing Levels and Retention; Performance Management; Gender Integration
6.3 Financial Management	Financial Policies and Procedures; Accounting System; Budgeting

# Domain 1: Research and Evaluation Design



## Subdomain 1.1: Overall Development

### Core Competency: Needs Identification

#### Performance Ideal

Ability to work effectively with donors, program implementers, beneficiaries, and other stakeholders to accurately define information needs and align these with time, budget, data, and practical and political realities, including understanding of different research approaches and evaluation types.

#### Prompts

1. Describe experience the organization has identifying needs with donors/program implementers/other stakeholders.
2. Are there procedures or templates used to calculate budget or resources needed?
3. Describe experience with different research approaches and evaluation types (e.g., formative, process, outcome, impact evaluations; operations research; implementation science).
4. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

#### Evidence

Written procedures or templates to calculate budget or resources needed.

### Core Competency: Evaluation Questions

#### Performance Ideal

Substantial expertise identifying quantitative and qualitative research or evaluation questions that will meet the information needs of stakeholders and can be answered with acceptable rigor given the program theory of change and any contextual factors.

#### Prompts

1. Describe staff member experience developing evaluation questions in collaboration with stakeholders.
2. Do staff members have experience identifying key quantitative/qualitative evaluation questions?
3. Does the organization use a procedure or process for determining evaluation questions?
4. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Core Competency: Methods Selection

### Performance Ideal

Significant knowledge of and experience with various study designs and quantitative and qualitative methods, including adaptive evaluation, such that one can determine what approach(es) best fit the evaluation questions, given user needs and any contextual factors.

### Prompts

1. Describe staff member knowledge and experience in study designs and quantitative and/or qualitative methods.
2. Describe staff member knowledge and experience of different qualitative research approaches such as phenomenology, grounded theory, content analysis, and case studies.
3. Can staff members sufficiently design and plan for quantitative/qualitative methods to address a variety of evaluation questions?
4. Has the organization had experience creatively determining approaches for complex or unique evaluations?
5. Does the organization have experience using participatory methods?
6. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Core Competency: Gender Integration

### Performance Ideal

Knowledge about the different roles, responsibilities, attributes, and experiences of women, men, and sexual and gender minorities in their given context. They understand how these may relate to the study topic and have experience addressing gender in study design.

### Prompts

1. Describe staff member experience addressing aspects of gender in study design.
2. Do staff members have experience designing evaluations which have considered the roles and aspects of minority groups including gender and sexual minorities?
3. Do staff members have experience developing theories of change/results chains/etc. that address how gender is expected to play a role?
4. Describe staff member experience working on studies addressing sensitive gender topics such as gender-based violence and early and forced child marriage?
5. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Core Competency: Research and Evaluation Ethics

### Performance Ideal

Team members have certification in research and evaluation ethics and significant experience assessing risk and benefit to participants and ensuring privacy and confidentiality. Someone on the team has expertise in addressing ethical and safety concerns for sensitive topics. Experience with requirements for in-country ethical and statistical review boards, committees, and ministries, including having on hand tools for informed consent, recruitment.

### Prompts

1. Describe the organization team members' training and certification in research ethics.
2. Are certifications up to date? How is this tracked by the organization?
3. Does the organization have experience assessing risk and benefit to participants and ensuring privacy and confidentiality?
4. Describe staff member expertise in working with vulnerable populations such as children, people living with HIV, people who are incarcerated, victims of gender-based violence, sex workers, or men who have sex with men.
5. Describe the organization's experience with requirements of in-country ethical and statistical review boards, committees, and ministries.
6. What challenges has the organization faced in submitting, tracking, presenting, expediting (as needed), required forms and templates? Relevant documentation?
7. What steps for tracking review are in place?
8. Does the organization have available examples of informed consent tools, including recruitment scripts and consent forms, appropriate for a range of participant ages, topics, and contexts?
9. Do staff members have substantial experience adapting tools to specific evaluations or studies?
10. What is the process for responding to reporting requirements after approval?
11. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

### Evidence

- Certification tracking, if available
- Examples of informed consent tools
- Any SOPs, forms or templates used for ethical review

## Core Competency: Protocol Writing

### Performance Ideal

Significant experience developing research or evaluation protocols. Staff have experience writing protocols including sections on research or evaluation questions, theory of change/conceptual framework, design, sampling strategy, estimation strategy and model (quantitative), threats and limitations, ethical considerations, data requirements, collection and management, and gender integration. Standardized templates available for staff members to adapt and substantial experience adapting them to meet the needs of different funders and ethical and statistical review boards.



## Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience developing protocols using quantitative and/or qualitative methods.
2. Does the organization have experience writing protocol sections on evaluation questions, theory of change/conceptual framework, evaluation/study design?
3. Does the organization have experience writing sections on sampling strategy, estimation strategy and model (quantitative)?
4. Does the organization have experience writing sections on ethical considerations, data requirements, collection and management, and gender integration?
5. When developing protocols, what are the organizational processes, revisions, roles, and responsibilities?
6. Do staff have experience determining limitations to study design, such as spillover, biases, threats to validity and reliability?
7. Are staff familiar with quality criteria to determine trustworthiness in qualitative research?
8. Are staff familiar with qualitative limitations including dependability, transferability, credibility, and reflexivity?
9. Does the organization use and/or adapt standardized templates? How were the templates developed?
10. Does the organization have experience adapting templates to meet the needs of different funders and ethical and statistical review boards?
11. Do forms and templates and processes differ for qualitative and quantitative studies? How so?
12. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Evidence

- Protocol templates - these may be adapted for quantitative/qualitative studies, for different funders, or for different ethical and statistical review boards.

## Subdomain 1.2: Sampling

### Core Competency: Quantitative—Sites

#### Performance Ideal

Deep knowledge about and ability to conduct sample size determination and operationalize sampling for study designs ranging from simple to complex (e.g., multi-arm RCTs using difference-in-difference estimation); thorough understanding of the factors affecting representativeness in sampling, expertise in developing sample frames and sampling plans with a range of complexity (including multi-stage).

## Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience conducting sample size determination for simple study designs.
2. Does the organization have skills and experience for determining complex study design (e.g., multi-arm RCTs using difference-in-difference estimation)?
3. Do staff members have experiences determining sampling needs to achieve representativeness of target population?

4. Does the organization demonstrate expertise in developing sample frames and sampling plans with a range of complexity (including multi-stage)?
5. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## **Core Competency: Quantitative—Participants**

### **Performance Ideal**

Understands how research or evaluation questions and study design affect site and participant selection needs, and how concepts such as spillover and contamination are important. Understands effects of sampling unit nonresponse and replacement on representativeness and sample size needs. Team has significant experience in site and participant selection, including for studies with complex participant eligibility criteria.

### **Prompts**

1. Describe the organization's experience considering and planning for participant selection.
2. Does the organization have experience planning and making considerations for spillover and contamination?
3. Do staff members have experiences handling sample unit nonresponse and replacement?
4. Does the organization demonstrate expertise in site and participant selection, including for studies with complex participant eligibility criteria?
5. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## **Core Competency: Qualitative—Sites**

### **Performance Ideal**

Knowledge about a variety of qualitative sampling strategies and when to use them, and has significant experience applying such strategies; also has solid understanding of the minimum and maximum number of interviews or group discussions needed per subgroup (e.g., men/women, young women/older women, rural/urban) per method to surface most key themes, knows how to set group size to support manageable but dynamic discussion.

### **Prompts**

1. Describe the organization's experience designing and applying a variety of qualitative sampling strategies (e.g., purposeful, snowball, quota, intensity, etc.)
2. Does the organization have experience determining minimum and maximum numbers of participants per subgroup, by method?
3. Does the organization have experience determining sample size for focus groups to support manageable yet dynamic discussions?
4. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Core Competency: Qualitative—Participants

### Performance Ideal

Understands how research or evaluation questions and study design affect site and participant selection needs and has significant experience in site and participant selection including for studies with complex participant eligibility criteria.

### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience determining site and participant selection needs.
2. Does the organization have significant experience in site and participant selection for studies with complex participant eligibility criteria? Describe this experience.
3. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Subdomain 1.3: Tools

### Core Competency: Quantitative

### Performance Ideal

The organization has a full set of procedures and quantitative tool templates or examples in place and has considerable experience adapting to specific evaluations or studies. Has significant experience developing surveys using paper forms as well as a variety of platforms/software and studies with multiple surveys for different participant types. Has experience translating tools into local languages and back-translating, and conducting tool pre-testing, piloting, and associated revisions. Understands factors affecting validity and reliability in quantitative measures and may have experience with cognitive interviews and related question assessment methods.

### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's existing procedures and tool templates for quantitative data collection.
2. Does the organization have experience adapting tools for specific evaluations or studies and conducting tool pre-testing, piloting, and associated revisions?
3. Does the organization have experience using paper forms?
4. Does the organization have experience using a variety of platforms/software with complex skip patterns and studies with multiple surveys for different participant type?
5. Translating and back-translating into local languages?
6. Understands factors affecting validity and reliability in quantitative measures?
7. Has experience with cognitive interviews and related question assessment methods?
8. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

### Evidence

- SOPs and tool templates for quantitative data collection

## Core Competency: Qualitative

### Performance Ideal

The organization has a full set of procedures and corresponding qualitative tools for a range of method types (e.g., in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and observations) in place and has considerable experience adapting tools to specific evaluations or studies over the years; includes experience translating tools into local languages and back-translating, and conducting tool piloting and associated revisions.

### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's procedures and corresponding sample or template qualitative tools for different method types (in-depth interviews, focus groups, observations, others).
2. Does the organization have experience developing tools for a variety of qualitative methods (in-depth interviews, focus groups, photovoice, projective techniques, most significant change, etc.)?
3. Does the organization have considerable experience adapting tools and conducting pilots for evaluations or other research?
4. Does the organization have experience translating tools into local languages and back-translating?
5. Does the organization invite potential respondents and/or stakeholders to review tools prior to implementation?
6. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

### Evidence

- SOPs and tool templates for qualitative data collection

# Domain 2: Fieldwork



## Subdomain 2.1: Team Mobilization

### Core Competency: Recruitment

#### Performance Ideal

The organization has staff qualified to serve as research assistants and supervisors as well as a large network of qualified research assistants and supervisors they have worked with in the past. Qualified personnel include specialists in one or more research and evaluation area such as GIS/mapping, chart review, participant observation, focus group discussions, anthropometry, and phlebotomy. Personnel are of diverse gender, age, and ethnolinguistic groups, such that matching staff and participant characteristics is possible when needed.

#### Prompts

1. Describe the organizational staff composition.
2. Does the organization's staff include specialists in a variety of specific evaluation technical areas?
3. Are staff personnel able to match participant characteristics in gender, age, and ethnolinguistic groups?
4. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

### Core Competency: Training

#### Performance Ideal

Expertise, established tools, facilities, and equipment to provide training across the different roles of the team, for both general research conduct as well as tasks adapted to a specific study.

#### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's established tools, facilities, and equipment to provide training.
2. Is staff training adapted or determined based on specific studies?
3. Are training competencies for staff defined by the organization?
4. How does the organization measure whether staff have achieved competencies after training?
5. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

#### Evidence

- Staff training materials

## Core Competency: Pilot

### Performance Ideal

Organization has the experience and relationships to engage community and stakeholders in facilitating a pilot and apply lessons from the pilot to address potential issues before full-scale implementation.

### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience designing and implementing pilot studies.
2. Does the organization use and/or adapt protocols based on results of pilots?
3. Does the organization include pilot studies and time for revisions in planning and budgetary considerations?
4. Do forms and templates and processes differ for qualitative and quantitative studies?

## Core Competency: Relationships

### Performance Ideal

Ability to establish or leverage connections with governmental and non-governmental stakeholders to facilitate access to data collection sites and study participants.

### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's relationships with various stakeholders. Do staff have connections to state and local village leaders to effectively describe the study and establish trust with the community?
2. Does the organization have experience leveraging various relationships to facilitate access to data collection sites and study participants?
3. Does the organization maintain contact with stakeholders throughout the evaluation process? How is this done, if at all?
4. Does the organization have procedures or processes for sharing relevant information with various stakeholders?
5. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Core Competency: Planning

### Performance Ideal

Experience mapping out a realistic and logical timeline attentive to team members, transport, cost, and contingencies. Experience planning for pre-deployment briefings, sensitization, travel and accommodation, inventory preparation (questionnaires, equipment, incentive items), safety and remote communication.

## Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience with planning for qualitative versus quantitative data collection fieldwork for a range of study sample sizes
2. Does the organization have experience planning project timelines to account for various aspects of fieldwork?
3. Does fieldwork planning typically involve considerations for training, sensitization, travel, and preparations to be able to conduct fieldwork?
4. Does planning account for safety and remote communications of fieldwork?
5. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Subdomain 2.2: Interviewing Techniques

### Core Competency: Quantitative

#### Performance Ideal

Staff have significant experience administering surveys and conducting interviews, including understanding how to follow a script when asking questions.

#### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience with conducting quantitative interviews.
2. Does the organization have experience using various techniques including in-person, telephone, and Computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI)?
3. Does the organization have expertise to plan for the benefits and limitations of using various techniques?
4. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

### Core Competency: Qualitative—Individual Interviews

#### Performance Ideal

Staff have skills and experience conducting one-on-one interviews, including following a semi-structured guide, posing open-ended questions, and asking follow-up questions based on responses.

#### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience with conducting qualitative interviews.
2. Does the organization have experience using various techniques to facilitate interviews with individuals (e.g., projective techniques, most significant change)?
3. Do staff members have experience with obtaining consent from individuals?
4. Do staff members have experience with a variety of interviewing techniques?
5. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Core Competency: Qualitative – Group Facilitation

### Performance Ideal

Staff have skills and experience conducting focus group discussions, and the ability to use specialized methods and tools as part of fostering input from the group and interactions across the group.

### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience with conducting qualitative focus group discussions.
2. Does the organization have experience managing challenging situations (e.g., dominating personalities, quiet participants, combative participants, etc.) during focus group discussions?
3. Do staff members have experience using various techniques to facilitate group discussion (e.g., ripple effects mapping, most significant change, outcome harvesting, etc.)?
4. Do staff members have experience with obtaining consent from individuals who will partake in group discussions?
5. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Core Competency: Gender Integration

### Performance Ideal

Knowledge about the different roles, responsibilities, attributes, and experiences of women, men, and sexual and gender minorities in their given context and understanding of how these aspects affect interviewing and group facilitation techniques.

### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience with considering various aspects of gender during interviews?
2. Describe the organization's experience with considering and managing gender dynamics during focus group discussions?
3. Does the organization have experience conducting interviews with individuals and groups from various genders and/or sexual minorities?
4. Do staff members have experience addressing sensitive topics for various gender and minority populations?
5. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?



## Subdomain 2.3: Data Collection Management

### Core Competency: Gender Integration

#### Performance Ideal

Commitment to understanding how gender norms may impact the performance of staff and participant responses and the follow-through to implement appropriate field protocols; this applies to any research or evaluation topic, not just those with a gender focus.

#### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience with considering gender norms related to staff performance.
2. Describe the organization's experience with considering how gender norms can affect participant responses.
3. Does the organization have experience following through to implement appropriate field protocols related to gender and gender norms, particularly for sensitive topics like gender-based violence?
4. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

### Core Competency: Safety

#### Performance Ideal

Attentive to safety of staff and participants and the follow-through to implement appropriate safety protocols.

#### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience with considering safety of staff during fieldwork.
2. Describe the organization's experience with considering safety of participants during fieldwork, particularly when discussing sensitive topics.
3. Does the organization have experience following through to implement appropriate field protocols related to ensure safety of staff and participants?
4. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

### Core Competency: Procedures

#### Performance Ideal

Procedures and corresponding tools in place. Experience adapting procedures and tools to specific research and evaluations and settings, even after data collection has started.

#### Prompts

1. Does the organization have SOPs developed for data collection, including quality control?
2. Does the organization have experience adapting SOPs to specific contexts?

3. Are the SOPs developed with the need for flexibility and rapidly changing contexts in mind?

#### Evidence

- SOPs for data collection

### Core Competency: Supervision

#### Performance Ideal

Ability to develop and follow a home office to field (and vice versa) communication plan. Maintain staffing and systems to track progress, costs and expenditures and oversee multiple data collection teams operating simultaneously, including in remote, dangerous, or hard to reach areas. Ability to coordinate with and across data collection teams, monitor and address challenges and implement course correct in real time. Debriefs teams regularly and provides performance feedback.

#### Prompts

1. Does the organization have experience developing communication plans between home office and field teams?
2. Describe how the organization tracks progress, costs, and expenditures, and oversees data collection teams.
3. Does the organization have SOPs for coordinating across data collection teams?
4. Describe the process used to share learning across teams in real time.

### Core Competency: Quality Assurance

#### Performance Ideal

Expertise, experience, and availability to follow the data collection processes from the home office and assess and understand the quality of the data along the way. Ability to recognize challenges including low response rates and data suggestive of error and capacity to intervene expeditiously and coordinate to ensure high quality data.

#### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience managing data quality and addressing issues in data quality during fieldwork.
2. Are processes in place to monitor and maintain the quality of the data interviews and data capture?
3. What steps are taken to communicate concerns in data quality?
4. How are issues and steps to resolution determined and communicated with field teams?
5. What are some challenges and corresponding solutions the organization has determined during fieldwork?
6. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

# Domain 3: Data Management

## Subdomain 3.1: Primary Quantitative



### Core Competency: Set-up

#### Performance Ideal

The organization owns or is able to purchase tablets. Multiple staff members with expertise in programming tablets, including experience in setting file structure and format.

#### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience and ability to utilize CAPI.
2. What resources are available to support data collection with CAPI?
3. What staff members can program tablets?
4. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

### Core Competency: Security and Quality

#### Performance Ideal

Ability to run data checks as well as edit and clean data during the data collection process. Standards for data entry where applicable. Established protocols for ensuring the tablets, paper forms, data, and data transfer are secure.

#### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's ability to account for security and quality while using CAPI for data collection.
2. What capabilities do staff members have to run data checks?
3. Are processes used to edit and clean data?
4. How is secure data transfer achieved?
5. For paper-based, do you have standards in place for data entry?
6. Are there opportunities to improve security and quality of data management?

### Core Competency: IT Support

#### Performance Ideal

The organization has skilled IT personnel on staff to troubleshoot any technical glitches or challenges. Experience with IT support and CAPI programmers working together.

#### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's IT capability to troubleshoot technical challenges.
2. How do IT support typically work with CAPI programmers?
3. Are there opportunities to improve IT support?

## **Core Competency: Data Entry and Transfer**

### **Performance Ideal**

Ability to develop and execute a plan for regular data transfers during data collection. Systems for ensuring final data transfers happen in a timely and efficient manner.

### **Prompts**

1. Describe the organization's processes for data transfer during/following collection.
2. What processes are in place to guide data transfer?
3. How are field staff guided in data transfer?
4. Are there quality control processes in place for paper-based tools? Do you use double data entry?
5. Are there opportunities to improve data transfer?

## **Core Competency: Analysis Files**

### **Performance Ideal**

Staff members with experience preparing a comprehensive set of analysis files and corresponding documentation.

### **Prompts**

1. Describe the organization's processes to prepare data analysis files.
2. What documentation is involved in preparation of analysis files?
3. Is analysis file preparation guided by protocols that address security and privacy?
4. Are there opportunities to improve the process?

## **Subdomain 3.2: Secondary Quantitative**

### **Core Competency: Quality**

### **Performance Ideal**

Expertise and experience in assessing quality of routine and other secondary data sources.

### **Prompts**

1. Describe the organization's experience assessing the quality of secondary data.
2. What types of secondary data sources do staff have experience reviewing?
3. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Core Competency: Comparability

### Performance Ideal

Ability to review multiple data sources and identify comparable findings. Experience blending data sources in appropriate and complementary ways.

### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience assessing the comparability of secondary data.
2. What experiences do staff members have blending data sources for studies?
3. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Core Competency: Data Structure

### Performance Ideal

The organization has staff with deep knowledge of and experience working with various secondary data sources and databases, including performance monitoring data, routine health information, and other survey data such as DHS, MICS, etc. In-depth understanding and experience with importing, exporting, and merging across various software and databases.

### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience with various secondary data sources and databases.
2. What experiences do staff members have importing, exporting, and merging across various software and databases?
3. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Subdomain 3.3: Qualitative

### Core Competency: Technology

### Performance Ideal

Knowledge around the use of technology for data collection and communications across teams, including cell phones, What's App, digital recorders, tablets, digital cameras, video cameras, dongles, survey gizmo, etc. Ensuring a backup plan is established to account for any technology challenges.

### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience using technology to collect qualitative data.
2. What technologies or devices do staff members have experience using for data collection?
3. What challenges has the organization experienced when using technology?
4. Does the technology appropriately align with data being collected?
5. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Core Competency: Naming Conventions

### Performance Ideal

Ability to establish a logical and consistent approach to numbering/tracking across multiple data collection tools and multiple types of information.

### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's tracking across multiple data collection tools or data types.
2. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Core Competency: Data Storage and Security

### Performance Ideal

Adequate physical space and equipment to transfer, transcribe, translate, enter, code, analyze, share, and store data in ethically sound ways and in line with the policies of the organization and the donor (including making de-identified data publicly available, if required).

### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's environment for staff members working with data, including sensitive data.
2. What sort of precautions are taken to ensure data are stored and shared in ethically sound ways?
3. Do staff members have experience making data de-identified for public sharing?
4. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Core Competency: Datasets

### Performance Ideal

Systems and skills to establish a written record (transcript) from the data collection tool(s) used, including understanding of linguistic nuances, and maintaining consistency.

### Prompts

1. What system(s) do(es) the organization use to transcribe data for analysis?
2. Do staff members have experience working with data across different languages?
3. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

# Domain 4: Data Analysis



## Subdomain 4.1: Primary Quantitative

### Core Competency: Analysis Plan

#### Performance Ideal

Thorough understanding of pros and cons of different analytical techniques. Ability to ensure a high quality and ethically sound approach to analysis. Organization owns the analysis software and has sufficient licenses. Ability to determine what analysis is needed to address the research or evaluation questions, including having standard operating procedures for analysis in place.

#### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's process to analyze data.
2. Does the organization have experience applying a variety of statistical analysis techniques?
3. How are analytic techniques determined for each specific study or evaluation?
4. Does the organization own/have licenses to sufficient software to support analysis?
5. What standard procedures are in place to support analysis?
6. Are there opportunities to improve the process?

### Core Competency: Gender Integration

#### Performance Ideal

Staff can apply a gender lens when conducting analysis and have skills to analyze gender-sensitive data and data that is disaggregated by relevant subgroups, such as sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, and age to identify patterns related to gender. Understanding of gender and its intersections with other forms of difference.

#### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience applying a gender lens to analysis.
2. What skills do staff members have to analyze gender-sensitive data and/or data disaggregated by relevant subgroups?
3. What experience do staff members have analyzing data for interactions between gender and other participant characteristics?
4. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Subdomain 4.2: Secondary Quantitative

### Core Competency: Analytic Insightfulness

#### Performance Ideal

Staff with ability to discern how various secondary sources relate to the evaluation questions. Ability to generate multiple types of output. Sophisticated understanding of how to interpret secondary data sources and draw conclusions.

#### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience using various secondary sources to answer evaluation questions.
2. What experience to staff have analyzing data from various sources and producing output?
3. What experiencing to staff members have importing, exporting, and merging across various software and databases?
4. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

### Core Competency: Analysis Plan

#### Performance Ideal

Skill and experience with keeping the analysis plan appropriately aligned to a mix of secondary data sources. Thorough understanding of pros and cons of different analytical techniques. Ability to ensure a high-quality approach to analysis.

#### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience keeping the analysis plan aligned to secondary data sources.
2. Does the organization have experience applying a variety of statistical analysis techniques?
3. How are analytic techniques determined for each specific study or evaluation?
4. Does the organization own/have licenses to sufficient software to support analysis?
5. What standard procedures are in place to support analysis?
6. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?



## Core Competency: Gender Integration

### Performance Ideal

Staff are able to apply a gender lens when conducting analysis and have skills to analyze gender-sensitive data and data that is disaggregated by relevant subgroups, such as sex, gender identity, religion, location, and age, in order to identify patterns related to gender. Understanding of gender and its intersections with other forms of difference.

### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience with and training related to applying a gender lens to analysis.
2. What skills do staff members have to analyze gender-sensitive data and/or data disaggregated by relevant subgroups?
3. What experience do staff members have analyzing data for interactions between gender and other participant characteristics?
4. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Subdomain 4.3: Qualitative

### Core Competency: Organization

### Performance Ideal

Licenses for qualitative data analysis software. Ability to link research or evaluation questions and data collection tools to coding approach and to develop codebooks and analysis plans. Expertise in developing and applying both pre-established and emergent codes. Understanding of techniques such as intercoder reliability and data saturation checks.

### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience and approach to coding.
2. How does the organization establish intercoder reliability?
3. Does the organization own/have licenses to sufficient software to support analysis?
4. Do staff members have experience working with both pre-established and emergent codes?
5. How does the organization assess data saturation?
6. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Core Competency: Integration

### Performance Ideal

Awareness of differences in reporting quantitative and qualitative findings. Skill in placing data in the context of complementary (or secondary) survey/indicator data.

### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience integrating qualitative and quantitative findings.
2. Do staff members have experience placing data in the context of complementary data?
3. How are field notes usually linked to transcripts?
4. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Core Competency: Output and Analysis

### Performance Ideal

Ability to generate and analyze multiple types of output from qualitative data analysis software. Sophisticated understanding of how to interpret qualitative data and draw conclusions. Recognition of the pros and cons of quantifying qualitative data.

### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience producing and interpreting outputs from qualitative data analysis software.
2. Does the organization have experience using memo writing and matrices to analyze qualitative data?
3. Do staff members have experience interpreting, drawing conclusions from, and synthesizing themes from qualitative analysis software outputs?
4. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Core Competency: Gender Integration

### Performance Ideal

Staff are able to apply a gender lens when conducting analysis and have skills to analyze gender-sensitive data and data that is disaggregated by relevant subgroups, such as sex and age, in order to identify patterns related to gender. Understanding of gender and its intersections with other forms of difference, like disability status, religion, and economic status.

### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's experience with and training related to applying a gender lens to qualitative analysis.

2. What skills do staff members have to analyze gender-sensitive data and/or data disaggregated by relevant subgroups?
3. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

# Domain 5: Information Sharing



## Subdomain 5.1: Translation

### Core Competency: Interpretation

#### Performance Ideal

Staff have the skills to interpret quantitative and qualitative data output and analysis to extract meaning, findings, and recommendations for different audiences.

#### Prompts

1. Does the organization have staff who can analyze data using different tools and methodologies?
2. Does the organization have the capacity to understand the data needs of different users and present data in the most appropriate manner?
3. Does the organization have experience synthesizing and communicating data in a manner that can be understood by non-researchers?
4. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

### Core Competency: Stakeholder Engagement

#### Performance Ideal

Staff can engage stakeholders in the interpretation of analysis to understand stakeholder perspectives and extract meaning and significance of the data.

#### Prompts

1. Does the organization have experience working with stakeholders to review and discuss data?
2. Does the organization have experience working with stakeholders at various stages of the evaluation process to understand which questions need to be answered, whether the data available are adequate to answer those questions, and what decision will be made with those answers?
3. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Core Competency: Gender Integration

### Performance Ideal

Staff consider issues of gender equity when translating data and formulating proposed recommendations.

### Prompts

1. Does the organization use a systematic approach to consider gender equity in data analysis and reporting?
2. Are staff trained on the importance of considering gender equity in research and evaluation?
3. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Subdomain 5.2: Dissemination

### Core Competency: Strategy

### Performance Ideal

Expertise in identifying what information is needed by whom and when, and determining what materials are appropriate for different audiences, including potentially vulnerable or special populations.

### Prompts

1. Does the organization have experience working with various types of stakeholders who may have different goals and/or needs for information?
2. Are the information needs of all stakeholders considered and addressed appropriately?
3. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

### Core Competency: Writing

### Performance Ideal

Ability to present findings, conclusions, and recommendations in a range of publications (e.g., report, brief, blog, journal article, conference paper) and in ways accessible to both technical and non-technical audiences.

### Prompts

1. Does the organization have experienced writers who can present information in different formats for different audiences?

2. Provide examples of reports and briefs that have been written and for which funders and audiences.
3. Provide examples of journal articles and conference papers that have been accepted.
4. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Core Competency: Visualizations

### Performance Ideal

Staff have the skills to synthesize data and present findings in constructive ways through actionable narrative and clear and compelling tables, charts, and other graphics.

### Prompts

1. Do staff have experience creating visualizations for quantitative and qualitative results?
2. What kind of software do staff have experience with for data visualization (e.g., Tableau, Excel, ArcGIS, PowerPoint)?
3. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

### Performance Ideal

Ability to design and edit reports and other knowledge products, including having access to and the ability to follow USAID report templates, style sheets, and branding requirements.

## Core Competency: Production

### Prompts

1. Does the organization have experience using USAID, government, or other donor templates, style sheets and branding requirements?
2. Is there someone on staff identified to review documents for compliance with branding requirements?
3. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Core Competency: Facilitation

### Performance Ideal

Expertise in planning events for stakeholders, including funders, beneficiary groups, government, civil society, and program staff and facilitating discussions around findings, conclusions, recommendations.

### Prompts

1. Does the organization have experience convening groups of stakeholders?
2. Does the organization have staff or consultants who are skilled at facilitating discussions about findings and coming to consensus on recommendations?
3. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Core Competency: Action Planning

### Performance Ideal

Expertise in working with stakeholders to apply results to the decision-making process and carry out action planning to encourage use of findings.

### Prompts

1. Does the organization have experience facilitating the use of data for decision making?
2. Does the organization have access to facilitators skilled at leading action planning?
3. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

# Domain 6: Organizational Capacity



## Subdomain 6.1: Organizational Management

### Core Competency: Action and Commitment

#### Performance Ideal

The organization has the ability to plan, make decisions, and act on the decisions collectively. This includes structures that can function efficiently with the available resources, ability to mobilize financial, institutional, and human resources to achieve collective goals, commitment to stable and action-oriented leadership, executive structures with ability to make binding commitments with relevant stakeholder(s), and effective monitoring of organizational work plans.

#### Prompts

1. Describe how the organization raises funds.
2. How many major funding sources does the organization have?
3. Does the organization have sufficient financial resources to continue current programs for the next year without additional funds?
4. Are there regular structured ways to exchange ideas and provide input? If so, how often?
5. Are staff consistently involved in decision making on major issues? Do they feel free to raise challenging issues?
6. Does the organization have access to consultants who are highly skilled technical experts who can fill in any gaps in staffing?
7. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

#### Evidence

- Business development or resource mobilization plan

### Core Competency: Organizational Objectives

#### Performance Ideal

The organization has a clear and coherent mandate, vision, and strategy, which is known by staff and used by management to guide decision-making aimed at meeting established goals. This includes having current and future financial resource base and the ability to generate own financial resources, access to knowledge and information sources; adequate human resources, facilities, equipment, and premises; and agreed standards and performance to measure results.

#### Prompts

1. Are the current vision and mission statements written? Are they periodically reviewed?



2. Are the vision and mission statements consistently used to guide priorities and actions?
3. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

### Evidence

- Vision, mission, and strategy documents

## Core Competency: Relationships

### Performance Ideal

The organization can purposefully build and maintain networks with external actors, including governmental structures, private sector parties, civil society organizations and other relevant entities. This includes relational competencies to build and maintain networks with various stakeholders, effective external and internal communication, political legitimacy, operational credibility, and reliability; participation in coalitions, adequate alliances with external stakeholders.

### Prompts

1. Is the organization an active member of any formal networks? If so, which ones? What role does the organization play in the network?
2. Has the organization taken a key role in leadership or knowledge sharing in the networks?
3. How often does the organization reach out to stakeholders?
4. Does the organization share findings and recommendations of assessments, studies, plans, and evaluations with key stakeholders?
5. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

### Evidence

- Stakeholder mapping or analyses
- Documentation on collaborations with other organizations and networks

## Core Competency: Adaptation and Self-Renewal

### Performance Ideal

The ability of an organization to learn internally and to adjust to shifting contexts and relevant trends. This includes internal openness to learning, active pursuit of internal learning on performance and strategy, confidence to change, leaving room for diversity, flexibility and creativity, ability to analyze current political trends, awareness of external market development, and use of opportunities and incentives.

### Prompts

1. Describe how the organization monitors its work and results. Are there opportunities to pause and reflect?

2. Does the organization consistently set realistic targets and quantitative and qualitative performance indicators?
3. Are lessons learned from monitoring incorporated into the design of subsequent projects?
4. How does the organization ensure that staff are sensitive to culture and gender issues in their work?
5. Does the organization have experience in identifying and adapting to changes in the internal and external environment? Give examples.
6. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

## Subdomain 6.2: Human Resources Management

### Core Competency: Personnel Policies

#### Performance Ideal

Personnel/employee policies exist to document and verify staff time, and that best practices in managing personnel are adhered to. Policies are regularly reviewed and known to all staff.

#### Prompts

1. Are policies consistently applied?
2. Are personnel records kept in a secure central file?
3. What is the gender, ethnic, religious, and cultural composition of management and staff?
4. Is the composition of the community reflected in the organization?
5. Do personnel policies fully comply with legal and donor requirements?
6. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

#### Evidence

- HR Manual

### Core Competency: Job Descriptions

#### Performance Ideal

The organization has systems for developing, disseminating, following, and updating job descriptions to ensure that staff roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood, and that they are relevant to the needs of the organization. There are appropriate written agreements for non-staff personnel (data collectors/enumerators, volunteers, etc.) to define their performance duties and pay.

#### Prompts

1. Do job descriptions include position titles and clearly specify roles and responsibilities, required qualifications and skills, and reporting?
2. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

#### Evidence

- Sample job descriptions
- Agreement templates for non-staff personnel

### Core Competency: Staffing Levels and Retention

#### Performance Ideal

The organization has a process for ensuring staffing levels are and remain adequate. There are strategies and guidelines to recruit staff and consultants. Staff have the resources they need to be effective (e.g., functional computer, access to the internet, access to software of the trade, office supplies), and there is minimal turnover and no attendance problems.

#### Prompts

1. How are new staff recruited?
2. How does the organization work to retain existing staff?
3. Are there opportunities for career advancement and salary increases?
4. Are staff professional development needs regularly identified? What training and staff development opportunities are available? Are these opportunities relevant to their current work? Are they used?
5. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

#### Evidence

1. HR Manual
2. Recruitment policies and procedures
3. Retention strategy or policy

## Core Competency: Performance Management

### Performance Ideal

The organization has a process for managing staff performance including performance appraisals and supervision. The organization has systems for managing field and office volunteers and interns including a comprehensive volunteer/intern policy, ensuring volunteers/interns are appropriately and consistently trained for their tasks, and provided with regular, consistent supervision and feedback.

### Prompts

1. What are the policies and procedures for staff and contractor supervision? Are these consistently followed?
2. How are workplans or performance objectives for staff and/or contractors set? How often are they prepared or revised?
3. Do staff and consultants have clear and detailed guidance of scopes of work for specific assignments?
4. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

### Evidence

- Performance appraisal forms
- Organization chart
- Supervision plans
- Employee and contractor work plans

## Core Competency: Gender Integration

### Performance Ideal

The organization is committed to diversity in composition of staffing, including gender and minority populations. The organization has policies in place to protect staff from discrimination and harassment related to sexual and gender identity or gender expression.

### Prompts

1. Does the organization have policies in place to protect staff from discrimination and harassment related to sexual and gender identity or gender expression? Are staff trained on such policies?
2. What processes are in place to address violations of policies that protect staff from discrimination related to sexual and gender identity or gender expression?
1. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

### Evidence

- HR policies or procedures

## Subdomain 6.3: Financial Management

### Core Competency: Financial Policies and Procedures

#### Prompts

1. Describe the organization's financial procedures and practices for safeguarding revenues,

#### Performance Ideal

The organization has complete and appropriate written financial policies and procedures that include back-up and recovery of financial documentation. Internal controls adequately safeguard the organization's assets, manage internal risk, and ensure the accuracy and reliability of accounting data. Procedures are known and consistently adhered to, reviewed, and updated.

obligations, and payments.

2. Are policies and procedures reviewed and updated regularly? When is the last time they were revised?
3. Have there been any internal or external audit of assessment findings on internal controls? Were there any significant weaknesses? Have those weaknesses been addressed?
4. How does the organization assess financial risk?
5. Have there been any problems with attempted or actual fraud? If so, when? How were they detected? How were they handled?
6. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

#### Evidence

- Financial policies and procedures manuals

### Core Competency: Accounting System

#### Performance Ideal

The organization has a fully operational computerized accounting system, including qualified accounting staff, and can respond to management needs and donor requirements.

#### Prompts

1. Does the organization have a reliable double-entry accounting system?

2. Is the accounting system computerized? If so, what software is used?
3. Is the accounting system reliable and does it meet current legal and donor requirements?
4. Is the organization able to track codes for each award, contract, and fund? Are there codes for unallowable expenses, sub-grants, and advances?
5. Does the financial system track expenses against each project budget ceiling and obligation?
6. Does the organization have qualified full-time accountants on staff?
7. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

### Evidence

- Finance monitoring tools

## Core Competency: Budgeting

### Performance Ideal

The organization has adequate financial planning systems, budget monitoring systems, budget templates, and the ability to determine additional funding requirements.

### Prompts

1. Is there a comprehensive annual master budget or core cost budget for administrative costs?
2. Does the budget process involve program and finance staff in a participatory and transparent manner?
3. Are project budgets realistic, clear and well documented?
4. Are required donor approvals consistently approved by senior managers?
5. Are required donor approvals consistently obtained for budget changes?
6. Are revenue and expenditure reports reviewed against project and master budgets? How often?
7. Are there opportunities for growth in this area? What are they?

### Evidence

- Annual and multi-year budgets
- Financial monitoring tools
- Revenue and expenditure reports

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