



Research and Evaluation Capacity Assessment Tool and Resource Package (RECAP)

RECAP Description

With increasing demand for accountability and rigorous research and evaluations of health programs, the Data for Impact (D4I) project developed RECAP to support local organizations to rapidly assess their technical and management capacity for conducting research and evaluations. This package is designed to help organizations with identifying areas that need strengthening or further development and creating actionable plans for institutional growth. The goal is to improve country and organizational capacity to address local health information gaps and have the readiness to receive direct awards from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and other funders. In addition, RECAP is a foundational activity for D4I and will be used for the project’s own monitoring, evaluation, and learning.

RECAP Development Process

RECAP builds upon previous tools and resources that have been designed to support evaluation capacity assessment and strengthening. The development of this package included a review of relevant tools, including MEASURE Evaluation’s Evaluation Capacity Strengthening Framework, USAID’s Organizational Capacity Assessment, and Non-US Organization Pre-Award Survey tools. It also included consultation meetings with evaluation experts from local institutions and organizations in Ghana and Nepal, USAID, and D4I partners.

Audience

RECAP was designed for research and evaluation organizations seeking to assess their current capacity, plan for institutional strengthening, and review progress over time. The assessment tool can be implemented by an organization’s full staff or by a team of the organization’s management and technical leaders. The user guide is designed for anyone planning, leading, or participating in the assessment and planning process.

RECAP Components

The package consists of a user guide, three assessment and institutional strengthening resources designed to be

implemented comprehensively, and a guide directing users to a list of readily available capacity strengthening resources.

Resource	Brief Description
User Guide	Provides step-by-step instructions for planning and implementing the capacity assessment and for developing an institutional strengthening plan.
Assessment Tool	Describes domains relevant to research and evaluation, subdomains, and core competencies, with defined performance ideals for each.
Excel Workbook	Supports data entry and visualization and includes suggested discussion questions. Probes for each sub-domain and provides a template for planning action steps that map to gaps identified in the assessment.
Facilitation PowerPoint	Provides a template for the facilitator and should be adapted to the context
Institutional Strengthening Resource Guide	Provides a full list of free and low-cost resources mapped to the domains. Users are encouraged to add additional resources specific to their context.

Assessment Tool

The key resource in the package, the assessment tool, provides research and evaluation organization leadership and staff with a systematic approach to assess their own performance. The tool is organized by six domains aligned to what is needed organizationally to undertake an evaluation or other research activity. The domains are:

1. Research and Evaluation Design
2. Fieldwork
3. Data Management
4. Data Analysis
5. Information Sharing
6. Organizational Capacity

As a facilitated self-assessment, the tool is designed to be adaptable with an organization choosing to implement some or all domains and/or subdomains.

Assessment Scoring

The tool includes a measurement scale that can be used to identify gaps between an organization’s current and desired capacity for each subdomain: Level 1 (Nascent), Level 2, (Emerging), Level 3 (Advancing), and Level 4 (Expert). A performance ideal is defined for each core competency. Participants will use the scores to visualize their capacity strengths and gaps and set priorities for action planning.