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Santé Familiale et Prévention du SIDA

Projet Régional pour l'Afrique de l'Ouest et Centrale

Institutional Development Assessments
of SFPS West and Central African Partner Organizations

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AED	Academy for Educational Development
AIDSCAP	AIDS Control and Prevention Program
AVSCI	Association for Voluntary and Safe Contraception International
BASICS	Basic Support for Institutionalizing Child Survival
CA	Cooperating Agency (organization working with USAID)
CBD	Community Based Distribution
CLUSA	Cooperative League of USA
COP	Chief of Party
COTR	Contracting Officer's Technical Representative
CPR	Contraceptive Prevalence Rate
CYP	Couple Years of Protection
DBMS	Database Management System
DHS	Demographic and Health Surveys
FP	Family Planning
FOCUS	Focus on Youth Project
FPLM	Family Planning Logistics Management Project
FPPMES	Family Planning Program Monitoring and Evaluation System
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GTZ	German Technical Assistance Agency
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IDA	Institutional Development Assessment
IDRC	International Development Research Centre (Canada)
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IPPF	International Planned Parenthood Federation
JHPIEGO	Johns Hopkins Program for International Education and Training in Reproductive Health
JHU/CCP	Johns Hopkins University/Center for Communication Programs
JSI	John Snow Incorporated
LOP	Life of Project
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
MIS	Management Information System
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPHSA	Ministry of Public Health and Social Action
MSH	Management Sciences for Health
MSP	Ministère de la Santé Publique
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OD/SS	Organizational Development/Sustainability Status Assessment Instrument
OR	Operations Research
ORS	Oral Rehydration Solution
PDRH	Projet de Développement des Ressources Humaines
PHNC	Population, Health and Nutrition Center (USAID)
POLICY	The POLICY Project (a USAID project of The Futures Group)
PSI	Population Services International
QOC	Quality of Care
RA	Resident Advisor
RAPI	Regional African Partner Institution

REDSO/WCA	Regional Economic and Development Support Office/WCA (USAID)
RF	Results Framework
RH	Reproductive Health
SDP	Service Delivery Point
SEATS	Family Planning Service Expansion and Technical Support Project
SFPS	Santé Familiale et Prévention du SIDA
SM	Social Marketing
SO	Strategic Objective
SOT	Strategic Objective Team
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
TA	Technical Assistance
UMT	Unified Management Team
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WCA	West and Central Africa
WRA	Women of Reproductive Age

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Santé Familiale et Prévention du SIDA (SFPS) Project is committed to increasing the capacity of its regional partner institutions for program development and implementation. An institutional development assessment (IDA) was conducted at ten SFPS Regional African Partner Institutions (RAPI) in six countries throughout West and Central Africa to document existing capacity and identify potential areas of collaboration and capacity-building in overall dimensions of management, financial management and technical capacity. The IDA employed a case-study approach during a one-week in-depth assessment at each institution. Multiple data collection methods were used to determine the institution's current status of capacity: self-administered questionnaires, interviews and document review. In addition, informal observations of the institution's facilities and day-to-day operations were also made during the assessment week.

The organizations who participated in the IDA are located in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Senegal and Togo. Of these ten organizations, six are NGOs, three are public organizations and one a regional organization. Five organizations have annual operating budgets of less than 100,000 USD, one organization has an annual budget between 100,000–500,000 USD, with three organizations operating with annual budgets over 500,000 USD (budgetary information from one organization was not available). Four organizations have staff sizes of less than ten, three others have staffs of between 10–30 people and the remaining three employ more than 30 people. Three of the organizations are less than five years old (one of which is newly emerging in its first year of activity), four others are between 5–10 years and three mature organizations have been in existence for more than ten years. Although many of the organizations provide services in multiple technical areas (e.g., training and research), three of the organizations focus primarily on IEC, four in operations research, one organization specializes in service delivery and two in training.

As a result of the IDAs, individual action plans were developed for each RAPI with proposed activities to enhance the organization's management, financial management and/or technical capacity. SFPS has identified four priority areas for institutional capacity-building where the project intends to focus its collaborative efforts. These common needs constitute four capacity areas: strategic management, marketing research and planning, financial planning, and grant-/proposal-writing. Three levels of capacity were defined within each of the organizational dimensions where common needs were found to exist among the ten RAPI with level 3 being the highest level of capacity. Institutions were categorized according to their level of capacity within each of these common need areas to provide a baseline measure. A composite indicator for institutional capacity development was developed where *strong* capacity was defined as the attainment of level 3 capacity in at least three of the four institutional capacity-building areas over the life of the project. To meet the needs in each area, interventions will comprise a series of activities to lead to increased capacity over time. This phased approach builds incrementally in knowledge and skills to enhance capacity in a dimension.

For management capacity (strategic planning and marketing), a strategic planning seminar is recommended for eight of the organizations to introduce these organizations to the concept and the benefits of institutionalizing a strategic planning process within an organization. This activity will be followed by technical assistance to individual RAPI on an as-needed basis. An introductory workshop on market research and planning is proposed for nine organizations. This workshop will assist organizations in undertaking marketing research to identify potential collaborators and develop mechanisms to track and evaluate their marketing efforts over time as well as introduce them to the value of elaborating a marketing plan. Technical assistance will be provided as-needed to RAPI to facilitate market research and marketing plan development.

While all the organizations possess adequate financial management capacity relative to their present level of activity and funding, they do not all possess and apply appropriate overhead rates. Only two of the organizations have overhead rates consistently applied to projects and another two other organizations apply fluctuating rates inconsistently. A basic, orientation seminar followed by individual TA will be provided for six RAPI on the importance and calculation of appropriate overhead rates.

All of the organizations except one expressed the need to either develop or further refine their grant-/ proposal-writing skills. A three-day grant-/proposal-writing workshop including the use of visual information will be provided to appropriate RAPI.

A followup IDA will be conducted on all ten RAPI at the end of the project to measure the change in each common capacity area as well as in overall institutional capacity. At that time, additional recommendations will be made and indicators established to further chart the path to increased institutional development among the RAPI.

In the past several years—and certainly visible over the life of the SFPS project so far—the number of West and Central African organizations working in the reproductive health sector has increased enormously as has the number of African regional partners collaborating with the SFPS Project. RAPI remain premier in their technical areas but are facing increasing competition for technical work and available resources in the region. In addition, competition is also increasing among African organizations for technical assistance to enhance overall institutional capacity and technical skills and competencies. The investment of the SFPS Project in its key partners is an important commitment to ensuring adequate and appropriate resources for meeting reproductive health needs in the region.

INTRODUCTION

The Santé Familiale et Prévention du SIDA (SFPS) Project, headquartered in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), is committed to increasing the capacity of its regional partner institutions for program development and implementation as one of its four overall results. (See Appendix A for an overview of the SFPS project.) The project works with ten different partner institutions in West and Central Africa to conduct activities in four countries (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo). Each of the SFPS Project's components[1] is linked to two or more African partner institutions with which the component collaborates to conduct the needed activities in the region or in a specific country.

The ten organizations assessed included six NGOs, three public organizations and one considered a regional organization because it is funded by nine countries (member-states) through a parent organization. Organizations were categorized by their annual operating budgets (only nine organizations provided data) and by number of full-time personnel. Five organizations had annual operating budgets of less than 100,000 USD, one organization had an annual budget between 100,000–500,000 USD, with three organizations operating with annual budgets over 500,000 USD. Four organizations had staff sizes of less than ten, three others had staffs of 10–30 people and the remaining three employed more than 30 people at the time of the assessments. Three of the organizations were less than five years old (one of which was newly emerging in its first year of activity), four others were between 5–10 years and three mature organizations had been in existence for more than ten years. Although many of the organizations provide services in multiple technical areas (e.g., training and research), three of the organizations focus primarily on IEC, four in operations research, one organization specializes in service delivery, and two in training. All organizations are considered regional in nature based on the fact that they provide services and carry out activities outside their respective countries.

In the second year of the project, a strategy for an institutional development assessment (IDA) of the regional African partner institutions (RAPI) was developed and implemented. IDAs were conducted in six francophone countries at ten organizations throughout West and Central Africa: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Senegal and Togo. The purpose of the assessment was to document existing capacity and identify potential areas of collaboration and capacity-building in overall management, financial management and technical capacity. This report is the synthesis of the series of ten individual IDA reports and presents findings from the ten week-long assessments, identifying areas of strength and those in need of improvement within the organizations. (See References for a full listing of the reports.) Potential areas for collaboration are proposed as well as indicators to measure progress towards the achievement of goals in those capacity areas where needs common to several of the RAPI were identified.

BACKGROUND

The objective of the IDA at each organization was to identify a baseline level of capacity, an operational definition and a method for measuring the change in capacity among SFPS regional African partners over the five years of the project. Discussions in 1996 concerning the SFPS strategy to promote institutional development among its regional partners evolved from efforts to define institutional sustainability, institutional development and capacity-building.

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[1] clinic-based service delivery and social marketing, training, operations research, and information, education and communication (IEC).

A literature review[2] was conducted to identify an appropriate definition of institutional development and determine which organizational dimensions were most appropriate for measurement and intervention according to the SFPS strategy. What initially emerged from the literature review was the recognition of indigenous institutions as vital to sustainable development in Africa (OECD 1989, in Brinkerhoff 1992; World Bank 1996). Although the literature review examined sustainability and the definition of an institution, it focused on efforts to describe institutional development or capacity-building. One author best described institutional capacity-building as an organization's ability to plan and manage the use of its available resources—material and financial as well as human resources—in the most effective and efficient manner possible (Israel 1987). This definition was further refined by the IDRC's *Framework for Strengthening Organizational Capacity for IDRC's Research Partners*, where capacity-building is defined as

> "...an ongoing process by which people and systems, operating within dynamic contexts, learn to develop and implement strategies in pursuit of their objectives for increased performance in a sustainable way"(1995, p. xiii).

The literature review provided categorizations of these resources and systems according to various institution-building theorists such as Esman and Mann as well as more recent efforts of the IDRC to strengthen institutional capacity. Common dimensions among these theorists which shaped the focus of the IDA effort included the importance of indigenous leadership and strategic management in addition to institutional resources and basic management and administrative systems (Brinkerhoff 1996; Uphoff 1986; Goldsmith 1996). This literature review provided an initial base from which to conceptualize an appropriate framework for assessing institutional capacity.

REVIEW OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT EFFORTS

In developing the IDA, a variety of institutional capacity assessment instruments were reviewed. Some were focused solely on a single dimension (management, financial management or technical capacity) while others were more comprehensive in nature, attempting to assess multiple dimensions. The following instruments—being used in developing country settings—were compared to determine the components comprising the three dimensions that were a common denominator (management, financial management, technical capacity).

- Organizational Development/Sustainability Status Assessment Instrument (OD/SS) (MSH/FPMD)
- Organizational Self-Assessment of Service Sustainability (JSI/Initiatives' Project)
- NGO Needs Assessment (IPPF/PASCA Project in Central America)
- Family Planning Program Financial Sustainability Assessment Tool (PopTech)

Table 1 summarizes the common variables in these instruments[3] demonstrating the similarity among them all despite the somewhat different apparent focus. In general, however, they ignore assessment of technical capacity. Only the NGO Needs Assessment instrument assessed technical capacity (in four areas—IEC, research, service delivery, training).

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[2] See Appendix B for the full literature review.

[3] The instruments are each reviewed individually in Appendix C.

We used this review in developing the data collection instruments for the IDA. Within the three overall organizational dimensions (management capacity, financial management capacity and technical capacity), each dimension was then broken down into various components comprising both resources and systems. (These are detailed in the next section.)

Table 1: Comparison of Variables Included in Institutional/Capacity Assessment Instruments

Dimensions	OD/SS Assessment Instrument (MSH/FPMD)	Organizational Self Assessment of Service Sustainability (JSI - Initiatives)	NGO Needs Assessment (IPPF/PASCA Project)	FPP/Financial Sustainability Assessment Tool (PopTech)
Management Capacity				
Leadership		X		
Mission	X	X	X	X
Strategy	X	X	X	X
Structure	X	X	X	X
Programmatic planning		X		X
Marketing		X	X	
Personnel	X	X	X	
Logistics/Supplies	X	X	X	
Financial Management Capacity				
Resources/Revenues	X	X	X	X
Accounting systems	X	X	X	
Reporting systems	X		X	X
Technical Capacity				
IEC			X	
Research			X	
Service delivery			X	
Training			X	
Program management		X		
Collection/Use of info.	X	X	X	X
Monitoring & evaluation	X	X	X	

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

IDA Objectives and Purpose

The purpose of the IDA activity was to determine the baseline status of selected SFPS regional partner institutions in management, financial management and technical capacity. From this assessment would come identification of areas of strength and those in need of improvement to determine areas in which partners could provide assistance to other partners and those in which SFPS could provide external assistance. In addition, indicators would be developed for those capacity areas in which a common need was identified to measure progress over time.

Institutions which were originally identified in the four project proposals as regional partners to each of the SFPS project agencies were selected for the IDA activity. Other institutions who also had a regional scope of work and had evolved into important partners within the SFPS project were later included.

Assessment Strategy

The IDA used a case-study approach during a one-week, in-depth assessment at each institution. Multiple data collection methods were used to determine the institution's current status of capacity: self-administered questionnaires, interviews and document review. In addition, informal observations of the institution's facilities and day-to-day operations were also made during the assessment week. The data collection instruments used were:

- *Organization Profile* (type, size, facility, equipment, etc.)
- *Document Review* (Mission statement, Annual Report, human resources procedures, etc.)
- *Leader's Interview* (how s/he directs the organization)
- *In-depth Interview* (experiences/perceptions)
- *Self-administered Questionnaire* (experiences/perceptions of various levels of staff who actually implement the procedures) by personnel level: senior management, mid-level management, professional and support staff
- *Self-administered Questionnaire - Technical Capacity* (technical qualifications/skills) at individual and organizational levels
- *Assessment of Organizational Status* (attitudinal ratings)

The IDAs were conducted over an eight-month period from January–August 1997. Each IDA was carried out by the SFPS team—a consultant with background in management and international development to assess management capacity and financial management capacity along with the SFPS component technical representative (chief of party or delegate) to assess technical capacity. The management consultant participated in each IDA while the technical assessor varied according to the technical component being assessed. Throughout each assessment, key staff from the organization being assessed acted as liaisons to the SFPS team.[4]

The IDA usually took place over a one-week period spent at the institution for document review, observations of the facilities, interviews of various staff, and administering questionnaires and rating tools to the staff. After the initial briefing, senior management, administration and mid-level management were interviewed. Self-administered questionnaires were completed by staff at a variety of levels of

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[4] See Appendix D for listing of teams and members.

responsibility.[5] Senior- and mid-level management also completed an organizational ratings questionnaire. Professional staff also responded to self-administered questionnaires specifically on technical capacity. Observation of the organization's facility and review of documents were conducted throughout the week. The assessment week concluded with a debriefing of senior management.

Scoring of the Organizational Capacity Dimensions

The institutional development assessment examined three organizational dimensions—management capacity, financial management capacity and technical capacity—each comprised of several components.

Management Capacity

Management capacity included the components of leadership, planning (both strategic and programmatic), marketing, personnel and logistics/supplies. Leadership was assessed based on the existence of a strong, charismatic leader able to convey a common vision to the staff and also possessing the authority to take action to move the organization toward this vision. Strategic planning was represented by a long-term (3–5 year) strategic plan which identified the organization's comparative advantage, taking into consideration the internal strengths of the organization as well as potentially positive and negative influences of the external environment. This component also included the existence of an ongoing process for continuous review and revision of the strategic objectives of the organization in the face of constant feedback and information. Programmatic planning reviewed short-term planning of specific activities or projects which specified individual tasks, their duration and the individual responsible as well as evaluation indicators. Marketing capacity included both marketing research—knowing the organization's niche in the market (its clients and competitors)—and a marketing strategy focused on increasing utilization of services and financial resources.

Personnel and logistics/supplies were primarily assessed based upon routine administrative systems. In the personnel component, these systems included hiring, supervising and job termination policies. The existence of personnel procedure manuals, well-developed job descriptions and regular job performance evaluations among other factors were reviewed. Logistics/supply systems were evaluated on the basis of whether inventories of basic supplies which enabled staff to carry out routine tasks were maintained and/or frequency of stockouts. The procurement system was assessed by staff's perceptions of its timeliness and responsiveness. In some instances, organizational structure/stability (or the lack thereof) surfaced as a major constraint to organizational growth and development in those organizations which lacked strong leadership and a clear direction.

Financial Management Capacity

Financial management capacity included assessment of both resources and systems—the composition of financial resources as well as the management and administrative systems in place and functioning which govern these resources. Fund disbursement, accounting, financial monitoring and financial reporting systems are all assessed relative to the needs of the organization and its collaborators.

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[5] Senior- and mid-level questionnaires emphasized management but also included sections regarding various administrative systems ranging from personnel to logistics. Professional- and support-level questionnaires focused primarily on administrative systems and how staff perceive them to function.

Technical Capacity

Technical capacity was assessed on both an organizational and individual level, determining the skills and competencies at the respective level needed for the organization to provide the specific technical services it offers. It included the ability to deliver a service or product and all the relevant tasks contributing to an end product or service such as planning, implementation and evaluation activities.

Table 2: Technical Capacity Factors for Each of the SFPS Technical Areas

Technical Area	Technical Capacity Factors
IEC	• development of IEC projects • quantitative and qualitative research and evaluation • technical assistance required or provided • IEC training skills and courses provided • management of IEC projects • knowledge and experience in various topics in IEC program development
Operations Research	• knowledge and use of a range of applied research techniques (quantitative and qualitative) • knowledge and use of statistical, graphics and presentation software packages • experience developing research protocols • experience conducting applied research training
Service Delivery	• experience and qualifications of providers • appropriateness of training • frequency of stockouts among partner clinic sites • condition of stockroom
Training	• technical staff qualifications and experience • competency of training staff in the technical areas (clinical training skills and curriculum development and implementation) • trainee assessment and evaluation

Limitations

The assessments were internally-focused evaluations, examining the institutional capacity of the SFPS partner organizations. The IDA concentrated on internal staff perceptions of the organization itself: identifying the organization's strengths and weaknesses and evaluating administrative and management systems in view of their adequacy and performance. Analyses of the external environment of each RAPI were generally not formally conducted nor was an evaluation of each organization's strategic partnerships and institutional linkages undertaken although both are recognized as potential factors in the institutional development process.

The ten institutions assessed were selected because of their relationship to the SFPS project. The findings provide limited opportunity to generalize to all West and Central African institutions, but they do provide lessons learned, particularly for the commonalities identified. These results will be useful and instructive for other institutions in West and Central Africa.

FINDINGS

The assessment findings are reported in the following sections: Overview of Institutions Assessed, Management Capacity, Financial Management Capacity and Technical Capacity. The document/record reviews, observations and interviews inform each section and are further enhanced by the ratings of senior and mid-level managers on various statements about their attitudes on management/administration and by their ratings of their own organizations.

Overview of Institutions Assessed

Ten African institutions were assessed as part of the IDA activity. Table 3 presents an overview of the institutions assessed by country, type, size and age of the organization. A brief description of each organization including a unique aspect of that organization is presented following Table 3.

Table 3: Overview of Institutions Assessed

Countries Represented	Burkina Faso (1) Cameroon (2) Mali (1)	Togo (1) Côte d'Ivoire (2) Senegal (3)

Number of organizations represented is in parentheses.

Type of Organization	*NGO* = 6 organizations *Public* = 3 organizations *Regional (Other)* = 1 organization

Operating Budget*	*US$ < 100,000* = 5 organizations *US$ 100,000–500,000* = 1 organization *US$ > 500,000* = 3 organizations

*Budgetary information from one organization was not available.

Number of Staff	*< 10 staff* = 4 organizations *10–30 staff* = 3 organizations *> 30 staff* = 3 organizations

Age of Organization	*< 5 years* = 3 organizations *5–10 years* = 4 organizations *> 10 years* = 3 organizations

The Atelier Théâtre Burkinabè (ATB), located in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, is a long-standing organization dedicated to promoting development through the arts, specifically that of theatre and drama. The organization is comprised of a group of comedians and actors who freely contribute their time and energies to this end. The organization is unique in its ability to organize large international events such as its biannual Festival International de Théâtre pour le Développement. ATB is involved in multiple activities that include the design and production of theatrical pieces, training in drama techniques,

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promotion of theatre for development, and utilizing other media such as radio broadcasts to promote social reform.

The Centre for African Family Studies (CAFS) is a unique organization as it is truly pan-African in scope, with training offices in both East and West Africa. It is headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, with a Regional Office for West and Central Africa based in Lomé, Togo, covering both anglophone and francophone countries in east, west and central Africa. SFPS is working in collaboration with the Lomé office in its efforts to promote training and IEC in reproductive health in the West and Central Africa region.

The Centre de Formation et de Recherche en Santé de la Reproduction (CEFOREP) located in Dakar, Senegal, is a newly emerging NGO (only two years in existence) which seeks to contribute to the promotion of reproductive health through the implementation of appropriate and quality training and research activities. The organization has invested a great deal of its resources in developing automated management and administrative systems in order to track all project activities.

The Centre d'Enseignement et de Recherche en Communication (CERCOM) in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, is the only institution in the region offering both teaching (long-term training) and research in communication. In addition, CERCOM is involved in the production of communication and education materials. CERCOM is a university center of the University of Cocody (Abidjan) but maintains an international perspective.

The Centre d'Etudes et de Recherche sur la Population pour le Développement (CERPOD) in Bamako, Mali is unique in the region with its program to integrate population in development through research, training and technical assistance. The mission of CERPOD is to propose strategies to promote sustainable development in the Sahel. CERPOD is a long-standing institution that contributes to sustainable development in the Sahel by formulating and promoting strategies to remove/lessen the demographic constraints in the region through its divisions of research, operations research and institutional development.

The Ecole Nationale de Statistique et Economie Appliquée (ENSEA) in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire is a well-established facility providing advanced-degree education in statistics and economic analysis to all African francophone countries south of the Sahara. ENSEA is unique in its superb facilities and strong funding base derived from the Government of Côte d'Ivoire. ENSEA is currently expanding its research capability and seeks to pursue applied research activities in statistics, economics and operations research in reproductive health and family planning.

Femmes-Santé-Développement en Afrique Sub-Saharienne (FESADE) is located in Yaoundé, Cameroon, and focuses its grassroots efforts on the health of the woman, believing that improvements in women's health will also serve to improve the health of children, families and communities thus contributing to overall development. FESADE has incredibly strong programmatic planning skills and maintains an extensive, automated bibliographic reference system.

The Institut de Recherche et des Etudes de Comportements (IRESCO), also located in Yaoundé, Cameroon, is a relatively new and emerging organization, staffed by a young and energetic team who all participate in decisions affecting its future. The mission of IRESCO is to undertake activities of research and studies in the areas of social science and behavioral change to promote development efforts in Cameroon and throughout Africa. IRESCO seeks to improve development efforts by contributing empirically based information and insight so that development interventions may be designed and

implemented in a more effective and efficient manner and significantly impact development. IRESCO maintains a non-hierarchical workstyle and involves all team members in the planning and monitoring of its multiple projects.

The Institut de Santé et Développement (ISED) in Dakar, Senegal, has a well developed and well deserved reputation for training in the region with its Certificat en Etudes Specialisées program. ISED is a rather entrepreneurial organization that successfully entered into a joint venture with ISADE (Institut Supérieure Africain pour le Développement de l'Entreprise) to provide public health training to health personnel in Guinée Bissau through a World Bank contract (won in a competitive bid). Through this partnership, ISED demonstrated its ability to acquire additional resources in a non-traditional way. It has acquired access to managerial and administrative expertise and additional resources which it did not previously possess.

Santé de la Famille (SANFAM) is a non-governmental organization (NGO) in Dakar, Senegal that provides assistance to developing reproductive health programs in the private and semi-public sectors as well as to local collectives. SANFAM is the only NGO that promotes family planning in the private sector of Senegal. It works with already existing health structures within these sectors and promotes family planning efforts by providing comprehensive support to efforts such as supervision and providing supplies. SANFAM is able to enter these markets by demonstrating to clients through feasibility studies the costs that could be saved if reproductive health and family planning services were to be provided on their premises. SANFAM has a unique opportunity to generate income through the sale of these feasibility studies to clients (private and semi-public organizations). On an international level, SANFAM offers its expertise to certain African countries such as Benin, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire in training of health workers, introducing family health and family programs into the private sector, and encouraging other NGOs to enter into the health sector.

This group of ten represents a very diverse perspective of African institutions operating throughout the West and Central African region. Although each organization offers something different and positive to promoting reproductive health and family health in the region, commonalities in capacity do exist and will be presented in the next section.

Commonalities in Capacity Dimensions

The findings from the IDAs demonstrated common needs among the RAPI in management and financial management capacity and institution-specific needs in technical capacity. The findings presented below are from the document reviews, in-depth interviews and self-administered questionnaires.

Management Capacity

Management capacity was evaluated on the basis of leadership, strategic and programmatic planning, marketing efforts, personnel systems, and logistics.

In all but two organizations, strong and dynamic leadership was present, providing guidance to the organization. This charismatic leadership often translated into public relations for the organization with government officials and potential donors.

Programmatic planning skills and systems were strong across all the organizations, having become a routine process with regular meetings for activity planning and evaluation at all but two organizations.

These two organizations lacked participation of the professional staff and/or the supervisor to adequately undertake routine evaluations of activities.

Two NGOs were highly successful in self-promotion and had a well-defined niche in their area of service. One was a well-established, mature organization and the other was relatively new (less than five years in existence). Both were involved in information, education, and communication services and products. Two other organizations also had well-defined niches but lacked skills in marketing this advantage, and one other organization was faced with the task of redefining its niche and developing its self-promotion capacity. The remaining organizations had some level of both a defined niche and of marketing activities.

Only one organization had a marketing plan, and it was in the process of being revised at the time of their assessment.

Management capacity varied according to the existence of strong leadership and organizational structure and stability, regardless of organization type, size or growth stage. Figure 1 illustrates the components of management capacity and the continuum of institutional rankings for each. Of the four organizations which had less than adequate management capacity, two were undergoing a restructuring process and the remaining two lacked a clear vision of the future direction of the organization. All four of these organizations were ranked at the low end on the *leadership* component scale and this ranking cut across all three types of organizations assessed: NGO, public and other.

Figure 1. Management Capacity: Tiered Ranking of Partner Institutions
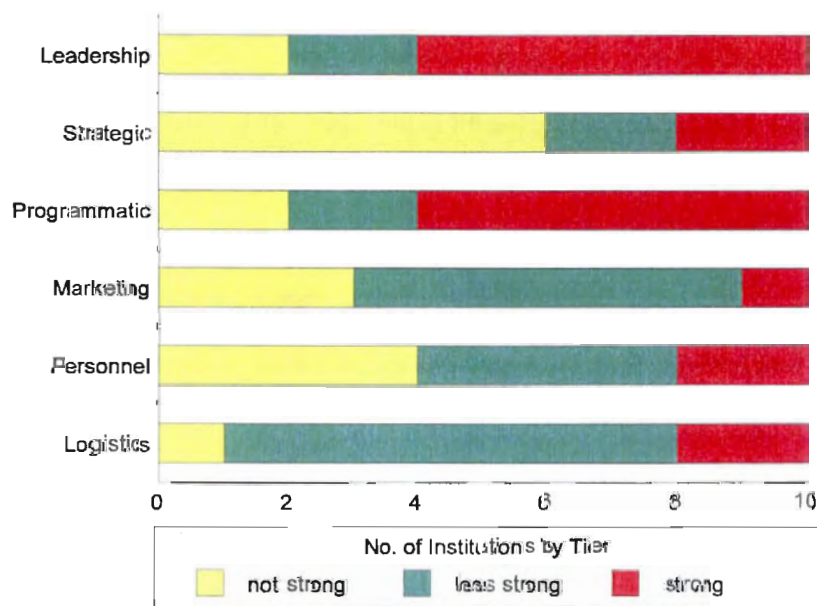
The two organizations experiencing the restructuring process both had undergone strategic planning processes and had formal, strategic plans in place. The restructuring had caused great upheaval and

change in all management and administrative systems, primarily that of personnel and logistical systems.[6] At the time of the assessments, the restructuring processes at these two organizations appeared to be causing a great deal of instability as leadership to guide the restructuring process was absent in both instances. However, both organizations emerged stronger after the process with new management in place to guide the organizations.[7]

Two other organizations, both NGOs which had been in existence for 5 to 10 years, demonstrated partial efforts at initiating strategic planning. Four of the remaining organizations had a shared, common vision among staff for the future of the organization but the final two did not possess a strong common vision.

In two of the three public organizations, personnel decisions were made outside of the organization itself, including the recruitment, evaluation and termination of personnel. Eight of ten organizations had job descriptions which staff felt conformed to actual job responsibilities. Staff at two of the public organizations had either not seen their job descriptions or felt their work did not conform to actual job responsibilities.

Supply systems were quite strong. Staff at only one organization responded that supplies were not delivered in a timely basis and that stockouts were a regular occurrence.

Strong leadership was often apparent in the director of the organization who possessed a clear vision of what the organization needed to do to develop and grow as an institution. This vision was usually shared among staff but rarely articulated in a formal document and thus was not evident to potential collaborators. The lack of a formal document (such as a strategic plan) did not allow the organization to evaluate its activities against its strategic objectives nor to measure its progress in organizational growth and development.

The concept of strategic planning and strategic management was not well understood. Only two of the ten organizations had a formal strategic plan—one organization had only recently (within the previous year) instituted a strategic planning process and the other organization had incorporated strategic planning into its routine over the past five years. Staff at those organizations without a long-term strategic plan confused a strategic plan with a programmatic plan and a long-term commitment to activities. Many senior managers expressed frustration with the short-term nature of funding and its negative effect on their ability to plan for the long-term.

Staff dedication and commitment was strong across all organizations, although one organization had been experiencing a high level of attrition in the past year as a result of a restructuring period and subsequent uncertainty regarding the organization's future. Many staff felt they were underpaid yet espoused a productive work ethic.

Strong programmatic planning skills were present among eight of the ten RAPI. The two organizations which did not rank highly on the programmatic planning component lacked the full participation of the appropriate staff in the routine review of activities.

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[6] However, at the completion of all the IDAs, new directors had been named to head these organizations and stability was increasing.

[7] The ideal result from strategic planning is healthy restructuring as occurred here although restructuring isn't always as successful.

Only one organization possessed a marketing plan (one of the two organizations which had undergone a strategic planning process), although this plan was under revision at the time of the assessment. Two other organizations were relatively successful in marketing their institutions. Although staff from most RAPI expressed an in-depth knowledge of their target populations both in the interviews as well as through the self-administered questionnaire, few RAPI had developed a marketing plan nor had focused marketing efforts. Knowledge of potential funding sources was limited as were the possible marketing efforts that could be utilized to attract greater collaboration between organizations and potential donors. Normally, RAPI received requests from donors for project proposals rather than taking a proactive role. Since these organizations were well-endowed with technical expertise they could have been more actively seeking collaborative opportunities for support on projects.

In summary for management capacity, the IDAs documented strong and dynamic leadership in eight of the ten organizations. Those organizations not demonstrating strong leadership were those undergoing a restructuring process. However, after the restructuring process, both organizations had new management in place and organizational stability appeared to be on the rise. Staff dedication and commitment were strong in all but one organization, again an organization which was undergoing a restructuring process at the time of their assessment. A clear and common vision existed and was shared among staff in each RAPI, as evidenced by responses to the self-administered questionnaires. This vision was rarely articulated, however, in a formal organization document. A common need among eight of the ten institutions was a comprehensive understanding of strategic planning—strategic plans and process. In addition, nine of the ten needed marketing plans and strong marketing skills to promote their institution to potential collaborators/funding sources in spite of the fact that all of the RAPI could clearly define their target populations.

Financial Management Capacity

Financial management capacity was evaluated on the basis of financial resources and resource planning, accounting and disbursement systems, and financial reporting. All organizations had received funding from a variety of sources, some of which provided long-term security and capital investment, and contributed directly to basic infrastructure.

The majority of organizations received short-term funding (1–2 years in duration) that was primarily related to projects or activities, a characteristic becoming more and more common in the donor community. All six of the NGOs received funding on a project-by-project basis, usually of a short-term nature. The regional organization was faced with the same situation. All three public organizations received funding from a variety of sources, but salaries were covered by their governments.

Only three of the ten organizations had received any significant capital investment in infrastructure in the last couple of years.[8] Two of the organizations who received the largest capital investment—one public and the other an NGO—had been in existence the longest. The third, also an NGO, was the newest organization to emerge and had also benefited from recent capital investment but on a more reduced scale.

Only two of the ten organizations had well-established, calculated overhead rates that were applied consistently. These two organizations were also the only two which had undergone a strategic planning

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[8] funding for equipment, physical facilities and other major items necessary to support ongoing activities.

process. Two other organizations also applied overhead rates, but these rates were applied inconsistently to projects and varied from project to project.

All RAPI expressed their frustration with a lack of financial resources and the short-term nature of project funding. They had difficulty accessing different revenue sources and remained dependent upon short-term funding. Few organizations developed their own project proposals for solicitation yet they admitted the need to expand their financial resource base. It could not be determined generally how proactive each organization was in seeking funding or whether they expected funding opportunities to present to them.

Accounting systems varied in sophistication across organizations but all provided adequate monitoring of financial transactions. (See Figure 2 for illustration of rankings of institutions.) Two of the more automated and sophisticated accounting systems belonged to one of the larger organizations which had been in existence close to ten years and the other to a smaller organization less than five years old. Reporting systems responded to external funding requirements—either government or donors. Donor requirements did not often differ in information requested, only in format. Greater demands were placed upon those reporting systems handling multiple projects funded by different donors.

Figure 2. Financial Management Capacity: Tiered Ranking of Partner Institutions
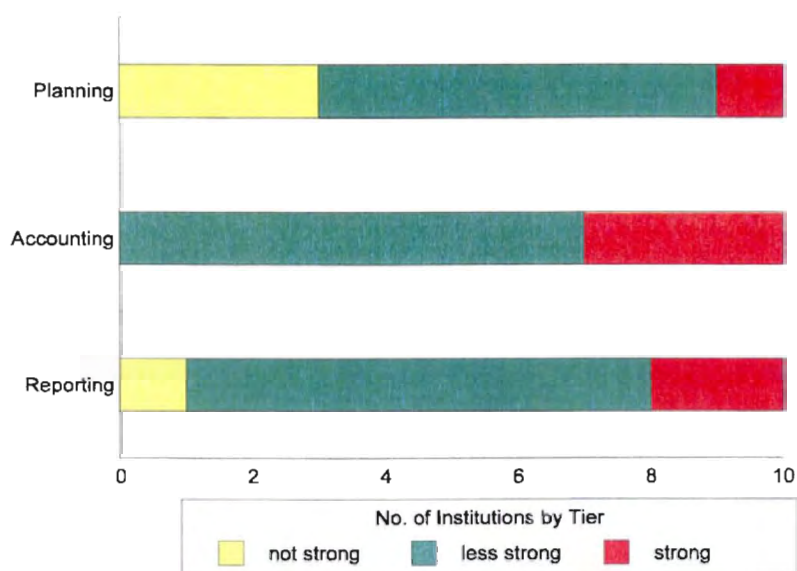
Overall, accounting and monitoring systems were adequate to current organizational needs (the level of funding they were managing at the time of the assessment). Disbursement of funds followed strict authorization procedures with adequate checks and the systems provided adequate transparency among the majority of RAPI. The organizations relied heavily on short-term funding but realized the need to seek alternative funding.

Lacking among RAPI was the use of financial data for decision-making. Straightforward reporting was conducted according to government or donor requirements, but analysis of financial data for planning

and resource allocation decisions was not. In-depth analysis of financial data was rarely undertaken. Only the most mature organization had produced limited trend analysis data for its own management review. No organization used financial projections to enhance its decision-making.

In the area of financial management capacity, a common need among RAPI was the establishment of an overhead rate (calculation to establish a rate and/or revision of an existing rate). Over half of the organizations expressed a need to better understand the concept of an overhead rate and how it would be used and applied.

Organizational Ratings: Comparisons and Contrasts

An additional perspective on the organizations was gained from an organizational ratings questionnaire. The findings by dimension of organizational capacity were based on document and systems review and interviews. The ratings that staff did about their perspectives on organizational capacity (primarily focused on the dimensions of management and financial management and the functioning of organizational systems) are reviewed here. The findings presented are aggregated across all the organizations, comparing the internal perspective of those working in the organization with the external view of the SFPS technical staff working with these organizations.

Senior management and mid-level management and professional staff at each organization completed a questionnaire asking them to respond to statements about the functioning of a generic organization and about their organization in particular.[9] In addition, SFPS assessment team liaisons were asked to fill in the same questionnaire and, where appropriate, rate a partner organization (to give both internal [int] and external [ext] perspectives of an organization).

Organizational Characteristics: The Individual Organizations

Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the series of eight statements on organizational characteristics or systems as they applied to their particular organization.

Table 4: Respondents' Perceptions of Their Own Organizations

Statements on Their Organization's Functioning [*disagree (0)* to *agree (1)*]	Int mean	Ext mean
Adequate accounting and financial management systems exist.	0.81	0.87
Adequate program management systems exist.	0.73	0.54
Adequate personnel management systems exist.	0.71	0.47
The organization is being run efficiently and effectively.	0.67	0.63
Anyone in the organization can offer suggestions and bring forward ideas for improving the organization's operations.	0.88	0.72
The organization operates in a business-like manner.	0.56	0.37
The organization uses a variety of information for programmatic and administrative decision-making.	0.87	0.59
Those who provide the technical services in the organization have the most important role.	0.72	0.64

In general, respondents' perceptions of the functioning of their own organizations were comparable to the management and financial management capacity findings discussed above. Accounting and financial management systems were adequate but with room for improvement. Adequate program and personnel management systems existed but could become more efficient as evidenced by the response to the following question: *The organization is being run efficiently and effectively* which at 0.67 indicates room

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[9] The questionnaire used a continuum for respondents to mark along defined for the various questions as a continuum from *unlikely (0)* to *likely (1)* or from *disagree (0)* to *agree (1)*. The responses were determined by measuring the spot on the line where a respondent made an "x" and this was converted into a number between 0 and 1. Means for each question were then calculated to determine where on the continuum the responses fell.

for improving management and administrative systems. Organizational environments were open—staff could participate and proffer suggestions to management and technical staff.[10] As to whether or not the organization operates in a business-like manner, internal respondents were somewhat ambivalent with a mean of 0.56, most likely due to the non-profit orientation of all the RAPI assessed. The use of information for decision-making was rated relatively high by the RAPI. As already discussed, however, although programmatic information is used effectively, there was a serious lack in the use of financial information for decision-making as no trend or projection analyses were conducted. RAPI also felt that technical staff played the most important role in the organization, supported by the fact that the IDAs showed strong technical capacity among the RAPI.

The external ratings were consistently lower across the board except for the first statement: *Adequate accounting and financial management systems exist* which perhaps revealed SFPS' knowledge of and confidence in the financial management of its partners. The lower ratings in the remaining statements may partly reflect the lack of in-depth knowledge regarding the RAPI's internal management and administration.[11]

The next two sections review the ratings that the RAPI and SFPS staff gave to statements about generic organizations. These results provide a context for attitudes and beliefs that could assist or affect institutional development work.

Organizational Functioning: All Organizations

Respondents were first asked to rate an organization's functioning and characteristics (the degree to which they thought the outcome was *likely [1]* or *unlikely [0]*).[12] Both internal respondents and external respondents felt very positive about their organizations' ability to survive: *What is the likelihood that this organization will continue to exist 5 years from now, given the present conditions?* with both scores very close to each other and quite close to the *likely* side of the continuum (mean internal=0.85, mean external=0.80).

Both groups also felt very positive about the organizations' reputations and ability to conduct business, as manifested in their responses to the question: *What is the likelihood that, if you were a donor, you would invest in this organization, given the present conditions?* (mean internal=0.91, mean external=0.88).

Both groups of respondents also felt that the organization's continued existence was not dependent on the present director: *What is the likelihood that this organization would collapse (be unable to continue its existence) with the departure of the present director?* (mean internal=0.20, mean external=0.27).

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[10] *Anyone in the organization can offer suggestions and bring forward ideas for improving the organization's operations.*

[11] External respondents often expressed their lack of knowledge while filling out the ratings questionnaire, however those who participated directly in the IDA often commented on how their perspective broadened in regards to the operations and constraints faced by the RAPI.

[12] At the time this report was prepared, data was available for 53 respondents, 40 internal respondents and 13 external respondents. However, there were frequent occurrences of questions not being answered so the number who contributed to each question varies.

At the individual organizational level, there were seven organizations where both internal and external responses were available for these questions. Despite small cell sizes (generally 2–4 responses for an organization and 1 for the external perspective), trends can be examined for each of the questions related above. Generally, responses between the two groups were similar, with the internal perspective usually a little higher than the external rating on the continuum from *unlikely (0)* to *likely (1)*. For two organizations, the SFPS representative felt much less optimistic about the organization (*What is the likelihood that this organization will continue to exist 5 years from now, given the present conditions?*) and thus rated the organization's likelihood of continued existence much less likely than the organization itself (external=0.68 to internal=0.92; external=0.44 to internal=0.83).

The responses were similar for the question, *What is the likelihood that, if you were a donor, you would invest in this organization, given the present conditions?*. Again, the same two organizations had great disparity between the internal and external ratings (external=0.68 to internal=0.94; external=0.25 to internal=0.72).

There was much wider variation in the two perspectives for the question: *What is the likelihood that this organization would collapse (be unable to continue its existence) with the departure of the present director?*. Two organizations and their SFPS colleagues felt it highly unlikely (mean < 0.1) that the organization would not survive a director's departure, and four felt it fairly unlikely (mean < 0.3) that there would be collapse. For only one organization did both perspectives reflect ambivalence about whether the organization would survive the director's departure (internal=0.54, external=0.47).

Organizational Characteristics

Respondents were to rate the statements (Table 3) about the characteristics of a generic organization, not necessarily reflecting their own organization, on a continuum from *disagree (0)* to *agree (1)*. The data shown are aggregated across the organizations's internal and external perspective.

Table 3: Respondents' Perceptions of Characteristics of an Organization

Statements on an Organization's Functioning [*disagree (0)* to *agree (1)*]	Int mean	Ext mean
• A clearly defined Mission Statement which all members of the organization can state is critical for a healthy organization.	0.97	0.89
• Long-term strategic planning must be reviewed at least once a year by senior management to ensure that an organization stays on track.	0.95	0.9
• Senior managers should always think strategically about program sustainability.	0.96	0.87
• An organization's reliance on donor support must decrease to less than 50% of its budget.	0.69	0.82
• A Board of Trustees/Directors is critical to the functioning of an organization.	0.86	0.85
• An organization should be able to provide its technical services primarily from organizational resources rather than from external sources.	0.89	0.54
• An organization should operate as an income-generating enterprise.	0.87	0.63

As seen in this table, the internal and external ratings were generally very similar and, in most cases, followed the pattern that the external perspective rating was not as high as the internal. This was not the

case, however, for the statement, *An organization's reliance on donor support must decrease to less than 50% of its budget*, where the internal view is less supportive of this statement than the external perspective.

It is interesting that this is somewhat contradicted by the internal view for the statement, *An organization should be able to provide its technical services primarily from organizational resources rather than from external sources*, showing their determination that technical expertise be provided from in-house sources not from external technical assistance (mean=0.89). The external respondents were ambivalent about this statement (mean=0.54).

Finally in this same questionnaire, staff were asked to rank the following dimensions in order of importance (from 1 as *most important* to 10 as *least important*) for assessing the capacity of an organization.

- Sound program management
- Adequate accounting and financial management systems
- Strong administrative systems
- Adequate personnel management systems
- Strong leadership
- Adequate physical plant
- Generates income to cover more than 50% of its budget needs
- Common vision across all levels of the organization
- Long-range strategic planning to achieve the organization's mandate
- Competency in the technical service provided

Table 5 shows the rankings of these 10 dimensions, aggregated across all 43 respondents.[13] *Strong leadership* was ranked most important overall by the 43 respondents (n=14) with *Competency in the technical service provided* a close second as the most important dimension (n=11). (These two reflected almost two-thirds [61%] of the responses.)

Table 5: Comparison of Total Rankings on the Most Important Dimensions of Organizational Capacity, Aggregated Across All Organizations

Rank	Dimensions	n
First	Strong leadership Competency in the technical service provided Long-range strategic planning to achieve the organization's mandate	14 11 6
Second	Sound program management Long-range strategic planning to achieve the organization's mandate Common vision across all levels of the organization	10 8 6
Third	Adequate accounting and financial management systems [Long-range strategic planning to achieve the organization's mandate] [Common vision across all levels of the organization]	7 6 each

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[13] Thirty-six internal respondents and 8 external respondents from the SFPS project team.

Internal respondents ranked *Competency in the technical service provided* as the most important dimension (n=11, 32%) with *Strong leadership* a close second (n=9, 26%). (See Table 6.) More than half of the external respondents, on the other hand, ranked *Strong leadership* as the most important dimension (n=5, 56%). This close overall ranking for the most important dimension shows that both the organizations and the SFPS members working with them feel that similar dimensions are critical for an organization to function.

Table 6: Comparison of Rankings Between Internal and External Perspectives on the Most Important Dimensions of Organizational Capacity

Rank	n	Internal	n	External
1st	11	Competency in the technical service provided	5	Strong leadership
	9	Strong leadership	2	Long-range strategic planning to achieve the organization's mandate
2nd	7	Long-range strategic planning to achieve the organization's mandate	3	Sound program management
	7	Sound program management	2	Common vision across all levels of the organization
3rd	7	Adequate accounting and financial management systems	4	Long-range strategic planning to achieve the organization's mandate
	5 ea	[Adequate personnel management systems] [Common vision across all levels of the organization]	1 ea	[Generates income to cover more than 50% of its budget needs] [Common vision across all levels of the organization]

For both external and internal respondents, the second most important dimension was *Sound program management*. Internal respondents weighted that equally with *Long-range strategic planning to achieve the organization's mandate* while *Common vision across all levels of the organization* was next for the external perspective. Beyond that, there was a wide spread of responses by the other respondents so that every other dimension except for *Adequate physical plant* received at least 1 vote as the second most important dimension.

Technical Capacity

In technical capacity, the technical needs varied from institution to institution. General performance indicators and targets were not set because technical improvements in the diverse set of RAPI could not be captured in a general indicator. SFPS will continue to work with each institution individually to strengthen technical capacity and report on these activities and progress achieved.

Overall, results from the IDAs demonstrate generally strong technical capacity.[14] Followup activities for each of the technical components (IEC, operations research, service delivery and training) are organization-specific and cannot be generalized. However, specific technical skills relative to each organization need further refinement and many will be met through SFPS TA by the relevant technical component.

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[14] This is not surprising as it is why they were chosen as partners.

- IEC efforts will strengthen baseline and followup KAP (knowledge, attitudes and practices) evaluation techniques and improve abilities to develop a communication strategy according to the P-process.[15]

- Operations research activities will focus on developing field research skills including improved technical expertise in qualitative methods, and providing training in research protocol development with a focus on instrument development, budgeting and planning, advanced statistical analysis tools, and use of graphic and presentation software for the dissemination of research findings.

- Service delivery activities will focus on specific technical specializations such as refining training skills and logistics management.

- Training activities will focus on post-training evaluations and further refining training skills and knowledge in new reproductive health technological advances.

General Capacity

The IDAs also revealed a general capacity need among nine of the ten partners—the need not just for marketing but to better package and promote the organization. This encompasses the institution's ability to develop unsolicited grants and proposals as well as its ability to develop and incorporate the effective display of information into these grants, proposals and reports.

Summary of Organizational Ratings

Overall, the assessments documented that the RAPI possessed strong and dynamic leadership, in addition to high levels of staff dedication and commitment. A clear and common vision existed and was shared among staff in each of the RAPI and all could clearly define their target population. In the area of financial management, accounting and monitoring systems were adequate to current organizational needs (the level of funding they were managing at the time of the assessment). Disbursement of funds followed strict authorization procedures with adequate checks and the systems provided adequate transparency among the majority of RAPI.

The RAPI shared several common needs in management and financial management capacity, (strategic planning, marketing research and planning, the calculation of overhead rates) and a general capacity need in grant-/proposal-writing, and they were fairly strong in their respective technical areas of expertise. Technical capacity needs were institution-specific and therefore cannot be generalized.

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[15] P-process: analyze audience and existing program, define objectives, define intended audience, define activities and monitoring plan, design appropriate messages and materials, execute advocacy and activities, conduct final evaluation, make recommendations for subsequent activities.

DEVELOPING REGIONAL PARTNER INSTITUTION CAPACITY

The SFPS Project believes that institutional development is an ongoing and continuous process—one which requires time, energy, investment and commitment from both RAPI and collaborators alike—and that an organization must continually adapt to an ever-changing environment to survive. Capacity-building continues throughout the life of an organization; there is no final plateau to be reached.

Based on each IDA, an individual action plan was developed for the organization with proposed activities to enhance the organization's management, financial management and/or technical capacity. However, it was never envisioned that SFPS would implement (or respond to) all the recommendations due to resource constraints. Recognizing that capacity-building is an ongoing process and given the limited capacity of SFPS to respond to all of the needs identified for each organization, the project selected four priority areas for institutional capacity-building for focusing its collaborative efforts. These priorities reflected the most common institutional needs among the greatest number of RAPI:

- Strategic Planning Process
- Marketing Research and Planning
- Overhead (Indirect Cost) Rate Calculation
- Organizational Promotion and Strategic Financing

Ranking of the Institutions

SFPS partners were ranked along an "institutional development" continuum based on their individual level of capacity for management and financial management.[16] (Technical capacity was not ranked since variations in technical expertise did not permit comparison across the organizations.) Three levels of capacity were defined within each of the organizational dimensions with level 3 being the highest level of capacity. Institutions were categorized according to their level of capacity within each of these common need areas. Table 7 shows the areas of common need and definitions of the indicators for each capacity area. A composite indicator for institutional capacity development was developed with *strong* capacity defined as the attainment of level 3 capacity in at least three of the four capacity areas over the life of the project. Strong capacity is the highest level attainable; when all or almost all indicators are strong, a strong organization is able to be proactive and is ready to respond to opportunities.

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[16] Management capacity variables comprised leadership, strategic planning, programmatic planning, marketing, personnel and logistics/supplies. Financial management capacity incorporated financial resource planning and the long-term nature/stability of the organization's financial resources as well as financial accounting, disbursement and reporting systems.

Table 7: Definition of Indicators of Capacity for Common Needs Identified, by Capacity Area

Capacity Area	Strong Capacity	Indicators by Level of Capacity Development
Management Capacity: Strategic Planning Process	Level 2 attained	Level 3: % increase in the number of RAPI that have institutionalized the strategic planning process, i.e., incorporated strategic planning into the organizational management system as evidenced by a long-term (3–5 year) strategic plan and regular (annual) review process by senior management or the board of directors as appropriate. Level 2: % increase in the number of RAPI that have formally approved a long-term strategic plan. Level 1: % increase in the number of RAPI that have initiated the strategic planning process in their respective institutions.
Management Capacity: Market Research and Planning	Level 2 attained	Level 3: % increase in the number of RAPI having conducted marketing research to identify their position in the market and having incorporated this information into a marketing plan, i.e., % increase in the number of RAPI with an operational marketing plan that undergoes regular review by senior management or the board of directors as appropriate. Level 2: % increase in the number of RAPI that have formally approved marketing plan. Level 1: % increase in the number of RAPI that have documented their market research efforts whether formal or informal.
Financial Management Capacity: Overhead Rate Calculation	Level 3 attained	Level 3: % increase in the number of RAPI possessing and applying an established overhead rate to their projects. Level 2: % increase in the number of RAPI that have calculated an overhead rate and developed a rationale/justification for this rate. Level 1: % increase in the number of RAPI that understand the concept of overhead rates—how and why these rates are calculated.
General Capacity: Grant-/Proposal-Writing and Strategic Financing	Level 3 attained	Level 3: % increase in the number of RAPI who win one unsolicited proposal and/or contribute to a joint proposal. Level 2: % increase in the number of RAPI who exhibit grant-/proposal-writing skills via the submission of proposals "tailor-made" to different funding sources. Level 1: % increase in the number of RAPI who increase their knowledge base of the content of grant/proposals.

To meet the needs in each area, interventions will comprise a series of activities to lead to increased capacity over time. This phased approach will build knowledge and skills incrementally to increase capacity in a specific area.

For management capacity (strategic planning and marketing), a strategic planning seminar is recommended for eight of the organizations to introduce these organizations to the concept and the benefits of institutionalizing a strategic planning process within an organization. This activity will be followed by technical assistance to individual RAPI on an as-needed basis, i.e., to those organizations who express the desire to pursue specific capacity-building initiatives and who require additional support to achieve such initiatives. An introductory workshop on market research and planning is proposed for nine organizations. This workshop will assist organizations in undertaking marketing research to identify potential collaborators and develop mechanisms to track and evaluate their marketing efforts over time as well as introduce them to the value of elaborating a marketing plan. Technical assistance will be provided as-needed to RAPI to facilitate market research and marketing plan development.

While all the organizations possessed adequate financial management capacity relative to their present level of activity and funding, they did not all possess and apply appropriate overhead rates. Only two of the organizations had overhead rates consistently applied to projects and another two organizations applied fluctuating rates inconsistently. A basic, orientation seminar followed by individual TA is needed for six RAPI on establishing appropriate overhead rates.

All of the organizations except one expressed the need to either develop or further refine their grant-/proposal-writing skills. A grant-/proposal-writing workshop including the visual display of information will be conducted with the appropriate RAPI.

Determining the Capacity of Regional Partner Institutions

The SFPS project staff and others including the RAPI themselves have been interested in how to determine the growth they are making individually and collectively through the efforts of the project—both from SFPS TA as well as the partner-to-partner relationships and support. Table 8 shows the baseline for each of the four priority areas for which SFPS project TA will be provided and then specifies the targets for each for the succeeding years.

Table 8: Measuring Change in the Capacity Needs of the RAPI

Four Priority Areas	Baseline	Targets (nos. of RAPI)		
	FY97	FY98	FY99	FY00
Strategic Planning Process	Level 3: 2 of 10	10 of 10 at Level 1	5 of 10 at Level 2	7 of 10 at Level 2 5 of 10 at Level 3
Market Research and Planning	Level 3: 1 of 10	3 of 10 at Level 1	5 of 10 at Level 2	7 of 10 at Level 2 5 of 10 at Level 3
Overhead (Indirect Cost) Rate Calculation	Level 3: 4 of 10	10 of 10 at Level 1	8 of 10 at Level 2	6 of 10 at Level 3
Grant-/Proposal-Writing and Strategic Financing	Level 3: 1 of 10	10 of 10 at Level 1	3 of 10 at Level 2	7 of 10 at Level 2 6 of 10 at Level 3

Included in these action plans is the SFPS Project's proposed level of involvement for each activity. The current level of SFPS involvement varies greatly across the RAPI, from very little to major involvement. The level of SFPS participation is also linked to the individual organizations' absorptive capacity. Four of the ten organizations were already operating at full capacity given their current level of resources and their volume of activity. These organizations cannot easily add additional programmatic responsibilities with a corresponding increase in resources without further straining already stressed operating systems. SFPS must also take into consideration the ability of the RAPI to commit time and personnel to these proposed institutional capacity efforts.

The IDA Process

The process of the IDA was very revealing in many aspects. RAPI participation and enthusiasm was much greater than anticipated, given the nature of the information requested from organizations. Financial disclosure was immediately forthcoming and directors freely discussed their financial status and concerns. Entire staffs were made available to the IDA team and most all welcomed the opportunity to share their views on their work environment and the organization as a whole. RAPI were very appreciative of the external review, especially one which produced an end-product in the form of an individualized action plan for capacity development. All of the directors of RAPI expressed a strong desire to improve their organizations, building upon their strengths and reinforcing those areas in need of improvement. The IDA process also allowed the members of SFPS to view their partners in a different light, sometimes attaining a new appreciation for their partners' constraints. It is expected that, in addition to guiding both internal and external capacity-building efforts, the individual IDA reports will provide RAPI with a marketing tool to introduce and persuade other potential collaborators to invest in these organizations.

RAPI Contributions to Capacity-Building

The IDA also revealed that the RAPI have a great deal to contribute to development in the region. RAPI are keenly interested to learn from the experiences of their colleagues in the region who experience similar challenges and constraints. South-to-south dissemination and collaborative efforts should be encouraged and supported. Some of the areas of expertise possessed by the RAPI which should be shared among the partners and beyond include:

- joint-ventures experience
- organizational skills for complex events
- continuing education program
- bibliographic reference system
- feasibility studies
- workstyle/project management

SUMMARY

The ten RAPI varied in a number of organizational characteristics: type, size, lifespan and area of technical expertise. The IDAs resulted in individual actions plans developed for each RAPI containing proposed activities to enhance the organization's management, financial management and technical capacity. From these, SFPS has identified four priority areas for institutional capacity-building where the project intends to focus its collaborative efforts. These common needs constitute four capacity areas: strategic management, marketing research and planning, financial planning, and grant-/proposal-writing. Indicators to measure levels of capacity were developed within each of these common capacity needs with level 3 being the highest level of capacity. A composite indicator for institutional capacity development was developed where *strong* capacity was defined as the attainment of level 3 capacity in at least three of the four institutional capacity-building areas over the life of the project.

Proposed SFPS interventions in management capacity include strategic planning and marketing research and planning. A strategic planning seminar is recommended for eight of the organizations to introduce these organizations to the concept and the benefits of institutionalizing a strategic planning process within an organization. This activity will be followed by TA to select individual RAPI who express the desire to pursue the institutionalization of strategic planning within their organization and require external assistance to do so. An introductory workshop on market research and planning is proposed for nine organizations. Technical assistance will be provided as-needed to RAPI to facilitate market research and marketing plan development.

While all the organizations possess adequate financial management capacity relative to their present level of activity and funding, only two of the organizations had overhead rates consistently applied to projects and another two organizations applied fluctuating rates inconsistently. A basic, orientation seminar on the importance and calculation of appropriate overhead rates is needed for six RAPI and will be followed by individual TA as-needed.

All of the organizations except one expressed the need to either develop or further refine their grant-/ proposal-writing skills, a need to be met in a grant-/proposal-writing workshop including the visual display of information. Sessions to review and critique the RAPI's proposal-writing efforts following the workshop will be conducted as part of the Regional Partners' Meeting held annually by the SFPS Project.

A followup IDA will be conducted on all ten RAPI at the end of the project to measure the change in each common capacity area as well as in overall institutional capacity. At that time, additional recommendations will be made and indicators established to further chart the path to increased institutional development among the RAPI.

In the past several years—and certainly visible over the life of the SFPS project so far—the number of West and Central African organizations working in the reproductive health sector has increased enormously as has the number of African regional partners collaborating with the SFPS Project. RAPI remain premier in their technical areas but are facing increasing competition for technical work and available resources in the region. In addition, competition is also increasing among African organizations for technical assistance to enhance overall institutional capacity and technical skills and competencies. The investment of the SFPS Project in its key partners is an important commitment to ensuring adequate and appropriate resources for meeting reproductive health needs in the region.

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- **ATB (Atelier Théâtre Burkinabè)** - Laura J. Haas, Claudia Vondrasek, Prosper Kompaoré, Susan J. Griffey Brechin. February 1998.
- **CAFS (Centre for African Family Studies)** - Laura J. Haas, Thierno M. Kane, Dr. Mariam Sangaré, Susan J. Griffey Brechin. February 1998.
- **CEFOREP (Centre de Formation et de Recherche en Santé de la Reproduction)** - Laura J. Haas, Thierno Kane, Susi Wyss, Dr. Fadel Diadhiou, Cheikh Seydi Aboubeker Mbengue, Susan J. Griffey Brechin. February 1998.
- **CERCOM (Centre d'Enseignement et de Recherche en Communication)** - Laura J. Haas, Claudia Vondrasek, Dr. Régina Traoré Série, Susan J. Griffey Brechin. February 1998.
- **CERPOD (Centre d'Etudes et de Recherche sur la Population pour le Développement)** - Laura J. Haas, Basile Tambashe Oleko, Mouhamadou Gueye, Susan J. Griffey Brechin. February 1998.
- **ENSEA (Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Statistique et d'Economie Appliquée)** - Laura J. Haas, Basile Tambashe Oleko, Koffi N'Guessan, Susan J. Griffey Brechin. December 1997.
- **FESADE (Femmes-Santé-Développement en Afrique Sub-Saharienne)** - Laura J. Haas, Claudia Vondrasek, Damaris Mounlom, Susan J. Griffey Brechin. February 1998.
- **IRESCO (Institut de Recherche et des Etudes de Comportements)** - Laura J. Haas, Basile Tambashe Oleko, Claude Cheta, Susan J. Griffey Brechin. January 1998.
- **ISED (Institut de Santé et Développement)** - Laura J. Haas, Lisanne F. Brown, Issakha Diallo, Scott D. McKeown, Susan J. Griffey Brechin. October 1997.
- **SANFAM (Santé de la Famille)** - Laura J. Haas, Alpha Dieng Mbissane Ngom, Susan J. Griffey Brechin, TJ Quan. February 1998.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: SFPS PROJECT OVERVIEW

The SFPS Project is represented by four separate agencies, each funded for a five-year period (through the year 2000) by USAID through REDSO/WCA: Tulane University, JHPIEGO Corporation, Johns Hopkins University Center for Communications Programs and PSI.

The purpose of the project is to increase availability and use of quality family planning/reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, and maternal and child health services. Specifically, the project seeks to:

- increase the use of modern family planning methods among women of reproductive age by 1% per year in the project target areas.

- increase the proportion of men with multiple partners who report consistent use of condoms by at least 5% over baseline figures in project target areas.

- increase the use of ORS by two and a half percentage points per year over baseline in project target countries.

- increase the capacity of key African institutions to implement activities in service delivery, training, IEC and operations research, with minimal reliance on external technical assistance.

The four agencies and their US and African partners collaborate together in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo on activities targeted to specific populations, based on the type of intervention needed to achieve the above goals. In general, these interventions are provided through clinics/hospitals or social marketing programs.

SFPS project activities are guided by the following regional strategies:

1. Improve the quality and efficiency of reproductive health services. In addition, educate the patient and provider about long-term and permanent reproductive health methods.

2. Strengthen family planning, maternal and child health, sexually transmitted diseases, and AIDS programs in the private sector.

3. Support women's initiatives in family planning, maternal and child health, sexually transmitted diseases, and AIDS by promoting women's organizations that are active in reproductive health, community outreach and women's empowerment.

4. Strengthen adolescent programs in family planning, maternal and child health, sexually transmitted diseases, and AIDS by promoting and replicating youth initiatives.

5. Address reproductive health needs of migrants through counseling and marketing activities.

6. Promote institutional sustainability.

7. Strengthen collaboration with USAID-sponsored agencies: The SFPS project seeks to collaborate with other USAID projects in West and Central Africa to maximize each agency's abilities.

8. Leverage donor support: SFPS will seek joint funding from other agencies to expand activities and ensure continuity.

9. Build regional resources that provide local technical expertise.

Institutional development has long been a component of development efforts, the concept having emerged with the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations and their programs to establish public administration and management institutes in the 1950s and 1960s while USAID undertook institution-building in the 1960s and 1970s. In the late 1980s the World Bank initiated another wave of capacity-building with new sponsors and approaches (Israel 1987). According to the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), "sustained and self-reliant development depends on the strength and quality of a country's institutions" (1989: 107 in Brinkerhoff and Goldsmith 1992).

In a review of its projects in 1990, the World Bank found that a strong positive association existed between strong indigenous institutions and the continuation of benefits beyond external support to a program (Paul 1990: 27 in Brinkerhoff and Goldsmith 1992). These decades of socioeconomic development have provided the recognition that effective institutions are critical to the development process (Brinkerhoff 1986; Uphoff 1986). Improving the capacity of indigenous institutions is one way of ensuring sustainable development at the local level (White 1987; Brinkerhoff 1996). However, these "development oriented" institutions are found to be incredibly scarce in the developing world (Brinkerhoff and Goldsmith 1992). In its *1996 Regional Perspectives*, the World Bank (1996) recognized capacity-building as one of the most vital means to enabling countries to define and achieve their development goals and concluded that it is central to sustainable development in Africa.

Sustainability

It has generally been accepted that the term "sustainability" has been abused in its usage throughout the development community. The term is commonly applied to multiple contexts and dimensions with various meanings and interpretations, all of which contribute to the confusion and difficulty in applying the term in a productive manner to development issues. Aid organizations embraced the concept as a new paradigm for development, but the literature has become inundated with a multitude of corresponding yet inconsistent definitions (Lele 1991). Although the issue of sustainability remains a constant concern in the development sector among donors and recipients alike, a universal definition that measures how well an organization is proceeding on the sustainability continuum has yet to emerge. In efforts to clarify and consolidate sustainability initiatives, USAID formed a working group in 1995 to establish an operational definition at three levels: outcome, program and organizational. (The discussion which follows will focus on the organizational level.) (SITF 1995)

USAID's Center for Population, Health and Nutrition (USAID/G/PHN) then developed a working definition of sustainability:

> Sustainability is the condition of a program that allows it to fulfill or maintain its quest of its objectives. Additionally, from an external donor prospective, sustainability is the programmatic or organizational state that allows the donor to discontinue support without adversely affecting the program's ability to maintain or continue its quest of its objectives (Tsui 1996).

The key questions implied here are:

- What is the condition of a program?
- What elements or characteristics make up this organizational condition which then leads to sustainability?

An additional question from Van Pelt MJF et al. (1990 in Stefanini 1993): is it only "the long-term availability of the means required for the long-term achievement of goals" or is there more to the definition? Further USAID discussions maintained that organizational sustainability focuses on the probability of individual organizations to achieve or maintain a defined level of performance given the withdrawal of public or donor funds (Sustainability Index Task Force 1995). However, we ask if it is realistic to believe that these institutions which by their nature serve an underprivileged population can continue to provide their much-needed services and/or products to this population without some sort of external support or subsidy?

> Is institutional development, according to Brinkerhoff and Goldsmith (1992), the ability of an organization to produce outputs of sufficient value so that it acquires enough inputs to continue production at a steady or growing rate?

> Is a sustainable institution one that has earned adherence of a sufficient body of people so as to provide the continuing encouragement and support it needs to maintain a stable volume of activities (Brinkerhoff 1992)?

This definition takes into consideration the challenges facing organizations in constrained environments such as West and Central Africa where access to resources is limited and survival of an organization is dependent upon multiple variables, both internal and external to the organization.

An Institution Defined

Uphoff (1986) maintains that "not all organizations are 'institutions'..." So, what is an institution? Veblen defines an institution simply as habits of thought which mold the way people function within an organization (Lerner 1948). This perception is reinforced by Huntington (1968, in Brinkerhoff and Goldsmith 1992) who states that institutions refer to stable, valued and recurring patterns of behavior. Uphoff adds that it is only when an organization acquires special status and legitimacy in society through having satisfied people's needs and for having met their expectations over time, can one say that an organization has become 'institutionalized' (1986). Existing institutions are strengthened when new useful processes and systems are adopted and incorporated, that is, institutionalized. This process of creating a new pattern of activities and behaviors which become integrated into the routine functions of an organization and thus persist over time is the process of institutional development (Brinkerhoff 1986; Stefanini 1993).

Institutional Development/Capacity-Building

Institutional capacity-building develops an organization's ability to plan and manage the use of its available resources—material and financial as well as human resources—in the most effective and efficient manner possible (Israel 1987). In the developing world, public and non-governmental institutions are often confronted with constrained environments in which they must operate. In these harsh environments of limited material, financial and human resources, it is crucial that the allocation of these resources is carefully planned and managed so as to maximize their benefit to society—to the target population the organization is seeking to serve. In the IDRC's *Framework for Strengthening Organizational Capacity for IDRC's Research Partners*, capacity-building is defined as

"...an ongoing process by which people and systems, operating within dynamic contexts, learn to develop and implement strategies in pursuit of their objectives for increased performance in a sustainable way"(1995, p. xiii).

To strengthen institutional capacity, a long-term commitment must be made to the organization as well as to the lengthy process involved in improving institutional capacity. In addition to this commitment, time and resources as well as appropriate strategies and concepts are necessary (Uphoff 1986) as is ownership of the implementation process of the capacity-building efforts (Brinkerhoff 1996). This belief is reinforced by Sahara (1991) who states that the training of individuals does not necessarily enhance the institutional capacity of an organization if these individuals are dealt with separately from their institution. "The most appropriate mode for efforts to strengthen local institutional capacity will depend on (a) what capabilities already exist, and (b) where initiatives for changes in the status quo come from" (Uphoff 1986: 188).

Brinkerhoff believes that the survival of an organization is affected by the external environment as well as its internal capabilities. In addition, an organization must possess and follow a strategy that is consistent with its own internal strengths and weaknesses as well as its external threats and opportunities (1992). Although the IDA focused solely on the internal capabilities of an organization, the hypotheses Brinkerhoff proposes formed the basis of the research methodology, recognizing an organization's need to develop internal mechanisms which identify and incorporate external realities into internal decision-making.

Areas of Intervention

Brinkerhoff (1992), Cohen (1993) and Lusthaus (1995) recognize the importance of factors in the external environment which have an impact on institutional development. SFPS chose to focus its IDA on the internal mechanisms of an organization, identifying actual needs and organizational dimensions whereby SFPS could potentially provide interventions to strengthen institutional capacity. The organizational dimensions used derive from the literature wherein Esman, (Brinkerhoff 1986) one of the major institution-building theorists, states that capacity-building interventions must focus on the following organizational variables:

- leadership
- mission and *raison d'être*
- program: what the organization produces, either goods or services
- resources: financial, material and human
- structure: procedures and practices

They comprise the basic foundation of organizational dimensions where institutional capacity-building interventions can occur even in subsequent theories which regroup or rename these variables. Mann (1989) recommends capacity-building efforts based on "tailor-made" approaches to address the particular needs of an organization rather than overly generalized approaches. This perspective regarding capacity-building approaches is also supported by Lusthaus (1995). Mann et al (1989) regroup these variables into four interrelated dimensions—strategic, technical, administrative and communications—with strategic capacity being the most critical as the catalyst to improvements in technical, administrative and communications capacity. Within each of these capacity dimensions are more specific categories/tasks as shown in Table 1.

Table B-1: Mann's Capacity Dimensions

Strategic	*Technical*	*Administrative*	*Communications*
Setting priorities	Project design	Personnel management	Information management
Increasing efficiency	Accounting practices		Institutional linkages
Managing change			
Creating independence			

Another institutional assessment framework, designed by the IDRC's Evaluation Unit, uses four categories: forces in the external environment, institutional motivation, institutional capacity and institutional performance (Lauthaus 1995). Areas of intervention focusing on the internal aspects of the organization are found primarily in the institutional capacity category and comprise resources and systems:

- Strategic leadership
- Human resources
- Other core resources
- Program management
- Process management
- Inter-institutional linkages

The literature emphasizes the necessity of indigenous leadership and strategic management in addition to institutional resources and basic management and administrative systems (Brinkerhoff 1996; Uphoff 1986; Goldsmith 1996). This literature review provided an initial base from which to conceptualize an appropriate framework for assessing institutional capacity.

APPENDIX C: REVIEW OF CAPACITY ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS

Two management capacity assessment tools (both including financial management) were reviewed: MSH's *Organizational Development/Sustainability Status Assessment Instrument* (OD/SS) and the Initiatives' Project's *Organizational Self-Assessment of Service Sustainability*. The OD/SS was designed to assess key management components and their present levels of performance. The matrix equated better performance to improved sustainability. Management components internal to the organization include: mission, strategy, structure and numerous systems (collection and use of information, commodities, financial management, revenues, planning and human resources). Each of these components were ranked on a scale (using statements about the component) from 1 to 4 with 4 being the highest stage of development. Each of the four levels are associated with specific characteristics that define that stage of development for that particular management component. Respondents are asked to circle those characteristics which most closely represent the present status of their organization.

The Initiatives' Project of JSI seeks to enhance NGO "prospects for achieving sustainability" through workshops to enhance these prospects. The workshops focus on strengthening the ability of health and family planning service providers to adapt to a changing environment and increase the likelihood of a continuation in the provision of goods and services. The Initiatives' model highlights the marketing component of institutional capacity and the ability of the organization to respond to opportunities to generate additional financial resources. The self-assessment instrument, administered during Initiatives' workshops, facilitates and guides internal discussions of organizational characteristics that are likely to contribute to or hinder the delivery of sustainable services.

The 11-question questionnaire is divided into three sections: leadership, management and financing. Questions highlight functional areas that have important implications on the organization's ability to adapt to its changing environment, to identify those systems and processes in place that will contribute to the organization's ability to adapt. The management section contains the bulk of the eleven questions focusing on: marketing, operations, personnel, commodities, accounting/finance, program management and the promotion of community participation. Respondents are asked to check any of the four characteristics following each question that applies to their organization. A score of 1 is given for each characteristic that applies to the organization and 0 for each that does not apply. The scores are totaled for all the questions and these totals are entered into a profile grid and connected by lines to produce a graphical presentation of the organization. Based upon this graphic, participants are asked to identify their organization's strengths and weaknesses.

IPPF developed a more comprehensive instrument, *NGO Needs Assessment*, administered in Central America as part of the PASCA Project. This self-administered mailback questionnaire was divided into five sections:

Section 1: level of involvement in specific program activities and identification of training needs
Section 2: identification of target population and types of interventions/activities provided
Section 3: level of collaboration that exists between organizations in the region (linkages)
Section 4: financial and management structure and administration
Section 5: information needed to register the organization in a database

The questionnaire covers numerous functions within an organization, needing to be filled out by a respondent at the highest administrative level and recommending that a maximum of four to six individuals participate in the completion of the questionnaire. In reviewing Sections 1, 2 and 4, the first two sections contributed to the development of the self-administered technical capacity questionnaires and the fourth section informing the self-administered management and financial management questionnaires and the in-depth interviews. Questions derived from this instrument included those regarding the types and extent of technical activities (training, research, condom distribution, etc.), identification of target populations in addition to those concerning management issues, organizational resources and administrative systems.

The *Financial Sustainability Assessment Tool* (1990) developed by Poptech was designed to assess the financial sustainability of family planning programs at the national or sub-national level with objectives to:

* identify aspects of these programs that are conducive to long-term sustainability,
* identify major needs for additional focus on sustainability,
* assess awareness of financing and financial sustainability among program leaders, and
* assess the extent to which long-term financial sustainability is incorporated into program strategies.

Organized into nine sections, the first section is descriptive in nature, seeking to describe the service delivery system, determining the program's developmental stage, and identifying the organizational structure. Section two through seven look at uses of family planning methods and sources of funding. Section eight contains several items regarding strategic planning. Section nine is designed to synthesize the information collected in previous sections and generate broad conclusions about program financial sustainability.

APPENDIX D: INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT TEAMS

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