



ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

Developed for use with grantees of The Colorado Trust's Healthy Aging Initiative (HAI). Adapted from The Colorado Trust's Serving Immigrant and Refugees Initiative Organizational Assessment Process and the Comprehensive Health Education Foundation's Nonprofit Capacity Building Project evaluation. For information on the development and use of the tool, contact Tanya Beer at The Colorado Trust, 303-837-1200.

Introduction

The Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) has been designed as a means to engage HAI grantees in a participative process of organizational assessment at the beginning of their grant period. It is intended as a foundation for identifying, designing and delivering appropriate technical assistance (TA) to the grantee over the life of the HAI grant. In itself, it can be a valuable and insightful exercise for the grantee's leadership to benchmark their organizational capacities and then decide, in consultation with their Project Liaison, i.e., their TA provider, where assistance in building those capacities would be most fruitful.

The OCA also will be re-administered toward the conclusion of the grant period as a measure of progress and to develop new capacity-building priorities for the grantee to implement independently.

Objectives

The objectives of the OCA are as follows:

- To provide an assessment of the grantee's development in various organizational capacities, preparatory to creating a capacity building/technical assistance plan tailored to each grantee
- To provide a baseline assessment of the organization's capacity in order to examine the success of the Initiative's aim to increase capacity and, thereby, improve service delivery
- To engage the grantee in a substantive dialogue, ideally with both board and staff members, that highlights the organizational strengths and resources as well as the needs to address
- To offer a foundation for the relationship between the grantee and the TA provider that is mutually respectful and strategically informative
- To provide a summative assessment of the organization's capacity in order to examine the success of the Initiative's aim to increase capacity and, thereby, improve service delivery

Target of the OCA

The questions and assessment benchmarks used in the OCA have been written in relation to the organization as a whole. Capacity building funded by The Colorado Trust (TCT) and delivered by Tri-County Health Department (TCHD), and its contractors will focus on the organization as a whole, and in particular, on the project being funded by TCT.

In large organizations, such as universities or hospitals, the TA provided may be more project-specific, rather than aimed at the entire organization. This will be decided in consultation between the Coordinating Agency (TCHD), the assigned Project Liaison (TA Provider) and the grantee.

In the case of coalitions, the OCA will be administered for the constituent organizations as a team, with the expectation that all constituent organizations in the coalition are represented at the OCA session.

Who Should Participate and When?

The OCA ideally will be conducted within the first three months of the grant period. It should be scheduled for at least one-half day, and as much as a full day, depending on the size and complexity of the organization(s) and the depth of inquiry desired. The executive director, key members of staff as well as a selection of board representatives should attend. Having additional stakeholders present (or surveyed) would be ideal.

The more the board, management, staff and other stakeholders' views are represented, the more valuable will be the dialogue, the relationship building, the learning, and the resulting plans. The details of the timing and input should be coordinated by the TA provider.

Structure of the OCA

The OCA has been divided into 11 sections, one of which is optional. Each section covers a different category of organizational capacity. The last section pertains to coalition management, applicable in this case only to collaboratives funded as an HAI grantee.

- I. Governance (Board)
- II. External Relations (Stakeholders)
- III. Management
- IV. Human Resources (Staff)
- V. Human Resources (Volunteers)
- VI. Financial Resource Management
- VII. Strategic Planning
- VIII. External Communications
- IX. Service Delivery
- X. Evaluation and Organizational Learning
- XI. Coalition Management (for formal collaboratives only)

Within each section, there are two parts – dialogue questions and assessment benchmarks. The dialogue questions are intended to engage everyone in a dialogue about the area, giving an opportunity to hear stories of what is working well and to hear different perspectives on what could be improved. This is the “qualitative data” the TA provider will be collecting. From these stories, the TA provider will be able to draw a picture for the evaluators of the grantee status in each of these capacity areas.

Following the dialogue, the assessment benchmarks offer an opportunity for everyone present to participate in rating the current status of the organization relative to a set of standards. The results of these ratings will be compiled by the TA provider and shared during the session.

Each section is designed to be approached sequentially. First, work through Dialogue Question A, then work through Dialogue Question C, which includes rating the organization according to the benchmarks. Dialogue Question B may be reserved for on-site visits, if that type of TA becomes a priority.

At least 20 minutes should be planned for each section, and up to 45 minutes if the optional exercises (Dialogue Question B) are used, or if the number of participants is large. At the end of the session, when the ratings for all sections have been compiled, at least one-half hour should be set

aside to review them in total and use them in a final process to identify priorities for capacity building over the period of the grant.

This packet includes colored copies of the dialogue questions and assessment benchmarks, which the grantees will turn into their TA provider during the session for data entry. The white versions are the grantee's own and can serve as a record of their responses. They will need to copy their responses from the colored sheets to the white sheets in order to have a record of their individual responses. Group responses will be shared with the grantees by the TA provider.

This OCA is intended as an assessment of organizational capacity. It will be used by both the Coordinating Agency, Tri-County Health, as well as the evaluation team, National Research Center, Inc. The success of the HAI evaluation will hinge upon gathering accurate OCA data at the beginning and end of the grant period.

Dialogue Questions (15-35 minutes/section)

There are three dialogue questions for each section. The first (A) is an appreciative question designed to get people telling stories of some of the best aspects of their organization and experiences there. The second (B) is an optional question or interactive exercise that can be used to go a little deeper into that area and to have fun.

The third question asks participants to rate the list of benchmarks. Using the benchmarks as a springboard, participants should identify one change that could make the most difference if the organization moved closer to the ideal. This question is intended to provoke an open dialogue about what the organization could do differently that would add to its effectiveness. This is not a time for debate or decision-making but of listening to different points of view.

Depending on the size of the group, the TA provider may choose to do some or all of the questions first in smaller groups, to give everyone a greater chance to speak their views. Of course, if small groups are used, it will be important to at least hear highlights in the whole group before moving on.

In general, the optional (B) question is designed to be a full group exercise. Between 15 and 35 minutes should be allotted for the dialogue portion of each section, depending on the size of the group and whether question B is used.

Assessment Benchmarks (5-10 minutes/section)

The assessment benchmarks are a set of statements intended to evoke elements of an ideal organization in relation to each category of organizational capacity. Once Dialogue Question A for each section is finished, everyone is asked to individually rate the organization in relation to all of the assessment statements for that section. Discussion then turns to Dialogue Question C. Finally, ratings are turned in to the TA provider to be summarized anonymously, with the results posted on a flip chart.

The benchmarking process should take only 5-10 minutes, a little more if there are any comments to be made about the results. Participants should retain the white sheets for their own reference (copying results from their colored sheet of benchmarks if they wish to have a record). If you record the results in the Excel spreadsheet provided to you by TCHD as people bring them up, individual ratings need not be copied.

Priority Setting (30-60 minutes)

After the dialogue and assessments have been completed for all sections, it is time to review all of the results and set priorities based on what participants feel would be the most important areas in which to target capacity building or technical assistance.

Post all of the flipcharted results around the room so everyone can look at them. Invite everyone to do a “gallery walk,” asking themselves the question, “What developments in organizational capacity would make the most difference for our organization?” Just because certain items are rated low does not necessarily mean this is an important issue for a particular organization, so now is the time for discernment in relation to what’s most needed.

After the gallery walk, participants should be invited to make recommendations about what they see as the top organizational priorities for capacity building. These can be summarized on a new flip chart and/or referenced to the item(s) on the flip charted assessment summary. After a period of dialogue, participants could be invited to mark (using markers or sticky dots) their top three priorities. This then becomes input to the development of a technical assistance plan.

Depending on who needs to be involved in making such decisions, it should be made clear to everyone how this input will be used, by whom, and in what timeframe, to develop the customized TA plan. Please defer to HAI Project Director Jana Smith at Tri-County Health Department for guidance in this area.

Special Considerations for Large Organizations

As mentioned earlier, large organizations (e.g., universities, hospitals) may have the focus of their OCA be on a part of the organization rather than the whole organization. In general, most of the questions can be adapted easily by substituting the word “department” or “program” in place of “organization,” and the questions will work.

In the case of governance for these larger organizations, if the board has a relationship to that particular program or department, the questions might still be relevant, and can be included if desired. If the board does not have a relationship to that particular program or department, governance questions can be adjusted and used in relation to the decision-making body relevant to that program or department (e.g., department chair, faculty committee, etc.). Users might choose to use some portions of the OCA with both board and management/staff, and other parts only with the latter, thus breaking the process into two shorter meetings.

Also, input can be requested in advance from other stakeholders who won’t be at the meeting(s), by requesting that they fill out particular sheets, including the ratings and questions A and C.

Copyright and Modifications

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Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA)

Introductory Note for Participants

Thank you for participating in the Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) for this organization. The OCA is a participative self-assessment process for organizations to use with their boards, management, staff and other stakeholders.

In each area of organizational capacity, the OCA invites dialogue about organizational strengths and improvement areas and allows participants to independently rate the organization against a set of benchmarks. The resulting perspective builds a shared understanding of the organization and will be very helpful in developing an appropriate capacity-building plan that leverages strengths, while focusing resources on the most important areas for improvement.

If you are participating in a meeting where this instrument is used, instructions will be given by your facilitator. If you are filling this out on your own, please follow these instructions:

Instructions

Answer questions A and C for each page provided on the back side of the sheet. Then rate the organization according to each of the statements in the “Assessment Benchmark” section. Each statement describes characteristics of an ideal organization. Rate your organization in terms of how well it matches the ideal described in the statement, from 5 (strongly agree) down to 1 (strongly disagree).

Circle the appropriate number for each line. If you do not understand the statement, leave that line blank. If you don’t know enough about the item or it does not seem to apply, circle “DK/NA”. If you agree with part of a statement and not with another part, choose a rating that reflects your response to the statement taken as a whole.

This packet includes colored copies of the dialogue questions and assessment benchmarks, which on-site participants will turn into the TA provider during the OCA session for data entry purposes. The white versions are your own and can serve as a record of your responses. On-site participants will need to copy responses from the colored sheets to the white sheets in order to have a record of individual responses. The TA provider will share the overall group responses during the session. If you are not attending the OCA session, you may request the overall results from the TA provider (or your organizational lead on this grant).

A Note on Terminology

“Stakeholders” refers to anyone with a “stake” or interest in the organization and typically includes board members, staff, volunteers and partner organizations, as well as constituents. “Constituents” (or “constituency”) are those served (or potentially served) by the organization within its mission, i.e., its clientele.

I. Governance (Board)

Dialogue Questions

- A. Tell a story about a time when you thought the board functioned especially well. When the board is working at its best, what qualities do you observe?
- B. Optional exercise: Think about all of the skills, talents and resources you wish were present on your board. Make a list of them, and then rate on a scale of 0 to 3 the extent to which they are present in your existing board (0=not at all; 1= minimal; 2=adequate; 3=superb). Consider how the three most desirable missing (or underrepresented) resources might be added, whether via new board members, partners, or other advisors.
- C. A list of statements describing effective governance follows. Complete the questionnaire, then, taking all the statements into account, identify the one change that you believe would improve your organization the most. Why do you think so?

Governance (Board) Assessment Benchmarks

<u>(Circle one per line)</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Don't Know/ Not Applicable</u>
1. The board is an independent governing body providing effective oversight to the organization.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
2. The board well represents the diverse makeup and interests of the constituency served by the organization.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
3. The board makes policy-level decisions for the organization and doesn't micromanage operations.....1		2	3	4	DK/NA
4. It is clear what the role of the board is in the organization and how that differs from the role of the staff.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
5. The board and the staff work harmoniously and complement one another's efforts.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
6. The board has an optimal mix of the skills and resources needed by the organization.....1		2	3	4	DK/NA
7. The board works well as a team and makes decisions efficiently that reflect the best wisdom of the group.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
8. Board members are enthusiastically involved in fundraising and external relations.....1		2	3	4	DK/NA
9. All board members set an example by contributing some money as well as time to the organization.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
10. The board ensures that the activities and finances of the organization are in line with its policy, including an annual review against goals and objectives.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
11. The board conducts an annual evaluation of the executive director and sets goals and objectives with him/her for the coming year.....1		2	3	4	DK/NA
12. The board meets regularly and has an effective committee structure to carry out more detailed work in between board meetings.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
13. A board member orientation is conducted for new board members.....1		2	3	4	DK/NA
14. An agenda is planned for all board meetings.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
15. Adequate minutes of all board meetings are kept, including decisions reached.....1		2	3	4	DK/NA

II. External Relations (Stakeholders)¹

Dialogue Questions

- A. Tell a story about external stakeholders that made your organization realize anew the importance of having external supporters.
- B. Optional exercise: Stakeholder Map. Draw a map of the organization’s stakeholders, encouraging everyone to contribute to it, until the group feels it is a complete picture of the full diversity of constituencies interested in, contributing to, and/or affected by the work of the organization. Consider how well each of these stakeholder groups is informed about and involved in the work of the organization.
- C. A list of statements describing effective external relations follows. Complete the questionnaire, then, taking all the statements into account, identify the one change that you believe would improve your organization the most. Why do you think so?

Assessment Benchmarks

<u>(Circle one per line)</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Don't Know/ Not Applicable</u>
1. The organization is well respected by the community.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
2. The organization regularly takes time to seek input from its constituency.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
3. The organization responds to input from its constituency.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
4. Expertise and resources in the community have been identified.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
5. Expertise and resources in the community are well-utilized by the organization.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
6. The organization successfully markets itself.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
7. The organization knows who all of its stakeholders are and understands the diversity of its constituency.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
8. The organization has a relationship of mutual respect with its donors and communicates regularly.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
9. The organization has good relations with the business community.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
10. The organization is known to the media, enabling good publicity and advocacy.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
11. The organization is well respected by relevant government agencies.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
12. The organization actively works with other nonprofits for mutual learning or enhanced service.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
13. The organization issues an annual report to stakeholders, which includes program accomplishments, financial condition, acknowledgment of major donors, and any significant organizational changes.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA

¹ A note on terminology: “Stakeholders” refer to anyone with a “stake” or interest in the organization and typically includes board members, staff, volunteers, and partner organizations, as well as constituents. “Constituents” (or “constituency”) are those served (or potentially served) by the organization within its mission (i.e., its clientele.)

III. Management²

Dialogue Questions

- A. What do you appreciate most about the management of your organization? When management is at its best, what does it do especially well?
- B. Optional exercise: In pairs or small groups, pick an animal that in some way symbolizes the management of your organization. Taking turns before the whole group, act out the behavior of this animal, until someone guesses it, and then discuss why you picked this animal.
- C. A list of statements describing effective management practices follows. Complete the questionnaire, then, taking all the statements into account, identify the one change that you believe would improve your organization the most. Why do you think so?

Management Assessment Benchmarks

<u>(Circle one per line)</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Don't Know/ Not Applicable</u>
1. The organizational structure is clear and serves the organization well.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
2. The organization's plans (including program plans) are consistent with its mission and strategy.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
3. Plans are regularly reviewed by management and adjusted as necessary.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
4. Programs are developed with appropriate input from staff.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
5. Programs are developed with appropriate input from constituents.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
6. Programs are developed based on best practices, which are regularly collected and reviewed.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
7. Program plans are effectively and consistently used to guide program activities	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
8. The relationship of programs (and in particular, the one funded here) to the whole organization is clear.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
9. Management team members exhibit teamwork in leading the organization.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
10. Management has an excellent working relationship with the board.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
11. Meetings of management and/or staff are well-organized and productive	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
12. Management empowers staff to take initiative with appropriate guidance.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
13. Staff feel free to discuss concerns with management.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
14. Staff concerns are dealt with fairly and quickly.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
15. Management does not micromanage operations.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA

² The term "management" includes at least the executive director, and may include other staff (not board members) who make decisions for the program and/or organization, as well as those who supervise program staff.

IV. Human Resources (Staff)

Dialogue Questions

- A. Tell a story about something one staff member did that makes you proud they work for your organization. What are the greatest strengths of your organization's staff?
- B. Optional question: What is the best thing about working for this organization?
- C. A list of statements describing effective human resource practices follows. Complete the questionnaire, then, taking all the statements into account, identify the one change that you believe would improve your organization the most. Why do you think so?

Human Resources (Staff) Assessment Benchmarks

<u>(Circle one per line)</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Don't Know/ Not Applicable</u>
1. Staff have a clear understanding of organizational mission, program goals, and their specific roles.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
2. Staff have written job descriptions that reflect their actual work.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
3. Staff receive annual performance-based evaluations and set goals and objectives for the coming year.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
4. The organization has an appropriate number of staff with the right mix of skills to achieve its mission.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
5. Staff is offered training that directly contributes to the organization's objectives.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
6. Staff morale is excellent.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
7. Staff are supported by management and/or the board acting upon issues that warrant attention.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
8. The efforts and accomplishments of staff are recognized and appreciation demonstrated.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
9. Staff are encouraged to take initiative and to raise questions, and they regularly do so.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
10. There are good opportunities for staff to develop as professionals and leaders in this organization.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
11. The level of staff turnover is acceptable.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
12. The reasons why staff leave are well understood.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
13. The gender and ethnic diversity of staff reflects the community served by the organization.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
14. Staff are "culturally competent" to serve the constituencies targeted by the organization.1		2	3	4	DK/NA
15. Salaries and benefits paid to employees are consistent with comparable nonprofit organizations.1		2	3	4	DK/NA

V. Human Resources (Volunteers)

Dialogue Questions

- A. Tell a story about something one volunteer did that makes you proud that your organization attracts people like this person. What are the greatest assets of your organization's volunteers?
- B. Optional question: What is a compelling reason to volunteer for this organization?
- C. A list of statements describing effective volunteer practices follows. Complete the questionnaire, then, taking all the statements into account, identify the one change that you believe would improve your organization the most. Why do you think so?

Human Resources (Volunteers) Assessment Benchmarks

<u>(Circle one per line)</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Don't Know/ Not Applicable</u>
1. The organization is clear about the variety of volunteer roles useful to the organization.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
2. The organization effectively recruits volunteers for as many tasks as appropriate.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
3. Volunteers have a clear understanding of organizational mission, program goals, and their specific roles.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
4. Volunteer training is offered that directly contributes to the organization's objectives.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
5. Volunteers are well qualified for their roles.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
6. Valuable volunteers are retained by the organization.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
7. Volunteers are supported by the organization acting upon issues that warrant attention.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
8. Volunteers are encouraged to take initiative and raise questions, and they regularly do so.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
9. Volunteers consider their roles meaningful contributions.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
10. Volunteers are appreciated by the organization and that appreciation is demonstrated meaningfully.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
11. Volunteers are eager to return.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
12. The gender and ethnic diversity of volunteers reflects the community served by the organization.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
13. Volunteers are "culturally competent" to serve the constituencies targeted by the organization.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA

VI. Financial Resource Management

Dialogue Questions

- A. Over the past couple of years, what financial accomplishment are you most proud of your organization having made (e.g., winning a large new grant, funding a new program, making strategic cuts to balance the budget while maintaining service, instituting new financial control systems, hiring a new director of philanthropy)?
- B. Optional question: In this time of tight financial resources, creativity in fundraising, resource sharing and cost-effective program implementation is essential. Brainstorm ideas that could help in any of these areas – be as wacky as you wish. After the brainstorm, give everyone three sticky dots (or pen marks) to vote for the best ones.
- C. A list of statements describing effective financial practices follows. Complete the questionnaire, then, taking all the statements into account, identify the one change that you believe would improve your organization the most. Why do you think so?

Assessment Benchmarks

<u>(Circle one per line)</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Don't Know/ Not Applicable</u>
1. The organization prepares annual budgets and uses them well as a tool for monitoring expenditures.....1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
2. The accounting systems of the organization are adequate to accurately track and report timely info.1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
3. Cash flow is evaluated monthly, generally keeps pace with the budget, and is adjusted as needed.....1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
4. Year-end financial statements are produced timely (B/S and I/S) and audited if budget is more than \$500,000.1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
5. Separate projects have separate accounts and funds are not co-mingled among them.1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
6. A comparison of budget to actual results is made and variances analyzed & explained regularly.1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
7. Appropriate action is taken as a result of the periodic comparison of budget to actual results.1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
8. Adequate internal controls are in place to ensure funds are not misused.1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
9. Board oversight is an essential part of internal controls over funds.....1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
10. Financial information is effectively used in planning new projects and developing reliable projections.1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
11. Effective contingency strategies are in place for revenue shortfalls below anticipated amounts.1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
12. The organization has a balanced fund development plan, relying upon a good mix of funding sources.1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
13. The organization has the skills needed to identify sources and write successful grants.....1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
14. The organization values and is effective at developing in-kind donations.1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
15. Donors feel well acknowledged by the organization and repeat their donations.....1	2	3	4	DK/NA	

VII. Strategic Planning

Dialogue Questions

- A. What is it about the vision or mission of your organization that excites you the most and makes you want to be part of fulfilling it?
- B. Optional exercise: Imagine it is four years from now. Due to the success of this funded program and others, your organization has risen to a whole new stature in serving your community. Describe how it has changed, what it is doing, what its impact has been and what made this success possible.
- C. A list of statements describing effective strategic planning follows. Complete the questionnaire, then, taking all the statements into account, identify the one change that you believe would improve your organization the most. Why do you think so?

Strategic Planning Assessment Benchmarks

<u>(Circle one per line)</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Don't Know/ Not Applicable</u>
1. The organization's mission and vision are current, clear and motivating for all stakeholders.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
2. The organization has a strategic plan that is recent and relevant.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
3. Plans are developed with input from constituents who will be affected.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
4. Plans are developed with input from staff who will implement them	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
5. The mission/vision and strategic plans of the organization are shared internally with staff and volunteers.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
6. The organization regularly assesses its position in relation to the external environment (e.g., economic conditions, immigration law changes, competing or complementary service providers).	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
7. The organization adheres to its mission and key goals, but also adapts them in response to change as needed.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
8. The relationship of program plans to the organization's strategic plan is clear and consistent.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
9. The organization's strategic priorities are well reflected in funding allocations.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
10. Management regularly refers to the mission and/or strategic plan in ensuring focus for its activities.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
11. With limited resources, the organization successfully uses its strategic plan to decide what NOT to do.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
12. Progress against key goals in the strategic plan are regularly monitored and considered.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
13. The balance of time spent in planning vs. implementing is just right in this organization.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
14. The organization has identified actions needed over the next 1-4 years to operationalize its strategies.	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
15. The organization is willing to change and/or eliminate services that no longer meet priority needs or are not adequately supported by funding and/or constituents.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA

VIII. External Communications

Dialogue Questions

- A. Tell a story of your organization's most successful venture into external communications.
- B. Optional exercise: Imagine an older adult moves into your geographic area, and is in need of your organization's services. How would s/he try to find out about you? Envision ways to make that discovery process easier for this person. Who could be mobilized within your community to help? What additional contacts need to be made?
- C. A list of statements describing effective external communications follows. Complete the questionnaire, then, taking all the statements into account, identify the one change that you believe would improve your organization the most. Why do you think so?

Assessment Benchmarks

<u>(Circle one per line)</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Don't Know/ Not Applicable</u>
1. The organization has a strategic communications plan in place.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
2. Core messages have been developed for communicating the work of the organization.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
3. A system is in place for capturing human-interest stories and lessons learned.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
4. Appropriate audiences have been identified for external communications.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
5. Web, print and/or video materials have been created to help inform key constituents and the media about the organization.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
6. Key spokespersons have been trained to speak with media and participate in other presentation opportunities.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
7. Key media (or other form of community outreach) have been targeted for continuous outreach efforts.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
8. A system is in place for tracking media coverage.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
9. The organization has strong visibility and credibility in the community among many constituents.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
10. Media and other third-party coverage about the organization is accurate and favorable.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
11. Key stakeholders in the community understand and are committed to your organization's mission.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
12. Expertise and resources in the community have been identified and are well-utilized by the organization.....	1	2	3	4	DK/NA

IX. Service Delivery

Dialogue Questions

- A. Tell a story of providing service to one of your constituents that exemplifies what your organization is best at.
- B. Optional question: Another way of doing more with less is to imagine what value added could be provided to your constituency at little or no additional cost in the course of providing services you already do. Brainstorm ideas for “little things that make a big difference” you might consider incorporating into your service plan.
- C. A list of statements describing effective service delivery follows. Complete the questionnaire, then, taking all the statements into account, identify the one change that you believe would improve your organization the most. Why do you think so?

Service Delivery Assessment Benchmarks

<u>(Circle one per line)</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Don't Know/ Not Applicable</u>
1. A detailed work plan exists for all programs (and this one in particular) adequate to guide implementation.....1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
2. Program plans are effectively and consistently used to guide activities.....1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
3. Program plans are sufficiently specific to ensure that programs are meeting organizational goals.....1	2	3	4	DK/NA.	
4. The people responsible for service delivery are well qualified and responsive to their clients.1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
5. Outreach plans are in place to reach difficult and diverse elements of the organization's target population.1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
6. The services provided meet, and sometimes exceed, the expectations of the organization's clients.1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
7. Guidelines are followed in providing services, and appropriate flexibility is also encouraged.....1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
8. The organization is adaptive to the changing service needs of its constituency.....1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
9. Relationships with other organizations that support your service delivery are clear and effective.1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
10. The services provided by your organization really make a difference in the lives of constituents.....1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
11. Services are delivered in the most effective and efficient manner possible.....1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
12. Constituents are made to feel they come first in service delivery.....1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
13. Communication flows smoothly between staff that provide services and other parts of the organization.....1	2	3	4	DK/NA	
14. Staff are provided with the necessary materials, resources, and equipment to deliver services well.1	2	3	4	DK/NA	

X. Evaluation and Organizational Learning

Dialogue Questions

- A. How do people in your organization learn from each other and from past experiences in order to make the organization more successful in the future?
- B. Optional question: During the course of your time with this organization, share one of your personal highlights of learning, whether as a result of your own actions or watching someone else.
- C. A list of statements describing evaluation and organizational learning follows. Complete the questionnaire, then, taking all the statements into account, identify the one change that you believe would improve your organization the most. Why do you think so?

Evaluation and Organizational Learning Assessment Benchmarks

<u>(Circle one per line)</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Don't Know/ Not Applicable</u>
1. The organization has written goals and objectives for each of its programs.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
2. The objectives for each program are specific and measurable.....1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
3. The organization collects information about its constituency that gives you a data starting point.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
4. The organization regularly tracks information on program activities.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
5. Adequate information systems (hardware and software) exist to track program information efficiently.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
6. The organization gathers <u>quantitative</u> information on the impact of its programs (i.e., numbers).1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
7. The organization gathers <u>qualitative</u> information on the impact of its programs (i.e., stories).1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
8. Program tracking and evaluation information is used to review programs and develop new ones.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
9. Program results are regularly communicated to stakeholders and used to further the organization's goals.....1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
10. All stakeholder groups (internal and external) have chances to reflect on what's working and what isn't.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
11. Program results and stakeholder input is used for organizational learning and making improvements.....1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
12. The organizational climate encourages experimentation and learning from both successes and mistakes.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
13. Evaluation methods are carefully chosen to balance value of the information with cost of collection.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA

XI. Coalition Management (for formal collaboratives only)

Dialogue Questions

- A. Tell me a story about a time when you experienced the benefits of working in collaboration with another organization. What made that relationship successful?
- B. Optional exercise: Have coalition members take turns blindfolding someone from another organization, then leading them on a walk around the area, preferably outside. This could be done in pairs or with members of each organization linked in a train and led by members of another organization. Debrief the experience afterward to find out what it was like for people and what it brought up.
- C. A list of statements describing effective collaboration follows. Complete the questionnaire, then, taking all the statements into account, identify the one change that you believe would improve your coalition the most. Why do you think so?

Coalition Management (for formal collaboratives only) Assessment Benchmarks

<u>(Circle one per line)</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Don't Know/ Not Applicable</u>
1. Relationships among coalition members have been actively nourished as a foundation for working together.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
2. There is a common vision among members of the coalition as to the desired impact of the program.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
3. All coalition members are in agreement about the program goals and primary strategies.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
4. The roles and responsibilities of each of the coalition members are clear and well documented.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
5. Areas of duplication or potential conflict have been anticipated and/or well resolved as they arise.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
6. The respective resources of coalition members are well leveraged for the benefit of the program.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
7. Regular meetings are scheduled and held to assure the program is on track and all members satisfied.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
8. There is a spirit of trust among coalition members that makes it possible to work through even thorny issues.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
9. Collaboration among coalition members extends beyond the program itself, evidence of good relations.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
10. The coalition is a positive example to the community, encouraging other coalitions to form as well.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA

Community Organizing and Policy Change³

Dialogue Questions

- A. Think about a time when your organization successfully created an opportunity for the community to come together (especially across traditional boundaries). What were some of the most important outcomes, what made them possible, and what did you learn in the process?
- B. Optional question: Imagine it is four years from now and the climate of support among diverse community members for older adults has been greatly improved. The older adults in your service area feel better supported in the community. How did your organization contribute to this result? What steps do you need to take in the next four years to ensure this occurs?
- C. A list of statements describing community organizing and policy change follows. Complete the questionnaire, then, taking all the statements into account, identify the one change that you believe would improve your organization in this area the most. Why do you think so?

Community Organizing and Policy Change Assessment Benchmarks

<u>(Circle one per line)</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Don't Know/ Not Applicable</u>
1. Members of the organization actively discover the needs and resources of the community, reaching out to involve constituents and other groups.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
2. The organization regularly creates opportunities for its constituency to come together to establish and maintain linkages with one another.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
3. The organization is active, perhaps in partnership with other organizations, in sponsoring community gatherings across cultural or other traditional boundaries.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
4. Projects of the organization have input and involvement from diverse segments of the community.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
5. The organization and its constituents are well represented in projects of the broader community.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
6. The organization empowers community members to create change on their own behalf.					
7. The board and staff of the organization model crosscultural understanding in their work with the community.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
8. The organization actively seeks to reach and include constituent voices least often heard.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
9. The organization acts as an advocate for its constituency with government and the media.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
10. The organization is successful in mobilizing its constituents to influence the political process as relevant issues arise.1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
11. The organization knows how to access and work with local government to effect policy change1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA
12. The organization knows how to access and work with State government to effect policy change1	1	2	3	4	DK/NA

³ This section was created for use by those TA providers who work with grantees who request this type of technical assistance. It is not a part of the OCA, nor will it be part of the Initiative evaluation.