Organizational Capacity Assessment

Capacity Strengthening Workshop for
Civil Society Organizations
Kisumu, Kenya
24 September 2025

What and How to Assessment Organizational Capacity

This presentation is to the Kenyan CSOs and provides an overview of Organizational Development and Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) for program and finance personnel of selected Concept Note Applicant. We'll explore Tools and methodologies for assessing and enhancing capacity focusing on strength and areas need improvement.

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Capacity Assessment

The purpose is to assess how well the organization is equipped— organizational and technically —to deliver effective, sustainable, and impactful project. It combines general organizational strength and the technical aspects in on the systems, skills, and tools that directly contribute to the organization's mission.

Capacity Assessments

Have you participated in an organizational capacity assessment? What type, purpose, and process of assessment you experienced?

What Capacity Assessment?

Capacity Assessment is a structured conversation about organizational capacities that highlights the connections between various organizational functions, thoughts, and practices in line with meeting its goals.

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Conducting Organizational Capacity Assessment

Shared Understanding

To facilitate open and smooth exchange of information among assessment team using OCA/Re-OCA tool and the administration processes.

Self-Reflection

To help key CSO personnel to identify their strengths and areas for improvement using the OCA tool.

Measuring Capacity/progress

To enable CSOs to understand the existing capacity and the and the changes they can implement based on their Re-Re-OCA results.

Strategic Planning

To prioritize improvement areas and develop a tailored tailored Institutional Strengthening Plan (ISP) for each each CSO.

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Expected Outputs: A Roadmap for Improvement

At the end of the baseline assessment, CSOs will:

- Understand their internal and external context.
- Identify and analyze their strengths and capacity gaps
- Develop a comprehensive Institutional Strengthening Plan (ISP).
- Set clear indicators to track progress.

At the end of the Re-assessment phase, CSOs will:

- Review changes based on previous assessment score
- Prioritize new areas for improvement.
- Refine their institutional strengthening plan.
- Adjust and establish new indicators for continued progress.

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Stages of Organizational Development

- **Nascent:** Organization (unit) is at its earliest stage of development, all components are in rudimentary or non-existent stage
- **Emerging:** Organization (unit) is developing some capacity, structures and systems
- **Expanding:** Organization (unit) has a track record of achievements; its work is recognized by its constituency, other government structures, etc.
- **Mature:** The organization (unit) is fully functioning and sustainable, with a diversified resource base and partnership with national and international networks

Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool

Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT) is both quantitative scoring 1-4; and qualitative discussion within each section, evidence and overall wrap up section.

These are not grading but rather points that should allow a learning organization to identify and address gaps so the organization may grow beyond its funding and/or reporting.

Types of Assessments

Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA)

Comprehensive review of an organization's overall capabilities.

Technical Capacity Assessment Assessment (TCA)

Focuses on specific technical and programmatic matters

Organizational Performance Performance Index/Assessment Index/Assessment (OPI)

Measures the effectiveness and efficiency of organizational outcomes.

Organizational Networking Assessment (ONA)

Assess internal and external relational dynamics and partnerships.

Compliance Assessment (DDA, PreAward, NUPAS)

Ensures adherence to regulatory requirements and donor guidelines.

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Who Participates

The OCA tool is *participatory* by nature and joins members from all levels of an organization.

- Board member,
- Head of the organization,
- Representatives from if possible head of:
  HR, Finance, M&E, Programs, etc.
- **All levels** should be represented, and
- the **tool and process** must be clearly explained before commencing the assessment.

The Essence of Capacity Assessment

Capacity Assessment IS:

- Participatory: Involves key and relevant personnel at all levels.
- Self-Scored: Fosters ownership and internal reflection.
- Facilitated: Guided by experts for objectivity and depth.
- Evidence-Based: Relies on verifiable data and documentation.
- Highlights Strengths & Weaknesses: Provides a balanced view of organizational pictures

Capacity Assessment **IS NOT**:

- An Audit: Not a fault finding, but a developmental tool.
- Facilitator's Judgment: Avoids external bias; empowers internal concusses building.
- Intended as a Training: Analytical end user, not intend to be an OCA expert.

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The Scoring

- 1 = Clear need for increased capacity;
- 2 = Basic level of capacity in place;
- 3 = Moderate level of capacity in place;
- 4 = High level of capacity in place;
- N/A = (not applicable or does not apply to my organization)

- *Completing the justifications (evidence/reasons for scoring) section is mandatory*

Common Organizational Capacity Areas

The OCA typically evaluates several generic components, adaptable to specific organizational contexts.

Leadership and Governance

Strategic direction, oversight, and decision-making structures.

Gender Equality & Social Inclusion

Policies and practices promoting equitable participation.

Finance & Sub-Grant Management

Fiscal responsibility, resource allocation, and accountability.

Procurement, Logistics & Infrastructure

Efficient acquisition, distribution, and facility management.

Human Resources Management

Talent acquisition, development, and retention strategies.

Program/Project Management

Effective planning, execution, and delivery of initiatives.

Planning, Monitoring, & Evaluation

Strategic foresight, performance tracking, and impact assessment.

ICT & Communication

Information technology infrastructure and communication flow.

Resource Diversification & Sustainability

Sourcing varied funding streams and long-term viability.

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Technical Capacity Assessment

Discuss in your table - what possible technical capacity areas could you propose?

Technical Capacity Assessment Areas

- Education
- Livelihoods
- Youth/Girls Empowerment
- Gender, GBV
- Community Empowerment,
- Health
- OVC

Sample Technical Capacity Areas: SRMNCAH

Specialized areas like SRMNCHA require tailored technical capacity assessments.

SRMNCAH as Strategic Priority

Integration of SRMNCAH goals into the organization's core mission and long-term planning.

SRMNCAH Standardization

Adherence to national and international guidelines for service delivery & program implementation.

Technical Team/Staff

Availability of qualified and competent personnel with specialized SRMNCAH expertise.

Quality Service Delivery

Ensuring high standards of care, client satisfaction, and positive health outcomes.

Inclusivity of SRMNCAH

Accessibility and appropriateness of services for diverse populations, including marginalized groups.

Accessibility of the Service

Geographical, financial, and cultural ease of access to SRMNCAH interventions.

Referral Systems

Robust mechanisms for seamless patient transfer and continuity of care across health levels.

Health Financing

Sustainable funding mechanisms and efficient resource utilization for SRMNCAH programs.

Health Policy Adherence

Compliance with national health policies and advocacy for policy improvements.

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Sources of Evidence

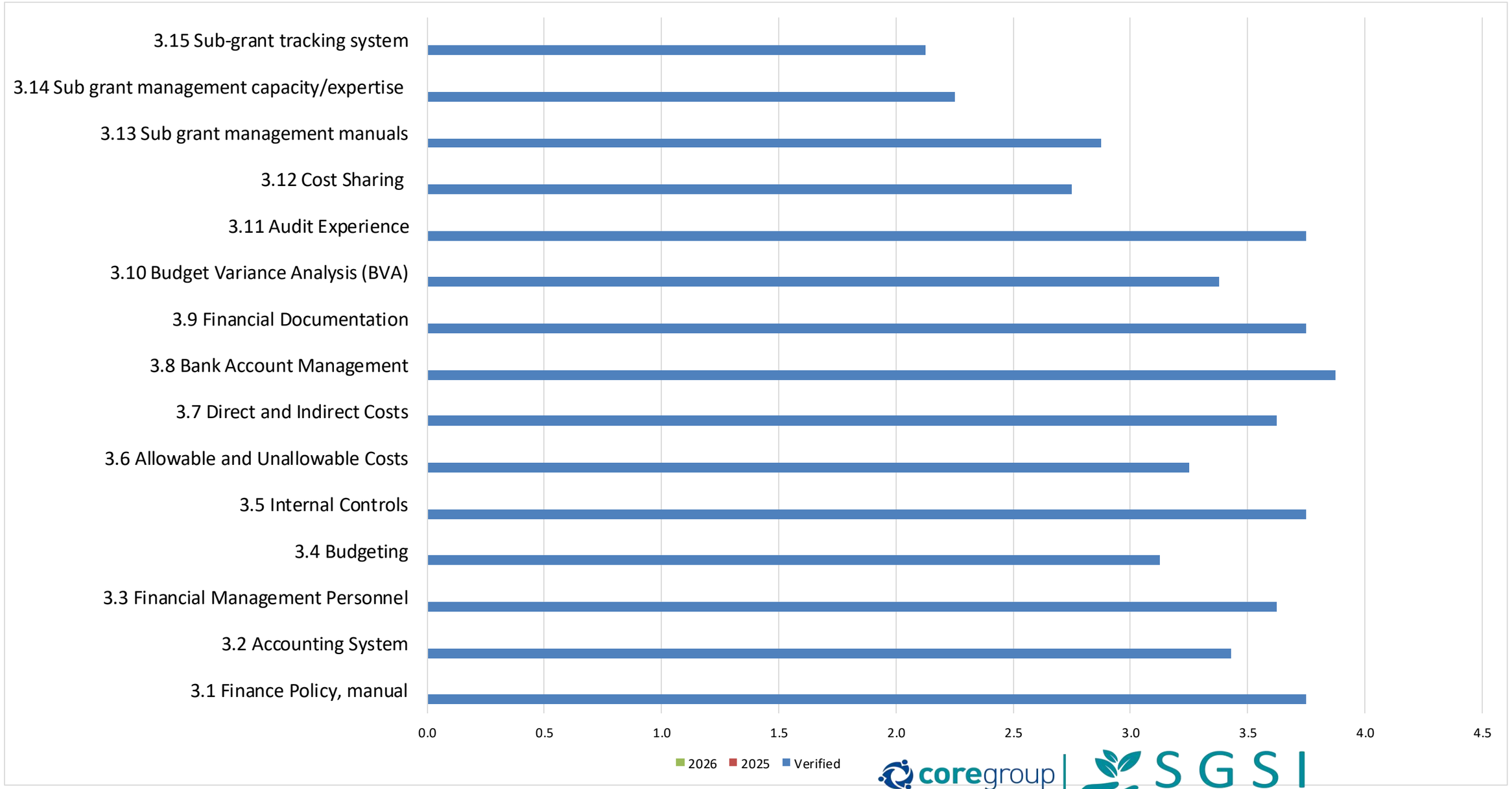
- Documents: policies, procedures, protocols, plans, reports
- Data and databases
- Organization’s website and social media
- Documented personnel experiences
- References: business partners, peers and stakeholders

PACT - Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool

Leadership and Governance: the provision of leadership and direction to the organization.

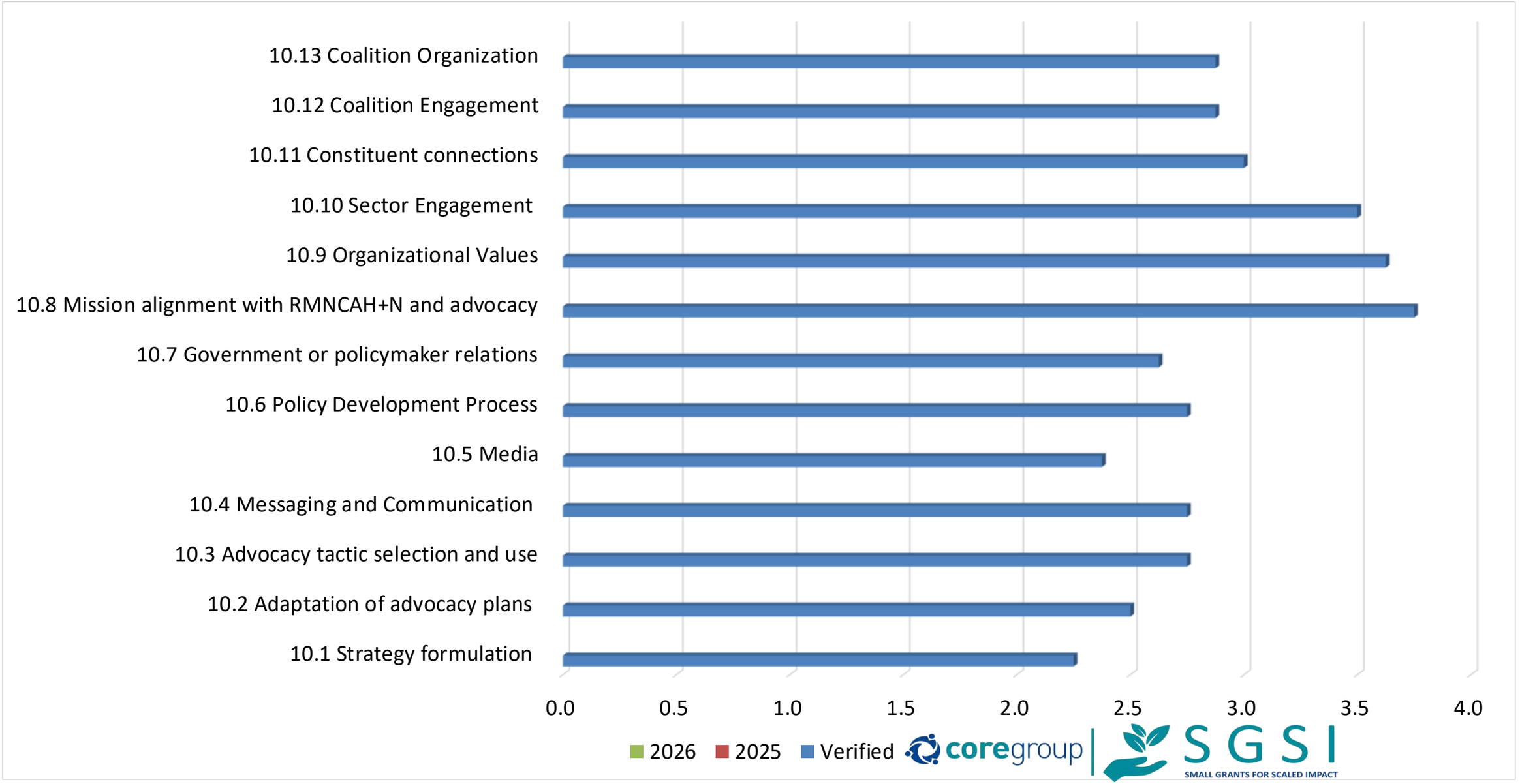
	1. Clear need for capacity	2. Basic level of capacity in place	3. Moderate level of capacity in place	4. High level of capacity in place	Ranking / 2021	Ranking / 2022	Justification	
							Strengths	Areas of Improvement
1.1 Organization's mission and goal	No written mission and goal	Some expression of organization's reason for existence that reflects its values and purpose, but may lack clarity	Clear expression of organization's reason for existence which reflects its values and purpose; held by many within organization and often referred to	Clear expression of organization's reason for existence which describes an enduring reality that reflects its values and purpose; broadly held within organization and frequently referred to				
1.2 Strategic plan	No strategic plan ; little shared understanding of what organization aspires to become	Strategic plan exists and somewhat clear or specific understanding of what organization aspires to become or achieve;	Clear and specific understanding of what organization aspires to become or achieve; held by many within the organization	Organization has a clearly written strategic plan in line with the vision and mission statement which guides work and is reviewed annually.				

Sample Consolidated – Finance and Sub-Grants

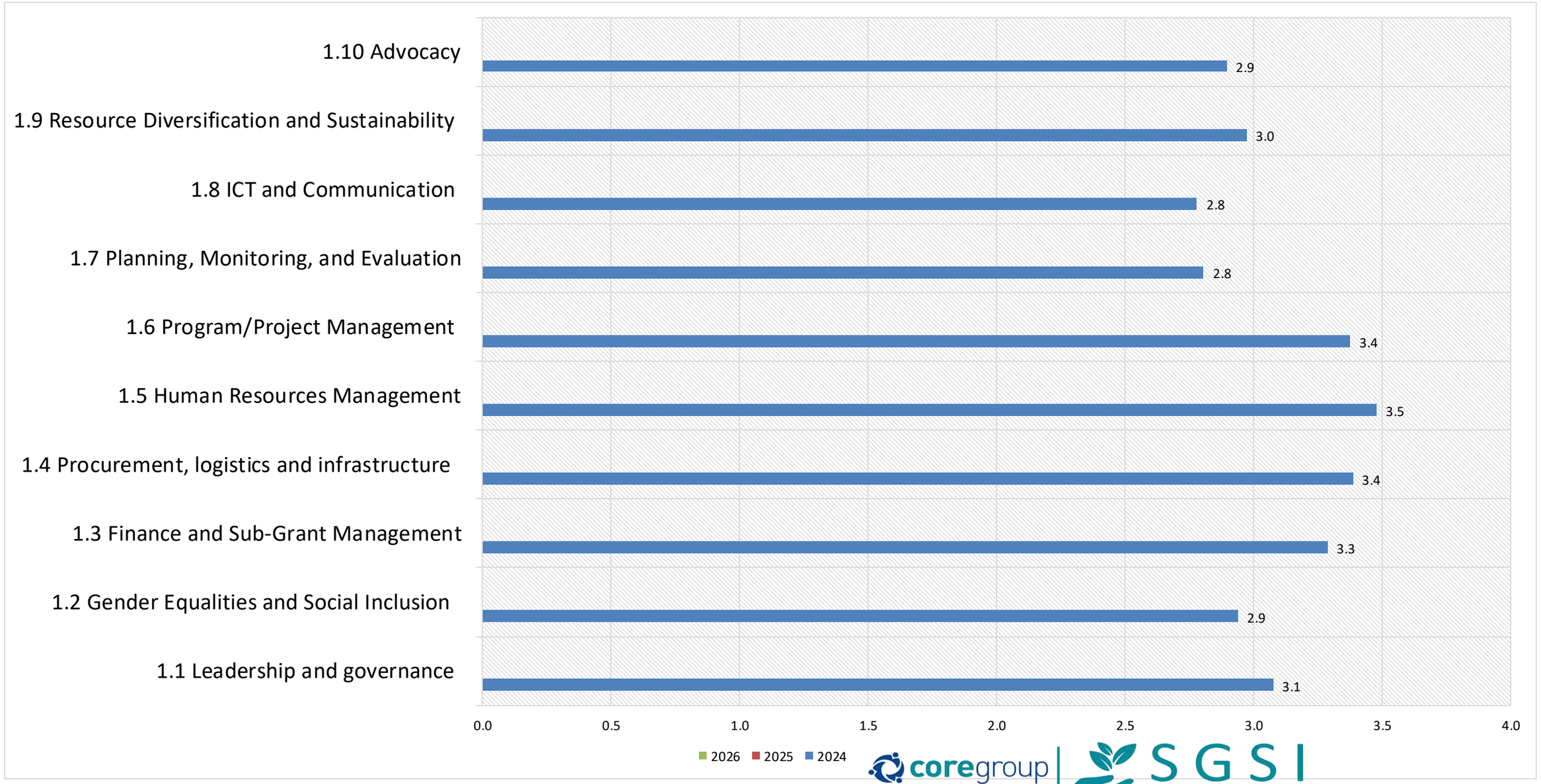


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Detailed TCA (Advocacy) Result



Sample TOCA Result, by Principal Capacity



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Sample ISP – template

Capacity Area/ Statement of Excellence	Capacity Weakness	Action proposed	Expected Results	Responsible Person/ Organization	Time Frame	Budget Cost/Inputs

Group Exercise

Selected Organizational pillars:

- Project/program Management
- Finance and Grants Management
- Operations Management

Review OCA tool adopted for SGSI Project.xlsx

Group Exercise

- Get the OCA tool from your email
- Discuss on each measurement and build consensus on scoring
- Complete the justification column in the excel sheet
- First, write the sub-capacity number for areas scored 1 or 2, its score on flip chart, and justification (Max 6 areas, prioritized)
- Then prepare an Institutional strengthening Plan (ISP) to the 6, write sub-capacity number for areas of each, write the proposed intervention as per the ISP

Next Action

- Generate Reports
- Verification and validation of Assessment Results
- Agree on the ISP
- Share responsibilities and tracking mechanisms for ISPs
- Celebrate successes
- Plan for re-Assessment

Common challenges in OCA

Assessment Fatigue

Lack of Contextual Sensitivity

Poor Facilitation or Tool Design

High Expectations → Low Scores

Fear of Judgment → High Scores

One-Time Assessment Syndrome and no follow up action

References

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Gamma AI technical assistance on presentation

Thank you,

