



# THE PERFORMANCE MAPPING AND IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM (PERFORM): MONITORING THE JOURNEY TO IMPROVED PERFORMANCE OF LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

Webinar on October 31, 2024

## RESPONSE TO WEBINAR QUESTIONS:

**Q: Are the five domains used in the PERFORM framework viewed to be a progressive, phasic set of statements, or can a domain be— in practice— independent of the other?**

A: The five domains are seen as interdependent as a system. Learning drives results, which drives support, etc. However, an organization may wish to focus on one at a time to strengthen it, so they do not have to be addressed all at once.

**Q: Can PERFORM be used to assess network groups that are frequently involved in advocacy, democracy, and governance activities or projects? Because of the fluidity with which they operate.**

A: We developed PERFORM as a system or a tool for local organizations. However, our experience shows that it applies to any organization. All five domains, all the practice statements or behaviors, and the performance drivers apply to organizations such as Catholic Relief Services (CRS), as well as to many other organizations that CRS is working with. So we should not limit it to local organizations only and should use it with small or big organizations. It would be relevant for organizations working in the area of humanitarian response, or international development more broadly, or in the nexus of both. This work behind PERFORM comes from the area of organizational development, so it can be applied more broadly.

PERFORM could be a very beneficial application to democracy and governance networks. The overall process would drive a lot of internal reflection.

**Q: Could you please compare PERFORM to the OCAT and note any key differences?**

A: PERFORM and the OCA/OCAT are different tools for different needs. OCA/OCAT tools tend to focus on structures, strategies, and documents. PERFORM focuses on behavior performance statements. OCA/OCATs also tend to be designed for an external ideal of a 'capacitated organization', rather than the internal goals.

**Q: Why was the decision made to create a new tool/approach?**

A: We recommend reading the [enhanced organizational capacity framework](#) available on the MOMENTUM website, which reviews and compares the leading tools.

OCA is a "snapshot" of the current situation. The tool can be used as a baseline with reassessments showing progress. PERFORM is more of a quality improvement tool that promotes ongoing performance improvement.

OCA focuses on specific systems and structures. Are these in place? Do people have job descriptions? Do you have policy manuals? What is their capacity? Are they able to do certain things? Do they have what is needed to perform?

On the other hand, PERFORM examines whether they are actually using their capacity and performing. For example, Are they reaching constituents? Can they provide accurate, timely, and complete financial information to stakeholders?

The two can be used together. For example, if an organization is underperforming in its ability to provide financial information to stakeholders, that might be an opportunity to use the financial management component of an OCA to examine the challenges more closely. Do you have the policy system structures? Do people know their roles?

Another big difference is that OCAs take 2 to 3 days and produce a snapshot of organizations, often based on participant opinion. This can be very useful but time-consuming, so they are not repeated very frequently; they are done at baseline and end-line or even annually.

That is challenging. We have heard organizations say they wish they could receive progress information more often so they could make changes. PERFORM's rapid feedback process is much shorter, giving that opportunity. For example, an organization thinks its skills or internal norms are holding back its performance. They try out ways to change that and then come back in 6 months to see if it is having an effect or not. If it's not, what changes can be made? That ongoing monitoring process is critical.

Also, the use of evidence is important. Rather than focusing on *having* a policy, PERFORM focuses on *using* that policy to get results. We believe this changes organizational behavior, which is what we want for organizations.

Overall, they're different tools, systems, and for different uses. Depending on the need, they could be used together or independently.

**Q: Besides OCAT, I believe MOMENTUM also created the Integrated Technical and Organizational Capacity Assessment (ITOCA) tool. What is the difference between ITOCA and PERFORM, and when would you use one over the other? It would be great to have a short one-pager or table that compares the different tools to help users determine their purpose and best match.**

A: The Enhanced Organizational Capacity Framework report compares several leading organizational assessment tools and their uses that will be of interest!

Table 2 and Appendix A in the recent [Data 4 Impact report](#) may also be helpful.

**Q: Feedback: I like the activity [process, scoresheet, Analysis, etc.], which is very participatory and collaborative, fosters prioritization, and ensures local organizations are in the driving seat to drive this process with external support/assistance.**

**One practical question: Thriving organizations these days need to be agile, matrixed, and diverse in constitution and "how" they function. How has PERFORM been applied in some of these dynamic contexts? Have you felt the tension on, for example, rigor?**

A: No, there was no tension in the PERFORM discussions. However, it was an eye-opener for everyone participating in the room to learn the importance of repeatedly engaging with constituents. However, in the case of the CIS Timor pilot, there is a reality check of sorts with stakeholders.

The CIS Timor staff thought a lot about who should engage in the evidence validation panel. They had community members, a peer agency representative, and a board member. They had a donor representative from the UN, and they spent a lot of time talking about the evidence. They looked at what they thought about the CIS TIMOR and its operations for 30 years, its performance in communities, its work with donors, etc. So it was a beneficial exercise for all. We heard stakeholders saying, "We want to be part of this more. We want to be part of the monitoring. We want to continue talking to CIS Timor and to learn." Even the UN representative said they would like this approach replicated among their partners, and CIS Timor was keen to share their experience. This is how CIS Timor collaborated and partnered while applying the PERFORM system with its stakeholders. There were some tensions, but not related to PERFORM or the system where CIS Timor operates. Still, it was more a case of particular stakeholders or representatives of the constituency that were engaged in the PERFORM process.

This tool was used with CIS Timor, a small organization working in a pretty dynamic humanitarian response context. But it is certainly designed for that because we need that agility. Performance and organizational assessment tools must be agile and focused to help organizations focus their efforts on where they are needed instead of looking at the whole picture.

**Q: CBLD-9 guidance talks about minimizing the burden for local "recipients" of organizational CS. Do you find that the advantages of a relatively structured and comprehensive approach outweigh the time and other resources needed? Would you recommend or caution against adapting the process to streamline it?**

A: First, the idea of having a system rather than a tool must be underscored. PERFORM is a system that includes a performance assessment, but it's much more than that. So, how can it be customized? It can be customized at the very outset when priorities are established and even before that, when the organization writes its goal statement and the assessment. This was not emphasized enough in the presentation, but the entire assessment is rooted in the goal statement that the organization has set for itself. That's the beginning of the process, and then setting the priorities is another form of customization, and those priorities are set about the goal statement.

There are many other customization options, including modifying the 25 practice statements. We wouldn't suggest that an organization begin with a modification, but possibly in subsequent iterations. As the monitoring proceeds, only those practice areas and the drivers associated with them are monitored.

How the organization structures its evidence validation panel is customized to that organization's constituency. The PERFORM documentation provides a much fuller answer to this question of customization. However, the main point is to go back to the original intent, which is to make a tool, a system, and a set of practices that can fit the needs, goals, and priorities of the user organization. And there's a structure to do that.

**Q: I love the idea of having 100-day plans to make things actionable and achievable. Given that performance improvement does take time, I would be interested to learn what kinds of results organizations have had after implementing their 100-day plans.**

A: 100-day plans are research-validated as a methodology for sustaining interest in change. They are also powerful in that they are doable rather than overly ambitious. They support the 100-day cycle in general and adaptive management processes.

During the PERFORM pilots, the organizations set up monitoring plans. However, we haven't been able to check in to see how it is going and what changes they are making.

**Q: This question is regarding performance drivers, norms, and cultures. How do we manage norms/cultures/work ethics that reject tested and proven frameworks?**

A: The PERFORM facilitator's guide has a section that suggests different strategies to address the various drivers. This wide-ranging list offers multiple ways to address both hard and soft skill sets in ways that are customized to the situation.

**Q: I understand that PERFORM is an excellent tool that can be included at the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative/BFHI when the health facility is in the process of accreditation since the application of self-assessment and for the organization to follow progress—e.g., adopting mapping analysis in Excel. It's helpful to confirm what the health facility is doing by adopting a holistic system like PERFORM. I'm nearly finished with the elaboration of a tutorial for the BFHI self-assessment, and I want to include PERFORM, which is translated into Portuguese.**

A: We have all our tools and resources in English now, but please write to us. We can put our information in the chat. Please write to us at this email in the chat, and we can continue this conversation to see how we can support you in using perform within your context.

The resources are all available on the MOMENTUM PERFORM website.

**Q: What evidence do we have from experience on its sustainability, and what does it take to ensure continuity beyond 100 days?**

A: We do not have evidence because the system has only been piloted in 2 settings. However, research on change management shows that achieving "early wins" can build momentum and increase buy-in for change. A 100-day plan provides a structured timeframe for setting and achieving specific goals. The use of milestones boosts accountability. Overall, 100-day plans have been shown to boost morale and engagement.

**Q: I find this educative. Just a comment on Performance Drivers. Considering "Norms and Cultures" can be inherent and hidden or rather not easily observable in the short run or if there are events where cultural traits erupt during implementation but were unavailable during the planning stages.**

A: The PERFORM monitoring cycle involves capturing changes in the drivers (including, of course, norms and culture) in relation to the specific performance areas they wish to improve. This means that the team would re-examine the role of norms and culture at the end of each 100-day planning cycle. We would expect to see changes in the drivers if the performance improvement program was well designed and implemented.