



Organizational Mapping Tool for Coalitions, Alliances and Networks (OMT-CAN)

FACILITATOR GUIDE

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Introduction

This guide is for facilitators of the Organizational Mapping Tool for Coalitions, Alliances and Networks (OMT-CAN), a participatory self-assessment survey. This tool provides the opportunity for a coalition, alliance or network¹ (CAN) to reflect and build on its strengths, asking what works well and what could be improved. It then helps to identify priority areas for improvement and steps for addressing them, all through CAN-wide discussion. It is not a strategic planning tool but, rather, is meant to provide input for an eventual institutional development plan. It is intended for groups of different sizes and levels of capability—from small or recently founded to mature and complex CANs. By the end of the process, the group should have:

- A clear sense of how it sees itself on key aspects of the CAN's development;
- A short list of highest priorities for CAN strengthening;
- A set of outcomes that would result from strengthening each of these prioritized areas;
- Steps the CAN may take on its own to make progress in each area; and
- A list of specific requests that could be made of a funder in a grant proposal for each area (if appropriate).

The OMT-CAN was inspired by the original Organizational Mapping Tool (OMT), which was created with the same objectives for use with a single organization.

The OMT-CAN is designed to be used by any coalition, alliance or network that has come together for something more than a one-time or short-term purpose. This is the case whether or not it is comprised of individuals or organizations (or a mix of both), has legal status, or has hired staff. It can be used regardless of where in its process of evolution the CAN may be (newly formed, shifting toward greater formality and intentionality, already has a long-term history, etc.).² It was designed for use by a wide variety of coalitions, alliances and networks, in different countries and regions of the world.

The OMT-CAN draws on the content of Our Healthy Alliance (OHA), an on-line assessment tool created by RoadMap and the Movement Strategy Center, which takes a deep dive into the makings of a strategic alliance that builds social change movements. Facilitators are encouraged to check out [OHA and its related tools, glossary and other conceptual materials](#).³

When to Use the OMT-CAN versus the OMT

Part of your role as facilitator is to ensure that the CAN is using the proper self-assessment tool if a group will be using an OMT. In general, coalitions, alliances and networks will benefit from using the OMT-CAN rather than the original OMT if their purpose is to assess the overall CAN (including the individuals and organizations that it comprises). If the purpose is only to assess the leadership body of the CAN, the OMT-CAN is also ideal. In contrast, they should use the original OMT if their purpose is to assess the CAN's "parent organization" or "backbone organization" solely (if there is one).

We suggest asking the following questions when choosing between the tools:

- Is the focus on assessing how the individuals and organizations that comprise the CAN work together (and work with the "parent organization")? In that case, the OMT-CAN would be most appropriate.

¹ Definitions vary and these terms are used in many different ways (for example, a group whose name indicates it is a coalition might be considered, by others, to be an alliance).

² For example, see Roadmap's Continuum of Collaboration, a chart that illustrates the spectrum of informal or time-limited collaboration to longer-term strategic alliances. Available at <https://roadmapconsulting.org/resource/continuum-of-collaboration/>.

³ Emily Goldfarb and Mala Nagarajan of RoadMap and Susan Misra of Change Elemental provided input and detailed feedback to drafts of the OMT-CAN tool, as did Victoria Wigodzky.

Or rather:

- Is the focus on assessing how the “parent organization” functions to support the CAN? In that case, the OMT may be most appropriate.

Both the OMT-CAN and the original OMT look at issues like vision and mission, governance, internal management and external communications, but each adds additional questions. The OMT-CAN has questions on how the individuals and organizations that comprise the CAN work together and work with the parent organization. People who take the OMT-CAN hold the perspective of the overall CAN—not their individual organizations or the parent organization only. In contrast, the original OMT has more extensive questions about aspects like human resources management, the internal management of programs, and executive leadership. People from a CAN who take the original OMT hold the perspective of the parent organization.

Who Participates?

The OMT-CAN should always include a meeting of CAN organizational and individual members, leaders, and staff to discuss their various perspectives on the survey questions. The more participation from people/organizations consistently involved and active in the work of the network, the better. Participation may vary for each coalition, alliance or network. Whenever possible:

- All members of the leadership body should participate.
- For groups with organizational members, all member organizations should be represented by at least one person with sufficient knowledge and standing to engage in meaningful discussions.
- For groups with individual members, all members should participate, and especially those who have been consistently involved for a year or more.
- All staff should participate, both programmatic and administrative (paid or unpaid) if they have been with the organization for a minimum of 6 months.

When a Representative Group Participates

When it is not possible for all members and/or staff to participate, a representative group may be chosen to participate, with the help of the facilitator, if needed. The criteria may vary but should take into consideration factors like a mix of staff, members, and leadership body representatives; a mix of program and administrative staff (from the network and its members), if applicable; members with different levels of involvement and seniority; geographic location; and factors such as age, gender, race, nationality, ethnicity, caste, class, etc.

Keep in mind that difference—ranging from identity (gender, race/ethnicity/caste, etc.) to position and tenure within the organization—could have bearing on experiences and perceptions of the CAN. As a facilitator, it is important to help the CAN bring forward different perspectives that may be otherwise obscured by expressions of only majority viewpoints. To this end, it is helpful to select individuals who are likely to contribute their different perspectives in a constructive way and who are willing and able to represent others’ as well as their own thinking.

Who selects this group may vary from case to case. The selection process should be as democratic, inclusive and transparent as possible. For example, staff may self-nominate or be nominated by peers. To the extent possible, it is recommended that those being represented weigh in on who will carry out such a role (for example, staff in a particular area or office may vote for their own representative).

When using a representative group, to begin the facilitated session, each person should say whom they represent, and the group should ensure that all relevant perspectives are, indeed, represented.

During the session, if someone is representing other people, they may: 1) simply represent the perspective of

his/her/their group as best he/she/they can, 2) act as a proxy for a person or group who shared their individual survey answers with him/her/them ahead of time (which can include their three priorities, if instructed to provide them), or 3) represent their own perspective with the understanding that they do not speak for their whole group.

After the session, it is recommended that facilitators be slightly more detailed in the “comments” section in the final OMT-CAN report to capture the main points of the discussion, keeping in mind it will be shared with people who were not in the room during the discussion. Facilitators should encourage the CAN’s leadership to determine in advance how the results will be shared with the larger group, and should inform the people who participate in the meeting what the process will be.

One option is to have a larger meeting (virtual or other) after the session to explain the OMT-CAN process, take questions on the report (from those who were or were not present at the session), and let participants give a sense of the process and the conversations to their peers. One possible sequence for that meeting is: 1) presentation of perspectives represented to see if the larger group feels any perspective is missing; 2) all read the OMT-CAN report; 3) clarifying questions; 4) small groups to detect points that sparked greatest enthusiasm, agreement or disagreement; 5) in smaller groups to discuss “What can my organization/team/etc. do to support implementation of next steps?”

Facilitator’s Responsibilities

The external facilitator’s **primary responsibilities** involve ensuring that the process moves along quickly and comes to necessary conclusions. S/he/they:

- Reminds participants that, when members are organizations, this exercise is analyzing their coalition, alliance or network, not their individual organization
- Listens for places where conclusions can be drawn and the conversation can move on
- Ensures that all voices are heard –see Ensuring the Inclusion of Diverse Perspectives (page 13)
- Leads the prioritizing and next steps exercises to conclusion
- Records the conclusions of the deliberations and summarizes the main points of discussion in a final report

In addition, the facilitator:

- Helps determine whether to use the original OMT-CAN versus the original OMT
- Helps in the process of choosing a representative group, making sure that people who have been historically excluded from power relative to the CAN are engaged, when necessary
- Helps leadership prepare for and make best use of the OMT-CAN, including considering how they frame the OMT-CAN, how they show up in ways that inspire even participation in the meeting, and how they will follow-up on the outcomes of the discussion
- Determines in advance if any section or question(s) do not apply and should be skipped by all participants
- Explains terminology and concepts, working with the CAN to translate words for the CAN-specific context in advance of administering the OMT-CAN (or in real time), as needed
- Reminds participants that they can leave questions blank if they feel they do not apply, or if they lack enough information with which to answer
- Develops an agenda for the OMT-CAN meeting, including working with the CAN to identify the appropriate duration for the session; how to balance discussing the survey and identifying priorities and next steps; and thinking through most appropriate facilitation techniques”
- Adapts the questions in real time, based on the discussion, or beforehand, based on your understanding of

the CAN's structure and operations. For example,

- Make clear when a question refers to CAN staff, member organization staff, or both
 - If the CAN has more than one director or coordinator (such as two co-directors), ask participants to mark their ratings of the Executive Leadership thinking of them as a team, then use the comments section to make specific references to the individuals, if needed.
- Clarifies that the OMT-CAN is not an evaluation

How Long Does the OMT-CAN Take?

The OMT-CAN exercise has four steps:

1. Setting the context and explaining the OMT-CAN
2. Completing the survey and reaching collective consensus
3. Prioritizing three items to work on as a CAN
4. Identifying next steps and resources needed for each of those three items

The amount of time involved depends in part on whether participants read and complete the survey before coming together, which adds two or more additional hours if they have not filled it out previously (both methods are described below). **As a general rule, it is recommended to have participants complete the survey beforehand.** The advantage of this option is that they have more time to read and reflect on their responses, and the in-person meeting becomes more agile.

If participants complete the survey in advance, **the OMT-CAN typically lasts about a day and a half.** One alternative is to cover steps 1 and 2 in one full day, and do steps 3 and 4 the following day. Alternatively, some facilitators attempt to do steps 1 through 3 in one day and step 4 the following day. That said, some CANs will attempt to complete the entire exercise in one day, while others prefer to dedicate two full days (or more), even having filled out the survey beforehand. This will depend in part on how much time is allowed for discussion of each survey item; how easily the group tends to reach consensus; and the level of detail generated in the prioritization and next steps exercise at the end.

Each CAN should decide how much time to invest. Facilitators should help CAN leaders understand the advantages and disadvantages of each option.

How to Conduct the Exercise

Here we describe two versions of how to conduct the exercise, the main difference being whether or not the participants fill out the survey before or during the meeting.⁴

VERSION 1: Survey Completed Before the Meeting

Before Facilitating the Exercise in the Room

In this case, if possible, the facilitator:

⁴ If the total number of people is less than 50, this meeting can be done “live.” It is recommended that participants complete the survey on their own before the meeting, but it does not need to be administered electronically or summarized in advance. If there are between 50 and 100 people, you may choose to administer the survey electronically to all participants in advance and to prepare a summary to share during the meeting as a point of departure for conversation during the meeting. Likewise, if there are more than 100 people, you may choose to give all people the opportunity to take the survey electronically in advance and prepare a summary to share during the meeting. Only a representative group of people would participate in the meeting (see the following section: “When a Representative Group Participates”).

- Has an initial introductory meeting with participants to distribute the survey, explain the desired outcomes, share any translations or special instructions needed for the specific CAN, discuss what steps will be taken to ensure equity and inclusion of diverse perspectives and welcome questions.

Note: It is recommended to distribute the survey approximately 72 hours in advance of the collective exercise (enough time for participants to complete it, but not so far in advance that they are likely to discuss it among themselves before the exercise).

- Asks each participant to complete the survey and bring it to the full group meeting. Encourage participants to answer all questions even with partial information, but they should leave blank those questions about which they do not have sufficient information to answer.

Note: Participants should be told they can choose to check the circle in between two ratings (as in the circle between Basic and Moderate). They should also be encouraged to read the introduction to the OMT-CAN for detailed guidelines, and be reminded to wear their “CAN hat” when completing the survey.

When it is not possible to have an introductory meeting, this step is usually replaced by an email communication from the facilitator to the participants (either directly or forwarded by someone within the CAN leadership).

The day of the exercise, once you are with the participants in the room:

Part 1: Setting the Context (30 minutes)

1. Welcome everyone, do a round of introductions and briefly introduce yourself. Particular members of the CAN's leadership might want to say a few words as well, including sharing any relevant institutional news, thanking those present for participating, actively encouraging them to do so openly throughout the exercise, and explaining how the OMT-CAN fits into the CAN's current and future plans. The leadership should also, ideally, announce that the OMT-CAN final report will be shared with all members/staff/etc. once completed.
2. Provide a brief, initial introduction to the session, including:
 - a. An overview of the survey, its purpose and topics
 - b. Clarity about the strengths and limitations of the exercise to help manage participant expectations, given that it opens up a lot of issues and needs. This is an important moment to reinforce that the discussions will serve as important *input* into the CAN's institutional strengthening priorities, but that no decisions will necessarily be made at the session.
 - c. A summary of expected outcomes for the day, including a list of proposed action steps for strengthening the CAN
 - d. A brief summary of how the day will go, and what steps will occur afterward (when the report will be completed, who will receive and approve it, etc.). Make sure to announce (or have the CAN's leadership announce) that the report will be shared with everyone once completed.
 - e. Clarity about the facilitator's role, including ensuring even participation, helping all voices be heard, and striking a balance between allowing for some in-depth discussion and keeping the process agile. This could include mention and/or discussion of how the facilitator and/or the group will address various power dynamics in the room, be they related to class, gender, race, age, etc.
 - f. A reminder that, with few exceptions, questions are best answered when participants are wearing their “CAN hat” rather than answering from the point of view of their individual organization
3. Answer initial clarifying questions
4. Set up ground rules to guide the group's discussion and remind participants of the participatory and open nature of the OMT-CAN. Suggested ground rules might include:
 - a. Even participation (many facilitators use the notion of “step forward/step back”)
 - b. Respect all voices
 - c. Listen actively/listen to understand
 - d. Name “elephants in the room” (an obvious problem or difficult situation that people do not want to talk about, but that is beneath the surface and might hinder the quality of discussion)
 - e. Trust positive intent and while acknowledging actual impact of words and actions

- f. Balancing inquiry and advocacy in our interventions (so as not to sway participants' ratings with too much "advocating" for one answer)
- g. Be concise
- h. Return from breaks and meals on time
- i. Cell phones silenced except for emergencies

Sample Script for Introduction to the OMT-CAN Session

1. Nature and Purpose of the OMT-CAN

- The purpose of the OMT-CAN is for the CAN to assess its institutional strengths and weaknesses collectively, generating discussion among a broad range of participants.
- It is an institutional self-assessment, not an evaluation of the CAN or its people.
- It covers a wide variety of topics (list them).
- It allows CANs to decide collectively which topics are top priority for future action and what steps they can take to address them.

2. Today's Outcomes

- A consensus rating on each of the points or sub-categories included in the survey
- A list of the top three priority topics that the CAN wants to address
- Desired outcomes for each, and concrete next steps for addressing them
- What actions the CAN is able take on its own and what resources it may need or choose to request from a donor

3. Strengths and Limitations of the OMT-CAN

- The OMT-CAN is relatively quick, agile, and highly participatory.
- It is low-tech and meant to be used across a variety of contexts.
- It allows for all participants to provide input and opinions, but does not allow for a deep dive into all topics nor does it result in a full institutional development plan.
- The consensus ratings are simply indicative of the collective view of the group and so we will not worry excessively about each one; the discussion and collective understanding is the most important aspect of the exercise.

4. Process and Clarifications

- *Describe how the session or sessions will occur*
- *Remind participants to wear their "CAN hat"*
- *Mention and openly address issues related to power dynamics in the room, if appropriate*
- *Describe your role as facilitator*
- *Describe all post-session steps (how you will elaborate the report, when the report will be ready, who will receive and approve it, that it will be circulated to all members/staff/etc.)*
- *Add any clarifications about confidentiality, who else will receive the report (such as absent members or a donor, if applicable) and how the results will and will not be used*

Part 2: Completing the Survey and Reaching Consensus (roughly 6-8 hours, including lunch and coffee breaks)

1. Clarify the meaning of consensus and "consensus rating" in the context of the OMT-CAN. Suggested language: "What we are going to do now is get a sense of how people voted and then seek to agree on a rating that reflects the collective opinion of the group. This is not based on a strict tally or an exact average. Rather, first, we will get a sense of the group's opinions and then you will decide together the best rating. Not everyone needs to agree; you just need to be able to live with it. On the outside chance that we can't, and in any moment where it is pertinent, I will make a note of any minority or dissenting voices in the comments

section, respecting individuals' confidentiality. Please remember that the richness of the OMT-CAN lies in the discussion and not in the particular rating."

Note: This definition of loose consensus may be put up on a flipchart as a reminder throughout the session.

1. Starting with the **Purpose, Goals and Strategy** category, help the group identify a consensus rating for each sub-category (or "question") that reflects the general agreement of the group. See suggested dynamics to help the group reach consensus in the grey box below.

Some sub-categories will take longer than others if consensus is hard to reach. It is the role of the facilitator to strike the right balance between allowing for needed discussion and helping the group avoid getting bogged down in each sub-category.

Note: The facilitator has a few options for how to record the consensus ratings and the most salient points of the discussion during the exercise, which will ultimately be submitted in the report form found at the end of the OMT-CAN survey:

- The consensus ratings can be marked using the PDF form on a computer or other device, or by hand on a printed version.
- The notes on the discussion can be logged directly in the same PDF form, or taken by hand, or logged in a computer or other device, not using the PDF (for example, in a Word document).

2. Repeat for each category. The group should complete all sections using the consensus process.

Note: The facilitator and CAN leadership should decide ahead of time whether or not the questions on Leadership Body Composition and Executive Leadership will be filled out anonymously. If so, the facilitator should skip those questions, and at the end, collect the answers to those in a confidential fashion. (Participants may hand in that page or send the PDF to the facilitator if they filled out this section electronically.)

Facilitation Tips for the Consensus Rating

One of your key roles is to create a brave space for discussion, manage power dynamics, ensure even participation and bring out the quieter voices in the group. Here are some ideas for helping to make that happen. If the facilitator detects that this is not occurring during the session, he/she/they should actively remind the group (especially the leadership, if necessary) about the spirit of the OMT-CAN.

- Conduct a "**lightning round**" for each sub-category, in which each participant calls out the level they chose, without explanations (for example, "Basic," "Basic," "Moderate," "Moderate," "Basic to Moderate," "Moderate," etc.)
 - Start each round with a different person and change direction frequently
 - After the lightning round, ask "What are people hearing?"
 - Reflect back to them the number of times that each level was named (you can keep tabs of this on a sheet of paper during the lightning round)
- Have participants indicate which level they chose with a **show of hands** for each level (starting with "Strong") and those in between (e.g., "Moderate to Strong"). This is particularly recommended when working with a group larger than 25 people, though it also works well in smaller groups.
- Have participants **stand along a continuum** or in different places in the room to reflect their rating
- Use **dot stickers on flip charts** to visually capture the range of ratings for some sub-categories
- **Straw poll with electronic voting technology** (if available)

Facilitation Tips for the Consensus Rating (continued)

- Where you see **outliers**, call on those persons to share their perspective: “Can you tell me why you scored this as you did?” or “Can someone that marked “Basic” share why they did so”?
- Focus on those who have relevant **expertise** (for example, the accountant when rating financial administration). But call on expert voices (and/or senior management) last, not first, so that others also feel free to speak out.
- Particularly for larger groups, you may choose to break up participants into triads, or three or four **smaller sub-groups** around “clusters” of topics. If participants voted on flipcharts, each group reviews a cluster of categories and tries to identify a consensus rating for each sub-category to report back to the plenary. Other tips for working with small groups include:
 - Beware of the amount of time involved in using small groups
 - Begin the OMT-CAN session with facilitation of one or more consensus ratings in plenary so that participants get a sense of how the discussion is supposed to go and what is meant by “reaching consensus,” before they are asked to mirror it in small groups, without your active facilitation
 - Look for overlap in consensus ratings among all small groups
 - Focus the discussion on where there is more divergence
 - Have participants self-organize in small groups around topics of their choosing (ensuring that everyone feels that they can opine even if it is not their area of expertise)
- Conduct a **“negative poll”**: “Does anyone disagree with moving on?” or “Who can’t live with moving on?” Two approaches may be:
 - **Thumbs up, down or sideways.** Thumb sideways means I don’t agree but can live with it. For those with thumbs down: “what would it take to move you from thumbs down to sideways?”
 - **Fist to Five**, where number of fingers shows level of agreement. Zero (fist) is “There is no way I can accept this consensus rating,” Three is “I don’t really agree, but can move on,” and 5 is “I fully agree with moving on.”
- **To capture dissenting voices**, or when consensus is difficult to reach:
 - Move to different places of the room to reflect how in agreement or disagreement each person is and have an “open mic” moment to say why
 - Use a “parking lot” to record dissenting voices (and make sure that these are later reflected anonymously in the comments section in your final report)
 - Have participants listen in to the discussion of a small group of people that agree on a rating, then ask them to share if they dissent
 - Provide post-its for people to share dissent in a more anonymous fashion
- It is helpful to have an easily **visible list of the categories** on the wall and check them off as you go along so that all participants can see how many remain to be covered. You may also get permission from the group at the start of the session to **use a timer** to help with time management.
- Because it’s a long exercise, the facilitator needs to **keep the process as agile as possible**. Diverse methodologies that involve **physical movement** to get the energy flowing **and visuals** are important, as are **occasional breaks, stretching, etc.**

Part 3: Prioritizing Exercise (30 minutes to 1 hour)

Once all sections of the tool are completed you will start the prioritizing exercise. There are many ways to do this; here is one method.

1. Ask each participant to go back through the survey on their own and log what they see as the CAN's first, second, and third priorities for institutional strengthening under the section "Prioritization Exercise," found on page 36. Remind participants that priorities are not necessarily what is most urgent (groups can establish timing later)—or the biggest weakness—but rather the most important issue for the CAN to focus on in the coming period.

Note: Remind participants that they may pick aspects that feel "weaker" or those that they consider strengths that they would like to work on further or differently. Some facilitators even add a brief exercise at some point before prioritization to help groups identify and celebrate their strengths.

Note: Participants may focus on the larger category (e.g. Advocacy and Organizing) unless they want to specify an issue raised in a sub-category.

2. Before beginning the tallying exercise, explain to participants that the numbers are merely suggestive, and do not automatically define the priorities.
3. Then ask each person to report what they ranked as first, tallying the individual answers on a large sheet or board in the front of the room, and repeat this process for second and third priorities. Note that this information can also be gathered by show of hands for each category, or by voting on flipcharts. In the first image, frequency of votes is captured by "sticks" (one stick for each mention). In the second image, those frequencies are converted to digits to facilitate the subsequent multiplication.

PRIORITY #1	PRIORITY #2	PRIORITY #3
GOVERNANCE I	BOARD-STAFF REL. (GOVERNANCE) IIII	BOARD-GOVERNANCE III
EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION II		INT. COMMUNICATION I
INT. COMMUNICATION III	LEARNING+ EVAL. III	LEARNING + EVAL. III
ADVOCACY I		
GOALS + OUTCOMES II	GOALS + OUTCOMES IIII	
PROGRAMMING II	PROGRAMMING II	
MISSION + STRATEG IIII	MISSION + STRATEGY I	LEGAL OBLIGATIONS (BY-LAWS) I
HUMAN RESOURCES IIII		HUMAN RESOURCES IIII
	FIELD ENGAGEMENT I	SECURITY II

PRIORITY #1	PRIORITY #2	PRIORITY #3
GOVERNANCE I 1	BOARD-STAFF REL. (GOVERNANCE) IIII 4	BOARD-GOVERNANCE III 3
EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION II 2		INT. COMMUNICATION I 1
INT. COMMUNICATION III 3	LEARNING+ EVAL. III 3	LEARNING + EVAL. III 3
ADVOCACY I 1		
GOALS + OUTCOMES II 2	GOALS + OUTCOMES IIII 6	
PROGRAMMING II 2	PROGRAMMING II 2	
MISSION + STRATEG IIII 4	MISSION + STRATEGY I 1	LEGAL OBLIGATIONS (BY-LAWS) I 1
HUMAN RESOURCES IIII 4		HUMAN RESOURCES IIII 5
	FIELD ENGAGEMENT I 1	SECURITY II 2

4. Sum the information in two ways:
 - a. Overall frequencies (e.g., how often was Communications mentioned overall)
 - b. A weighted frequency in which first priorities weigh more than second ones, and second more than third

Note: To do this, every time a category is considered first priority, it should receive three points; for second, it should receive two; and for third, one point.

PRIORITY #1	PRIORITY #2	PRIORITY #3
GOVERNANCE 1 1 3	BOARD-STAFF REL. (GOVERNANCE) 1111 4 8	BOARD-GOVERNANCE 111 3 3
EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION 1 1 2 6		INT. COMMUNICATION 1 1 1
INT. COMMUNICATION 111 3 9	LEARNING+ EVAL 111 3 6	LEARNING+ EVAL 111 3 3
ADVOCACY 1 1 3		
GOALS+OUTCOMES 1 1 2 6	GOALS+OUTCOMES 1111 6 12	
PROGRAMMING 1 1 2 6	PROGRAMMING 1 1 2 4	
MISSION+STRATEGY 1111 4 12	MISSION+STRATEGY 1 1 2	LEGAL OBLIGATIONS (BY-LAWS) 1 1 1
HUMAN RESOURCES 1111 4 12		HUMAN RESOURCES 1111 5 5
	FIELD ENGAGEMENT 1 1 2	SECURITY 1 1 2 2

In this image, the weighted points are logged throughout the chart. For example, 1 x 3 equals 3 points for Governance as priority one; 2 x 3 equals 6 points for External Communication as priority one; 2 x 4 equals 8 points for Governance as priority two, etc.

PRIORITY #1	PRIORITY #2	PRIORITY #3
GOVERNANCE 1 1 3 14	BOARD-STAFF REL. (GOVERNANCE) 1111 4 8	BOARD-GOVERNANCE 111 3 3 ✓
EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION 1 1 2 6 6		INT. COMMUNICATION 1 1 1
INT. COMMUNICATION 111 3 9 10	LEARNING+ EVAL 111 3 6 9	LEARNING+ EVAL 111 3 3 ✓
ADVOCACY 1 1 3 3		
GOALS+OUTCOMES 1 1 2 6 18	GOALS+OUTCOMES 1111 6 12 ✓	
PROGRAMMING 1 1 2 6 10	PROGRAMMING 1 1 2 4 ✓	
MISSION+STRATEGY 1111 4 12 14	MISSION+STRATEGY 1 1 2 ✓	LEGAL OBLIGATIONS (BY-LAWS) 1 1 1 1
HUMAN RESOURCES 1111 4 12 17		HUMAN RESOURCES 1111 5 5 ✓
	FIELD ENGAGEMENT 1 1 2 2	SECURITY 1 1 2 2 2

In this image, the points are summed for each topic (for example, for governance, three points under priority one and eight points under priority two, three points under priority four sums to 14 points total; there are six points for External Communication, etc.).

PRIORITY #1	PRIORITY #2	PRIORITY #3
GOVERNANCE I I 3 14 (18)	BOARD-STAFF REL. (GOVERNANCE) I I I 4 8	BOARD-GOVERNANCE I I I 3 3
EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION I I 2 6 6		INT. COMMUNICATION I I 1
INT. COMMUNICATION I I I 3 9 10	LEARNING + EVAL. I I I 3 6 9	LEARNING + EVAL. I I I 3 3
ADVOCACY I I 1 3 3		
GOALS + OUTCOMES I I 2 6 18 (14)	GOALS + OUTCOMES I I I 7 6 12	
PROGRAMMING I I 2 6 10	PROGRAMMING I I 2 4	
MISSION + STRATEGY I I I 4 12 14 (13)	MISSION + STRATEGY I I 1 2	LEGAL OBLIGATION (BY-LAWS) I I 1 1
HUMAN RESOURCES I I I 4 12 17 (2)		HUMAN RESOURCES I I I 5 5
	FIELD ENGAGEMENT I I 2 2	SECURITY I I 2 2

In this image, the top three priorities are indicated by the circled numbers (Priority one is Goals and Outcomes with 18 points; priority two is Human Resources with 17 points; and Governance and Mission and Strategy tied for priority three with 14 points each).

Tip: To move this step along and foster participation, you may want to have someone from the CAN help you calculate and/or check the weighted frequencies.

Tip: The facilitators may use and later transcribe flipcharts for both the prioritization and next steps exercise, writing up the results electronically using the report form at the end of the OMT-CAN survey. The prioritization exercise worksheet at the bottom of the form tallies the weighted frequencies automatically.

5. Ask the group to note trends in terms of CAN priorities for institutional strengthening.
6. Remind the group that the numbers are just indicative, and turn them over for discussions with questions like: "What are you seeing?" "Does anyone think that something else should be among the top three priorities?" Conclude by identifying the CAN's first, second, and third priorities.
7. Remind participants to answer and turn in the last question on the OMT-CAN survey (located on page 35), with feedback on the session. The facilitator may include anonymous, aggregate comments about participant feedback in his/her/their final report.

Part 4: Next Steps and Resource Identification (1 to 2 hours)

Once the group has identified the CAN's top three priorities, the facilitator engages participants in a discussion of next steps. This is a critical part of the process and should be given adequate time and emphasis. After having opened up all the areas that require strengthening, it is important for participants to feel that some steps will be taken to make change.

The facilitator helps the group:

- Identify the outcomes they would want to see within a few years for each of the three priorities (ask participants to answer: for this priority, "what does success look like?")
- Specify steps they would need to take to realize these outcomes
- Identify follow-up actions for each priority (if the group agrees, including persons responsible and deadlines)
- Consider which resources the CAN already has to help them realize their outcomes
- Identify those resources that require external support
- If there is time, articulate the request they might make, where appropriate, to a funder in a proposal (this may also be done by CAN leadership or staff after the exercise)

All of this may serve as input for an eventual Institutional Development Plan, which may accompany a proposal to a funder, if additional resources are needed to realize the outcomes.

As a general rule, it is recommended that the facilitator divide participants into smaller groups to do the work related to next steps and follow-up actions (for example, three groups, one to work on each priority). Depending on time, the smaller groups may report-back to the plenary and/or hand in written recommendations to the CAN's leadership.

Tip: Some facilitators create a Word document that mimics page 39 of the OMT-CAN PDF and asks small groups to fill out this form digitally for the priority assigned to them, indicating the expected outcomes, next steps, required resources, etc. Their work can be presented in plenary (using a projector, if desired), and, eventually, cut and paste into the OMT-CAN PDF report form.

VERSION 2: Survey Completed During the Meeting

For this longer version, the facilitator will:

1. Complete the steps included in Part 1 from Version 1.
2. Hand out printed versions of the survey to each participant and give them a few minutes to read the introductory page with more detailed guidelines on how to fill it out.

Note: Some groups are sensitive to the use of paper and will prefer that participants fill out the survey on a laptop, tablet or other device. Facilitators should agree on the best modality with the CAN's leadership beforehand.

3. Ask the participants to rank each of the sub-categories in the Purpose, Goals and Strategy section on their own. Encourage participants to answer all questions even with partial information, but they should leave blank those questions about which they do not have sufficient information to answer. Give about 10 minutes for participants to read and complete.

Note: Participants should be reminded that they can choose to check the circle in between two ratings (as in the circle between Basic and Moderate).

4. Reconvene the group and help them identify a consensus rating for each sub-category within the Purpose, Goals and Strategy category that reflects general agreement as to where the CAN ranks. See suggested dynamics to help the group reach consensus in the grey box above.
5. Repeat for each category: The group should complete all sections using the consensus process. The facilitator may make an exception for the questions on Leadership Body Composition and Executive Leadership, if decided in advance that these will not be discussed in the larger group.
6. If necessary, ask participants to complete the questions on Leadership Body Composition and Executive Leadership anonymously, and then collect the individual answers to those questions. (Participants may send the PDF to the facilitator if they filled out this section electronically.)
7. Complete the prioritizing exercise and work on next steps and resource identification, as described above.

Ensuring the Inclusion of Diverse Perspectives

Participants may have widely varying experiences and perceptions of the CAN based on factors mentioned above, ranging from *personal identity* (race, ethnicity, caste, gender, gender identity, etc.) to *organizational identity* (position, tenure, etc.). It is the responsibility of the facilitator to create a space where people are willing and able to share these perspectives while minimizing the risk of harm during or after the meeting.

In preparation for the OMT-CAN process, it is important for the facilitator to work with the CAN to ensure that different perspectives are not obscured by majority viewpoints. Toward this end, the facilitator should **look for opportunities to foster the exploration of oppression, equity and inclusion issues**. The facilitator should work with the CAN to craft strategies that make room for full participation—including using different language

versions to remove language barriers, equalizing educational barriers such as the reliance on the written word to take the survey, and having ways to share perspectives anonymously to address power differences in the room.

One suggestion that the facilitator may offer to the CAN is to **consider translating the OMT-CAN into an online survey that includes demographic information**.⁵ Participants would allow the facilitator to disaggregate the data of sub-groups (gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity/caste, department, tenure, etc.) and compare it to the data of the whole group, which may help uncover how difference informs experience and perspective. Should the CAN decide to integrate demographic data into the survey, the facilitator should work with the leadership and staff around issues of confidentiality and anonymity to address any concerns that may exist around retribution.

Another option would be to have **affinity sub-groups** meet to discuss their experiences and perspectives and how they would like to share them with the larger group. This may be important toward making room for people who feel marginalized within the CAN to prepare to share their opinions. The facilitator may want to consult with leadership and staff about how to configure affinity groups before the OMT-CAN session (if considered essential) or during it.

As you read through this facilitation guide and prepare to lead the OMT-CAN process and session, think about how you can help the CAN to be intentional about bringing all points of view into the assessment and future planning work. If the conversation leads to any conflict, harm or trauma, you should assess the possible need to take specific steps to address this.⁶

Preparing the Report

The final report consists of the full OMT-CAN PDF, which includes both the completed OMT-CAN survey with the consensus ratings and any comments, and the report form that appears just after the survey. After the meeting, the facilitator:

- Completes the survey by checking the consensus rating selected by the group for each sub-category
- Completes the comments section for each category, making sure to succinctly, accurately and appropriately capture the main points of discussion
- If necessary, chooses the most appropriate consensus ratings for the questions on Leadership Body Composition and Executive Leadership based on the individual answers and synthesizes the anonymous comments on those questions, noting general trends in a way that is both clear and constructive
- Synthesizes and shares any relevant anonymous feedback on the session (page 35)
- Fills out the “For Facilitator Use Only” report form at the end of the PDF with general information and the results of the prioritization exercise, next steps and resource identification

⁵ Where relevant, the facilitator should be aware of and comply with the European Union’s General Data Protection Regulation.

⁶ Some relevant resources include:

- Healing Justice Podcast “Facilitating Conflict & Leading from the Feminine” with Celia Kutz accessed at <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/healing-justice-podcast/id1308078502?i=1000396274446>.
- *Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most* by Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton and Sheila Heen (2010), accessed at <https://epdf.pub/difficult-conversations-how-to-discuss-what-matters-most.html>.
- “Moving Toward Conflict for the Sake of Good Strategy,” a blog (with written and audio versions) by Yotam Marom, accessible at <https://medium.com/@YotamMarom/moving-toward-conflict-for-the-sake-of-good-strategy-9ad0aa28b529>.
- “Building a Psychologically Safe Workplace,” a TEDx talk by Amy Edmondson, available at <https://tinyurl.com/zl7nts7>.

Sharing the Findings

With the CAN

Once the full report is complete, the facilitator shares this with the CAN's leaders (as agreed beforehand) and obtains their approval of the report, making any edits, as necessary. In general, these changes should be minor, either for the sake of clarity, or choosing different words that are more appropriate for the CAN's organizational culture and sensitivities. If the leadership proposes changes of substance or significant clarifications, the facilitator indicates that s/he/they will include these as an additional opinion in the report, but should not change the report.

Note: If questions about Leadership Body Composition or Executive Leadership were answered anonymously, the facilitator may choose to share this section with the leadership shortly after the exercise and before sharing the report with any other staff or CAN members.

Ideally, the facilitator will also confirm that the final report was shared with participants (and others), as agreed and announced at the outset.

With Donors

The report should **only** be shared with donors with the consent of the CAN leadership, after they have approved a final version of the report. As a rule, and unless there is an explicit agreement to the contrary, only the CAN, not the facilitator, should share the report with donors. When in doubt, facilitators should clarify this with the CAN's leadership.

Additional Considerations

A Note about Tallying Answers Ahead of Time

Facilitators may be inclined to create an on-line survey or other mechanism to tally individual answers before the facilitated session. Some who have done so have employed Survey Monkey. As the starting point for discussion on each question, they have shared the counts of how that question was answered, so that people could see the range of responses, along with the average rating. While this option provides greater anonymity for participants and may save time around reaching a consensus rating, potentially allowing more time for in-depth discussion, it also affects the participatory feeling and spirit of the OMT-CAN associated with having all participants express themselves on each sub-category face-to-face, in the moment.

Adapting the OMT-CAN for Each Group

Not all categories or sub-categories will apply easily to all CANs. Facilitators should help groups understand each element in a way that makes it as relevant to them as possible, for example, adapting terminology as needed. As mentioned, groups should be reminded that the tool is flexible and that the goal is to spur discussion and discern the "sense of the group" rather than focus on any specific rating. In some cases, the facilitator—in consultation with the CAN's leadership—may choose to tell participants to skip a particular section if it is clearly not relevant to them. This should be done as an exception, and on a case-by-case basis.

Tip: Facilitators should be conversant in the CAN's mission, structure, and programs and consider marking up the form with comments or text boxes (or preparing a separate, accompanying document) with any notes related to terminology or other opportunities for adapting the tool to the CAN's specific characteristics.

Tip: Facilitators should also be aware of any recent strategic planning, institutional assessment of the CAN or other institutional strengthening efforts that the CAN has undertaken (or is currently undertaking), to figure out how the OMT-CAN best fits in and can support existing efforts.

Facilitators should also be prepared to help groups identify which factors related to power dynamics, diversity, equity and inclusion are most relevant in their case (gender, gender identity, race, class, ethnicity, caste, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability or others) and which marginalized groups are relevant (for example, women as a whole, rural women, people with disabilities, indigenous communities, members of certain castes or ethnic groups, people of color, transgender people, gender non-conforming people, etc.).

Changing the Order

You may want to change the order in which the categories are discussed to ensure that those that will likely require greater time and energy are discussed earlier in the day. Some facilitators poll the group at the outset to get a sense of which categories they would like to spend the most time on, or they decide ahead of time in consultation with the CAN's leadership, and adapt the session accordingly.

Having a Note-Taker

Facilitators are encouraged to take brief notes during the exercise and to complete the comments sections immediately after the exercise (or as soon as possible), while the discussions are fresh. In some circumstances, facilitators may prefer to have a designated note-taker (either from the CAN or an external person that they bring themselves). This should be decided on a case-by-case basis, depending on the complexity of the case and/or availability or appropriateness of someone taking notes.

Conflict of Interest

Facilitators may face a conflict of interest during the prioritization exercise if they are in any way a candidate to provide institutional strengthening support to the CAN related to any of the categories or sub-categories. Facilitators should be extra careful to avoid steering groups toward priorities or actions that they, as consultants, can help with, even if this represents a well-intentioned effort to help a CAN prioritize issues it can most easily address. It is recommended that facilitators remind the group that priorities should be chosen independent of resources available at the time. At the very least, facilitators should disclose and openly discuss this potential conflict of interest with the CAN's leadership and reassure the CAN that it is free to work with any consultant and should feel no obligation to engage the facilitator in follow-up work.

Technology Issues

From time to time, the OMT-CAN may also experience bugs due to changing versions of Adobe Acrobat and other PDF readers. Before sharing the PDF with the CAN and before the exercise begins, the facilitator should ensure that s/he/they is able to mark, save, change and re-save answers to the survey (checkmarks, comments and the prioritization worksheet).

Tip: Facilitators should do a role-play test round to make sure they are familiar with the technical aspects of using the PDF.

Checklist of Agreements and Decisions to be Made with Each CAN Before You Start

1. Duration and date(s) of the exercise
2. Background documents that the CAN feels comfortable sharing with you. For example, the last strategic plan, organizational chart and organizational development plan (or informal list of institutional strengthening priorities that the CAN may have already developed)
3. Confirm that the OMT-CAN is the best tool for this group
4. Who and how many will participate, including decisions around selecting a representative group, if necessary
5. Get clarity about the group's structure and power dynamics, if relevant, especially if these are complex and may impact the focus of the OMT-CAN
6. Decide together what measures will be taken to ensure the inclusion of diverse voices
7. Come to agreement on any needed modifications, translations, or questions or sections to be skipped
8. Decide if the Leadership Body Composition and/or Executive Leadership questions will be completed anonymously
9. Date by which the facilitator will provide the final report to the organization
10. Who will receive and approve the report
11. Who and date by which the CAN's leadership will share the report with members/staff/etc.
12. Get clarity on how the OMT-CAN fits into or complements other institutional efforts underway, including, for example, strategic planning, strengthening of governance, etc.
13. Alert the CAN's leadership that the OMT-CAN tends to open up a variety of topics and to generate momentum and raise participants' expectations. He/she/they should be prepared to announce some sort of follow-up by the end of the session.
14. Logistics:
 - a. Where the exercise will take place (location should be of appropriate size to comfortably accommodate all participants), and/or whether the exercise will be held in-person, virtually or hybrid
 - b. If people will be required to fill out the survey beforehand, and if not, whether the group prefers to fill it out during the session electronically, manually, or a combination of both
 - c. If the survey will be completed beforehand, date for sending out the survey and who will send the survey to participants, with what background information and instructions (for example, the facilitator may obtain participants' email addresses from the CAN's leadership and communicate directly, or he/she/they may prepare the introduction and instructions for the CAN's leaders to send out)
 - d. Who provides materials (markers, flipchart paper, photocopies if relevant, etc.)
 - e. Snack break and other meal requirements to be provided by the CAN



“Organizational Mapping Tool for Coalitions, Alliances and Networks (OMT-CAN) Facilitator Guide” (2019) by Martha Farmelo (adapted from the “Organizational Mapping Tool Facilitator Guide,” updated 2019 by Martha Farmelo and Victoria Wigodzky), is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

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