The Technical Independence Indicator

An approach to assessing sustainability of project results

USAID FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE
PEPFAR U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
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Project Outcome Sustainability

Without *ex-post evaluation*, it is typically not possible to measure whether project results are *maintained*

- There are, however, features that are generally accepted as conditions of success
- The Technical Independence (TI) indicator assembles objective measures to serve as a proxy for "outcome sustainability" that can be monitored over time
- GHSC-PSM has measured TI in 28 countries over 5 years

The Technical Independence Indicator

Strategy

For a select set of **targeted supply chain activities**…

…does the **host country entity** have **five technical capacity elements** in place

…and are they acting as the **primary technical implementer**?

The Technical Independence Indicator

Strategy

For a select set of **targeted supply chain activities**…

Technical Sub-Categories
Strategy and Planning
Forecasting and Supply Planning
Procurement
Quality Assurance
Warehousing and Inventory Management
Transportation and Distribution
Management information systems (MIS)
Governance and Financing
Monitoring and Evaluation
Human resources capacity development

Selection based on:

1. Project objectives and interventions
2. Consultations with host country governments
3. Agreement between Implementer and Funder
4. Resource limitations of monitoring teams

Technical Independence

Reporting format

FY Quarter | Country

Total number of supply chain activities targeted for technical independence by the end of the GHSC-PSM project

10

Percentage of targeted supply chain activities in which the host country entity has achieved technical independence with GHSC-PSM technical assistance

40%

All countries aim to achieve 100% technical independence on targeted activities by the end of the project in 2023.

Capacity element in place	★
Capacity element not in place	○
T.I. achieved	✓

Level of GHSC-PSM contribution towards achieving T.I.

None → Major

Detailed Breakdown by Targeted Activity

Technical Sub-category	Activity	Responsible host country entity	Health Area	Designation of Responsibility	Standardization	Training Approach	Other Resources	Performance Indicator	Host Country Entity Implementation Role	Technical Independence
Forecasting and Supply Planning	Monitor the commodities pipeline		Integrated	★	★	★	★	★	Primary technical implementer	✓
	Develop/update supply plan		Integrated	★	★	★	★	★	Primary technical implementer	✓
	Develop annual forecast		Integrated	★	○	○	★	○	Primary technical implementer	○
Governance and Financing	Manage logistics management committee		Integrated	★	★	○	★	○	Primary technical implementer	○
Human Resources Capacity Development	Implement supply chain management pre-service curriculum		Integrated	★	★	★	○	○	Primary technical implementer	○
Monitoring and Evaluation	Collect and report supply chain performance indicators		Integrated	★	★	★	★	★	Primary technical implementer	✓
	Conduct ongoing data quality assurance		Integrated	★	★	★	★	★	Primary technical implementer	✓
	Facilitate active use of data for supply chain management decision making		Integrated	★	★	○	★	★	Primary technical implementer	○
Procurement	Manage contracts and vendors		Integrated	★	★	○	○	★	Primary technical implementer	○
Warehousing and Inventory Management	Monitor inventory levels		Integrated	★	★	★	○	★	Primary technical implementer	○

Stakeholder Feedback

- GHSC-PSM conducted key informant interviews in five countries with
  - Government agencies
  - USAID
  - Project staff
- Conducted to identify
    - Benefits of TI indicator reporting process
    - Capacity transfer stimulated by indicator
    - Suggested improvements
    - TI indicator data use
    - Challenges/barriers

Reported Benefits

- In many but not all cases, indicator improved relationships between donor, projects, and government
  - In those cases, the *process* itself has improved collaboration with counterparts
- Capacity gaps have been identified and addressed where possible
- Most respondents acknowledged sustainability was important but not always the top priority
  - The TI indicator moves sustainability to the forefront
  - In at least one country, MOH adopted a similar indicator
- TI reporting identifies gaps in resources to inform strategy and funding
- Aligns with USAID's current strategy to build local capacity

Validity & Usefulness

- Gap identification
- Countries and their partners reassess technical strategy
- Building confidence in GHSC-PSM's implementation approach
- Continual assessment of implementation progress

"I believe their [GHSC-PSM's] approach has been systematic in addressing the gaps and leading towards sustainability and technical independence of our respective departments."

Ministry of Health representative

Reported Challenges and Constraints

- Sufficient funding is required to achieve TI, but not assessed
- Operating environment (political, economic, social) is not considered
- Requires significant resources to collect, train, and communicate
- Several aspects are difficult to measure objectively

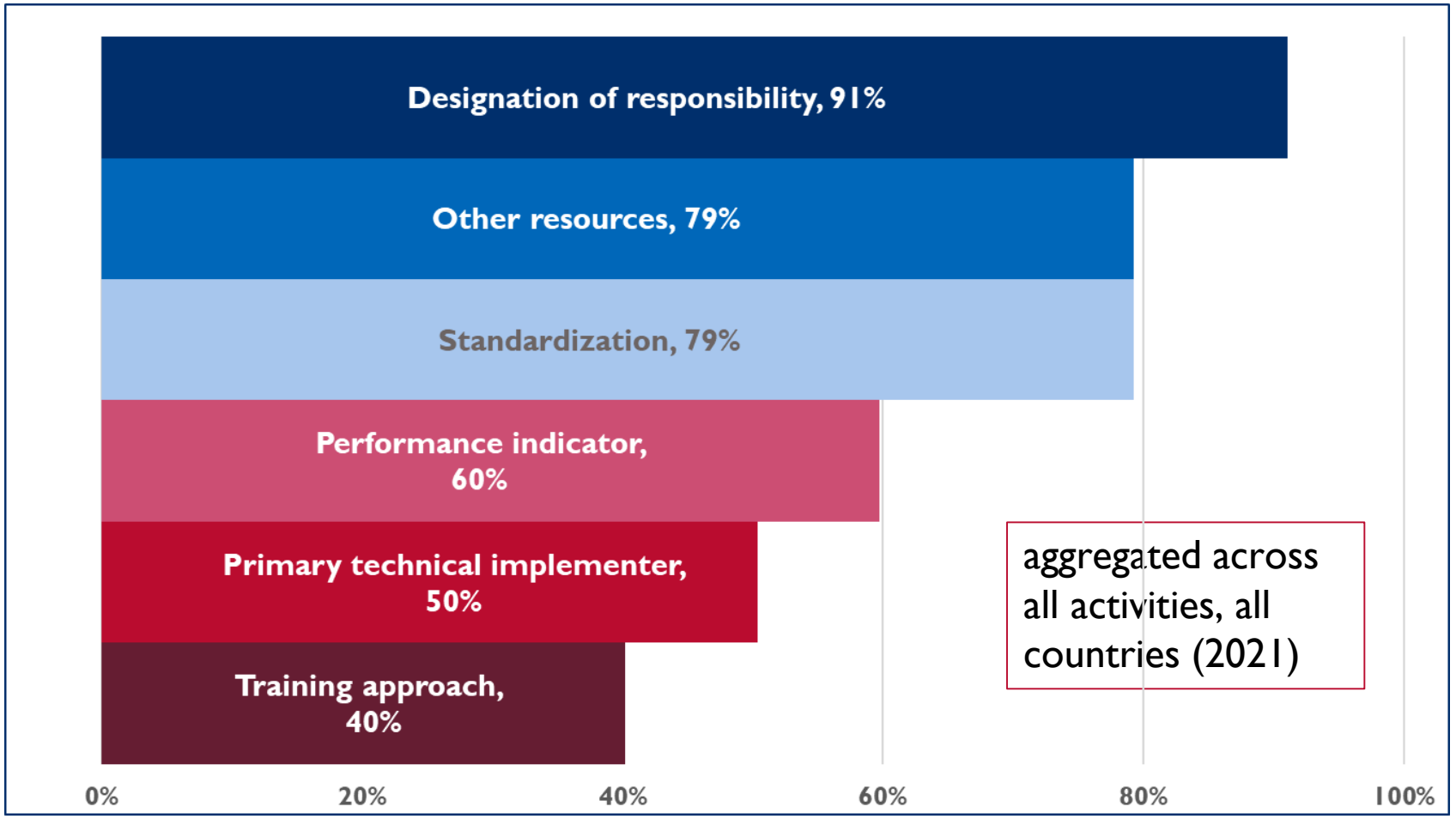
Recommended Improvements

As part of Technical Independence assessments consider:

- Capturing resiliency
- Assessing leadership commitment to TI
- Incorporating funding gap analysis

TI achievement is a high bar

Capacity Elements Achieved



Barriers to Achieving *(not measuring)* Technical Independence

- Shortage of personnel with required skills
- High staff turnover
- Insufficient funding
- Low political will
- Bureaucratic structures within an institution may resist the structural or cultural changes sometimes required
- Training materials such as curriculums, SOPs, and support materials are not standardized

"The key barrier for [developing a] training approach is that the [MOH] **agency's human resource department is not organized…to coordinate and lead the development of such training packages** and the provision of training. They mostly focus on personnel management and other human resource administrative activities. Technical units are [now] taking the initiative and leading such activities."

Ministry of Health representative

Overall Takeaways

A majority of interviewed stakeholders agree, the Technical Independence indicator:

- Is a meaningful and useful metric that facilitates technical planning and collaboration with host countries and donors;
- Creates a compelling way to demonstrate the "impact" of technical assistance activities;

It would be valuable to assess the current financial aspects of technical independence along with capacity transfer.

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