International Federation of Biosafety Associations
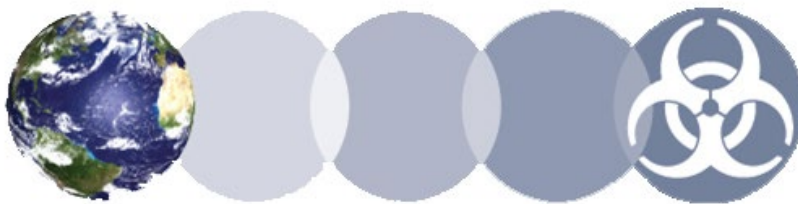
## IFBA Biosafety Association Sustainability Tool

Introduction

This tool is being provided to IFBA Member Biosafety Associations for self-assessment of their organizational capacity and sustainability. Sustainability is a measure of an association's ability to fulfill its mission, to serve its members and stakeholders over time, and to deliver lasting impactful outcomes. The assessment questions are compiled on the basis of the work of many organizations including PACT (an international capacity development organization) and KEPA's *"Organizational Capacity Assessment: An Introduction to a Tool"* (a Finish organization who provide capacity building assistance to non-governmental organizations).

Results from the assessment will help each association deepen its understanding of their current capacity and includes ratings across a variety of capacity and sustainability elements:
- Governance & Strategic Focus - the way an organization formulates and implements policies guiding the conduct of its mission and the attainment of its goals
- Management & Administration - the organization's structures, practices and human resources to manage and administer its activities and day-to-day operations
- Financial Resources - the way in which funds are raised, managed and used for the purpose intended
- Stakeholder Relations & Service Delivery - the way members and stakeholders interact with the association and benefit from its activities

Each of the 4 assessment areas includes a number of sub-levels as illustrated below:
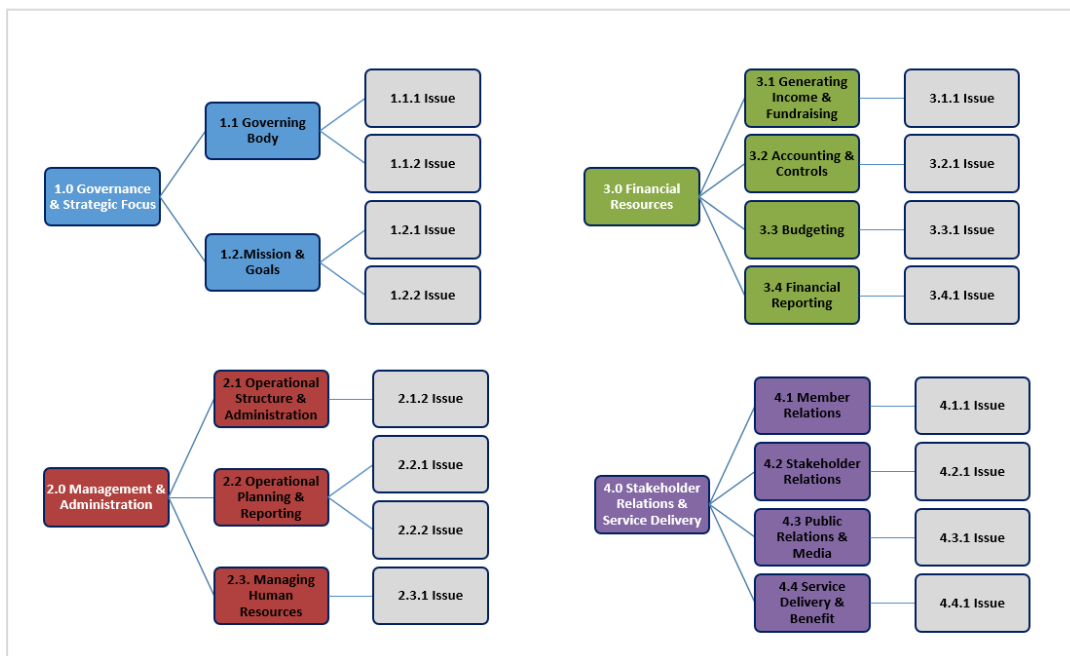
Self-assessment in each of the 4 areas is made on a floating scale and the results are presented as a graphical representation of the values entered for each question. Obtained percentages

indicate the extent to which the requirements have been met and should not be interpreted as pass or fail. Instead, use the results to highlight areas for improvement and capacity-building needs within your association. The IFBA is available to assist its Members in developing an action plan of capacity building and sustainability interventions based on the results of the self-assessment. We also encourage you to consult KEPA's assessment guide for further information on strengthening the sustainability of your association.

Using the Tool

The assessment tool should be completed by a small sub-committee or working group (i.e. 8-10 people) within each Biosafety Association. It is important to ensure that the group comprises a cross-section of the Association's bodies including Executive Council, Secretariat, and Membership. Individuals should discuss and agree on a group rating for each question. This will enable a participatory approach to understanding the association's current capacities.

To input your ratings for each question on the electronic version of the tool, simply drag the slider to a point corresponding to the estimated percentage of compliance with the requirement. If you do not have access to the electronic version, the tool can also be used manually by recording the percentage of compliance in the rating score box below each question. A space has also been provided to enter comments and discussion points related to each question. When using the electronic tool, the results will be automatically presented as a bar graph as illustrated below. The results from sub-level questions are averaged in order to obtain a score for each of the 4 assessment areas. If you do not have access to the electronic version of the tool, results can also be scored manually by averaging the percentages for each section and entering them into the Summary of Results chart provided.
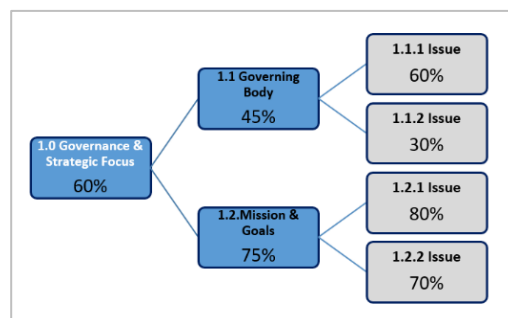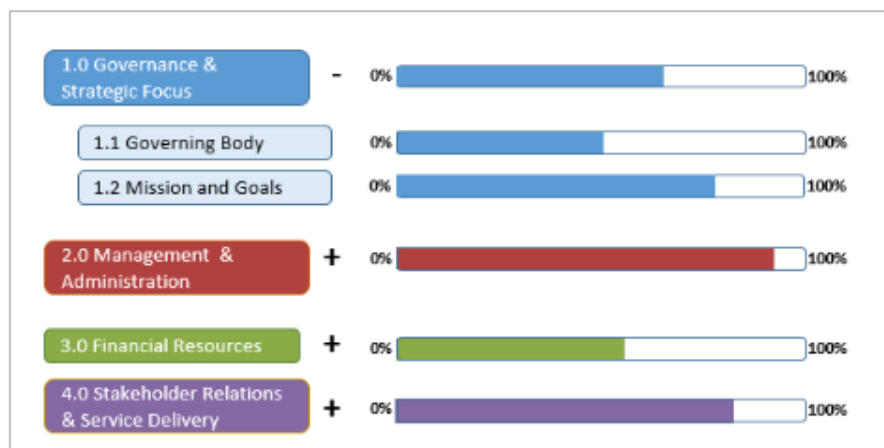
Interpreting the Results

The results of this self-assessment tool should not be interpreted as pass or fail but rather as a mechanism to highlight which areas of the association have strengths and which are weaker. The results can also be used to define the stage of growth for the association as a whole. Five stages of growth for a non-governmental organization are commonly described as follows:

Stage	State	Characteristics
1.	Embryonic	In the initial stage a group of persons organise around a common purpose. The organisational structure is underdeveloped, and the activities are loosely structured around some ideas on what should be done and how resources could be mobilised. Direction is normally lacking and functions and roles unclear.
2.	Emerging	The organisation still operates with volunteers but is beginning to put organizational systems in place. The organisation plans activities, outlines roles and starts following a certain direction.
3.	Growing	The organization starts rethinking service delivery in terms of effectiveness and efficiency, putting more sophisticated operational planning tools in place and attempting to attract donors on the basis of achievements rather than intentions. The organisation is more aware of its stakeholders and the possibility for them to influence the organisation's policy direction and decision-making.
4.	Well-Developed	The organization is responsive to stakeholders, activities are efficiently carried out and decisions are made strategically. The organisation is a reputable agent with stable finances consisting of a mix of long-term sponsors and internal resource mobilisation endeavours. Human resource management is oriented to motivating and supervising working teams of experts.
5.	Mature	A self-sustained organisation that can be reasonably expected to survive on its own.
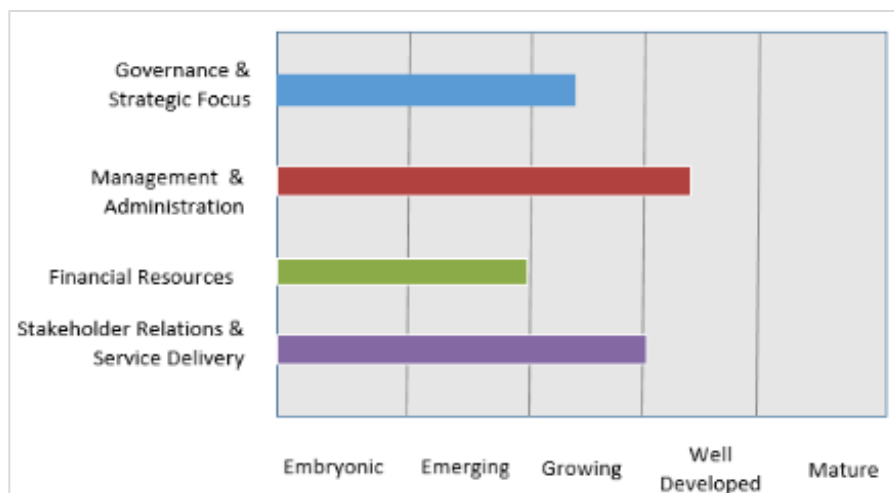
Detailed descriptions of the stages for each of the 4 assessment areas (i.e. Governance & Strategic Focus, Management & Administration, Financial Resources, Stakeholder Relations & Service Delivery) can be found in KEPA's "*Organizational Capacity Assessment: An Introduction to a Tool*".

The Questions

Part 1: Governance & Strategic Focus

Governance can be defined as the way an organization formulates its structures and implements policies guiding the conduct of its mission and the attainment of its goals. A well governed organization is an effective organization. Basic principles of effective governance include an accountable governing body, acting as the highest authority, and leading the organization towards achieving its mission; and a clearly sense of purpose as stated in its vision, mission, goals and strategic plan.

1.1 Governing Body

Governing Body means the organizational structure that has ultimate authority and accountability for the association. This may be called a Board of Directors, Executive Counsel, Executive Committee, Governing Body, or some other name.

1.1.1 The association is a properly registered entity according to local applicable regulations. The governing body is structured and selected in compliance with these legal requirements and has a clearly documented terms of reference. The length of tenure of governing body members is respected as outlined in the association's bylaws.

Meets no requirements	0%	Meets all requirements
0 %		100 %
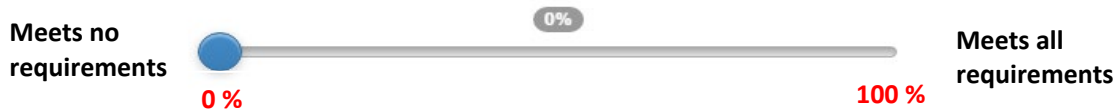
Rating Score: %

Comments

1.1.2 The governing body performs its role to provide overall policy direction and oversight for the association and directing the activities of the association. The governing body also provides financial accountability and financial oversight of the association.

Meets no requirements	0%	Meets all requirements
0 %		100 %
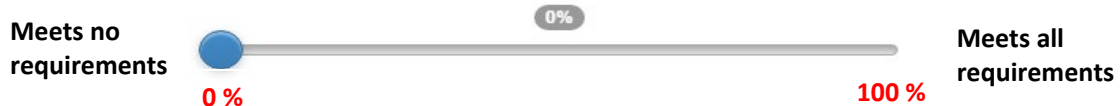
Rating Score: %

Comments

1.1.3 The governing body fulfills its fundraising role (e.g. assists in resource mobilization for the activities of the association) and its lobbying role (e.g. promotes the activities of the association and advocates for strengthened biosafety to stakeholders).

Meets no
requirements

0%

0 %   100 %

Meets all
requirements

Rating Score: %

Comments

1.1.4 The governing body is composed of committed leaders who represent the varied interests of the members and stakeholders. These leaders have the skills, knowledge and experience to carry out their roles effectively.

Meets no
requirements

0%

0 %   100 %

Meets all
requirements
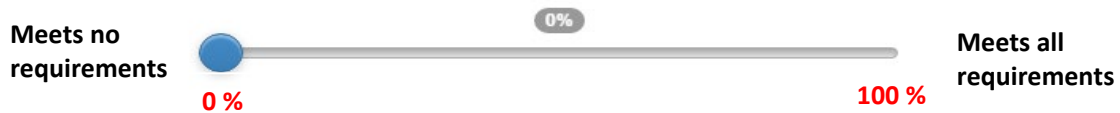
Rating Score: %

Comments

1.1.5 At least 70% of the governing body members attend all association and governing body meetings. All records of decisions made by the governing body are documented and retained by the association.

Meets no
requirements

0%

0 %   100 %

Meets all
requirements
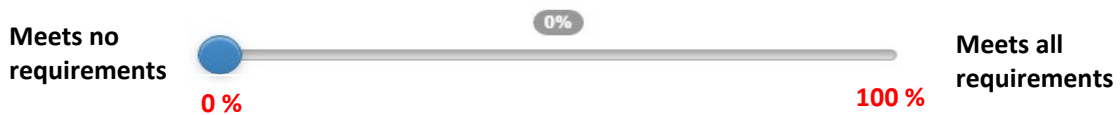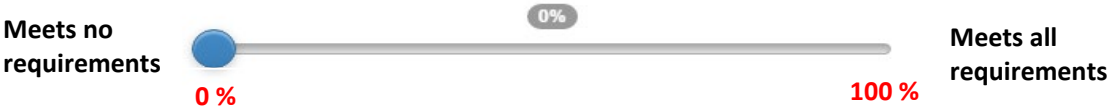
Rating Score: %

Comments

1.2   Mission and Goals

1.2.1   The association has a clearly articulated vision, mission statement and goals. The mission and goals are communicated to and understood by the members and stakeholders.
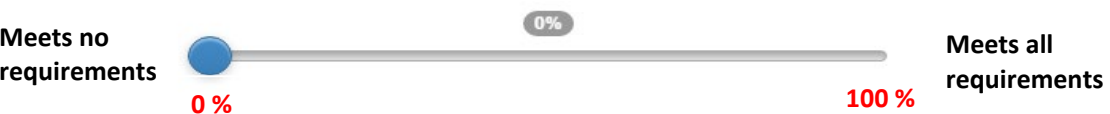
Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   100 %

Rating Score: %

Comments

1.2.2   The association has the necessary sectoral expertise (e.g. biosafety, biosecurity, biorisk management, biocontainment) to accomplish its mission.
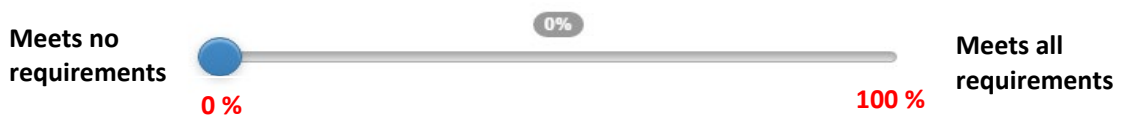
Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   100 %

Rating Score: %

Comments

1.2.3   The association has a written strategic plan which is realistically achievable and aligned with its mission and goals. The strategic plan includes clearly articulated SMART objectives (specific, measurable, achievable, results-focused, time-bound) and is developed by the governing body with input from the members and stakeholders.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   100 %

Rating Score: %

Comments

1.2.4 The development of the mission, goals and objectives, and the strategic planning process, is based on analysis of the external environment (e.g. political context, meeting the needs of external stakeholders, economical factors, relevance, impact) and the internal environment (e.g. meeting the needs of membership, association's governance structure & strategic leadership, internal human and financial resources). Programs are regularly reviewed and adapted to the changing needs of its members and stakeholders.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   100 %
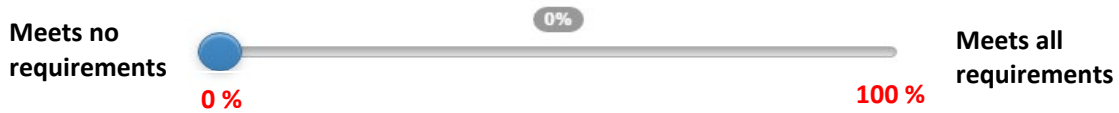
Rating Score: %

Comments

1.2.5 The association uses performance indicators to measure progress towards the achievement of its mission and the impact of its activities. The results of these evaluations are used to make adjustments to the association's activities. Activities are also adapted based on the changing needs of its members and stakeholders.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   100 %
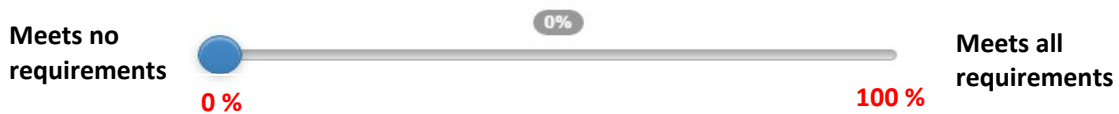
Rating Score: %

Comments

Part 2: Management & Administration

The management and administration of an association's day-to-day operations greatly influence the ability of the association to carry out its mission and goals. A well-managed association has an operational structure with clearly defined roles and responsibilities (e.g. management, secretariat, staff, committees, volunteers); develops and implements work plans and activities reflecting a broader strategic plan; plans for and allocates resources properly; adheres to clearly defined administrative procedures; regularly reports on activities to members and stakeholders; and, places value on human resources with formalized personnel practices.

2.1 Operational Structure & Administration

2.1.1 The association has a defined operational structure to carry out the organization's day-to-day activities (e.g. management, secretariat, staff, volunteers, committees) with clear lines of authority and responsibility. The structure is defined within the association's bylaws and policies.

Meets no requirements   0%   Meets all requirements

0 %   100 %

Rating Score:	%

Comments
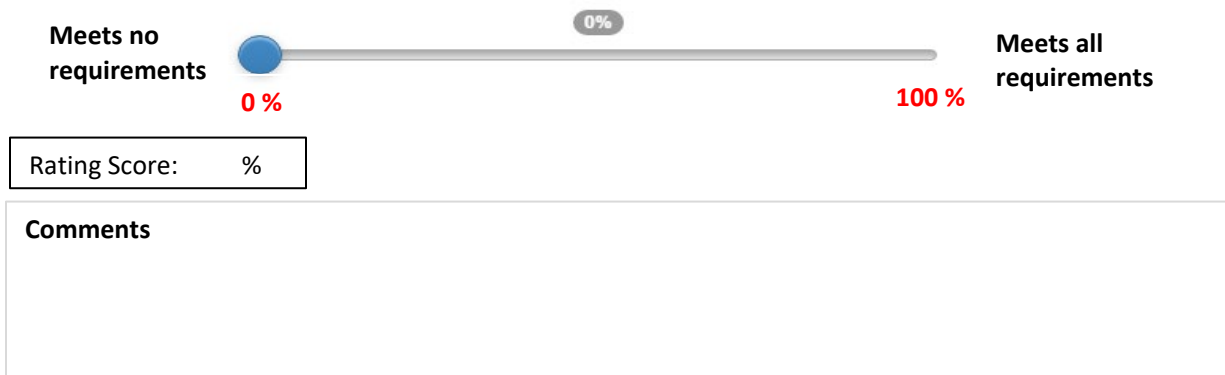
2.1.2 The association's operational structure is realistic and provides an adequate framework for carrying out the mission and goals of the organisation.

Meets no requirements   0%   Meets all requirements

0 %   100 %

Rating Score:	%

Comments
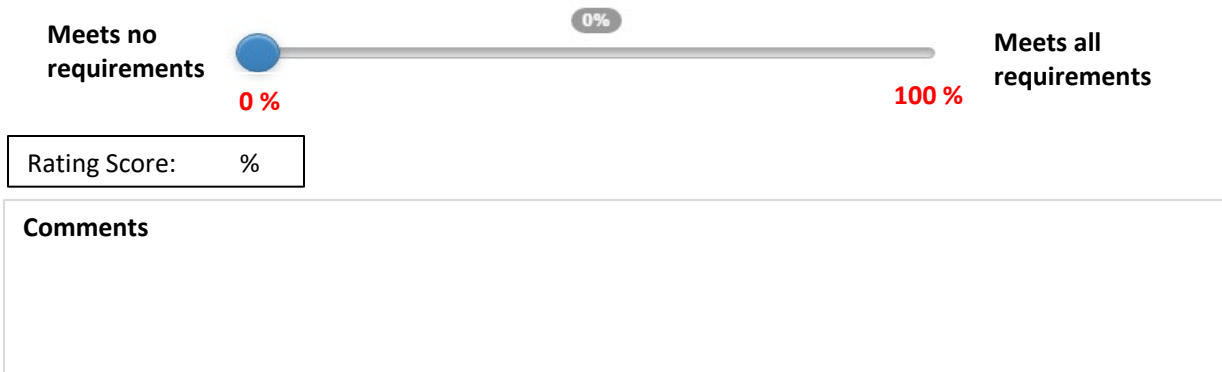
2.1.3 Each of the positions within the operational structure are filled (i.e. either by staff or volunteers). Individuals are drawn from a diverse background, are free from conflict of interest, bring to the association a wide range of skills and experience, and are capable of collaborating across the entire organization.

Meets no requirements   **Meets all requirements**

0%

0 %   **100 %**

Rating Score:	%

Comments

2.1.4 Written administrative procedures (e.g. day-to-day operations, human resources, document control, travel, financial management) have been developed and are adhered to. These procedures are regularly reviewed and updated as required.

Meets no requirements   **Meets all requirements**

0%

0 %   **100 %**
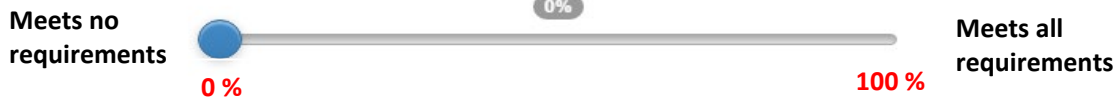
Rating Score:	%

Comments

2.1.5 Administrative procedures include risk management activities to protect the association (e.g. external audits of the association's operations, inventory-taking).

Meets no requirements   **Meets all requirements**

0%

0 %   **100 %**
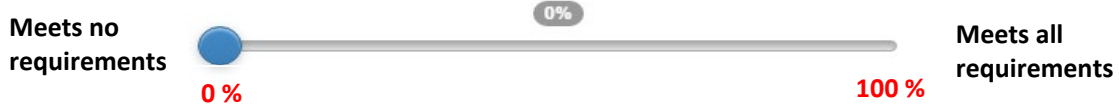
Rating Score:	%

Comments

2.2   Operational Planning & Reporting

2.2.1   The association's operational work plans reflect the strategic plan and include specific activities, accountabilities, budgets, time frames for implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   100 %

| Rating Score: | % |

Comments

2.2.2   Work plans and activities are jointly developed by the appropriate members and stakeholders.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   100 %

| Rating Score: | % |

Comments

2.2.3   Resources (human and financial) to implement the association's work plans are planned for and allocated properly.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   100 %

| Rating Score: | % |

Comments

2.2.4   Work plans are reviewed regularly and updated when necessary. Flexibility exists to adjust work plans and activities as a result of the monitoring process.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   100 %

| Rating Score: | % |

Comments

2.2.5   The association produces quality activity and evaluation reports which are distributed to its members and stakeholders.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   100 %

| Rating Score: | % |

Comments

2.3   Managing Human Resources

2.3.1   Written procedures and criteria are in place for the selection of staff, volunteers, committee members and other individuals within the association's operational structure. The diversity of the association's membership is reflected in these human resources.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   100 %

| Rating Score: | % |

Comments

2.3.2   Individuals are provided with the tools and training necessary to carry out responsibilities based on the association's capacity needs to carry out program objectives. Individuals with financial responsibilities have the skills and qualifications needed to oversee financial responsibilities for the association.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**
0 %   **100 %**
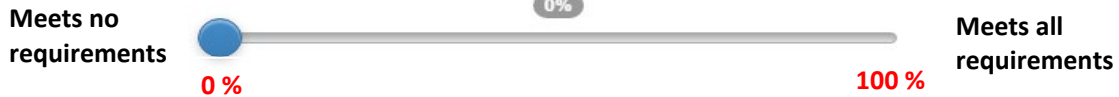
Rating Score: %

Comments

2.3.3   Individuals participate in decisions on how their own work is organized and know what is expected of them. Teamwork is encouraged, communication is open, and information is shared freely among all individuals.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**
0 %   **100 %**

Rating Score: %

Comments

2.3.4   The association provides incentives, either financial (e.g. competitive salaries, benefits) or non-financial (e.g. special projects, assignments, acquiring and using new skills, continual learning and career development), to maintain motivation and the full potential of its human resources.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**
0 %   **100 %**

Rating Score: %

Comments

2.3.5 The performance of individuals is monitored, evaluated and feedback given. Performance recognition schemes, and grievances/conflict resolution procedures are in place.

Meets no requirements

0%

0 %   100 %

Meets all requirements

Rating Score: %

Comments

Part 3: Financial Resources

The governing body has overall responsibility for financial stewardship and ensuring appropriate procedures and systems are in place for managing the association's financial resources. Good financial management is not only concerned with the raising and allocation of funds to attain the association's goals, but also addresses the way in which funds are used for the purpose intended. It not sufficient to be able to access funds – associations must spend their financial resources wisely on relevant activities that are aligned with their strategic goals and objectives. Unrestricted funds are also available to cover fundament core costs and overhead expenses. Equally important are accurate financial accounting procedures, transparency, auditing and reporting. The association's accounting system and financial controls should be aligned with internationally accepted accounting standards and best practices. Finally, financially sustainable associations have a diversified income base including income generating activities and are able to mobilize and efficiently manage resources without excessive dependence on any single funding source or revenue generating stream.

3.1 Generating Income & Fundraising

3.1.1 The association has a diversified income without excessive dependence on any single funding source or revenue generating stream.
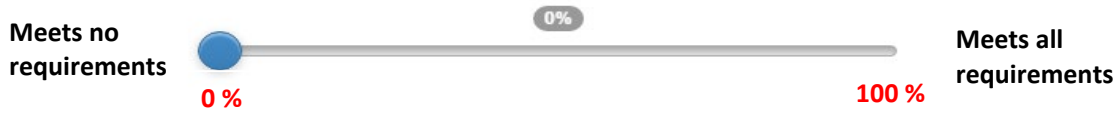
Meets no requirements

0%

0 %   100 %

Meets all requirements

Rating Score: %

Comments

3.1.2 The association generates its own income in addition to membership fees through fee-for-services or other cost recovery mechanisms.

0%

Meets no requirements

0 %

100 %

Meets all requirements

Rating Score:	%

Comments

3.1.3 The association has a realistic fundraising strategy to access a variety of additional resources such as in-kind contributions and donations.

0%

Meets no requirements

0 %

100 %

Meets all requirements
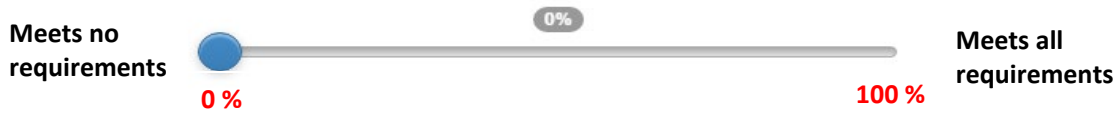
Rating Score:	%

Comments

3.1.4 The association has funds for short-term expenses (e.g. for next 3 months) and a long-term resource mobilization plan. There is a policy for financial reserves to enable the association to meet its mission in periods when funds are not forthcoming.

0%

Meets no requirements

0 %

100 %

Meets all requirements
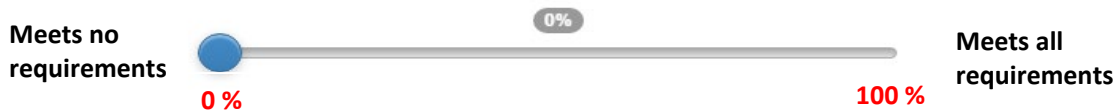
Rating Score:	%

Comments

3.2   Accounting & Controls

3.2.1   An individual with training in financial accounting/bookkeeping is responsible for the association's accounting procedures. These procedures follows sound financial accounting practices using internationally accepted financial tools (delegation of authority, accounting software to process and record financial transactions, Chart of Accounts, reconciliation of bank statements, cash books, receipt books, invoices, fixed asset register). A supporting document is available for every income and expenditure transaction.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   **100 %**
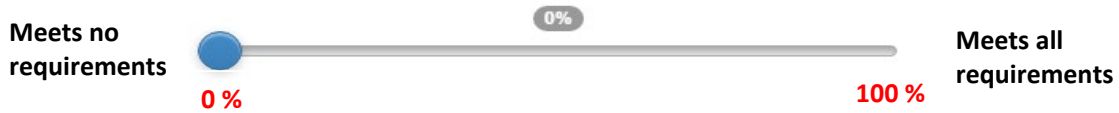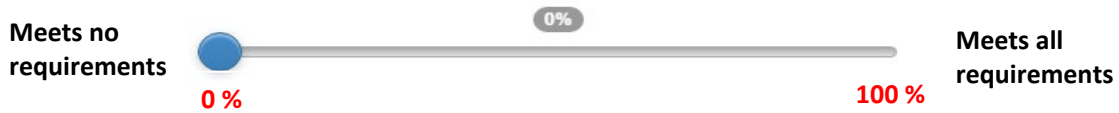
| Rating Score: | % |

Comments

3.2.2   Account categories (e.g. cost centers) exist for separating individual project funds and to avoid cross-project funding. The association is able to track core overhead and operational costs separately from project funds.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   **100 %**

| Rating Score: | % |

Comments

3.2.3   Sound procurement processes are in place and followed. The association verifies that goods and services bought by the association have been received before invoices are paid. Salaries are paid after substantiation of the activities performed and hours accumulated (e.g. time-sheets).

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   **100 %**
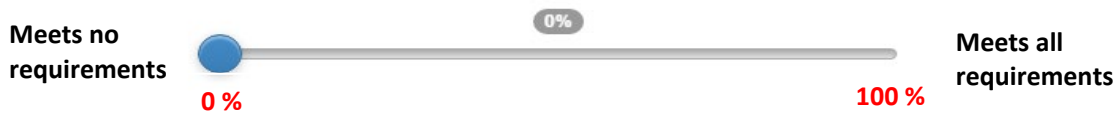
| Rating Score: | % |

Comments

3.2.4   Internal financial controls are in place to provide assurances that assets are safeguarded, have been accurately presented in the financial statements and that local laws and regulations have been observed (e.g. petty cash locked in cash box or safe, bank accounts in the name of the association, transactions authorized, cheques not signed before the payee is written in and supporting documents verified, supporting documents and bank statements are kept on file.

Meets no requirements   0%

0 %   **100 %**   **Meets all requirements**

| Rating Score: | % |

Comments

3.2.5   An annual external financial audit is conducted by a qualified independent individual. Auditors are not selected by individuals with financial responsibility within the association. Recommendations from the auditor (e.g. to correct any weaknesses in financial control, suggestions to improve financial management practices) are implemented.

Meets no requirements   0%

0 %   **100 %**   **Meets all requirements**

| Rating Score: | % |

Comments

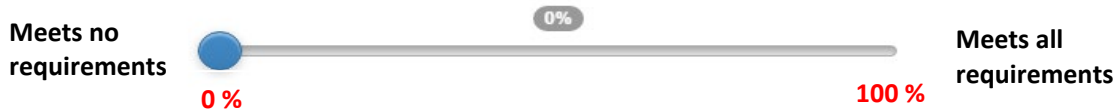## 3.3   Budgeting

3.3.1   An individual(s) with experience in financial management is responsible for the preparation, management and implementation of the budget. Budgets are approved by the governing body of the association.

Meets no requirements   0%

0 %   **100 %**   **Meets all requirements**

| Rating Score: | % |

Comments

3.3.2 The budgeting process is integrated into the development of annual work plans and activities. Budgets are prepared for the association as whole and for individual projects as may be required. Budgets include forecasts for income, expenditures and cash flow. To facilitate planning and identify in advance areas where risks may lay, budgets separately consider the flow of restricted funds (e.g. for specific projects) and unrestricted funds (e.g. for overhead expenses).

Meets no requirements | 0% | **Meets all requirements**
0 % | 100 %

Rating Score: %

Comments

3.3.3 The budget forecast includes enough income to pay for planned expenditures with flexibility for adjustments due to changes in circumstances. An approval process is in place for planned variations and changes to the budget.

Meets no requirements | 0% | **Meets all requirements**
0 % | 100 %

Rating Score: %

Comments

3.3.4 Actual expenses are regularly monitored against the budget and variances are investigated. The governing body receives regular budget monitoring reports showing actual versus budgeted expenditure with notes explaining the variances.

Meets no requirements | 0% | **Meets all requirements**
0 % | 100 %

Rating Score: %

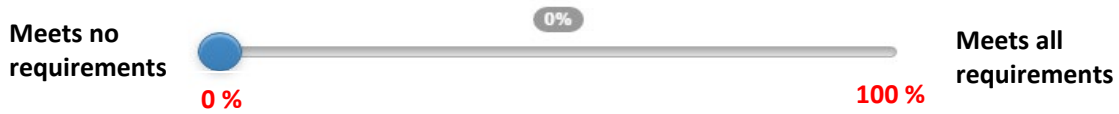Comments

3.4   Financial Reporting

3.4.1   Financial reports are presented to the governing body and include a balance sheet (i.e. summarizing assets, liabilities and net assets) and an income/expense statement (i.e. showing income minus expenses, resulting in either a surplus or deficit).

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   **100 %**
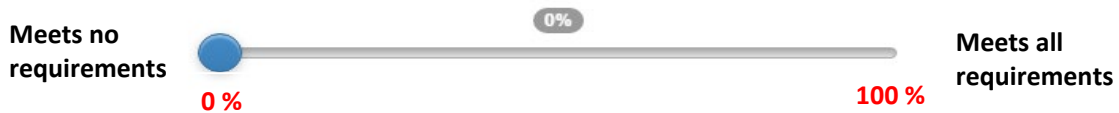
Rating Score: %

Comments

3.4.2   Real-time statements of cash flow and functional expenses are prepared to facilitate short-term planning and anticipate any shortfalls.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   **100 %**

Rating Score: %

Comments

3.4.3   The association understands what other financial reports are required (e.g. financial reports to donors and funding agencies). Such reports are prepared in the proper format and submitted to the donor within the allocated reporting period.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

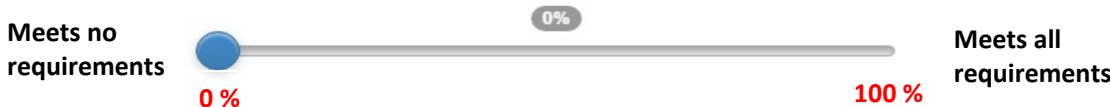**0 %**   **100 %**

Rating Score: %

Comments

3.4.4 All financial reports are used by the association for review purposes and for long-term planning.

Meets no requirements	**Meets all requirements**

0%

0 %   100 %
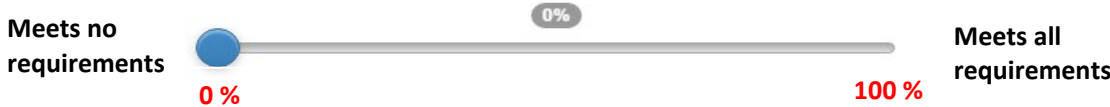
Rating Score: %

Comments

Part 4: Stakeholder Relations & Service Delivery

The association's relationships with its members and stakeholders will determine whether or not the association's mission and goals are realized. Members and stakeholders must be supportive of what the association is intent on accomplishing and the association-stakeholder relationship is one of partnership for a common purpose. A fully involved and motivated membership, stakeholders who see the association as having value and impact, and a positive image within the local community, will lead to a more sustainable organization. Finally, in order for the association to remain sustainable, it must adapt to a changing context and continue to be relevant to its members and stakeholders over time.

4.1   Member Relations

4.1.1 The organization's membership is drawn from a variety of stakeholders (e.g. diagnostic & research laboratories, scientific institutions, governments, academia, private industry, non-governmental organizations).
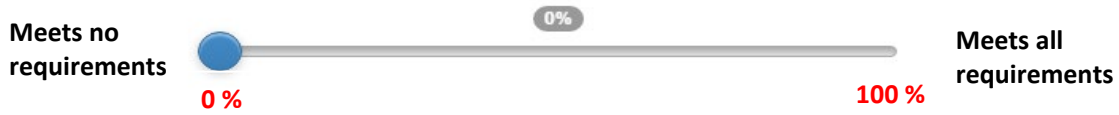
Meets no requirements	**Meets all requirements**

0%

0 %   100 %
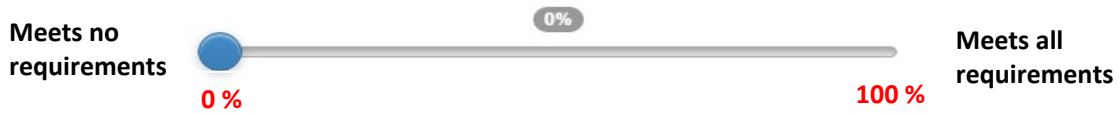
Rating Score: %

Comments

4.1.2   The association's members are involved in the activities of the association, motivated and committed to success of the organization.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   100 %

| Rating Score: | % |

Comments

4.1.3   The culture operating within the association's membership, and between the membership and governing body, is participatory and consensus building working towards a common goal.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   100 %

| Rating Score: | % |

Comments

4.1.4   There is effective and ongoing communication from the governing body to the members. There is a mechanism for members to communicate with the governing body and provide input into the organization's goals and strategic plans.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   100 %
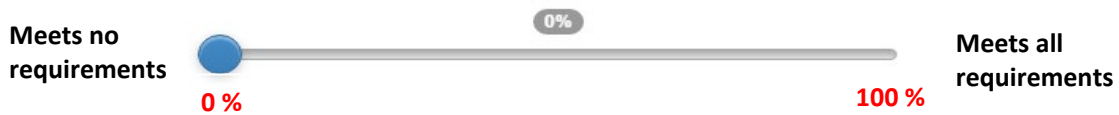
| Rating Score: | % |

Comments

4.1.5 The members regularly attend the association's meetings, conferences and events. If applicable, membership fees are paid by the members annually, or, as may be required by the association's bylaws.
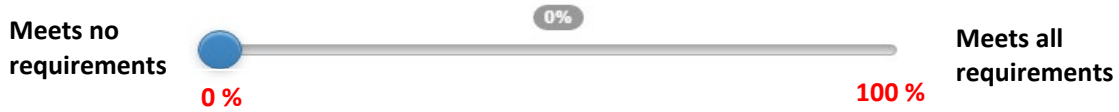
Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   100 %

Rating Score: %

Comments

4.2   Stakeholder Relations

4.2.1 The association has established relationships with a variety of stakeholders (e.g. governments, research institutes, laboratories, academia, private sector, NGOs, donors, funding agencies, international agencies) and is recognized as a credible and valuable resource.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   100 %
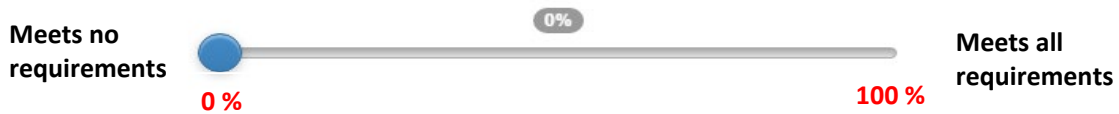
Rating Score: %

Comments

4.2.2 The biosafety expertise and services provided by the association to its stakeholders is highly relevant and beneficial. The association-stakeholder relationship is one of partnership for a common purpose.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**
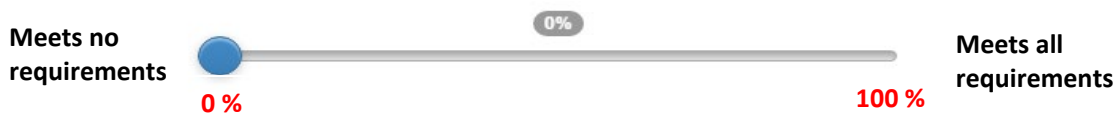
0 %   100 %

Rating Score: %

Comments

4.2.3 The association engages in dialogue with policy-makers and is called upon by governments to collaborate on biosafety issues.

Meets no requirements

0%

0 %   100 %

Meets all requirements

Rating Score: %

Comments

4.2.4 The association has a relationship with the private sector for technical expertise, materials, in-kind contributions, and/or human and financial resources.

Meets no requirements

0%

0 %   100 %

Meets all requirements

Rating Score: %

Comments

4.2.5 The association collaborates with and shares resources among other national, regional and international biosafety associations.

Meets no requirements

0%

0 %   100 %

Meets all requirements

Rating Score: %

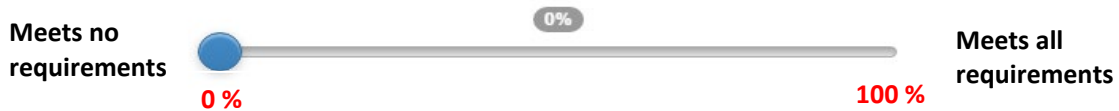Comments

4.3   Public Relations & Media

4.3.1   The association engages in public relations and has a positive image among the local community and public. The association's mission and goals is understood and seen as having value.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   **100 %**

Rating Score: %

Comments

4.3.2   The association has a strategy for and regularly engages with the media. The association has received positive media attention. The media consults with the association on relevant issues.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   **100 %**

Rating Score: %

Comments

4.3.3   The association has a marketing plan to build brand awareness and position itself as a source of biosafety expertise.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   **100 %**
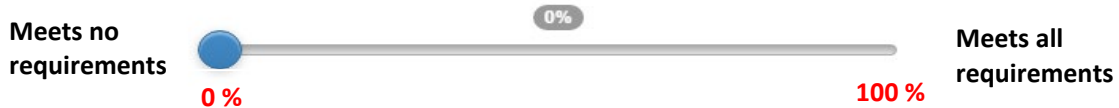
Rating Score: %

Comments

## 4.4   Service Delivery & Benefit

4.4.1   The association's activities are supported by the members & stakeholders. They recognize the benefits of, and are involved in, the work of the association.

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   100 %
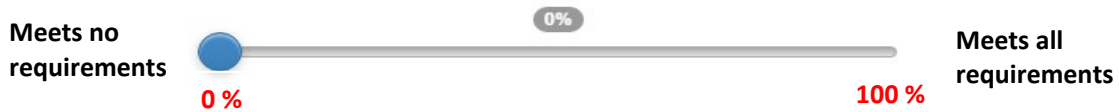
| Rating Score: | % |

Comments

4.4.2   The association is providing biosafety capacity building and skills-transfer to local stakeholders (e.g. training, technical assistance).

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   100 %
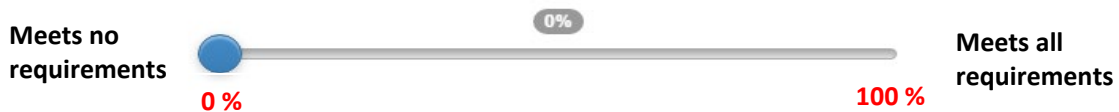
| Rating Score: | % |

Comments

4.4.3   The association plans and adapts its activities in accordance with changes in the local stakeholder environment (e.g. increased awareness of biosafety, strengthened biosafety practices).

Meets no requirements   0%   **Meets all requirements**

0 %   100 %

| Rating Score: | % |

Comments

Summary of Results Chart

If you do not have access to the electronic version of the tool, results can also be scored manually by averaging the recorded percentages for each section and entering them into the Summary of Results chart provided below.

Section Rating %	Sub-Section Rating %	Question Rating %
1. Governance & Strategic Focus	**1.1 Governing Body**	1.1.1
		1.1.2
		1.1.3
		1.1.4
		1.1.5
	1.2 Mission & Goals	1.2.1
		1.2.2
		1.2.3
		1.2.4
		1.2.5
2. Management & Administration	**2.1 Operational Structure & Administration**	2.1.1
		2.1.2
		2.1.3
		2.1.4
		2.1.5
	2.1 Operational Planning & Reporting	2.2.1
		2.2.2
		2.2.3
		2.2.4
		2.2.5
	2.3 Managing Human Resources	2.3.1
		2.3.2
		2.3.3
		2.3.4
		2.3.5
3. Financial Resources	**3.1 Generating Income & Fundraising**	3.1.1
		3.1.2
		3.1.3
		3.1.4

Section Rating %	Sub-Section Rating %	Question Rating %
	3.2 Accounting & Controls	3.2.1
		3.2.2
		3.2.3
		3.2.4
		3.2.5
	3.3 Budgeting	3.3.1
		3.3.2
		3.3.3
		3.3.4
	3.4 Financial Reporting	3.4.1
		3.4.2
		3.4.3
		3.4.4
4. Stakeholder Relations & Service Delivery	**4.1 Member Relations**	4.1.1
		4.1.2
		4.1.3
		4.1.4
		4.1.5
	4.2 Stakeholder Relations	4.2.1
		4.2.2
		4.2.3
		4.2.4
		4.2.5
	4.3 Public Relations & Media	4.3.1
		4.3.2
		4.3.3
	4.4 Service Delivery & Benefit	4.4.1
		4.4.2
		4.4.3