



## ACIAR project development guidance – capacity building<sup>1</sup>

One of ACIAR's development objectives is 'Building scientific and policy capability within our partner countries'. Many ACIAR projects include elements of research capacity building. This guidance aims to support ACIAR project leaders and team members, to help plan this capacity building and capture it in reporting.

Capacity Building through ACIAR projects may include small but targeted and context aware activities, but aligned to the project's Impact Pathway. As an approach capacity building is iterative, context adaptive and builds on previous successful activities.

This five-step guide represents a practical approach to incorporating capacity building during project and proposal development, with links to the relevant section of the ACIAR project proposal document. They are intended as guidance rather than a rigid framework. This guidance is in line with DFAT's 2021 note on 'Supporting Partner Capacity'.

How important is research capacity building in your project? This guidance can help with the planning, implementing, and reporting, whether it is a single activity within the project or major component.

There are **four essentials** for successful research capacity building:

- An accurate diagnosis of the *precise nature of the problem*
- Understanding the *institutional environment* in which your partner organisation is operating
- Sufficient *ownership of, and commitment to, the capacity building agenda* and its implications by (especially) the leadership of your partner organisation, underpinned by a shared knowledge of capacity strengths and challenges
- *The right selection of activities* and investments for the job – including committed project team members, with complementary external expertise when needed

Getting the basics right:

- **Individuals have skills and competencies.** Individuals also make decisions, use services, and behave in ways that impact on the performance of organisations
- **Organisations have capacity.** Organisations also have particular and specific *capabilities* to do things such as manage people, learn, strategise, make decisions, and account for funds. Capabilities are the building blocks of any organisation's overall capacity to perform. Organisations operate in a wider institutional environment that may either support or circumvent the organisation's ability to carry out its formal goals
- **Institutions are the 'rules of the game'** – the formal and informal rules that govern society. Institutions such as laws, policies, and inter-organisation cooperation (on the formal side) and patriarchy, collectivism, patronage systems, or religious influences (on the informal side) have a powerful positive or negative impact on the capacity of individuals and organisations

Tool 1 presents two 'models' for thinking about an organisation

<sup>1</sup> August 2020. ACIAR encourages researchers to provide constructive feedback about research teams experiences in using this document, including what worked and what didn't work. Your ongoing feedback will help ensure the guidelines remain a useful resource for all researchers. Please send your comments to [joy.hardman@aciar.gov.au](mailto:joy.hardman@aciar.gov.au)

## A five-step guide to research capacity building within ACIAR projects

There are five steps in building capacity within projects:

1. Assess and understand the context
2. Identify and agree the problem
3. Agree with partners where are the 'points of entry' – where should we start?
4. Decide what to do – what activities will address the problem?
5. Monitor, test, and learn

In the five steps that follow, each step starts with four tips. These tips summarise the lessons of experience and are included as suggestions to bear in mind as we go through the planning and design process.

Each of the five steps then articulates two core questions to be considered at each stage. Each of these core questions is accompanied by three further describing statements or explaining questions.

## Step 1: Assess and understand the context (jointly with Step 2)

Four tips as you go through step 1:

- ✓ bear in mind that organisations are complex things, made by humans and thus subject to human whim and caprice
- ✓ much of what drives any research organisation is not visible. Recall the iceberg – the mass can be under the surface
- ✓ culture matters and it matters a lot. What is acceptable in one country and one department may not be acceptable in another. Issues of inclusion and gender are often powerful drivers of organisational behaviour, but are never formally written down
- ✓ social norms and values will be just as important as rules and regulations – and often more so

**Two questions:** How ready is the research organisation for change, and do we know who is for and who is against the change or reform?

**Commentary:** This step is designed to reach a judgement about why we think the investment has a decent chance of success. It is one thing to know that reform or change is technically appropriate – but is it politically feasible? Will the organisation or research department be up for it and can they deliver?

**I. How ready is this research department, ministry, or organisation for change and collaboration?**

- a. has anything been said by the politicians or senior executives in charge?
- b. are there any policy commitments or pronouncements in place?
- c. has there been any recent assessment of research capacity in the department or organisation? Is there a shared assessment of the organisation's research strengths and weaknesses?

**II. Who is for and who is against change?**

- a. in every organisation there are people with positional authority (because of where they sit) and people with personal authority (because of who they are). Do we know which is which and how strong they are in support of change?
- b. do we know what is motivating these people – their interests and incentives?
- c. who are the key decision-makers – and do they hold formal positions of power? What are the implications of the gendered distribution of power?

If appropriate the key actors (individuals and organisations) can be placed on a simple map to illustrate potential support for or against change (Tool 2)

## Step 2: Identify and agree what is the problem (jointly with Step 1)

Five tips as you go through step 2:

- ✓ continue to bear in mind that organisations are complex - this cannot be said too often!
- ✓ much of the time the problem is less about individual skills and competencies than it is about dysfunctional organisations and institutions that don't incentivise performance
- ✓ we all see the world from where we sit – what we think may be a problem may not be a problem to our partners
- ✓ with partners resist solutions (especially infrastructure) until the larger problem is unpacked
- ✓ it is therefore critical that the problem is agreed

**Two questions:** To what extent are the problems and challenges of our partner about research skills and competencies, or are they more about a lack of funds, poor management, an inappropriate commissioning model, or the absence of demand for the results of research; and are we sure we have got to the root of the problem?

**Commentary:** Regarding the first question for example, is the problem the organisation's inability to produce rigorous research? Or is it the inability to translate good research findings into policy prescriptions? Or is it the inability (or unwillingness) of the government to take any action on those recommendations? Each of these would generate a different set of activities, and the third possibility may preclude a role for ACIAR...

### 1. Do we have a shared understanding of the specific nature of the problem?

- a. be clear about whether the problem at the individual, organisational, or institutional level. This is critical, as it will determine our response (step 4)
- b. if the problem is indeed skills and competencies, is it a generic 'whole of organisation' problem, or is it in one or two limited areas?
- c. if the problem lies mainly at the organisational or the institutional level, is there really anything ACIAR can effectively offer?

### 2. Are we sure we have got to the root of the problem?

- a. problems on the surface are often symptoms of deeper underlying problems. Are we able to trace problems to their roots?
- b. imperative that our partners agree - ensure that the problems we have identified are really their problems and not merely ours. Consult all stakeholders – although time-consuming it pays dividends in the long run
- c. be as sure as we can that our potential 'solutions' to these problems are both politically feasible and organisationally possible (see also step 3 question 2)

We can use tool 1 to help locate and therefore understand the nature and severity of the problem

## Step 3: Where do we start?

Four tips as you go through step 3:

- ✓ what we have learned about the problem should lead us to agreement over where to start (is it systems? structures? funding? motivations? individual skills and competencies?)
- ✓ often, we will need to start in more than one place at a time
- ✓ will there be enough 'change champions' where we start?
- ✓ we must think constantly about how change may happen – not how we would like it to happen, but how it may happen

**Two questions:** How do we know where to start – the entry points most amenable to change - and do we really need a theory of change?

**Commentary:** This is about considering where to start – and more fundamentally, whether to start at all. We need to consider our 'points of entry' into the department or organisation (check with tool 1) and assess whether there is sufficient support there for our activity

1. **How can we know if there is real potential for action on our problem?**
  - a. revisit the 'actor map' (tool 2). Who is sitting in the upper right quadrant? What are the gendered implications of those holding positions power and authority?
  - b. consider three simple questions, one each on authority, acceptance, and ability. Do those sitting in that upper right quadrant have sufficient formal and informal authority to make the change happen? Is there widespread acceptance of the need for change? And does our partner – especially its leadership – can deliver it? This latter point is where ACIAR comes in. We can provide the ability, but rarely if ever the authority or the acceptance (see tool 3)
  - c. do these three A's overlap sufficiently for us to be confident of success?
2. **Do we really need a theory of change (and what is one anyway?)**
  - a. yes, we do. We absolutely do
  - b. a theory of change is a fancy way of explaining why we think expending ACIAR's scarce resources will indeed deliver a better performing research agency. The logic is simple. It runs as follows "if then, because", as in "if we do this, that, and the other, then this will be the outcome, and it will be the outcome because of another set of this, that, and the others". The critical word here is 'because'. It is not enough merely to say "if, then". This is not a theory of change. It is a wish. A theory of change says why we think what we propose will actually deliver what we want – because of the support in the top right quadrant, because the three As overlap sufficiently, because good leadership and commitment are in place. There always must be a 'because'
  - c. do we think our activities will be influential enough to ripple through the organisation and deliver the system wide change we are seeking?

See the cell below for further consideration of theories of change

Tool 3 summarises the 3 As model

### A note on theories of change

The term 'Theory of Change' is intended to mean an informed assessment of why, in the face of explicit and implicit personal and political incentives, facilitating some particular managerial, institutional, attitudinal or capacity changes will lead to other changes and eventually to the desired improvement in the results chain.<sup>2</sup> Specifying a 'Theory of Change' can seem a rather theological concept but the key point is that the question of *why* relevant actors will make the behavioural changes assumed within a program is crucial. Simply giving actors the formal right or capacity to do things differently, whether on the demand or supply side, is not the same as those actors using those rights or capacities in practice. The actors (whether the public in general, particular communities, public officials, etc.) must want to follow that different path and many of the incentives for their current behaviour may not be evident.

<sup>2</sup> See (Dart, Hall et al. 2010; Stein and Valters 2012; Vogel 2012) for definitions. It is a 'theory' because it produces predictions which are capable of falsification about whether things are going as predicted. The risk in not having an adequate theory of change is that all involved might not be sufficiently mindful about whether reforms are headed in the right direction and whether any course corrections are needed.

## Step 4: Deciding what to do

Four tips as you go through step 4:

- ✓ always agree activities in concert with colleagues and partners (“nothing about us without us”)
- ✓ always ask (sometimes out loud, sometimes in one’s head) “will this really be feasible?”
- ✓ err on the side of modesty and caution
- ✓ however long you will think it may take – double it

**Two questions:** Where do we think is the greatest potential for change; and how can we be sure that the activities we have chosen will address the problems we have identified?

**Commentary:** This step is about being clear about why we think the activities we are proposing are the right ones to address the problem and why we think they will deliver the outcomes we are seeking

**1. Where is the greatest potential for immediate change, however modest?**

- a. refer back to the three As (Authority, Ability, and Acceptance) – is there any one person or group of people in the organisation that are serious about change, and how influential are they?
- b. if there are, we should consider what assistance they may need
- c. where have the ideas for the activities come from? Are they the priorities of our partners?

**2. Are we sure as we can be that the activities will deliver the outcomes we want – will they deliver the theory of change (as in step 3)?**

- a. ensure that the activities we are proposing are technically the right ones – if the problem is organisational, then a series of activities addressing skills and competencies at the individual level will not be appropriate
- b. do we think that these activities are both organisationally possible and politically feasible?
- c. do we think that we will be able to manage and even mitigate the risks we foresee?

Tool 4 presents a menu of capacity building activities

## Step 5: Monitor, test and learn

Four tips as you go through step 5:

- ✓ far better to have a simple monitoring framework that gets monitored than a complex one that doesn't (sounds obvious but most of the time the opposite applies)
- ✓ be aware that as soon as we include an 'indicator' in any monitoring framework we are creating an incentive to monitor it – so we need to be sure that we are choosing only 'measures that matter'. Forget everything else
- ✓ the world is constantly changing, so will need constantly to revisit the theory of change – does not have to be formally written down but every week, every month mentally check it over and if necessary, revise it - and set aside every six months for a deep reflective process with all colleagues and key stakeholders on what is working, what is not, and why
- ✓ monitoring inclusion issues is critical – gender, disability, and other intersectional issues

**Two questions:** Is it possible to measure research capacity development; and what does a good monitoring system look like?

**Commentary:** This step is about agreeing two sets of 'data': first, for Intermediate Outcomes and End of Program Outcomes (EoPO), some indicators or measures that will tell us when we have achieved what we set out to achieve; and second, given that change is long term, some indicators that tell us that we are making progress. Monitoring activities and outputs is easy but won't take us very far. Listing publications – so what? It may be useful to indicate individual skills and competencies, but it says little about the impact of research

### 1. How can we monitor the development of research capacity?

- a. our indicators clearly must 'measure' or report against, the problem we have agreed to address
- b. as far as possible choose indicators that are either already available and collected routinely, or that will not be onerous to collect
- c. monitoring should focus on the outcome level – activities and outputs (which themselves are the direct results of activities) speak for themselves. They hardly need monitoring

### 2. What does a good monitoring system look like?

- a. simple, intuitive, and adaptable (see tool 5 for possible indicators)
- b. a good framework will require regular review and reflection – not only on the extent of progress, but whether our theory of change still holds. And if not, why not – what has changed?
- c. a good monitoring system for research will balance transactional outputs with higher order development objectives at the End of Program Outcome level

## Endnote

Once the five steps are completed, it may be useful to summarise our conclusions in a table such as that presented in tool 6.

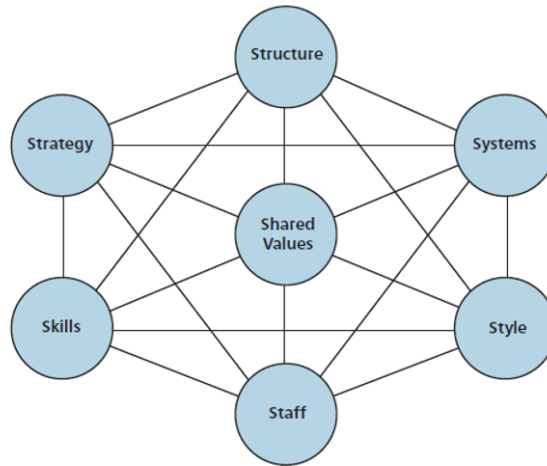
We provide some tools below, that may be useful in planning and implement research capacity building within ACIAR projects. There are many other useful tools – for example in [this publication](#) from the Tropical Agriculture Platform, or this [learning module](#) from FAO.

## Tool 1. Visualising an organisation

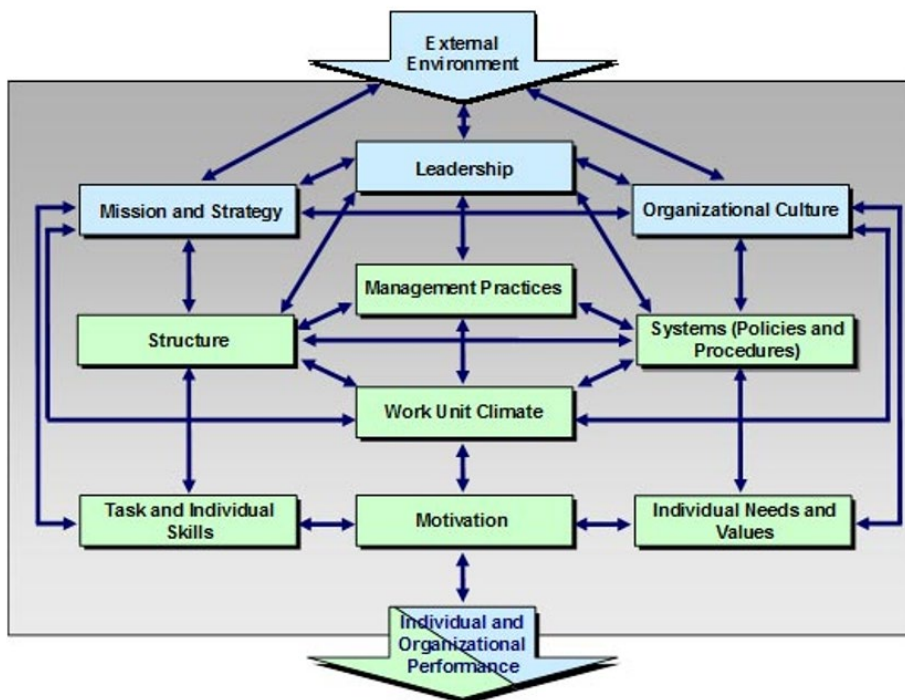
There are many ways to 'model' or think about an organisation. Two prominent ones are the Seven S Modal, and the Burke-Litwin model.

This is the Seven-S model:

- Simple
- easy to remember
- but*
- No modelling the impact of the external environment
- Not explanatory



This is Burke Litwin model:

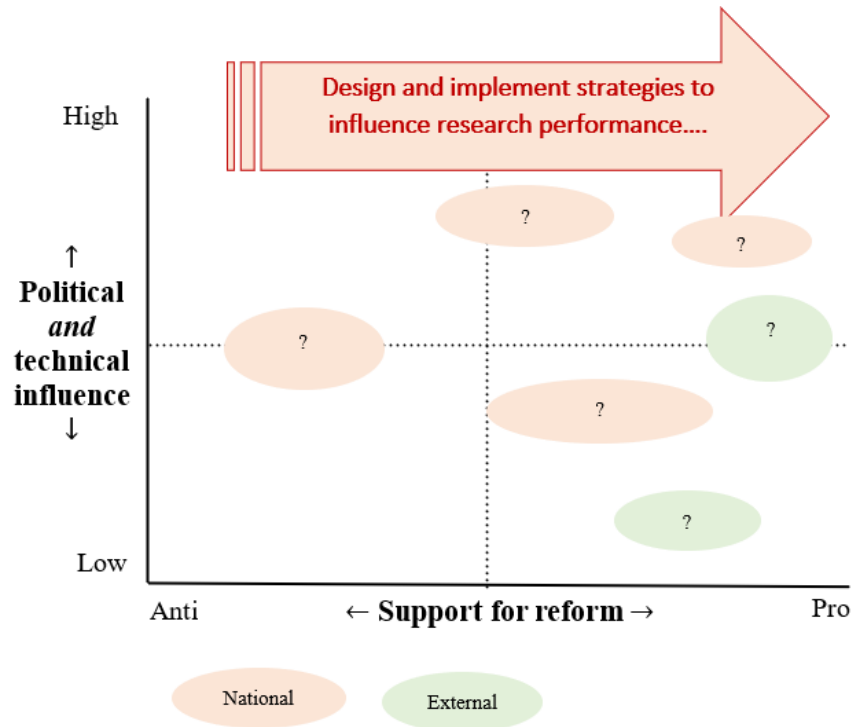


The blue cells are (usually) the source of institutional (i.e., long term, fundamental, sustainable) change, whereas the green cells are sources of more limited organisational change. Individual skills are limited to one small green cell, reflecting the fact that improvements in skills and competencies alone are unlikely to transform organisational performance.



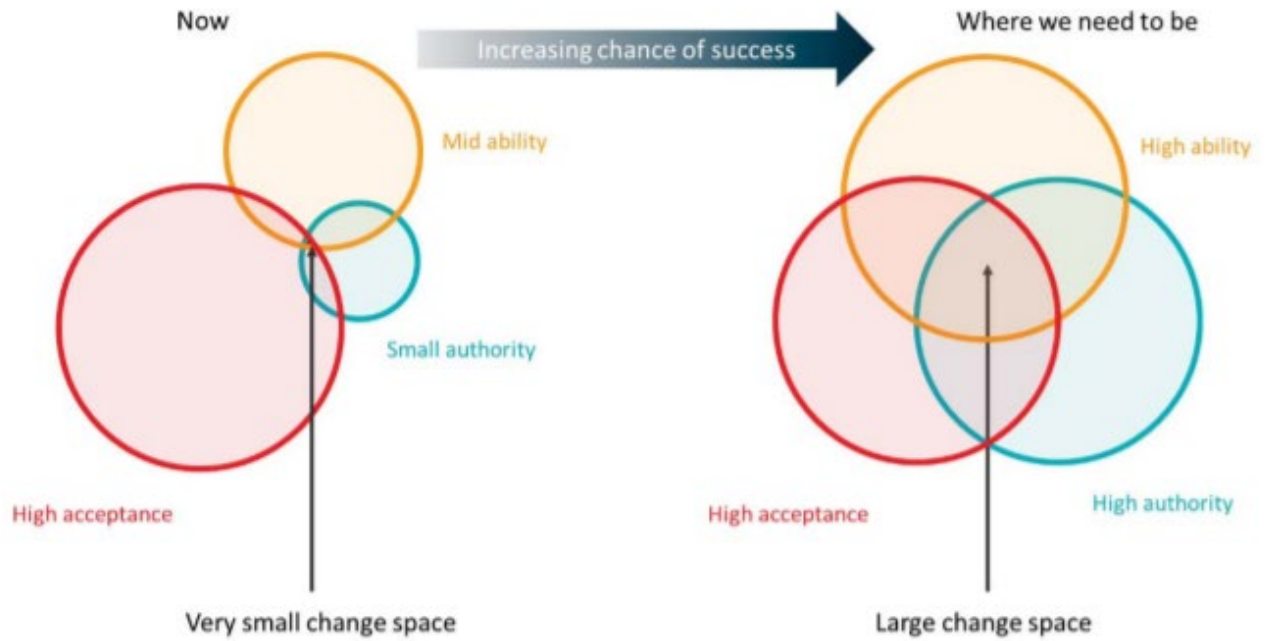
## Tool 2. Who matters for driving change in any department or organisation?

One simple way to assess the potential for change is to plot stakeholders on a simple map. Stakeholders can be individuals or organisations, internal or external to the research department or organisation. Who is for and who is against, and how much power and authority does each possess?



### Tool 3. Authority, acceptance, and ability

The model was developed by academics at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. The diagram below is taken from a publication by the Queensland Productivity Commission on how to implement change.



## Tool 4. Research capacity building indicative activities

	Features	Needed for success	Principles
<b>Individual skills and competency development</b>			
<b>Learning-by-doing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informal</li> <li>• Usually, face-to-face</li> <li>• May be long term, over the length of the project</li> <li>• May be combined with a study tour or placement (internship)</li> <li>• A good way to reinforce skills learned, for example, through a short course</li> <li>• Often 'taken for granted' and overlooked in project reporting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The required skills, attitudes, and experience within the team</li> <li>• Commitment from all team members</li> <li>• An atmosphere of professional respect and trust</li> </ul>	<p>Appropriate choice of teaching and learning techniques (pedagogy) for the specific cultural and organisational context (human-centred design)</p>
<b>Mentoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informal</li> <li>• Usually, one-on-one</li> <li>• Face-to-face or remote</li> <li>• May be long term, over the length of the project</li> <li>• May be combined with a study tour or placement (internship)</li> <li>• Often 'taken for granted' and overlooked in project reporting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time commitment</li> <li>• Mentoring skills</li> <li>• Mutual respect and trust</li> </ul>	
<b>Workshop/short course</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal group training</li> <li>• Cost-effective and efficient</li> <li>• Details of each activity should be fully reported in project reports: What is the objective? How are participants to be selected? Are gender and inclusion policies in place? What approaches and methods are to be used? What are expected results and outcomes? What M&amp;E methods will be used to assess outcomes?</li> <li>• Awarding Certificates which outline expertise gained can be beneficial for career progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tailor to partner/group needs, and cultural considerations</li> <li>• May need external expertise (professional trainers)</li> <li>• Post-workshop, reinforce new skills through learning-by-doing or integrating into participants' practical work activities</li> <li>• Provide continuing support post-workshop for improved outcomes and impacts</li> </ul>	
<b>Study tour</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprises a combination of activities such as learning-by-doing, mentoring and professional networking, in an intensive experience</li> <li>• Often conducted in Australia, or another partner country, where there are excellent facilities and high professional standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tailor to partner (and individual) needs</li> <li>• Complement with longer term interactions such as mentoring</li> </ul>	
<b>Placements (internships)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Like study tours, but of longer duration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same as study tours</li> </ul>	
<b>Formal qualifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awarding a formal qualification following a training activity may increase the commitment and motivation of individuals and partner organisations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership with an academic institution to provide accreditation</li> </ul>	

<b>Supporting student thesis research</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A potentially powerful way to build research capacity while supporting project research outputs and outcomes</li> <li>• Contributes to long-term project outcomes and impacts by embedding key skills within the partner country research system</li> <li>• There may be opportunities to fund postgraduate students through ACIAR's John Allwright Fellowship or ACIAR's Pacific scholarship program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment (a formal agreement) from the host academic institution</li> <li>• External co-funding of the students' non-research costs</li> <li>• See also 'Guidelines for integrating post-graduate research students in ACIAR projects'</li> </ul>	
<b>Professional networking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Builds professional confidence and motivation</li> <li>• Contributes to long-term outcomes and impacts when it continues beyond the life of the project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For formal networks, a long-term organisational partner, or other arrangements to support beyond the project life</li> </ul>	

<b>Organisational</b>	<b>Features</b>	<b>Needed for success</b>	<b>Principles</b>
<b>Group/cohort training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential to catalyse change in an organisation – but may need sustained efforts beyond a single project</li> <li>• Builds professional confidence and motivation in a cohort of staff, which may subsequently contribute to organisational change</li> <li>• Can be done within the partner organisation (in country), or hosted by a third party (in Australia or elsewhere)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear commitment from the partner organisation</li> <li>• Likely to need external expertise (professional trainers)</li> </ul>	ownership of, and commitment to, the capacity building agenda and its implications by (especially) the leadership of your partner organisation, underpinned by a shared knowledge of capacity strengths and challenges
<b>Engagement with senior managers including Human Resource managers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps to develop partner ownership of the process</li> <li>• Encourages managers and decision-makers to support the returning trainees and provide an enabling organisational environment for further change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear commitment from the partner organisation</li> <li>• A good level of trust between organisations</li> </ul>	
<b>Infrastructure investment Organisational twinning and peer to peer approaches</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific equipment may be necessary for project technical outputs, but complementary investment can greatly increase effectiveness in capacity building and other outcomes</li> <li>• Cost-effectiveness may be increased by designing dual-purpose (research-and-training) facilities</li> <li>• Mutual learning through south-south and triangular twinning arrangements and peer to peer networks</li> <li>• Sharing research management processes and procedures for adaption in local context</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May require specific agreements relating to ownership and access, during and after the project</li> <li>• Partner organisation must have the resources (expertise and financial) to maintain and operate facilities after project</li> <li>• A research project or program to come together around</li> <li>• Targeting an identified agency need, rather than a 'general' need</li> </ul>	

<b>Organisational twinning</b> <b>Peer to peer approaches</b> <b>South-south/triangular partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mutual learning through south-south and triangular twinning arrangements and peer to peer networks</li> <li>• Sharing research management processes and procedures for adaption in local context</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A research project or program to come together around</li> <li>• Targeting an identified agency need, rather than a ‘general’ need</li> </ul>	
<b>Promoting a learning organisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating a safe space where ideas can be discussed</li> <li>• Culturally appropriate, inclusive but simple approaches to sharing learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open and safe environment</li> <li>• In agency Champions</li> <li>• Staff time away from the day to day</li> </ul>	

<b>Institutional environment options</b>			<b>Principles</b>
Targeted efforts to address a policy/regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specifically targeted interventions by projects may support or catalyse enabling changes in the policy or regulatory environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well targeted and defined interventions</li> <li>• Clear understanding of policy-making processes – especially how evidence informs policy</li> <li>• Clear strategy to identify entry points and opportunities for change</li> </ul>	<p>An accurate diagnosis of the <i>precise nature of the problem</i></p> <p>Understanding the <i>institutional environment</i> in which your partner organisation is operating</p>
Multi-stakeholder platform (e.g., a ‘policy forum’)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitates research engagement in policy processes</li> <li>• Builds capacity of researchers to engage in policy processes</li> <li>• Strengthens the role of evidence in policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional skills (non-research, e.g., communication, advocacy) for effective engagement by researchers</li> <li>• Clear understanding of policy-making processes – and who is involved</li> </ul>	
Innovation platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A potentially powerful way to build the broader partnerships necessary to support participatory action research and other multi-stakeholder models of innovation</li> <li>• Leads to new ways of conceptualising and describing research and innovation processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A deep understanding of culture and existing institutional and organisational relationships</li> <li>• Appropriate arrangements and agreements to bring together diverse groups of people and organisations</li> </ul>	
Influencing the agricultural education system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A potentially powerful entry point for catalysing change in agricultural innovation systems over the long term</li> <li>• Appropriate for introducing new skills and disciplines, and new paradigms for research and innovation</li> <li>• May be sufficient to introduce new modules into existing curricula but likely to require enabling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A broad understanding of national innovation systems (and the role of different kinds of education)</li> <li>• An understanding of decision-making processes (accreditation, curriculum development etc.)</li> <li>• Commitment – supported by appropriate arrangements and formal agreements</li> </ul>	

	changes in ways of working (e.g., across disciplines, partnerships with outside organisations etc.)		
--	---	--	--

## Tool 5: Possible indicators for monitoring

Level	Activity	Indicators at Output level	Indicators at Program Outcome level	Indicators at End of Program for research capacity development
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Task and individual skills transfer</li> <li>Planned on the job training</li> <li>Mentoring</li> <li>Scholarships and short courses</li> <li>Work placements</li> <li>Public presentation of research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Numbers trained - by skill level / course / level of attainment/ mentored</li> <li>Scholarships awarded</li> <li>Numbers of staff with appropriate qualifications</li> <li>Student self-evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff apply skills and competencies</li> <li>Research papers produced and presented</li> <li>Trainer the trainer and agency mentoring programs in place</li> <li>Clarity of research focus</li> <li>Trust in research leadership and direction</li> <li>Up to date infrastructure</li> <li>Diverse stakeholder views sought (farmers, agribusiness, consumers, ministers)</li> <li>Knowledge sharing forums established</li> <li>Culture of research collaboration and innovation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organisation produces timely and quality research outputs</li> <li>Government listens to research evidence and recommendations</li> <li>Research findings translated into govt policy</li> <li>Research outputs lead to adoption by government and others</li> </ul>
Organisational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cohort trained in technical skills or research management</li> <li>Research strategy and focus clarified</li> <li>Organisational processes support research project activities</li> <li>New infrastructure including training in usage and maintenance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number trained &amp; applicability of training</li> <li>Research strategy developed and owned by CEO/board</li> <li>Reduction in logistical holdups to research</li> <li>New structure supplied, ongoing training and maintenance plans in place</li> </ul>		

The highlighted red cells indicate where ACIAR activity will be focused. Delivering the EoPO (probably something like “improved capacity for producing quality and timely research that is used by policy makers”) is likely to require change in areas beyond ACIAR’s reach – in the way the organisation is structured and the incentives acting upon it. Regardless – ACIAR projects must be aware of these issues as they will either enable or constrain project success

Institutional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External environment (ongoing monitoring)</li> <li>Promote research innovation culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External environment reported on quarterly and theory of change checked for relevance</li> <li>Evidence of improved staff motivation and commitment</li> </ul>		
---------------	--	---	--	--

### Tool 6. Capacity analysis framework (adapted from FAO 2015)

Level	Capacity area	Existing situation – is this the problem?	Where do we want to be?	Capacity development needs	Interventions – what is the best way to get there?	Responsibilities – who needs to do what, and is our ToC realistic?	Priority (1 = high, 4 = low)
<b>Individual</b>	Technical skills						
	Strategic skills (e.g., broader research skills)						
	Professional confidence and motivation						
<b>Organisational</b>	Specific team within agency						
	Leadership engagement						
	Infrastructure and assets						
	Agency procedures and protocols enable research						
	Research culture						
<b>Institutional</b>	Policy and regulatory framework						
	Incentives, including remuneration, research funding						

	Broader political environment						
	Innovative and collaborative research culture						