DRAFT EAST AFRICAN STANDARD

Business Development Services — Building Organisational Capacity — Guidelines for Providers

EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

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Foreword

Development of the East African Standards has been necessitated by the need for harmonizing requirements governing quality of products and services in the East African Community. It is envisaged that through harmonized standardization, trade barriers that are encountered when goods and services are exchanged within the Community will be removed.

The Community has established an East African Standards Committee (EASC) mandated to develop and issue East African Standards (EAS). The Committee is composed of representatives of the National Standards Bodies in Partner States, together with the representatives from the public and private sector organizations in the community.

East African Standards are developed through Technical Committees that are representative of key stakeholders including government, academia, consumer groups, private sector and other interested parties. Draft East African Standards are circulated to stakeholders through the National Standards Bodies in the Partner States. The comments received are discussed and incorporated before finalization of standards, in accordance with the Principles and procedures for development of East African Standards.

East African Standards are subject to review, to keep pace with technological advances. Users of the East African Standards are therefore expected to ensure that they always have the latest versions of the standards they are implementing.

The committee responsible for this document is Technical Committee EASC/TC 076, *Services.*

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be subject of patent rights. EAC shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent right

Business Development Services — Building Organisational Capacity — Guidelines for Providers

1 Scope

This Draft East African standard provides guidelines for building the capacity of the Business Development Services (BDS) providers. The guideline can be used by:

a) Solo practitioners and BDS organisations to improve their organisational capacity:

b) BDS providers to effect change across the organization and measure continued progress;

c) BDS funders and MSMEs to evaluate and select BDS providers.

The Draft East African standard does not cover building capacities of organisations that are not BDS providers.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— IEC Electropedia: available at http://www.electropedia.org/

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at http://www.iso.org/obp

3.1
Business Development Services (BDS)
non-financial services offered to help start-ups, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and/or small and growing businesses (SGBs) tackle obstacles more effectively, speed up growth and achieve greater scale. These services include incubation, acceleration, training, technical assistance, coaching, consulting, mentoring and other forms of non-financial support.

3.2
BDS Funder
organization which provides financial resources to promote business development services

3.3
BDS Provider
individual or organization that provides BDS directly to MSMEs

3.4
customer
organization or person that receives a product or service

Note 1 to entry: The customer may be the user or a distributor.

3.5
continual Improvement
recurring activities carried out to enhance performance

3.6
end User
individual or organization who receives business development services

3.7
performance
measurable result

3.8
product and Services
output of a process

Note 1: A *product* is a tangible or intangible output that is the result of a process that does not include activities that 72 are performed at the interface between the supplier (provider) and the customer.

Note 2: A *service is an intangible* output and is the result of a process that includes at least one activity that is carried 74 out at the interface between the supplier (provider) and the customer.

3.9
risk
effect of uncertainty on an expected result

3.10
strategy
 plan for achieving an objective

3.11
contract
binding agreement between two or more parties

3.12
Micro small medium enterprises (MSMEs)
entities that are involved in service, trade, production, manufacturing and processing of goods and commodities that are owned either individually or by business entities that have met the criteria as micro-small and medium enterprises.

3.13
Small and Growing Business (SGBs)
commercially viable businesses with 5 to 250 employees that have significant potential and ambition for growth.

NOTE: SGBs and MSMEs are usually used interchangeably however SGBs are typically above the upper limit in size of the MSMEs. They are businesses with a rapid growth trajectory.

3.14
solo Practitioner
professional who practices independently usually are also the business owner

3.15
startup
businesses in the early stages of developments

4. Context: Understanding the BDS Provision Market

4.1 To understand the external environment BDS Providers should examine:

a)   The political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal factors that would affect the achievement of their strategic objectives;

b)   Competition and market dynamics;

c)   Industry and technological trends;

d)   Standards and codes of practice;

e)   External stakeholders' relationships, perceptions, values, needs and expectations;

f)   Contractual relationships and commitments;

g)   The complexity of network

4.2 These factors should be documented and reviewed on a regular basis.

4.3 To build an understanding of competitor offerings, the BDS provider should regularly identify and look at competitor products, pricing & service levels to understand their market positioning.

5. Leadership

5.1 Leadership Skills, Team, and Culture

5.1.1   Leadership shapes the culture of an organization. The BDS provider should strive to improve their leadership skills and to build a leadership team (unless the provider is a solo practitioner).

5.1.2   The BDS provider should:

a) Invest in developing their leadership skills;

b) Focus on building a motivated leadership team;

c) Foster a positive organizational culture;

d) Provide strategy-focused guidance to the team;

e) Provide the support required to build the skills of the individual members of the team. This may be achieved through coaching and mentoring

5.2 Governance and Compliance

The BDS provider should establish a system of governance that ensures that the organisation complies with all laws ethical, social, and environmental responsibilities. The BDS Provider should also establish and implement a decision-making process that balances the business interests of all stakeholders.

NOTE: Please refer to Annex A for a governance and compliance checklist

5.3 Risk

The BDS provider should:

a) Identify the risks associated with their operations;

b) Determine the significance of the risks;

c) Implement appropriate mitigation measures;

d) Regularly monitor current and emergent risks and evaluate how these would affect their operations,

e) Update the mitigation plans accordingly.

NOTE: ISO 31000:2018 provides guidance on risk management

6. Planning

6.1 Strategy planning

6.1.1　Establishing a clear strategy provides a road map, flexibly responsive to changing circumstances, of what is to be done in pursuit of short-, medium- and longer-term business objectives. This clarity boosts employee and investor confidence.

6.1.2　Strategic planning starts by identifying trends in the business environment that might create opportunities or threats for the BDS provider's organisation. While formulating a strategy, BDS providers should consider the competition; define what is unique about their business; and then decide how best to achieve their mission.

6.1.3　A strategy should guide the planning for each function in the organisation. As part of an initial strategy, the BDS provider should consider establishing the vision, mission, and values to guide the organisation.

6.1.4　As part of the strategy, BDS providers should consider establishing goals. In order to achieve those goals, the BDS provider should establish objectives at relevant functions and levels. This needs to be supported with a work plan to be followed in pursuit of the strategic objectives.

NOTE: This is the strategy for the BDS provider.

6.2 Strategy review

For a strategy to be relevant, it should be reviewed at defined intervals and updated for the upcoming strategic period.

NOTE: A strategy may be reviewed on a quarterly, bi-annual or annual basis as may be deemed fit for the organisation.

6.3 Tracking progress
The BDS provider should review the level to which the goals and objectives have been achieved.

NOTE: Please refer to Annex B for supplementary materials relating to strategic planning.

7.   Resource management

7.1 Financial Planning and Management

7.1.1   Financial planning and management ensures that an organisation has sufficient funds for its operations, while helping to maximise long-term profit and sustainability.

7.1.2   Financial planning and management should include:

a) Budgeting;

b) Cash flow projections and plans to bridge financial shortfalls;

c) Pricing;

d) Accounting systems and processes;

e) Regular review of costs and supplier cost management;

f) Reviewing financial performance;

g) Bookkeeping;

h) Conducting financial audits.

NOTE: Refer to Annex C for supplementary materials relating to financial planning and management.

7.1.3   The BDS provider should maintain records of all business financial transactions, implement controls to ensure probity, and monitor cash flows regularly.

7.1.4   The BDS provider should aim to reduce both variable and overhead costs.

7.2 Human Resource Management
BDS providers rely on the competence of their human resources to deliver their services.

7.2.1   Human resources planning
The BDS provider should ensure that staff have the necessary competences. Human resources planning can include a focus on recruitment, training, and retention of key staff.

In cases where there are constraints on the capacity of internal resources, consideration should be given to sourcing external resources. The external resources should have the required skills.

BDS providers should strive to employ staff whose diversity reflects the diversity of the MSMEs it serves.

7.2.2   Communication and check-ins with staff
The BDS provider should set up appropriate channels for communicating with their staff.

NOTE: Examples of communication channels may include meetings, newsletters, e-mailers, internal memos, social media etc.

7.2.3 Regular feedback and coaching

The BDS provider may use regular feedback and coaching to maintain a motivated and growing team. The goals of coaching sessions should be clearly stated.

7.2.4 Performance reviews

BDS providers should consider conducting regular performance appraisals. In cases where competence gaps are identified, the BDS provider may consider taking the following actions to bridge these gaps:

a) Training;

b) Coaching and mentoring;

c) Job rotation and re-assignment and any other measures.

7.2.5 Staff learning and development

7.2.5.1 BDS providers should ensure their team is trained and continuously upskilled.

7.2.5.2 An accessible permanent record of all training provided to individuals should be maintained so that evidence of competence levels can be provided, if required.

7.2.5.3 The BDS provider should ensure compliance with personal data regulations when setting up document records.

NOTE: Learning could include various formats such as: internal or external training, seminars, webinars, coaching, self-managed learning, online learning, assignments, projects.

7.3 Infrastructure management

Management should plan resources to ensure availability of adequate resources for business operations. The BDS provider should ensure that they have the necessary infrastructure to deliver their services.

NOTE: Please refer to Annex D for an infrastructure management check list.

7.4 Documentation and managing information

The BDS provider should maintain appropriate documentation based on the size and complexity of the operations undertaken. The documentation can be maintained in any media.

8. Operations

Establishing clear processes for service delivery ensures consistent quality. The BDS provider should focus on streamlining the customer interfacing and service delivery processes to enhance customer satisfaction.

8.1 Market and Customer Positioning

The BDS provider should influence customer perceptions towards their services and their place in the market relative to competition.

8.1.1 Understanding Customers and Stakeholders

BDS providers may have two different customers: the end user and the funder. The needs and expectations of these customers may differ. BDS providers should have sufficient insight into the end user's business model and its potential to advise appropriately.

8.1.2 Understanding Customer Needs and Expectations
To understand the needs and expectations of the end user and the funder, the BDS provider may:

a) Conduct market research and surveys;

b) Survey customers (funders and end-users) using quantitative and qualitative methods;

c) Survey competitors.

8.1.3 Understanding Stakeholder Needs and Expectations

8.1.3.1 BDS Providers should:

a) Align their internal goals with the needs and expectations of stakeholders to articulate a comprehensive vision for the future,

b) Determine the opportunities and risks presented by the intersection between the stakeholder needs and expectations and the organization's objectives,

c) Understand their place in the market and ecosystem (including the competition and available funding resources)

8.1.3.2 BDS providers should actively pursue building and nurturing mutually beneficial networks within the ecosystem.

NOTE: To grow their networks, the BDS provider may consider:

a) Joining industry organisations;

b) Volunteering, etc.

8.2 Scope of Services and Innovation
The BDS provider should consider market and customer insights as well as internal capabilities when defining the scope of services to be offered. This can be achieved by:

a) Profiling and segmenting the end users;

b) Designing products and services to specifically meet the needs and expectations of these segments;

c) Diversifying products and services to consider new customer segments, markets, channels or delivery models as appropriate,

d) Considering their internal capabilities and specialties in their positioning and;

e) Articulating their value proposition based on their market and customer research.

NOTE: Some of the parameters that can be used for profiling and segmentation of the end users may include size, stage of development, location, industry, etc.

8.3 Sales and Marketing plan
To effectively promote products and increase sales, the BDS provider should develop a sales and marketing plan. A sales and marketing plan should include high value sales and marketing activities.

The sales and marketing plan may effectively be supported with customer communication channels, which may include:

   a) Electronic communication;

   b) Print media and;

   c) Broadcast media.

8.4 Operational processes

Operational processes ensure consistency. Processes can be documented as operational procedures. These operational procedures should further be supported with tools for routine collection of information.

NOTE: Please refer to Annex E for supplementary material relating to operational processes and planning.

8.4.1 Operations planning

Through operations planning a BDS provider can anticipate what will be needed in time to allocate resources to ensure implementation of regular activities and new projects as they arise. The BDS provider should ensure that they have the capacity to handle the work.

8.4.2 Service Provider and Partner Negotiation and Contracting

BDS providers should model good business practices when dealing with service providers and partners. It is beneficial to create a lasting relationship with service providers and negotiate factors such as delivery times, payment terms or the quality of the services.

To negotiate contracts and partnerships BDS providers should consider:

   a) Setting objectives

   b) Understanding the supplier's position and adapting their tactics accordingly.

8.4.3 Project Management

BDS are often executed through projects. The BDS provider should align the available tools, processes, and competencies to achieving the goals and objectives of the project. Managing and tracking projects may be facilitated by:

   a) Establishing a plan;

   b) Prioritizing tasks;

   c) Defining deliverables and timelines;

   d) Reviewing and reporting on progress at defined intervals;

   e) Using data for decision making;

   f) Resolving conflicts.

8.4.4 Operational Improvement

All operational processes should include a regular review to improve the process. For example, the BDS provider may improve operations by:

   a) Monitoring processes to determine which functions are ineffective or redundant or not value adding and taking appropriate action;

b) Assessing resource utilization and aiming for resource optimization;

c) Ensuring that processes deliver the intended results;

d) Applying statistical improvement tools

9. Performance Evaluation

Performance evaluation should be undertaken by leadership team of all aspects of the business at defined intervals to assess progress made towards achieving business objectives. The following metrics may be considered for evaluating business performance to identify improvement needs:

a) Context
Representation of youth and women, internally in the organization vs. in the MSME ecosystem

b) Leadership

Organisational health metrics

c) Planning

Strategic performance indicators;

d) Resource management

    i. Financial measures;

    ii. Staff turnover, etc

e) Operations

    i. Market share;

    ii. Customer satisfaction surveys about existing and new products;

    iii. Project performance;

    iv. Service quality;

    v. Service delivery processes, methods, tools;

10. Improvement

10.1 Continual improvement comes through reviewing and acting on the results from performance evaluations, self- assessments, audits, benchmarking, or interventions. Insights gained may lead to creative solutions and innovations.

10.2 BDS providers should assess solutions and innovations, prioritise, and allocate resources to ensure improvements are implemented.

10.3 Continuous learning is part of continual improvement and is critical to ensuring that the BDS provider is kept abreast of new developments in their field. Learning may come through:
a) Experience;

b)   Lessons learnt on different projects;

c)   Conferences;

d)   Courses attended and

e)   Coaching and mentoring.

Annex A

(Informative)

Governance

To maintain good governance, it is important to

a. Comply with the governance requirements stipulated by the legal and regulatory requirements

b. Practise good governance

c. Meet basic business requirements

Each of these aspects are detailed in the tables below.

A.1 Complying with the governance requirements stipulated by the legal and regulatory requirements

This section highlights the advantages and disadvantages of each of the three key business structures. As a BDS provider's business grows and expands, they may decide to change their business structure, or restructure their business.

Table 1: Governance according to business structure

Guiding questions	Sole Prop.	Partnerships		Companies	
		General	Limited	Private	Public
Overall					
Do you need to register the business name?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes – if Limited, the name must end with "limited' or "LTD"	Yes – the name must end with "Limited Company"
Do you need an agreement/contract to run the business?	No	No – but it's recommended to have a partnership agreement/deed	Yes – you need a Partnership agreement/deed	Yes – you must have a Certificate of Incorporation	Yes – You must have a Certificate of Incorporation and a Trading License
	No – but you can chooseto haveadvisors	No – but you can choose to have advisors	No – but you can choose to have advisors	Yes – with at least 2 directors	Yes – with at least2 directors

Do you need to register the business name?	No	No	No	No	Yes – you need to have a minimal amount of capital(in the bank) when registering
What tax rate is applicable?	Individual income tax	Individual income tax	Individual income tax	Corporate tax	Corporate tax
Management structure					
Who has control over the business?	Owner has control	Partners jointly share control	Partners jointly share control	Shareholders have control and get to vote	Shareholders have control and get to vote
Who handles all the internal management matters?	Owner handles all internal matters	Partners and key departments jointly handle all internal matters	Partners and key department handle internal matters	Senior Management (e.g., CEO, COO, CFO) handle internal Matters in Separate departments with clear roles	Senior Management (e.g., CEO, COO, CFO) handle internal Matters in separate departments with clear roles
Succession					
Does the business have perpetual existence?	Upon the death of the owner, the business closes	The business is closed upon the termination or dissolution of the partnership	Yes –the Business has perpetual existence	Yes – the business has perpetual existence	Yes – the business has perpetual existence
Liability and Losses					
Who bears any business liability?	The owner bears all the liability	The partners share unlimited liability	The partners are only liable for their respective negligent acts	The company bears all debts and liabilities	The company bears all debts and liabilities
Who bears any business losses?	Owner bears all losses	Partners share the losses	Partners share the losses	Shareholders bear all losses, except in cases of gross negligence on the part of senior management	Shareholders bear all losses, except in cases of gross negligence on the part of senior management

A.2 Practising Good Governance

Some of the pillars of good governance include authority, clarity of roles and processes, integrity and fairness, transparency, and accountability. All of these are critical for the successful running of a company and help form solid professional relationships with the business's stakeholders.

Table 2: Good Governance Self-Assessment

Pillar	Description	BDS Provider Self-assessment: ● *What does this mean to me?* ● *How do I describe this in my business?* ● *What systems do I have for each of these pillars?*
Authority and delegation	Define the authority levels. Who is responsible for key decision-making in the business and who else can this role be delegated to?	
Clarity of roles and processes	Ensure that all roles and processes in the business are clearly defined and documented.	
Integrity and fairness	Outline the values and business ethos that the business lives by and processes that ensure everyone is treated fairly.	
Transparency and communication	Communicate all key decisions and business performance with stakeholders and ensure that business processes and transactions can be verified by auditors or regulatory bodies.	
Accountability	Ensure that everyone is aware of their responsibilities and that they take ownership of their tasks, actions, decisions, and their consequences.	

A.3 Meeting Basic Business Compliance Requirements

Various businesses have different requirements that they need to comply with. The laws governing industries vary in 424 different countries. Therefore, it is important to check with your local regulatory bodies to confirm those that are 425 applicable to you. This tool is provided to help you with your research.

Table 3: Basic Meeting business compliance

Legal Regulatory requirements	Business Documents	Self-Assessment	Action plan Next steps to correct any non-compliance
Business registration requirements	a) The company's Memorandum of Association	Yes ☐ No ☐	
	b) Articles of Association	Yes ☐ No ☐	
	c) Certificate of Incorporation	Yes ☐ No ☐	
Company TIN and VAT registration requirements	a) Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) Certificate	Yes ☐ No ☐	
	b) Business Value Added Tax (VAT) Certificate	Yes ☐ No ☐	
Licences and permits	a) Business permit (trading license, issued by KCCA or local government)	Yes ☐ No ☐	
	b) Food and Health certificate	Yes ☐ No ☐	
	c) Occupational Permit	Yes ☐ No ☐	

Annex B

(Informative)

Strategic Planning Supplementary Materials

It is helpful to break down the strategy into specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound (SMART) goals with measurable metrics that can be tracked throughout the year. Lastly, it is advisable to find ways of creating data transparency, for example, through dashboards and reports together with regular reviews.

Table 4: Smart Goal definition

Specific	They state exactly what you need to achieve within the time period.
Measurable	There are clearly observable ways of demonstrating that you have achieved the objective, including quantities – e.g., financial results, production volumes, sales numbers, or quality standards
Achievable	They need to be reasonable so that you can achieve them in the time (and with the resources) available. They should stretch you to achieve a bit more than usual, but can still be achieved
Relevant	The goal needs to be in line with your mission / what you ultimately want to achieve.
Time-bound	A large objective (spanning over a year or more), you'll want to define sub-objectives and thenthe goals you will set under each of these which you can measure along the way. This will helpyou know if you're on track or if you need to change your implementation plan

Table 5: Goal Tracker Template

Priority	Goal description	Action/Steps	Resources required	Success measure / metrics	Due Date	Status	Reflection
	What is the specific objective youare aiming to achieve?	*What do you need to do to achieve thisgoal?*	*What resources doyou need to accomplish the task?*	*How do you determine whether the task was successful or not – be very specific*	*By when should we complete this goal*	*Status and date completed*	*What are the learnings, what worked,what didn't work*
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							

6							
7							
8							
9							
10							

Annex C

(informative)

Resource management – Finance supplementary materials

C.1 Transaction Records

BDS providers should know the flow of money going in and out of their business (and if required can show proof to get a loan or identify mistakes or fraud). Key to this is recording any financial transaction through a consistent system, with controls to make it accessible to management.

A computer-based record keeping system eases keeping and maintaining these records. In cases of larger cash based organisations, the system should prevent one employee being in the vulnerable position of handling money without any checks and balances.

C.2 Financial Performance Review

Good data is necessary to make sound financial decisions. Implementing financial performance reviews is key to implement the practice of good decision making. BDS providers should be proactive around monitoring cash flow and profitability and delegate responsibility for financial decisions to those with appropriate financial competencies.

As part of the financial performance review, organisations should consider financial sustainability, for example, additional revenue sources by applying to funder programmes. This in turn will be informed by and inform strategy.

C.3 Budgeting

A budget is key to understanding what the organisation needs to do to ensure profitability and have sufficient cash through the year, and to manage costs and revenues to meet budget.

BDS providers should consider making a monthly cash flow projection to ensure that the business will have enough cash to survive throughout the year, particularly if revenues are received after expenses are incurred, and if there are seasonal quiet periods or expensive periods.

A budget should list all projected revenue, the revenue sources (e.g., products and services used to generate revenue) and the projected expenses (costs incurred in generating the revenue via major product or service line). This will help detail the profitability of each major product/service sold, to assist strategic decision making about what to stop, keep or start.

C.4 Reduce costs

As a business owner, a BDS provider, should aim to minimise both variable and overhead costs, by not just containing costs, but actively reducing them without jeopardising the quality of product or service. A regular meeting should be scheduled at defined intervals for all staff members who are involved in a particular part of the business to review costs in their part of the business. They can report back up to the organisation's leadership.

Annex D

(Informative)

Resource Management - Infrastructure Checklist

BDS Providers with set premises for use as their offices and/or client premises (for coaching, advising, training, etc.) should ensure that the premises meet the needs of internal and/or external stakeholders.

All BDS Providers need to be aware of the responsibility they have handling participants' personal and business data and exercise data security compliance accordingly.

Table 6: Infrastructure Self-Assessment

Category	Details	Assessment
Physical infrastructure - Health and safety	Maintain the appropriate health and safety measures and responsibilities to maintain a conducive environment.	Yes ☐ No ☐
Physical infrastructure - Accessibility	Where possible, cater to the needs of a people with disabilities and women (e.g., mothers' room, etc.).	Yes ☐ No ☐
Physical infrastructure - Connectively	If providing in-person services or facilities for entrepreneurs, provide the appropriate level of connectivity given the nature, skills, and market requirements of the organisations and its entrepreneurs while recognizing that connectivity can enhance competitiveness.	Yes ☐ No ☐
Physical infrastructure - Equipment	If providing in-person services or facilities for entrepreneurs, ensurethat appropriate equipment and workspaces are provided.	Yes ☐ No ☐
Physical infrastructure - Physical security	Maintain adequate levels of physical security to minimize personal and property security risks be it theft of property of the organisations, its staff, its entrepreneurs, and other stakeholders.	Yes ☐ No ☐
Virtual infrastructure -Data security	Ensure data security compliance through clearly communicated data policies.	Yes ☐ No ☐

Annex E

(Informative)

Operational Planning

E.1 Operational processes

BDS Providers with larger businesses can consider documenting the processes used by compiling Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). SOPs are instructions prepared by an organisation to help employees perform specific duties and sets standards for running your business. SOPs help organisations achieve efficiency and consistency and reduces miscommunication.

E.1.1 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) Tool

E 1.2 Preparing to develop your SOP

• **Purpose –** what is the objective of your SOP? An SOP can be developed for various reasons e.g., to ensure compliance standards are met, for safety purposes or even for training. Whichever the purpose, ensure that you have it in mind throughout the process.

• **Where do people typically make mistakes? –** identify what people typically do wrong and focus your SOP on those things. For example, if you have an SOP on how to wash your hands and you realise that the issue is that people aren't rubbing their hands together for long enough (to get rid of all the bacterial), then your SOP would say 'make sure to rub your hands together for 30 seconds".

• **Who is your audience? –** have in mind who your audience is and what they need to hear. Consider their prior knowledge, their language capabilities, and the size of your audience. Make sure the SOP is designed specifically for them.

• **Who should write the SOP? –** are you the best person to write this? Do you know what the process entails? If not, let the right person do it or at least advise on how it should be done – i.e., interview the persons involved in the process on how they execute the task.

• **Have SOP reviewed by those that 'do' the procedure –** SOPs matter most to the people who do the procedure –making them part of developing the SOP will get their buy-in to it and will make it easier to implement

• **Keep things simple –** think about how the process works step by step, and find the simplest, easiest way to describe/present it

• **Think about dependencies –** some steps in a process will depend on other things happening. For example, if you are baking bread, you need to ensure you have all the ingredients in your kitchen before you start – so if you have an SOP on how to bake bread which has the first step be "get ready all the ingredients", then the dependency is that you have all the ingredients in your kitchen. For your particular process, what dependencies do you need to think about? You may want to highlight (e.g., make bold or **add a note) any steps that have dependencies to remind people to think about them**

E 1.3 Writing your SOP

• **Describe the purpose –** what are you trying to achieve? What is this SOP about? Who is responsible? who needs to follow this SOP?

• **List the procedures –** list the key steps in the process including what equipment is needed… keep it as simple as possible!!! Make this the main part of the document… you can make the steps big font, bold, whatever it takes to get people's attention to them.

• **Cautions and interferences –** cover what could go wrong, what to look out for. List the things people need to be particularly careful about… keep this list short!!! (3-5 points maximum)

• **Clarification of terminology –** if there are any acronyms, abbreviations, etc. that people don't typically 5 know, then have a section on the bottom where you explain them.

• **Most important thing! Be concise and keep things simple** – keep it short and clear. Use language that is 525 easy for staff performing the task to understand.

E 1.4 Reviewing and implementing SOP

• **Test the procedure –** have someone with little knowledge of the process (i.e., they have never done it before) use the SOP to guide them and see how it works. Do you need to add a step to help them do it properly? Do you need to simplify to make it easier for them to understand?

• **Once approved, start implementation** – post the SOP where people will see it/read it, and train people on how to use it

• Check – find a way to check that people are doing it. For example, have them check off (on a tracking sheet) every time they do it, or do random observations (so see if they are doing it properly)

• **Review and revise regularly –** at the bottom of the SOP, indicate the date it was developed and the date it should be reviewed (e.g., 6 months from now). Things often change in a business, so remember you should keep updating the SOP regularly

E.2 Operational Planning

BDS Providers should anticipate what will be needed and allocate people's time and procure resources to cope with both regular activities and new projects as they arise. The BDS provider should only take on customers if they have the knowledge, skills, and capacity to handle the work.

It is advisable that operational planning be part of the standard operating processes for projects and routine activities. Also, the organization should have a mechanism in a way that any requirements in one part of the company should be noted in the other affected teams.

Annex F

(Informative)

BDS Provider Capacity checklist

BDS providers can focus in on what is most important and relevant to their business by using the checklist below to identify gaps in their own business practices. The checklist below relates the pillars of BDS Provider Capacity to some practice examples. Many of these business practices are common to both MSMEs and BDS Providers.
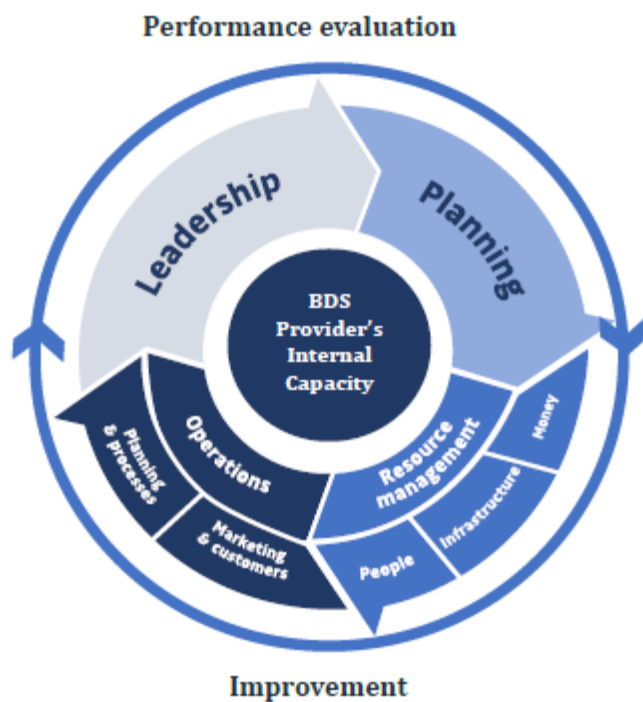
Figure 1: Framework showing BDS Continual Improvement Growth Cycle for strengthened Capacity

Table 7: BDS Capacity Checklist

Pillars of BDS Provider Capacity as seen in figure 1	Examples of Practices (Not exhaustive)	Assessment	
Leadership	Plan: Review compliance annually	Yes ☐	No ☐
	People: Manage organisational climate	Yes ☐	No ☐
Planning	Plan: Draft a strategic plan	Yes ☐	No ☐
	Plan: Track progress against the plan	Yes ☐	No ☐
	Finance: Capture all money transactions	Yes ☐	No ☐
Resource management – Finance	Finance: Draw annual budget and track against it	Yes ☐	No ☐
	People: Conduct regular feedback and coaching		
	People: Plan talent annually assessing needs and internal competences		
Operation	Customers and market: Survey customers regularly to understandproduct market fit	Yes ☐	No ☐
	Operations: Streamline operations by reviewing operational processes monthly		
Performance evaluation	Plan: Review business performance	Yes ☐	No ☐

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