

Key results identified in the INTOSAI-Donor cooperation report:

1. Need to continue efforts to develop strategic and development action plans

In view of the importance of needs-based and demand-driven support, one goal of the stock taking was to develop an inventory of SAI-owned strategic and development action plans. Efforts have been made within the INTOSAI Community in recent years to encourage the development of SAI capacity building needs assessments and corresponding strategic and development action plans based on those assessments. According to the stock taking, although 71 percent of SAIs have strategic plans in place, a number of SAIs still require assistance in developing and implementing them. Furthermore, the SAIs responding to the questionnaire highlighted the development of such plans and support based on them as critical success factors for effective capacity-building. Therefore, the stock taking report recommended that a priority be placed on assisting SAIs in need of developing strategic and development action plans.

2. A substantial amount of ongoing capacity-building efforts

According to the stock taking report, the majority of SAIs are, or have been, beneficiaries of capacity-building support. The current number of recipients also appears to have increased when compared to the number of recipients in the past. The proportion of SAIs receiving support is highest for those countries that the World Bank classifies as low income countries. Twice as many SAIs from these countries are receiving ongoing support compared with those who received it in the past.

3. Demand for increased capacity-building support

Establishing an overview of the needs and funding gaps facing the SAI community was a key goal of the stock taking. A total of 129 SAIs indicated a high or medium need for capacity-building support in the eight domains used in the questionnaire. The report identified more than 1000 activities in need of funding; the total estimated funding gap (excluding outliers) is approximately US\$269 million. The aggregate funding gap for SAIs from low income and lower middle income countries is approximately US\$228 million. The stock taking thus identified a need to increase the level of support provided to the SAI community. The report recommends that the primary focus be on supporting SAIs in low and lower middle income countries but that due attention should also be given to strengthening SAIs in other partner countries that require assistance.

4. Value of peer-to-peer cooperation

According to the stock taking, SAI recipients of capacity-building support see more added value in working with other SAIs, INTOSAI regions, and IDI in their institutional strengthening efforts than in working with external consultants and other capacity-building providers. The report thus concludes that donors should investigate ways to increasingly use the SAI community to provide support to their peers and consider increasing support to the INTOSAI Regional Working Groups and regional programs as mechanism for delivering increased levels of support.

5. Potential for increasing the number of SAI providers

While there is considerable perceived value in and demand for SAI-to-SAI capacity-building cooperation, a relatively small number of SAIs currently provide such support to their peers. The key barriers to such support appear to be capacity constraints (in particular, financial constraints) often in combination with technical/skill constraints. However, it is encouraging to note that 44 SAIs reported plans to address these barriers and become providers in the future.

6. Key Success Factors for Capacity-building Support

The stock taking also identified eight key success factors for ensuring effective and sustainable SAI capacity building:

- Many SAIs highlighted the importance of needs-based support, often coupled with the need for clearly defined objectives. This entails support that is rooted in the strategic and development action plans of the recipient SAI.
- Leadership and management commitment was frequently cited as a success factor. Experience shows that management must have ownership of and commitment to the reforms if they are to have the desired impact.
- Respondents stressed that donors should provide predictable and long-term support and also take a holistic approach that targets individuals, the SAI's organization, and the SAI's external environment.
- SAIs highlighted peer-to-peer cooperation as an effective tool for capacity building and underlined the importance of high-quality facilitators with cultural sensitivity and sound knowledge of the challenges facing SAIs.
- Respondents also pointed to the need for improved donor coordination of support. Because of the transaction costs resulting from interacting with and soliciting support from an array of development partners, it is preferable to have fewer donors and larger capacity-building projects.