

THE
PROFESSIONAL
ASSOCIATION
STRENGTHENING
PROJECT

MODULE 8

Resource Mobilization

survive & thrive

professional associations, private sector and global health scholars
saving mothers, newborns and children

Acknowledgments

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Contributors

The primary author for this module is Vineeta Gupta, Technical Director, Global Women's Health, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

Overall project management for the Professional Association Strengthening Project was provided by Kate McHugh, American College of Nurse-Midwives, Senior Technical Advisor.

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Where to find the complete the Professional Association Strengthening manual:

The complete set of Professional Association Strengthening modules can be downloaded for no fee at: www.StrongProfAssoc.org.

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Resource Mobilization

Successful resource mobilization (RM) and financial management are essential for organizational sustainability and growth, yet only some professional associations (PAs) approach these tasks in a planned manner. The reasons for this include lack of focus, lack of expertise, and procrastination.



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The purpose of this module is to provide many examples of RM, to clarify what makes RM important for PAs, and to outline the various steps in the RM process. Various sources of funding for PAs and their relative benefits and disadvantages will be described. This module provides PAs with a set of tools (such as checklists), templates (such as budget templates), and examples to help them create their own plans and fuel their missions. It is beneficial to identify a resource person, whether internal or external, who can facilitate the overall RM and budget processes in a PA.

Objectives

- To demystify the process of RM for PAs.
- To describe the steps in creating a RM plan to meet short-term goals, long-term sustainability, and growth.
- To explain the essentials needed by PAs to mobilize resources.
- To help keep RM aligned with the PA's mission and purpose.

What is RM?

- Planning, identifying and raising resources to support a PA; these might include monetary and non-monetary resources.
- Usually flows from the PA's strategic plan.
- A critical process for sustainability and growth.

Why Do PAs Need to Raise Funds and Resources?

- To advance the interests of the profession and its members, including increased capacity and increased access to opportunities such as networking.
- To support PAs in their efforts to meet association goals and to drive social change through support programs, activities, and publications.
- To help PAs generate the much needed funds to support the expansion of their work and membership.
- To raise funds through a variety of sources to reduce the risk of dependence on one source.
- To help spread awareness about the work and objectives of the PA amongst its constituency.
- To pre-empt cash crunches and even surplus/unutilized resources that can be put to better use; this leads to financial sustainability.

How is RM for PAs Unique?

When securing resources, professional associations have unique strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths

- Membership fees are an important, direct revenue source.
- PAs have a huge potential to engage members as champions and ambassadors.
- PAs are bound together by common professional goals and progress of the trade.
- PAs work with a focused mission often directed towards advancement of the profession and constituents.
- A social cause may be part of a health-related PAs mission, such as reducing the maternal or newborn mortality rate.

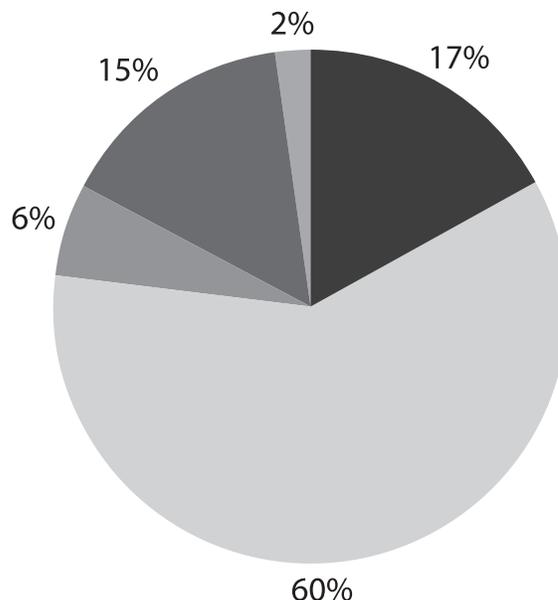
Weaknesses

- Because of their clear professional goals, PAs can be misunderstood as self-serving bodies. A well designed RM strategy and a communication plan that highlights the social cause the PA focuses on can help address this issue.
- Due to their affiliation with senior members of a profession, it may be perceived that PAs have a lot of money and do not need public funds and grants.
- Members of a PA have various ages, professional experience, seniority, socio-cultural backgrounds, etc. As part of the RM Strategy, the PA should identify clear member segments and create customized communication for each segment.
- Officers of PAs usually change every 1-3 years, which adversely affects overall RM.

What Resources Should PAs Consider for Their RM Processes?

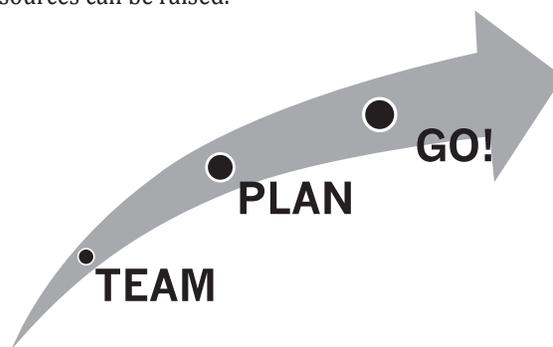
Resource mobilization grows out of a PA's strategic planning process. The resources needed for the year will be determined based on that plan. For example, based on the strategic plan, the PA might anticipate 60% of the year's resources as cash from membership dues and 6% as a contribution of rent-free office space. For growth to occur and for

the PA to reach other goals, a plan to mobilize new resources is essential.



How Do Professional Associations Mobilize More Resources?

Professional associations that want to mobilize resources effectively can follow a structured, 3-stage process. Team – Plan – Go! is such a process that helps a PA to secure the much needed human resource to design and implement RM activities, to create a comprehensive RM plan, and to build the various sources from which monetary and non-monetary resources can be raised.



Team

The role of the team is to provide direction and leadership. This core team develops the overall RM plan and then reaches out to the larger organization team to execute this plan. The point to understand here is that RM is not limited to the core team; everyone in the organization has a role

in mobilizing resources. A sound RM team provides impetus to the RM process, and the Board of Directors of the PA should appoint a leader for the team building effort. The RM core team should ideally consist of 5-7 members, and there should be representation from the following stakeholder groups:

- Board
- Executive leadership
- Dedicated RM staff/volunteer
- Accounts/administrative staff

Ensure that the members of the team have the following collective skills:

- Research
- Writing/documentation
- Editing
- Marketing
- Management
- People Skills

Refer to Tool 1 for assistance with organizing the RM team kick off meeting.

Plan

A well-structured RM plan helps to keep the focus on RM needs and goals, helps to control the workflow of the RM process according to the capacity of the PA, and helps to prevent the inability to meet basic expenses. A well-structured plan is based on and mirrors the focus of the PA's strategic plan. Building some cash reserves may be part of a stabilizing plan for a PA, especially when this helps the PA move towards overall sustainability.

Professional associations can use the following steps to create a RM plan.

STEP 1: Recap mission, vision, goals and objectives of the association

- Familiarize the team with the big picture of the PA.
- Ensure that RM fits the overall big picture and the mission and vision of the PA. (Refer to Module 3: Strategic Planning.)

Note: If your PA already has a mission, vision and overall strategy, this is a good time to look at them again to provide

Resources for PAs	
Monetary Contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Membership dues ■ Funding from grants or individual donors
Non-monetary Contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Time: members and external volunteers can support the PA ■ Expertise: experts can offer services to the PA as volunteers or at reduced rates. They may or may not be members of the PA. ■ Materials: corporations or businesses may offer office space, furniture, or supplies. These in-kind contributions can provide crucial support to the RM process. ■ Opportunities: some institutions may open up 1 or 2 spaces for PAs at reduced or full rates but will ensure that the space is guaranteed for the PA.

a guiding framework to the RM process.

STEP 2: Collect and analyse key information from the external and internal environment

Understanding the trends and features of the internal and external environments helps a PA identify favourable and unfavourable factors for its growth and plan a future course of action. Key information that a PA could collect and analyse includes the following:

- **Competitors:** to understand the practices followed in the sector, competitive advantages, and disadvantages.
- **Target segment:** to understand the needs and behaviour pattern of the target group.
- **Collaborations:** to identify opportunities for resource sharing.
- **Current trends:** to identify economic and socio-political trends that affect the organization.
- **Risks:** to understand unforeseen situations that could be a possible threat for PA and its work.

For a list of questions that PAs could use to scan their environment, refer to Tool 2.

Once the information is collected and collated, it should be analysed to guide the planning and decision-making process. Such analysis is used to determine the following critical factors:

- **Strengths:** eg, a wide membership base.
- **Weaknesses:** eg, poor visibility of PA activities.
- **Opportunities:** eg, donations to PAs are tax exempt.

- **Threats:** eg, economic downturn reduces per capita disposable income.

A strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis template is provided in Tool 3.

STEP 3: Develop RM goals and specific targets

A PA will need to develop short-term and long-term goals for RM efforts. The core RM team should look to past performance to highlight gaps that need to be addressed to create the greatest effect. PAs should remember that RM goals and targets are effective if they are very specific, achievable and relevant to the PA. The goals and targets should further indicate measures of success and relevant timelines.

PAs can answer the following questions to support the goal setting process:

- What do we need money for: a specific cause, eg, to support the Save the Girl Child campaign?
- How much money do we need to raise? Work toward a specific amount, eg, \$100,000 USD, instead of a vague goal such as raise more money.
- Where will the money come from: one source or a mix of revenue streams, eg, membership fees, grants, and individual donations?
- How much will we ask from each stream? Sub-goals for each category make planning easier, eg, membership fees: \$35,000 USD, grants: \$50,000 USD, and individual donations: \$15,000 USD.
- Who will we ask? Start internally and move out, eg, existing members, corporate foundations, civil society.
- How will we maintain our donor relations?
Remembering and nurturing donors is needed to create sustainable funding sources, eg, share updates, invite them for events, and engage them through stakeholder meetings.
- How frequently will we ask? It's important for the donors to know how long their support will last and how soon they are likely to be asked again, eg, annual membership fee, grant for 3 years.

For help with goal setting, refer to Tool 4.

STEP 4: Develop RM budget

The RM budget should be integrated into the overall budget of the association to ensure commitment and dedicated resources for RM activities. Professional associations can explore the option of hiring a RM consultant to support the core team.

An RM budget template is provided in Tool 5.

Go!

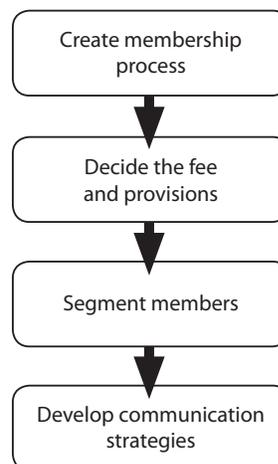
Once the RM team and plan are ready, it's time to implement RM activities. Professional associations normally use various RM strategies and sources of funding. Each of these sources, with their respective pros and cons should be considered in the context of the organization. The following process will help a PA translate the RM plan into action.

- **Step 1:** Prioritize the sources of funds that are relevant to the PA and assign a lead person for RM activities.
- **Step 2:** Create working groups for these sources that are overseen by the core team.
- **Step 3:** Execute the plan and set milestones and timelines.

Sources of Funding for Professional Associations

The various sources of funds relevant to PAs are operationalized based on their relative advantages and disadvantages and are discussed below.

Membership Fees



Membership fees are one of the most important funding streams for PAs because these fees leverage the key internal strength of the membership base. A PA could use the following process to implement a membership fee.

Points to Ponder: Membership Fees

- Flexible funds that can be utilized as per the priorities of the PA
- Builds commitment of members to the PA

CHALLENGES

- Requires setting up a process to receive and process fees
- Numbers can plateau in the absence of planning for growth

Individual Donations

To secure individual donations, ensure that the following are in place:

- Non-profit status and tax status letter
- Statement of purpose
- Clarity on use of funds raised from individual donations
- Donor database
- System to process donations and acknowledge receipt
- Giving tools, including a donation button on a website, cards, reply envelopes
- Volunteer team trained on raising individual donations

Create a letter to invite individual donations. (Link to online resources on How to write a donation seeking letter. Sample Letter Format)

Develop and launch a campaign to promote individual donations. (Link to online resources on Running an Internet Campaign)

Points to Ponder: Individual Donations

- Important source of funds from a wide base of donors (though usually small amounts)
- Builds a wide network of patrons
- Increases recognition from civil society

CHALLENGES

- Requires nurturing relationships with donors
- Involves significant planning
- Time consuming

Grants

Grants provide longer-term funding that the PA can use to finance larger projects. Grants are usually governed by mandates of the donor agency, and the PA should carefully choose appropriate funders. The grant funding process is outlined below.

- Prospecting (Link to online resources on Prospecting)
- Application/Inquiry (Link to online resources on Making Grant Applications)
- Proposal (Link to open share resources on proposal writing)
- Follow Up
- Reporting

Points to Ponder: Foundation and Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Grants

- May be a source of large funds for dedicated activities/programs
- Add credibility to the PA and help to raise resources from other sources

CHALLENGES

- Require intensive relationship management
- Absence of proper prospecting and match making can make the efforts futile
- NGOs might be driven by their own agendas and priorities

Corporate and Small Business Collaborations

Private businesses/corporate houses usually contribute funds to non-profits, and PAs can leverage these contributions by specifically reaching out to companies within the industry in which they operate. Corporate collaborations work in one of the following ways:

- Corporate Foundations
- Corporate Social Responsibility
- Corporate Sponsorships

Points to Ponder: Collaboration with Corporations and Small Businesses

- Industry support may elevate the profile of the PA
- Lesser bureaucratic processes to obtain funds or resources
- May offer in-kind support/resource sharing, such as furniture, phones
- Huge employee base that can be turned into a RM asset

CHALLENGES

- Potential for limited understanding of social issues
- Giving decisions largely governed by tax benefits or visibility

Events

Events are a popular way to raise resources amongst non-profits because of their ability to attract many prospective donors and provide visibility. However organizing a fundraising event involves upfront investment, which makes it more risky than other RM strategies. One of the ways to mitigate this risk is to answer the following key questions before organizing a fundraising event:

- Who will come to the event: friends, high net worth individuals, parents?
- What is the event going to be: dinner, marathon, auction?
- Where will the event be organized: outdoors, partner premises, public building?
- When is the best time to do this event: Christmas, end of financial year, around a special day, eg, International Women's Day?
- How will donations be received: cash, cheque, credit/debit cards, in-kind contributions?
- How will the event be publicized: newspapers, outdoor advertising, electronic media? (Link to online resources on organizing fundraising events)

Points to Ponder: Events

- Visibility
- Attract new supporters to the PA
- Help build donor database
- Appeal diverse groups

CHALLENGES

- Involve high levels of planning and organization
- External factors pose a risk, such as bad weather, cancellation by speaker
- Cost-benefit analysis might not always be favourable

Publications

Establishing publications and journals is a natural choice for PAs because they can be used to lead key discussions related to the trade or profession. Creating a publication is time consuming and needs significant expert help. The revenue from a publication is modest but the positive impact on reputation can be significant. The following process should be kept in mind:

- Choose a format: newsletter, journal
- Decide on the frequency
- Identify the circulation mechanism: print, electronic
- Identify the content focus
- Gather resources and partnerships

Points to Ponder: Publications

- Establish thought leadership
- Wide circulation ensures wide effect of the work of the PA

CHALLENGES

- Quality of content is a key determinant
- Needs a sound research base
- Takes a small portion of the overall fundraising pie

Income Generating Activities

PAs could undertake a range of income generating activities, including training, webinars, and conferences. While there are more options to choose from, PAs should remember that the income generating activity should complement the overall efforts of the PA and not become a separate, unrelated unit in itself. Consider the following when setting up and running an income generating activity:

- Identify products or services that are marketable.
- Identify the market for that product/service and determine the size of the market, ie, how many participants can we attract to our paid trainings each year?
- Put together a business plan and budget.
- Raise the investment needed (if any); corporate sponsorships could be helpful.
- Set up production and marketing process. (Link to online resources on setting up income generation projects within non-profit set up)

Points to Ponder: Income Generating Activities

- Flexible funds with no strings attached
- Encourage self-sufficiency with reduced dependence on external funds
- Build diversified RM portfolio

CHALLENGES

- Different area of expertise that the PA might not possess
- Buy in from board and key decision makers might be difficult
- May challenge tax exempt status
- Result in distraction if the income generating activity does not tie in with the overall mission of the PA

Evaluation

Comparing actual RM efforts to the plan will help to identify gaps and areas in need of improvement. The core team can then include corrective measures in the next RM cycle.

- Why evaluate? Decide the purpose of evaluation and what the results will inform.
- What to evaluate? Assess whether RM efforts will be evaluated in terms of processes, specific outputs, outcomes, or broader effects.
- Who is the evaluation for? Understand whether evaluation serves the needs of the internal team, community members, external organizations, or any other stakeholders.
- How will evaluation be done? Assess whether specific resources or processes are needed.

To check readiness, refer to Tool 6: Diagnostic Checklist.

Tools

Tool 1: Kick-Off Meeting

The kick off meeting for a new RM team is a good opportunity to energize the team and set a common objective. A PA could use the following steps to organize the RM kick-off meeting:

Organization Exercise

- Identify the RM expert/lead before the meeting.
- The RM expert/lead identifies other members of the RM core team, discusses the role with them, and takes their consent to serve.
- Once the members are identified, the RM expert/lead formally invites the members to the kick-off meeting.
- The agenda of the meeting is developed and circulated before the meeting, including any relevant information.
- Clear objectives are set for the meeting.

Agenda

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ■ Date/time | ■ RM strategies |
| ■ Overall goal | ■ Strategy manager |
| ■ Targets and deliverables | ■ Key success factors |
| ■ Member introductions | ■ Frequency of meetings (frequency) |

Tool 2: Questions for Environment Scan

Competitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Which organizations do the same work? ■ Which organizations offer the same services? ■ Which organizations satisfy the same need?
Target Segment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Whose needs does the PA serve? ■ Who will receive the benefit from the PA's work? ■ What are their behaviour patterns and choices?
Collaborations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What skills/resources can we share with each other? ■ What skills/resources do we need? ■ What opportunities can we exploit through collaborations?
Current Trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What are the current trends in the economy: taxation, inflation, exchange rates? ■ What is the political & legislative framework? ■ What technological innovations & developments can we leverage?

Tool 3: SWOT Analysis Grid

	Helpful	Harmful
Internal	Strengths	Weaknesses
External	Opportunities	Threats

Note. The SWOT analysis should be done in the context of RM for a PA.

Tool 4: Goal Setting Template (with Illustration)

	Member In-Charge	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	
Overall RM target	XXXX	\$1,000,000					
Annual RM target	XXXX	\$20,000		\$30,000		\$40,000	
Membership fee	AAAA	30%	\$6,000	30%	\$9,000	30%	\$12,000
Grants	BBBB	30%	\$6,000	20%	\$6,000	10%	\$4,000
Corporate funds	CCCC	0%	\$0	10%	\$3,000	10%	\$4,000
Individual donations	DDDD	20%	\$4,000	20%	\$6,000	20%	\$8,000
Events	EEEE	10%	\$2,000	10%	\$3,000	10%	\$4,000
Publications	FFFF	10%	\$2,000	10%	\$3,000	20%	\$8,000
Income Generating Activities	GGGG	0%	\$0	0%	\$0	0%	\$0
Total		100%	\$20,000	100%	\$30,000	100%	\$40,000

Tool 5: RM Budget Template

	Particulars	Unit	Cost	Amount
Personnel	Team Member 1			
	Team Member 2			
	Team Member 3			
Publications	Content Development			
	Printing			
	Circulation			
Events	Venue			
	Food & Snacks			
	Decoration			
	Invitations			
	Celebrity			
Media	Website			
	Campaign			
Income Generating Activity	Production			
	Promotion			
	Distribution			
	Total RM Budget			

Tool 6: Diagnostic Checklist for Readiness

- We have developed and articulated a clear mission and vision for the professional association.
- We have identified the core problem that needs to be addressed.
- We have set our resource mobilization goals (money, visibility, patronage, expert positioning etc.).
- We have estimated the available/easy to raise resources that can support resource mobilization.
- We have defined the scope of resource mobilization activities (lists such as Must Have and Nice to Have).
- We have developed a budget for resource mobilization, created an activity schedule, and set clear timelines.