

Background

Business Membership Organisations (BMOs), i.e. chambers and associations, are important facilitators and multipliers when it comes to reaching companies, triggering economic-political reform processes or placing new services. BMOs are therefore ideal partners for cooperating with the private sector, provided that the right partners are found in a given case and their strength and weaknesses are identified. Each country has a multitude of BMOs which differ with regard to their objectives, performance and potentials. With many years of experience and an extensive repertoire of approaches and tools for the analysis and evaluation of BMOs, sequa is able to analyse BMOs and their specific capabilities, to select partners as well as identify strengths, weaknesses and potentials for the implementation of project activities and a successful cooperation.

BMO Analysis and Evaluation

Product Description

The purpose of this product is the detailed comprehension and objective evaluation of a BMO's current state as well as its general and specific performance.

Interviews with permanent staff and board members as well as member companies are essential for the analysis and evaluation of BMOs. Standardized guidelines or questionnaires are the tools usually deployed to this end; good practice has shown that results should be quantified, e.g. through a scoring procedure, and evaluated qualitatively in form of an analysis report. Depending on the country context and the evaluation objectives these guidelines and questionnaires should be adapted in a demand-oriented manner.



The first step of the analysis consists in the compilation of general information. This can be done on the basis of an evaluation of existing material followed by an on-site alignment with the organisations to be assessed. This includes a self-assessment of the BMOs with respect to their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). In a second step an in-depth analysis focuses on nine BMO-specific topics, which are individually treated in the interviews as well as the scorings and the analysis report.

BMO-specific topics are:

- **Leadership** (commitment, objectives, structures, member participation etc.)
- **Quality Management** (responsibilities, operational procedures, standard processes etc.)
- **Strategy and Planning** (strategy development, planning processes, member-orientation etc.)
- **Personnel** (recruiting, training opportunities, motivation, success criteria etc.)
- **Communication and Knowledge** (PR, knowledge management, information systems etc.)
- **Members** (membership numbers and structure, member management, member satisfaction etc.)
- **Advocacy** (networking, political dialogue, lobbying etc.)
- **Services** (portfolio, demand-orientation, cost recovery etc.)
- **Finances** (level and structure of revenues, reserves, control mechanisms etc.)

Product Impact

A proper BMO analysis and evaluation creates a useful framework for the identification and grouping of possible project partners, the appraisal of their strengths and weaknesses as well as the assessment of a possible need for support. The results also form an important basis for both the development of project activities and the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation system for the project progress. Moreover, the BMO analysis and evaluation promotes constructive competition between comparable BMOs and frequently serves as a starting point for an institutional change process as well as the development of additional capacities. The BMO analysis and evaluation establishes a shared and objective picture of the specific strengths, weaknesses and potentials of BMOs. Conducted at regular intervals, the analysis allows for the recording of developments over any period of time and, simultaneously, the comparability with other BMOs.

Product Application Examples

BMO analyses and evaluations are usually carried out at the start of a project (baseline analysis). In many cases, however, a repeated application should be planned, especially if the tool is intended for use in impact monitoring, benchmarking and competitions.

The following examples from sequa's work portfolio give an overview of the application spectrum of the product of BMO analysis and evaluation:

- The Training and Development Centers of the Bavarian Employers' Associations (Berufliche Fortbildungszentren der Bayerischen Wirtschaft - bfz) have acquired more than 20 years of project experience with Brazilian BMOs. As part of the sequa-managed Chamber and Association Partnership Programme (KVP), the bfz has developed a detailed questionnaire that allows for a systematic assessment of the performance of BMOs. The BMO structure typical of Brazil and the comprehensive partner constellation in the specific projects also allowed for a meaningful comparison of the chambers and associations and contributed to the organizational development of the BMOs involved.
- In the EU-funded project „AL-Invest 4“ sequa conducted a mid-project benchmarking exercise with 15 BMOs in four countries (Peru, Colombia, Bolivia and Ecuador). The goal was to identify the concrete demands of the BMOs with regard to action planning in the second half of the project. A basis for the comparison of the chambers from three of the four countries was also created, allowing for an exchange of best practices. The results of the benchmarking exercise were summarized in a report, which was subsequently used for the evaluation of the project results and impact carried out by external experts after the termination of the project.
- In the EU-funded project „East Invest“ sequa conducted an analysis and evaluation of 15 BMOs in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine (the six constituent countries of the so-called “Eastern Partnership” – EaP). The product was applied at the beginning of the project to produce a detailed survey of the strengths, weaknesses, and potentials of the BMOs. The results were used, together with Western European chambers, to determine the main foci for specific cooperation projects and to develop proposals for small partnership projects within the East Invest Programme. The product was later used as baseline for the impact monitoring and the evaluation of the individual activities. In this case, the organisations tested were not compared and rated since this was neither relevant nor desired in the context of the EaP countries.