Pact is an international development organization with 27 offices spanning more than 30 countries with a mission to build communities and improve people's lives through programs in support of health, livelihoods, natural resources, capacity development, governance, and markets. The individual causes are diverse, ranging from orphans, adolescent girls, and HIV/AIDS to fishing, forest management and market development.

As an international NGO with a presence across Asia, Africa and Latin America, Pact collaborates with local organizations to increase their capacity to serve their own communities.

In order to achieve sustainable long term change, Pact employs a flexible approach in leading people, processes and the technology needed for a worldwide impact. The agenda is participatory, involving collaboration with each local organization to define success, and set metrics for tracking activities.

While this consensus-based approach leads to more successful outcomes, the data is not one-size-fits-all. Furthermore, since the organizations don’t function in isolation, it is necessary to have a global view, and understand the scope and boundaries of the involved networks.

Challenges

While capacity development is a process that requires integrated management at the individual, institutional, and societal level, the reality is that many organizations’ systems for tracking progress can often include data silos such as spreadsheets, paper, and email attachments. Assembling, analyzing, and maintaining the data for hundreds of projects required significant manual labor.

If each local project is as unique as a snowflake, how would Pact maintain a societal view of its work, while providing the locally customized guidance, coaching, and feedback needed to learn and improve?

Solution

Pact needed a robust system that could scale to support its growing network, both internationally and locally. The ideal solution would enable Pact to measure impact and improve its efforts, while communicating and sharing knowledge across global networks with outcome-level reporting. It would also need to function as a decision-making tool with real-time data from across the world, capable of being used by thousands of constituents from multiple languages and cultures.

At a Glance

- Singular view of international data across 30+ countries
- Dynamic reporting tool
- Capacity assessments
- Organizational network analysis and performance indexing
- Event tracking system
- Centralized, cloud-hosted dashboard
- Angular.JS and Bootstrap application

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A key requirement was the ability to support Pact’s unique analytical methodologies, such as the Organizational Performance Index (OPI), endorsed by the USAID Local Solutions team for measuring capacity development outcomes. The tool also needed the capability for Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA), and Network Analysis. In addition to providing these analytical insights on demand, the tool would be required to work on any kind of device with an internet connection, as high-bandwidth networks are rarely available in the field. It would also have to be usable by non-technical users.

In order to create a scalable solution with the potential to support other international NGOs, Pact selected EPIC Software Development to develop a Capacity Solutions Platform (CSP), capable of measuring and tracking all of its partner organizations’ and networks’ capacity development work.

As Pact’s technology partner, EPIC provided architectural, design, and development services, including quality control and release management. EPIC’s solution included an administration area, tools for loading data, as well as a dashboard with reports and visualizations based on Pact’s OPI, OCA, and Network Analysis methodologies.

The Capacity Solutions Platform had its first production release in October 2015, requiring that all Pact capacity development data be captured within the platform.

### Features

- **Organizational Performance Index**\(^1\) (OPI) indicator tracks the outcomes of capacity development across the four domains of organizational performance – Effectiveness, Efficiency, Relevance and Sustainability

- **Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA)** for nonprofits and organizations to evaluate organizational and technical capacity, strengths and improvement areas

- **Organizational Network Analysis (ONA)**: a visual of the flow of communication, information, decision making and coordination within a network

- **Community Performance Index (CPI)**: tracks community performance in four domains: Quality of Service, Relevance, Resource Mobilization, and Efficiency

- **Governmental Performance Index (GPI)**: tracks the performance of local government institutions and sub-national agencies in four domains: Effectiveness, Efficiency, Relevance and Sustainability

- **Event tracking with attendance records, document storage, and photo upload linked to organizational profiles**

\(^1\) More about Pact’s capacity development metrics: http://www.pactworld.org/our-approach/capacity
Results

Because of Pact’s organization-wide commitment to consistent measurement and learning around the Capacity Solutions Platform (CSP), initial adoption was good, and usage has continued to grow with continued training and promotion in the field. A key success factor was the involvement of Pact’s program leaders, who ensured that all country offices were educated about the value of using a shared dashboard. These stakeholders were able to realize the benefits of time savings and analytical capabilities, which allowed them to focus their efforts on planning the most valuable capacity development activities.

Building on this early success, in 2016, Pact launched a new CSP feature to capture training, coaching and mentoring events in order to establish linkages with capacity development outcomes.

The Capacity Solutions Platform is now in use by local civil society organizations, international nonprofits, multilateral organizations, and governments worldwide.

By mid-2016, the platform had gathered data from civil society organizations, networks, and governments in 25 countries and more than 1,700 local organizations. And by the end of 2016, the number of partners had increased 77% vs. the past year.

Results Highlights

- More than 2,400 organizations enrolled as of 12/31/2016
- Over 911 training and mentoring sessions recorded in the past 2 years
- Individual users increased 71% in 2016
- Over 390 OCA organizational assessments recorded
- Organizational Network Analysis (ONA): 10 analyses linked with 49 organizations captured
- Organizational Performance Index (OPI): 1,792 indices generated, including past data; 636 since the 2015 launch
- Community Performance Index (CPI): 1,669 indices generated
- Government Performance Index (GPI): 362 conducted while in beta testing
CASE STUDY: NON-PROFIT NGO

The Capacity Solutions Platform has become the standard capacity development measurement suite for all Pact programs, and it is well positioned to become the definitive solution of choice for international development organizations and governments funding capacity development.

“The real power of the Capacity Solutions Platform is that our staff and partners can see and visualize data, globally. They feel comfortable and at ease with the platform because it is intuitive and beautifully designed. It’s easy to use, reliable, and non-technical people understand it!”

Sarah Ellison,
Senior Capacity Development Specialist,
Pact, Washington DC

More about Pact’s Capacity Solutions Platform:
http://www.capacitysolutionsplatform.com

About EPIC Software Development

EPIC Software Development is a leader in multi-shore custom application development. We are passionate about solving our clients' business problems through consultative teamwork, innovative software, and proven processes. We’ve served more than 35 clients and delivered over 100 high quality, custom applications in the past 3 years. Our clients value us as integral team members who get the job done on time and on spec, and we are proud of our high client retention rate and under 2% staff turnover.

With offices in New Jersey, Boston, Costa Rica, and Eastern Europe, we execute the full software lifecycle, from architecture and design through development, QA and application maintenance & support. Our company culture emphasizes client service, trust-based relationships, and innovation.