

Better quality in public sector organisations

Achieve excellent performance with CAF

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I Understanding CAF

The CAF was developed in the year 2000 by member states of the European Union as a quality management system for the public sector. The abbreviation "CAF" stands for Common Assessment Framework, meaning that CAF provides a framework for the common (staff and management) assessment of the public sector organisation.

The core of the CAF is an approximately 200-sample questionnaire that captures the quality of public administration (eg, a organisation). Together, the employees and management assess "their" organisation and thereby recognize their strengths and potential for improvement. The CAF Action Plan then implements the jointly defined improvements.

Due to its universal applicability, the CAF has constantly evolved. Administrative practitioners, quality managers, organisational developers, and academics from the European Union have formed the CAF into a European guide to good governance and excellence in public administrations. Today, the CAF is a recognized administration development tool.

1 The CAF model

The basic idea of the CAF is that every public sector organisation wants to achieve excellent results. Excellent results are e.g. "quick, correct and understandable building permissions", "Well-understood information on the website of the organisation", "an accessible citizens service", "sustainably managed infrastructure of the organisation" or "high skilled employees". What "empowers" the organisation to achieve these excellent results?

CAF defines five "enablers" which boost the organisation to perform at its best.

- ☐ Above all is the leadership (1), which sets the strategic direction of the organisation and creates the organisational foundations.
- ☐ Good leadership uses instruments of "Strategy and Planning (2)" as well as "Human Resources Management (3)", cooperates with "Partners and manages resources" (4) such as budget, knowledge and IT.
- ☐ On these bases, the organisation defines and documents the internal "processes (5)" and develops these permanently.

If the organisation is well placed to boost the enablers, it will also deliver excellent results for their customers, stakeholders, employees, citizens and the society. CAF defines four result criteria which measure the results of the organisations work. These are:

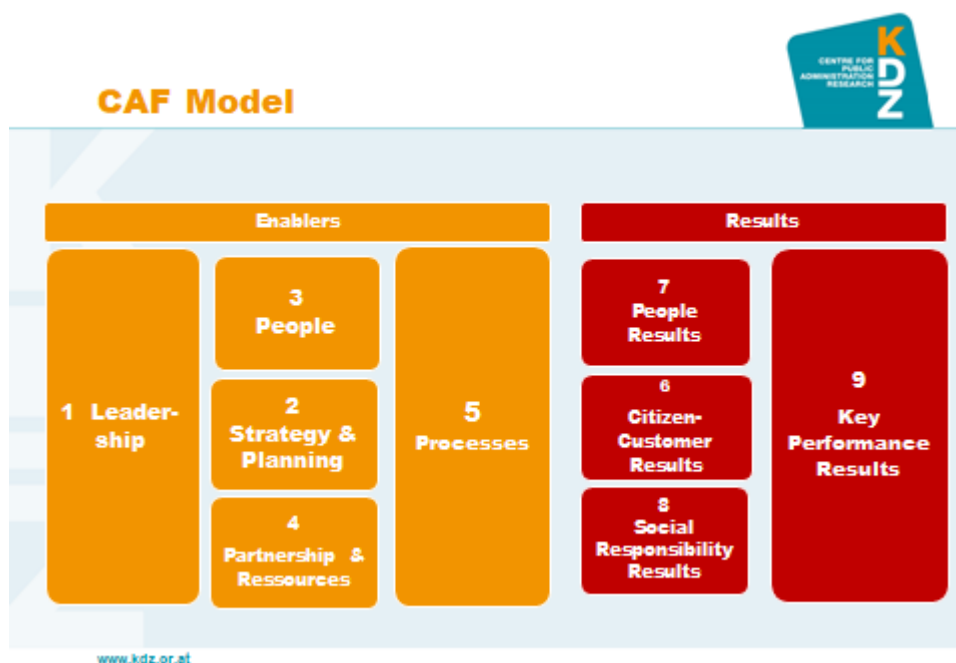
- ☐ Customer/citizens results - e.g. How satisfied are the citizens with the work of the organisation (the ministry, the municipality, the school, etc.)? How is the telephone accessibility seen? What are the opening hours of the citizen service center?
- ☐ Peoples results - e.g. How satisfied are the employees with their work in the organisation? How is the performance of the peoples work? Which training courses are attended?
- ☐ Social responsibility results - Which results concerning social responsibility are reached? e.g. How much recycling paper is used? How many transparency/open data initiatives are supported?

- ❑ Key performance results - e.g. What output and outcome impacts does the organisation achieve with its work (for public transportation, police security, environmental protection, social services, quality of the laws, etc.)?

The total of nine criteria are made up of 28 sub-criteria. These, in turn, are explained using examples that highlight the various areas that are relevant for the quality of public sector organisations.

The following figure of the CAF model shows the total of nine topics (criteria). These cover the key areas to consider when evaluating an organisation.

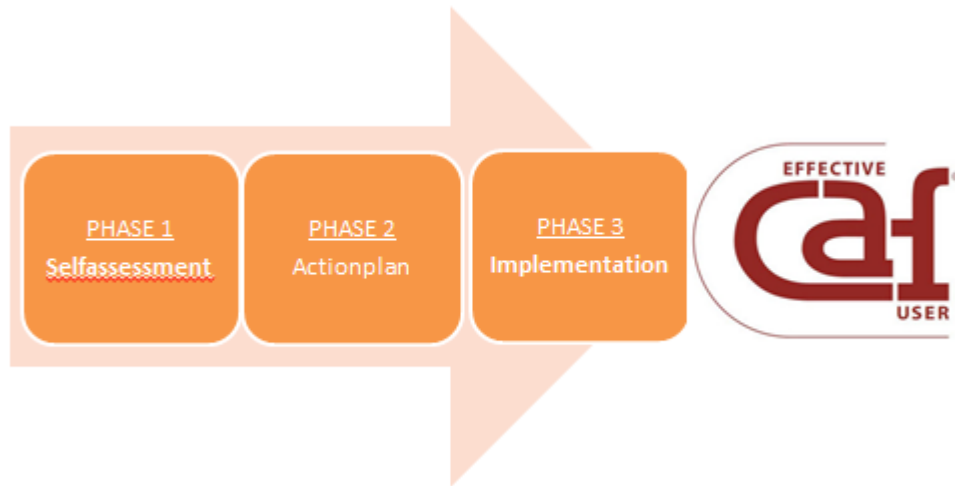
Table 1: The nine criteria of CAF



2 The CAF quality program

The "core" of the CAF is the self-assessment of the organisation and thus the starting signal for a comprehensive improvement process. CAF is quality management and the goal of the CAF is to introduce in the organisation a system and culture of continuous improvement.

This has to be considered from the beginning and requires clear responsibilities and contact persons for the CAF. The CAF self-assessment is to be embedded in a quality program consisting of three phases.

Table 2: The CAF quality program


Source: KDZ, own presentation, Vienna 2018

Phase 1: CAF-Selfassessment

Here a joint self-evaluation of the organisation by employees and management is carried out on the basis of the “CAF-questionnaire” in order to identify strengths and areas for improvement. The CAF-Self-Assessment is no evaluation by external experts or consultants. Facilitation through CAF-experts coming from outside of the organisation is common. The main result of this phase, in addition to the evaluation, is a catalog with ideas for improvement for the further development of the organisation.

Phase 2: CAF-Actionplan

On the basis of the ideas for improvement developed in phase 1, a CAF improvement plan is drawn up, which specifies the implementation of the ideas for improvement. Here, the individual actions are prioritized, provided with schedules and responsibilities and assigned the necessary resources.

Phase 3: CAF-Implementation

The most comprehensive phase of the CAF Quality Program is the implementation of the CAF Action Plan. Now the measures and projects defined in the CAF Action Plan have to be implemented. At the end of Phase 3, it is recommended to re-run a CAF self-assessment and start again at Phase 1. This often happens every two to three years. This "loop" ensures the continuous improvement process in the organisation.

Label „Effective CAF User“

At the end of the CAF process, the label “Effective CAF User” can be applied as a reward for the effort and as proof of excellent work of the organisation.



The CAF label "Effective CAF User" was developed by the CAF Expert Group of “European Public Administration Network” (EUPAN). This is a feedback from experienced, external CAF experts. The correct use of the CAF and the effectiveness of the chosen path for further development in the sense of quality management are confirmed.

Specifically, the CAF label

- ☐ confirms a high degree of efficiency in administrative procedures and service orientation;
- ☐ high degree of willingness to implement a continuous improvement process and
- ☐ thus achieving effective and sustainable improvements for citizens and society.

CAF can thus become an important tool of change for each organisation by helping management to work together with employees to gain a common understanding of the starting position and future challenges of the organisation and to reveal potential for improvement. The time-efficient sequence of the workshops and the solution-oriented approach guarantee rapid implementation success.

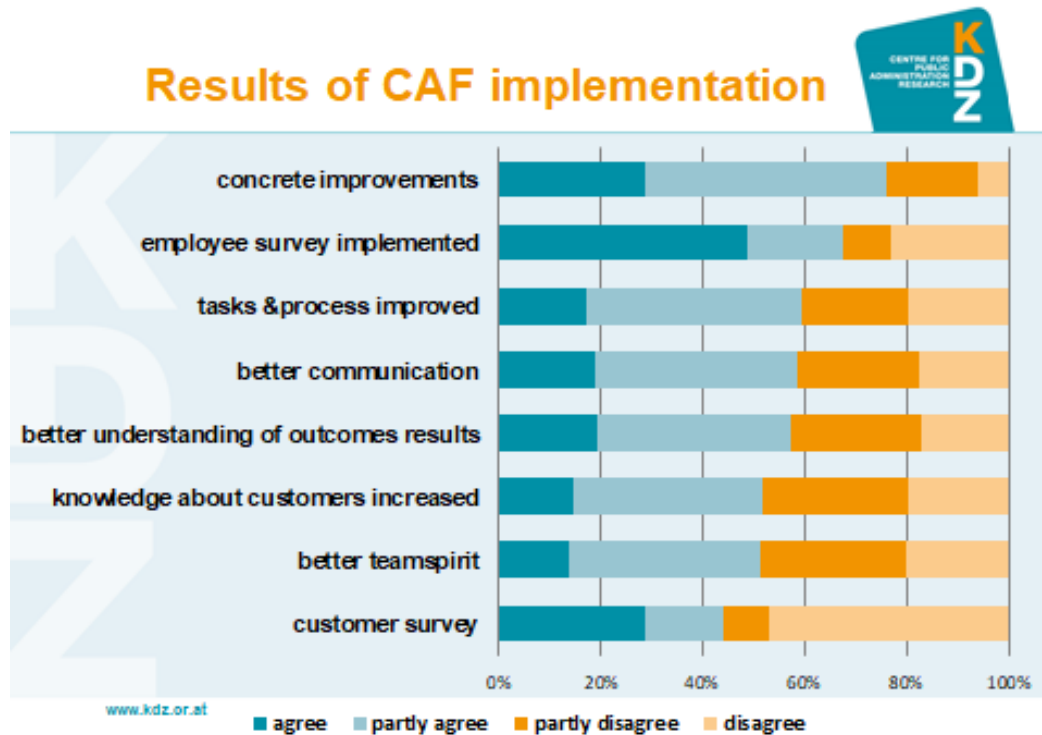
3 Does CAF work?

Over the past decade, some 4000 public sector organisations at different levels of government and non-profit organisations have used CAF as a tool for continuous quality and organisational development.

A survey in Austria showed that more than 70 percent of CAF users achieved concrete improvements and further developments in the organisation. In particular, the following results were achieved:

- ☐ finding and implementing concrete improvement measures and developing the organization (over 70 percent);
- ☐ Carrying out an employee survey and task appraisal as well as improving communication and understanding of impact and result orientation (about 60 percent).
- ☐ Increase in team spirit and understanding of the customers needs and expectations (around 50 percent).

Table 3: Results of CAF Implementation



Source: CAF-study 2015, KDZ Vienna

Experiences of CAF users show that between 40 and 120 concrete suggestions for improvement can be worked out through a CAF implementation. Approx. 30-40 percent result in concrete action plans such as “Developing a management model, introducing a regular and structured appraisal interview, updating job descriptions, regular evaluation of the organisations structure and field offices as well as key core processes, optimising the meetings and communication, building project management and use of structured project controlling, professionalisation of public relations, Expansion of online services, intensification of the use of customer and employee surveys and much more”

And what do the CAF users say

"It was a great experience for our municipality to examine the processes with other municipalities and also internally and formulate goals consciously.

We've seen improvements in communications, leadership and citizen orientation. I would like to recommend the CAF to all the municipalities, as it is a very good tool to do a self-assessment and to better identify the necessary measures for improvement. The CAF is a living process that should always be in the foreground.

"More transparency, more customization and, with regard to budgeting, a forward-looking planning."

"I also see the CAF as a management tool. The strengths and weaknesses in all areas (eg citizen / customer orientation, leadership quality, employees, social responsibility, partnerships) are brought to the fore and the need for action defined. The area of politics and administration is also repeatedly in focus and contains many ambiguities and no clear guidelines. Even there, the CAF can help!"

In addition to the numerous internal improvements which the organisations can achieve with the CAF, the many years of experience have the following key advantages:

Better services for the citizens: Implementing CAF increases the quality of services for the citizens and customers and thus their satisfaction.

Tailor-made for the needs of public administrations: CAF is the European quality management tool developed by public administrations for public administrations.

Involving the people: The methodology of self-assessment and consensus is the bases for the systematic involvement of the people in the improvement of the organisation.

A common language for benchlearning: CAF creates a common language that allows staff and managers in an organisation to discuss organisational issues together in a constructive way. It promotes the dialogue and the benchlearning among public administrations.

Quick comprehensive organisation check with overall overview: The results of a CAF implementation are quickly available and show the strengths and improvement areas in terms of an organisational check. Further more CAF sets the ground for change in the organisation.

Self-assessment based on evidence and measurements: The self-assessment stimulates public sector organisations to gather and use information concerning the functions of the organisation. The more an administration progresses towards continuous improvement, the more it will systematically and progressively collect and manage information, both internally and externally.

No external costs and consulting: All CAF documents and methods are available free of charge without a licence fee. Excellent organisations can use CAF without any external costs.

Label "Effective CAF User": The label "Effective CAF User" is an award for excellent public sector organisations using CAF. It provides recommendations and external feedback for the further development of the organisation.

II Guide to CAF Implementation

1 Phases of the CAF Program

The CAF program is based on a clear logic based on a lean project structure and structured

Table 4: CAF Program

	Phase 1	Setting up CAF Program Structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information of employees Defining CAF Program-Roles Defining Communication Plan
	Phase 2	Self-Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining CAF-Self-Assessment Group Implementing CAF-Training Starting CAF-Selfassessment Phase Delivering CAF-Consensus Workshop Creating CAF-Selfassessment Report
	Phase 3	Action-Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivering CAF-Actionplan Creating CAF Action-Plan Report
	Phase 4	Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing CAF Improvement Actions Carrying out ongoing project controlling

Decision for the CAF application

CAF supports public sector organizations in the qualified positioning and ongoing organizational development. At the beginning of a check, the decision to use CAF requires to what extent this project approach can support the objectives of the organization and also fits the organizational culture itself. If you are a manager and ask yourself the following questions in your leadership work, the use of CAF is recommended:

Checklist CAF

- ☐ Where do we stand and where do we want to go together?
- ☐ How can I promote cross-departmental thinking and exploit the innovative potential of my employees?
- ☐ I am new to my leadership role and want to gain a quick but concise insight into the status quo, strengths and weaknesses of the organisation?
- ☐ What are my departments doing and what challenges do they see?
- ☐ What is the mood in the team and how is the interdepartmental and interdepartmental cooperation structured?
- ☐ How can I create motivation internally and a suitable start for necessary change projects?
- ☐ Are our administrative processes efficiently organized?
- ☐ How and where can we save time and money - what are the potentials?
- ☐ How can we make our services even more efficient and "closer to the citizen"?
- ☐ How does the cooperation work internally and with external partners and politics?
- ☐ What are our central strategic areas of action to which we need to find concrete answers in the next 2 to 3 years?

Furthermore, a basically open and mutually appreciative discussion culture should be part of the organisation's self-understanding, as well as the fundamental willingness of the employees to have a critical view of their own organisational structures, processes etc.

If the organisation decides to use CAF for this, experts should be consulted, especially during the initial application. In addition to practical know-how in quality management and the Common Assessment Framework in particular, they should understand the nature of organisation work and have practical and, above all, solution-oriented facilitation skills.

Depending on the size of the organisation CAF can be introduced for the whole organisation as well as only in single departments. In organisations up to 150 employees CAF can be well implemented in the overall organisation. In larger units, especially organisations that have a broad structure of business units and departments / units, a separate implementation in the individual organisational units is recommended. As experience has shown, CAF is particularly well-suited to rolling out unified management and leadership standards or supporting the implementation of strategic guidelines at an operational level. Here, CAF offers the necessary flexibility - within the European standards - to supplement or adjust the assessment grid accordingly, so that the assessment grid tailored to the specific requirements of the organisation can be developed.

Furthermore, the necessary internal time of the CAF program has to be calculated individually for each organisations. Experience has shown that in each organisation, each CAF self-assessment team member should be given about 3 to 5 working days.



The decision for or against CAF should be openly discussed in the management team. The checklist can be helpful in asking the right questions to make the right decision for the organisation. It must be clear that CAF is not an "expert" procedure in which external experts determine what is "good" or "bad", but start a joint organisational development process - a continuous improvement process. The CAF grid is the fundamental standard of evaluation for good administrative management.

Information of the employees

In order to ensure transparency from the outset and to enable all employees to participate in the CAF program, employee information is useful before the CAF self-assessment team is defined. Accordingly, all organisation employees should at least be informed about the project and the goals of the CAF program. These are in particular:

The participation of the general manager (director etc.) in the staff information is recommended. The employee information will be:

- ☐ The CAF, its objectives, approach and expected results presented;
- ☐ Employees are invited to express interest for participation in the selfassessment group (SAG) within two weeks. Alternatively the CAF Program Officer invites dedicated members based on explained selection criteria;
- ☐ The Lead / CAF program officer will designate the CAF self-assessment team after the two-week registration deadline according to the selection criteria.



Use the employee information not only for the presentation of CAF, but also as an ideal framework for past successes, projects etc. which have already been implemented by the team to highlight and celebrate. CAF should not be seen by employees as an "indication" of inadequate quality in services and processes. CAF focuses on the strengths and potentials of the organisation in order to achieve consistent service improvements and increased efficiency.

Particularly important is also a united appearance of the management team. Only if politics and administration are behind the CAF program and show convincement for the CAF, the necessary credibility can be created and strategic relevance underlined.

Define CAF program roles

The following program roles and responsibilities have to be defined:

CAF program management

A CAF-programme manager has to be appointed by the general manager. The CAF-programme manager is responsible for planning the CAF process, setting milestones, selecting the CAF self-assessment group. Further more the CAF-program management is available internally for any questions about the CAF program. The tasks of the CAF program manager in detail are:

- ☐ The content and timing of planning and coordination of the CAF program;
- ☐ Informing the employees, at least at the beginning and end, as well as ensuring effective information and communication during the CAF program - drawing up a communication plan;
- ☐ After volunteering to the CAF Self-Assessment Group, the CAF Program Management will designate the CAF Self-Assessment Group according to specific criteria;
- ☐ Acceptance of CAF final result and manage the implementation of the CAF-Action plan.

To support the CAF program management, a CAF program assistance should be set up. This should be a co-worker in the organisation, who will take care of the ongoing coordination of appointments, take care of the preparation of the workshops and support the CAF program management in the creation of information, evaluations etc. The tasks of the CAF program assistant include in particular:

- ☐ Supporting CAF program management in CAF communal agendas;
- ☐ Organisation and preparation of the workshops (invitation of the participants, preparation of the premises, preparing printouts, etc.);
- ☐ Preparing and keeping up to date all necessary information and communication tools;
- ☐ Result documentation of the CAF consensus workshop;
- ☐ Result documentation of the action plan workshop.

CAF self-assessment group

For the actual implementation of the self-assessment, a CAF self-assessment group should be appointed. This includes depending on size / number of employees of the municipality between 4 and a maximum of 15 people. Anyway, part of the CAF self-assessment group are:

- ☐ CAF Program Management
- ☐ One employee from each functional area / department of the organisation

Optionally, the general manager/director may also be a member of the CAF self-assessment group. This has the advantage that implementation decisions can usually be made more quickly. It should be emphasized that CAF does not judge the quality of political decisions but the quality of organisation services.

If, in the presence of the management, the members of the self-assessment group are reluctant to make their own opinions and suggestions, it can be considered to compose the self-assessment group without the management.

The tasks of the CAF self-assessment group include in particular:

- ☐ participation in the CAF training;
- ☐ Individual filling in the CAF questionnaire (individual self-assessment);
- ☐ participation in the CAF consensus Workshop;
- ☐ Participation in the CAF Action Plan Workshop;
- ☐ Willingness to participate in the implementation of the CAF improvement actions.

Set communication plan

The communication plan includes who (politics, staff, citizens, departments etc.) is informed when and by what means of communication (personal, e-mail, drive, etc.) about which CAF related activities. This plan is an important tool for the accompanying project communication. As in any change project transparent and goal-oriented communication across all project phases ensures the acceptance and the success of the CAF program.

The CAF program management is responsible for communicating the CAF results to the general director/management and staff.

Select CAF Self-Assessment Group

Following the employee information, employees will be given two weeks to announce their interest or willingness to participate in the CAF self-assessment group.

The CAF program manager is responsible for the correct composition of the CAF self-assessment group. The CAF self-assessment group consists of at least one employee from each service area or department. If the total number of employees is less than five employees all employees are part of the CAF self-assessment group.



The selection of the CAF self-assessment group is an important decision for the successful implementation of the CAF process. The decision should be based on the principle of balance. In addition to a good mix of professionals, there should also be critical persons in the CAF self-assessment group who can provide additional perspectives. A mix of different age groups, gender, education, duration in the organisation, hierarchy etc. should also be included in the selection process. As a result, the CAF self-assessment group should reflect a good cross-section of the entire organisation team. In a first step, it is advisable to invite the staff to the employee information, to announce their interest in the cooperation and to make a selection based on this. Nomination to the CAF self-assessment group by the CAF program manager is also possible and should be transparent according to the listed decision criteria.

Conduct CAF training

As part of a one to two-day training, the members of the CAF self-assessment group are introduced to CAF and introduced to their specific tasks.



As a rule, a one day (eg 9: 00-16: 00) should be provided for CAF training. In addition to an introduction to the logic of the CAF assessment, the focus should be on concrete "applying". CAF simulations in which the CAF self-assessment team uses a criterion and considers strengths, improvement areas and improvement actions. It is recommended to use a CAF-Online tool for the self-assessment.

Start individual evaluation phase

At this stage, each CAF self-assessment group member should individually perform their CAF self-assessment. The "CAF questionnaire" is used for this.

Table 5: Overview CAF-Self-assessment questionnaire

4.3 Manage finances			
	a Financial management is aligned with strategic objectives in an efficient, effective and economic way.		
	b Budget development is subject to an internal ongoing control or analysis.		
	c A transparent system of budgeting and financial monitoring exists.		
	d The cost-accounting calculation is used and shows the costs of services.		
	e Systems of budgetary, cost planning and monitoring are introduced.		
	f The medium-term financial planning covers the most important projects and changes in the coming five years.		
	g Cost-benefit calculations are made for allocating the funds.		
	h Objectives, outputs and outcomes are part of the budget documents.		
4.3	Strengths	Improvement Areas	Improvement Actions
4.3 consensus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Financial management is aligned with strategic objectives in an efficient, effective and economic way. * Budget development is subject to an internal ongoing control or analysis. * A transparent system of budgeting and financial monitoring exists. * Financial Regulations are in force. * Sound financial management promoted. * Budget monitoring in place. * BIO is continuously improved. * Budget and Financial Management are set providing cost accounting calculation of the cost of services. * Budgetary cost planning and monitoring systems are introduced and integrated into Business Intelligence. * Promptness in archiving relevant programme documentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The internal control system to be improved * A longer term financial planning should cover the most important projects and changes in the coming years. * Objectives, outputs and outcomes should be part of the budget documents. * Managerial accountability * On line application for all events of organisation XY. * The computerised needs to be modified to generate such reports by various users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * An internal control system should be developed. * To encompass longer period in financial planning. * On line application should be implemented. * Alignment of Objectives outputs and outcomes with the financial management.

Source: KDZ, 2019

Each CAF self-assessment group member answers the CAF questionnaire based on the own knowledge and own work experience in the organisation. Each CAF self-assessment group member notes his / her assessment for CAF criterion and Sub-Criterion:

- ☐ What are our strengths - Where are we good?
- ☐ Which improvement areas do I see?
- ☐ What improvement actions should be implemented?

- ☐ A score between 0 and 100 points.

For the individual assessment phase, a timeframe of between four and six weeks should be scheduled, with each CAF self-assessment group member taking about one to two days to assess. During the individual assessment, the CAF self-assessment group members can meet in smaller groups. At these meetings perspectives can be exchanged, possible ambiguities and questions can be discussed and clarified. However, the assessment - the description of strengths, improvement areas, improvement actions and the scoring - must be done individually.

At the end of the four- to six-week individual assessment phase, the individual completed questionnaires are transmitted to the facilitation/moderation in preparation for the CAF consensus workshop. The assessments of each CAF self-assessment group member should be anonymous and confidential.



To support the individual assessment phase the use of CAF Online Tools is recommended. They guide the CAF self-assessment group through the questionnaire step by step. In addition, notes and explanations of the CAF model, CAF terminology and the rating scales can be used. In addition CAF Online Tools ensure an efficient and complete preparation of the CAF consensus workshop.

CAF consensus workshop: Evaluating together - improving together

The CAF consensus workshop is at the heart of the CAF program. At this point the CAF Self-Assessment Group unites and discusses the different perspectives. Different points of view become transparent, first suggestions for improvement are discussed and agreed upon. Through consistent solution orientation and focus on a common consensus of the facilitation/moderation, the CAF self-assessment group experiences itself as an engine of administrative development.

The preparation of the CAF consensus workshop takes place

- ☐ contentwise by the facilitator/moderator;
- ☐ organisationally through the CAF program management and CAF program assistance.

Only the members of the CAF selfassessment group participate in the CAF consensus workshop. The CAF consensus workshop can be set up as follows:

- ☐ either as a block workshop: 2 days at a time (it has proven useful to schedule the first day with "open end")
- ☐ or through five to seven closely spaced half-day workshops (the time between workshops should not exceed one week).

At the beginning, common rules and framework conditions for the joint work are agreed and the daily routine coordinated. The moderator briefly presents the CAF criteria, explains the results of the individual self-assessment or invites members of the group to present the results. The moderator leads the discussion with a focus on formulating suggestions for improvement.

The essential principle is that the workshop works according to the consensus method. In other words, the CAF self-assessment team has common ground for each sub-criterion

- ☐ strengths of the organisation;
- ☐ improvement areas in the organisation;
- ☐ improvement actions as well as
- ☐ a score between 0 and 100 points.

The CAF moderator cares for the documentation of the results of the consensus workshop.



The professional facilitation of the workshop guarantees the thorough preparation of the CAF consensus workshop, fosters the commitment of the CAF self-assessment group and gives a critical view on the organisation and its processes. The central task of the moderation is to structure the discussion and, if necessary, to visualize it and, above all, to support a discussion focused on solutions and come to a consensus with good questions. This is a key success factor as the consensus within the CAF self-assessment group reaches the important "YES" for the further implementation of individual policy proposals. This greatly supports the actual implementation.

Use this workshop also as a team event and as a token of appreciation of the team. Basically, the implementation of the workshop in an external location is recommended, in order to create the necessary privacy here as well as to use the times after the workshop for a get-together. Of course, the workshop in the organisation is also possible. However, this should ensure the necessary privacy and time availability of the CAF self-assessment group members.

CAF-self-assessment report

After the consensus workshop, the moderator compiles the CAF self-assessment report and hands it over to the CAF program management. The CAF self-assessment report shows the strengths, improvement areas and improvement actions.

The CAF Self Assessment Report forms the basis of the Action Plan Workshop.

The CAF self-assessment report documents the outcome of the discussion (consensus) on all nine criteria of the CAF.

Table 6: Example chapter CAF-Selfassessment Report

SC 2.3	Strengths	* Indicators on output level exists and they are measured.	60
		* Strategy and objectives are communicated regularly to all employees.	
		* Detailed Plan of Activities are regularly and jointly prepared.	
		* Trained and experienced staff.	
		* The Strategy is being prepared for the first time in a wide consultative and participatory process.	
	Improvement Areas	* New communication strategy in line with expected new strategy 2019-2024.	
		* To improve relations between programme and operations.	
		* Measurement of the performance of the organisation.	
		* Better projection of staff and costs needed.	
		* Better involvement of all employees in development of the Strategy.	
	Improvement Actions	* Design of new communication strategy in line with expected new strategy 2019-2024.	
		* Measure the performance of the organisation.	
		* Introduction and implementation of Result Based Management/Budgeting and International Public Sector Accounting Standards.	

Source: KDZ, 2019



After creating the CAF self-assessment report, the general manager/director should also be informed about the key findings of the CAF self-assessment. The results should be communicated to the entire staff only after the conclusion of the action plan workshop.

2 CAF-Action Plan

CAF-Action Plan Workshop

Following the implementation of the CAF consensus workshop and on the basis of the CAF self-assessment report, a 1-day workshop will be held on the preparation of the CAF Action Plan. This workshop will prioritise and categorise consensus-building measures (important, urgent, etc.), and provide responsibilities and timelines. The CAF self-assessment group builds the participants of the CAF Action Plan Workshop. If the management has not participated in the Self-Assessment Workshop one or two representatives of the management can participate in the CAF Action Plan Workshop. It can also be decided that a part of the self-assessment group runs the CAF consensus workshop.

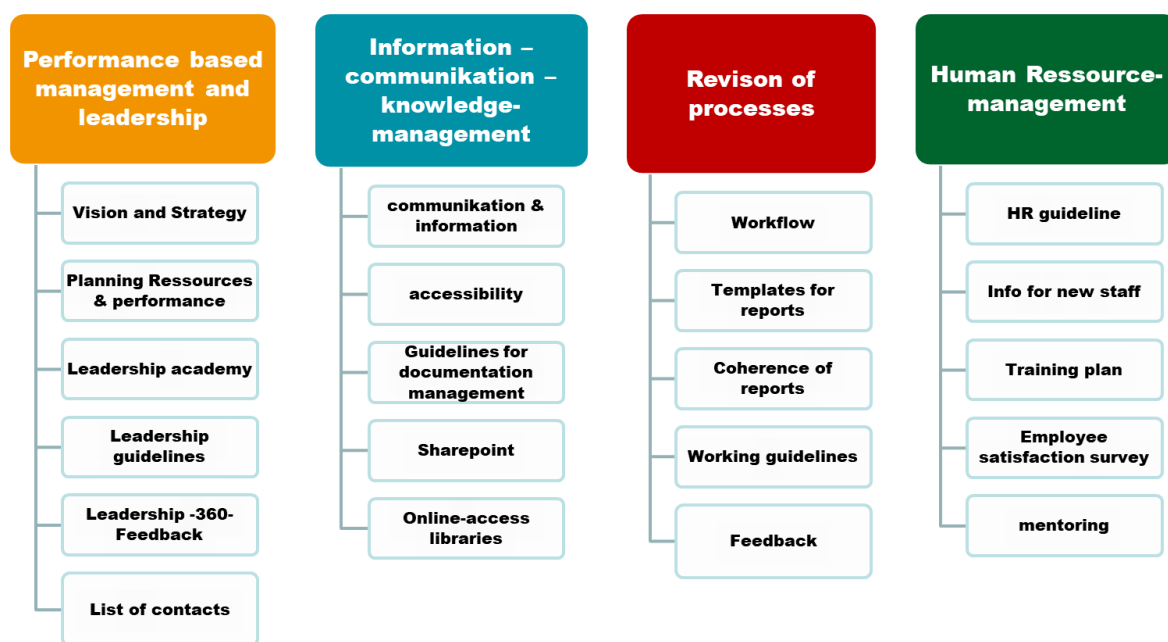
The preparation of the CAF action plan workshop takes place

- ☐ contentwise by the facilitator/moderator;
- ☐ organisationally by the CAF program management and CAF program assistance.

CAF-Action Plan Report

Based on the Action Plan Workshop, a CAF Action Plan is prepared to guide the organisation in implementing the CAF improvement actions. It is recommended that the CAF Action Plan for Implementation is divided into several groups ("CAF Action Groups") that pool together related actions. Attached an example:

Table 7: Example CAF-Actiongroups



Source: Example; KDZ 2019

The concrete implementation roadmap is outlined for each of these measures under the guidance of the moderator. This means that the objectives of the action are defined ("What should be achieved in concrete terms?") and the concrete implementation steps ("What is to be done by whom and by when?") as well as the expected processing effort ("How many person days will we have to spend?").

Tabelle 1: Example CAF-Actionplan

Description of the activity	realized until	Duration / person days	complexity (low, medium, high)	Project manager	Sub-criterion
Overall Objective: Improvement of internal organisational structure Activities: Step 1: Workload analyses (status quo and future perspectives) Step 2: Revise organisational chart/job descriptions Step 3: Adoption of new staff regulations Step 4: Implementation of new organisational structure, tasks and responsibilities	Step1: June 2019 Step 2-4: 1st Quarter of 2020	100 days	high	Director, CR/GF/HU	3.1 1.2 2.2 4.6

Source: Example; KDZ 2019

For each of the selected actions, a detailed action plan will be prepared, agreed by consensus and endorsed by the CAF self-assessment group. By clearly naming responsibilities and the timeline, the cornerstones are set that are necessary for successful implementation.

Implement actions

Now, the improvement actions and projects defined in the CAF Action Plan are to be implemented. Here, the action plan requires a timeframe of two to three years.

The CAF Action Plan is the basis for the implementation of the suggestions for improvement. The CAF program management is responsible for the control of the implementation, the continuous monitoring of the realisation steps and, if necessary, the necessary decision-making in case of uncertainties. It is also important to constantly communicate the implementation progress to employees, partners, customers etc.



We recommend to regularly incorporate the agreements of the CAF Action Plan in the team discussions. The persons responsible for implementation can thus regularly inform about the status of the project as well as discuss possible challenges in the implementation in the team. These regular feedback loops are very important to ensure that the action plan does not go down in the "everyday business".

Carry out ongoing project controlling

In order not to lose the overview of the implementation, a suitable system for the organisation should be found to regularly review the project progress. Ongoing project monitoring is the central management tool of CAF program management and provides important insights on where support is needed, certain issues that need to be resolved, and whether time and resources are on schedule.

In practice, it has proved useful to nominate one project manager for the individual CAF actions. The project management of each CAF action regularly reports on the implementation progress of the CAF action in team meetings, CAF jour fixes, etc., which are regularly convened CAF program manager.



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