

## Benchmarking

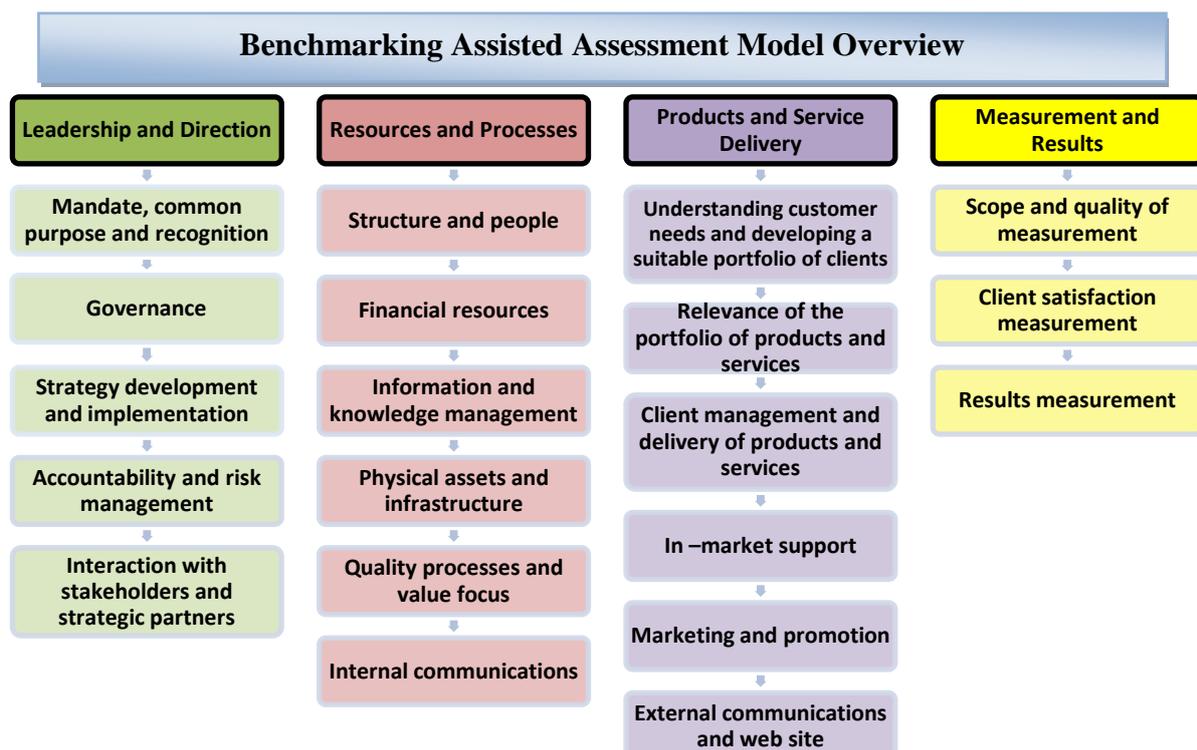
ITC's benchmarking provides Trade Promotion Organizations (TPOs) an independent and objective assessment of their institutional situation, their efficiency and their performance in relation to the good business practices of other TPOs. The assessment identifies areas for improvement through the use of a full set of benchmark measures, developed specifically for TPOs. The programme has the twofold objective of providing organizations with an independent assessment on their performance while offering them a global learning platform to compare processes and business practices for improvement.

### What is it?

The Program's objective is not to rank TPOs but to focus on the key factors of organizational performance and how these elements interact. TPOs are complex organizations and their performance critically depend on a number of both internal and external factors that influence their capacity to efficiently and effectively serve a wide variety of stakeholders including government bodies, the private sector as well as other institutions. With its in-depth understanding of TPOs and their operating environment, the ITC benchmarking methodology offers a structured and results-oriented approach to identify institutional strengths and weaknesses as a first step towards improvement.

### The methodology

The benchmarking process is achieved through the comprehensive analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data through a series of interviews with senior managers and staff of all main areas of the TPO. The assessment is conducted by ITC certified experts and based on a tested and consolidated maturity based model<sup>®</sup> shaped around four main areas of performance: I) Leadership and Direction, II) Resources and Processes, III) Products and Service Delivery, IV) Measurement and Results. The following graph represents the four areas of performance and the main groups of measures:



The assessment model uses a total of 225 indicators of performance in those four main areas of analysis. The assessment, done at indicator level, is subsequently aggregated into the four areas of analysis, building up scores progressively and providing a wider, comprehensive and interlinked picture of the TPO.

### The benchmarking report

The assessment results are processed with proprietary software and compiled in a confidential report. In the report, scores are interpreted and explained and causal relationships existing between the different measures, themes and areas of performance are identified. The report also includes specific recommendations for the TPO, based on its results and suggests possible follow-up activities.

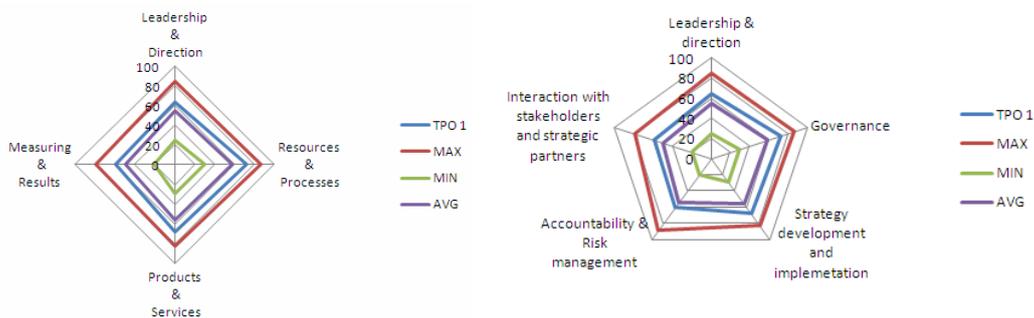
Focusing on the overall objective of improving performance, the benchmarking methodology identifies areas for improvement but also shows achievements and areas where the TPO is performing well or is innovating. These areas may provide material – content or case studies – that would be useful to share with other TPOs through the web-sharing platform.

### Follow-up

The benchmarking report represents the first step to identifying key areas of possible intervention and appropriate follow-up assistance to develop and improve the TPO. The document provides relevant and specific information but it is possible that a further in-depth assessment might be needed in specific cases.

### Learning and sharing platform

The ITC benchmarking programme is supported by an online learning platform providing intelligence to assist the senior management of the selected TPOs to set objectives, prioritize areas for improvement and implement new ways of working and thereby learn from the experience of other institutions. The benchmarking application will allow TPOs to register with a password protected account in order to display and extract, on line and in real time, their benchmarking scores in the different assessed areas. The platform will allow several levels of comparison with the maximum, minimum and average scores registered in the system but, in order to ensure data confidentiality, TPOs will not be able to display individual results other than their own.



The platform will also give access to a rich repository of case studies and best practices as well as to a continuously updated collection of documents on topics such as institutional development, organizational performance and result measurement.

## Benefits for TPOs

- Provides TPOs with an independent perspective on performance;
- Reviews and evaluates internal and external factors influencing their effectiveness and performance;
- Analyzes consistency and verifies alignment between structure, activities and strategic objectives;
- Allows TPOs to benchmark their overall level of performance and their performance in specific areas and measures against other TPOs;
- Identifies where a TPO is doing well and where it could improve;
- Identifies what could be enhanced or developed to have a more positive impact on operations and delivery;
- Provides a summary of results and recommendations including: strengths and challenges, areas for action and detailed analysis of results;
- Gives TPOs the opportunity to provide evidence of their effectiveness to their stakeholders, clients and government;
- Gives participating TPOs opening to a global network of institutions to benefit from the knowledge and experience of their peers – share and learn;
- Provides online access to benchmarking scores and graphs where the organization can compare its own performance to a set of trade promotion activity standards.

### For more information:

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