



BOCA 2.0 STEP BY STEP CHECKLIST

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Branch development is a priority for many National Societies, and “Branch Organisational Capacity to Act (BOCA)” can be a powerful tool to help branches come together, reflect on their strengths and further growth areas, and develop a roadmap around shared priorities. Before launching a BOCA process, it is recommended to take a moment to reflect on the objectives and whether BOCA is the right tool for the National Society. It is also important to check whether the timing, readiness, and conditions are right or if something needs to be put in place before starting a Branch Development journey using BOCA. The list below draws on lessons learnt from National Societies that have used BOCA successfully as a tool for systematic branch development.

INITIAL REFLECTION

STEP 1

Why Branch Development?

Before starting, reflect on these key questions:

What are we aiming for with our Branch Development process?

- Why do we need to work on Branch Development?
- What are the problems we are aiming to solve, and what would be the right approach to addressing these?
- How would a self-reflection at a Branch level contribute to our goals?
- Do we know what we want to achieve through launching a Branch self-reflection process and how the outcomes will be used by Branches and by NHQ?
- Have we done other assessments recently? If so, are we risking duplicating efforts? (refer to [Guidance on National Society Assessment and Development Processes | IFRC](#))
- Do we think BOCA is the tool that could best support the above expectations?

Make sure that you have a clearly defined goal and purpose for the process and what you would like to achieve. BOCA is a tool for branch development, and it works best when conducted as a part of a wider branch development plan or strategy, or as a means to collect information to help inform such a plan. Having a clearly defined purpose will also help with the communication to the branches so they fully understand the exercise and the expectations of the branch.

STEP 2

Are we BOCA ready?

Once you decide BOCA would be the tool that could help you, reflect on these key questions:

What are we aiming for with our Branch Development process?

- Do we have a designated focal person who can facilitate reflection on the above points?
- Do we have the financial and human resources needed – to run BOCA and support branches with follow-up?
- Do we have a clear rollout approach? Will we start with a few branches or roll out to all? What is our selection method?
- Do we know how to clearly communicate the purpose and expectations to branches?
- Is the timing right?
 - Are we in the middle of an emergency?
 - Are branches newly established or already implementing other plans?

Check when
Step 1
completed

Step 2
completed

INITIAL PREPARATION

STEP 3

The BOCA Kick-off: Roles and Responsibilities

The BOCA process can be initiated by National Society leadership, the OD/NSD/BD focal point, or even a motivated Branch – ideally with support from NHQ. Whoever initiates the process is recommended to engage key stakeholders and, if needed, request technical support from the IFRC or another NS experienced in BOCA.

Who Is Who in BOCA?

Role	Potential Actor	Key Responsibilities
BOCA Promoter	Secretary General or President	Advocates for BOCA, secures governance approval, and aligns BOCA with strategic goals.
BOCA Coordinator	OD/NSD/BD focal point at NHQ	Leads nationwide rollout, supports branches, manages reports, and ensures funding. Responsibilities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain strong communication with the Secretary General and governance. • Coordinate across NHQ Departments to ensure NHQ awareness and buy-in to the process and ensure that BOCA does not duplicate other initiatives at Branch level. • Develop a ToR for the process • Build a pool of facilitators and prepare and run the BOCA ToF • Follow-up on the BOCA roll out in Branches • Facilitate learning among BOCA facilitators and make necessary adjustments based on feedback • Prepare the overall budget and secure funding • Conduct analysis of overall results. Consolidate BOCA reports and produce a national-level summary for leadership and partners. • Monitor and follow up on results of implementation on the roadmaps • Coordinate across branches to align BOCA plans • Provide support to branches where needed
BOCA Mobiliser	Branch Director / Branch BOCA FP	Manages logistics for the BOCA workshop, prepares participants, and ensures follow-up after the workshop.
BOCA Facilitator	Trained through BOCA ToF	Facilitates BOCA workshops, and guides prioritisation and roadmapping. Prepares and submits the BOCA report. Can also play an important role in supporting the monitoring and follow up after the BOCA workshop
BOCA Participant	Branch board, staff, volunteers, members	Participates actively in dialogue, self-reflection, and joint roadmapping. Shares the experiences from the BOCA exercise with peers in the branch to build awareness and joint branch ownership of the roadmap.
BOCA Trainer	Trained through participating in BOCA ToT	Leads BOCA ToF, builds facilitator capacity. Acts as a Branch Development ambassador and advises the National Society on using BOCA effectively as part of its Branch Development ambitions. Supports the NS to prepare, adapt, and apply BOCA with quality.

One key action is this step to **appoint the BOCA Coordinator to kickstart the preparation.**

Your closest IFRC office can help provide you with technical support to guide your process. It is also possible to seek support from a peer NS with experience of using BOCA.

Step 3
completed

STEP 4

Identify your BOCA approach and selection of branches

Develop a ToR for the process. Think about the best way to roll out BOCA in your NS.

BOCA can either be done in all branches, or you can select a few branches to start with and then expand the initiative; it all depends on your context, your defined purpose of launching a BOCA process, and available resources. You can also make BOCA optional for branches, depending on your organisational set up. In this step, also think about how you will communicate to the branches about BOCA.

STEP 5

Identify financial resources and develop a budget

Start thinking about the financial resources needed early on and determine whether you will need to do any additional fundraising. Will the costs for the BOCA workshops be covered by the HQ or by the branches themselves? The budget will also depend on whether you are planning to conduct BOCA in all branches or apply a phased approach. Also consider whether you would like to set up a small seed fund to help branches finance their roadmap and support implementation.

When budgeting for a BOCA process you will need to consider the following costs:

- Training of Facilitators (2 days in person training at the HQ or in a hosting branch)
- BOCA workshop costs in branches (1.5-2 days workshop in the branch)

In addition, you may want to consider the following:

- Seed fund to support implementation of roadmaps
- Costs related to organising peer exchange and learning events such as Branch Development/ BOCA Forums
- Any additional costs related to monitoring and follow up

STEP 6

Orientation and Pre-Workshop Preparation

Before BOCA workshops begin, branches should be oriented on the purpose, process, and expectations. Pre-BOCA orientation helps build trust, encourages open reflection, and ensures informed participation. Orientation should include governance, staff, and volunteers.

Branches should be informed of how BOCA results will be used to inform any Branch Development processes, and any preparations they need to make – such as submitting annual reports, financial statements, or other documents in advance. Also make sure that NHQ staff across the departments receive relevant information about this process.

Tips for Promoting BOCA and creating ownership with Branches

Branch development is a core responsibility of the branch leadership, who are accountable for the growth, relevance, and sustainability of their branch. As such, BOCA will only be successful when branches feel ownership over the process. Therefore, strong promotion and inclusive engagement from the start is important to ensure buy-in and motivation. Also consider:

Engaging Branch Leadership and Stakeholders

- Clearly state that branch leadership is responsible for leading their development journey.
- Ensure the process includes all stakeholders, not just branch leaders. BOCA gives a space for staff and volunteers to share insights and participate in setting priorities for the branch
- Use pre-workshop orientation sessions to explain BOCA's purpose, process, and benefits.
- Emphasise how BOCA is linked to broader NSD/Branch Development strategies.

Communication, motivation and ownership

- Send a letter from the NS Leadership to branches introducing the BOCA and stating the purpose of the exercise. [Insert sample link]
- Start each BOCA workshop with a short video message from the Secretary General or President. [Insert sample videos]
- Ensure branches feel confident that BOCA is not an audit – it's an opportunity for self-reflection, shared dialogue, and collective roadmapping based on consensus. It works best when all branch stakeholders, including governance, staff, and volunteers, have a voice in shaping their future.
- Promote Branch Development plans and BOCA at national events such as General Assembly/Annual General Meetings or leadership gatherings.
- Organise a BOCA/BD forum for peer branches to exchange experiences and motivate each other.
- Invite leaders from branches that have already completed BOCA to speak and share their journey with others
- Emphasise that BOCA is a global Movement tool – used by branches worldwide.
- Share progress on the IFRC Branch Development Community of Practice to encourage peer learning.

Step 4 completed

Step 5 completed

Step 6 completed

STEP 7

Adaptation and translation

You will need to adapt the tool to fit your local context and translate it into your local language. It is important that the terminology aligns with how things are commonly said and done in your National Society, so that branches clearly understand and can engage with the content. This process may take time – so plan accordingly.

What does “Adaptation to Local Context” mean?

Adaptation means adjusting the matrix so it resonates with the procedures, language, and structures of your branches, without losing the integrity of the BOCA tool and methodology. (see example below)

- Adjust terminology to match your internal language and defined roles and responsibilities within the branch (typically for governance, types of branches, key internal processes, or Standard Operating Procedures)
- Reflect NS wide adopted Strategies and Policies in related attributes and remove references to any mentioning of policies that do not exist in the National Society
- Remove all references to staff if you do not have staff at branch level
- You can also choose to discard certain attributes if they do not apply to your context, for example if you do not have a logistics set up in your branch or you do not have staff directly hired by and managed by the branch attributes 34 and 35 could be skipped.
- Note: If you do choose to discard certain attributes but still wish to be able to allow for global comparison of results, it is important that you do not change the numbering of the remaining attributes. I.e. If you do not have a logistics set up at branch level but you do have staff, you would take out attribute 34 and leave this blank. The next attribute, Staff management would then still be number 35.

Example of adaptation:

Before adaptation	After adaptation
Attribute 4, column D, reflection point 2	Attribute 4, column D, reflection point 2
The branch coordinates and shares timely information across its different organisational levels to ensure everyone works towards the same goals	<i>The Branch Executive Committee</i> , coordinates and shares information with focal points in the sub-branches on a weekly basis to ensure everyone works towards the same goals
Before adaptation	After adaptation
Attribute 8, column B, reflection point 3	Attribute 8, column B, reflection point 3
The branch follows any National Society policies related to Inclusion and Diversity (if applicable) and promotes these among staff and volunteers.	The branch follows <i>the 2022 Diversity policy</i> and promotes <i>this among volunteers</i>

Tips for adaptation and translation

- **Form a small review team** – Include colleagues with deep knowledge of branches and technical areas (finance, governance, volunteering, etc.) to ensure relevance and accuracy. By working on the translation and adaptation in-house rather than using an external translator you can ensure better quality and resonance with NS terminology and practices, and you will also build in-depth knowledge and understanding of the tool within the review team.
- **Engage at least one branch in the review. Test early drafts with someone from a branch** to make sure the language and concepts make sense on the ground.
- **Include inputs from leadership** – Use the BOCA orientation process or leadership discussions to define key elements to include in your version of BOCA. This helps ensure alignment with your strategic direction and branch development goals.
- **Reflect on branch typologies in your NS** – The way BOCA is adapted may depend on the types of branches in your National Society. Consider using the branch typologies outlined in the IFRC Branch Development Framework (e.g. community-based, service-delivery-focused, administrative hubs) to help tailor facilitation, priorities, and language accordingly.

- **Keep core structure intact** – Maintain the overall structure of the BOCA matrix and scoring system to allow for comparability across branches and with the global tool.
- **Review legal and policy references** – Localise any examples that refer to laws or policies that may not apply in your country or that are known by specific names.
- **Use familiar and inclusive terminology** – Replace generic terms with the ones most used in your NS. Make sure the language is respectful and representative of all branch roles.
- **Use plain and accessible language** – Avoid jargon; ensure language is clear enough for all branch members, including volunteers.
- **Document your changes** – Keep track of what was changed and why as this supports transparency and future updates.
- **Translate all supporting materials** – Be sure to translate facilitator guides, participant handouts, and any other tools used during BOCA workshops.
- **Quality-check your translation** – Have a second person or team review the translated materials to ensure clarity and accuracy.

SETTING UP THE TEAM

STEP 8

Identify a team of facilitators

How many facilitators you need will depend on the size of your National Society and the number of branches you decide to cover in the first round. The facilitators should be chosen carefully as they play a very important role in making BOCA a success. It is good if the facilitators know the NS well, have a good understanding of NSD and BD priorities, and already have good workshop facilitation skills, as the training is not designed to specifically teach facilitation skills. It is recommended to establish a diverse pool of facilitators, consisting of both staff and volunteers/members of Governance. Think about whether you have any special requirements, such as language skills that need to be reflected in your pool of facilitators.

Tips for building and supporting your team of BOCA facilitators

- Select your facilitators based on the qualifications listed above and explain the task and what will be expected of them well
- Train facilitators not only in the BOCA tool, but in how it fits within your NS's strategy. Set up platforms (e.g., WhatsApp, Teams, regular calls) to support peer-to-peer exchange between facilitators. Experience has shown that it can be very useful for BOCA facilitators to have a space to exchange learnings, ask questions and share achievements and challenges with each other during the BOCA process.
- Encourage facilitators to also sign up as members to the BOCA Facilitators' sub-community on the IFRC Community of practice
- Encourage facilitators to stay engaged beyond the workshops and assign clear roles for this engagement

Step 7
completed

Step 8
completed

STEP 9

Conduct training of facilitators

The training of facilitators is conducted by a trainer (a person who completed the IFRC BOCA 2.0 ToT). You can reach out to your closest IFRC office to find a qualified trainer if needed. It is important that there is not too big of a gap between when you train the facilitators and their first assignments to make sure the learning is still fresh. Also make sure to keep a record of who has been trained in your NS for future reference.

BOCA Training of Facilitators (ToF)

- **What it is:** A practical training to equip selected individuals to facilitate BOCA at branch level.
- **Who it's for:** Candidates with a strong understanding of NS structures, facilitation skills, and knowledge of NSD/BD.
- **Core content:** BOCA methodology, facilitation tips and tricks, and reporting guidelines. The ToF is designed to last 2 days.
- **How to run the BOCA ToF** is explained in detail in the “BOCA 2.0 Instructions for ToF Facilitation”

ROLL-OUT

STEP 10

BOCA Workshops

Organise BOCA workshops in the different branches according to the plan. The BOCA workshop methodology has been designed to last 1.5-2 days. Recommended number of participants from the branches is 8-15 people, and it should be a good mix of Governance, staff and volunteers as applicable to your context.

Standard Elements of a BOCA Workshop

- Opening the workshop and setting the stage
- BOCA Puzzle
- What is a strong branch
- BOCA Matrix dialogue
- Analysis, prioritisation and roadmapping
- Wrap up and closing of the workshop

Read more details from “BOCA 2.0 Workshop Facilitation Guide”

Post-BOCA

- After the workshop, BOCA facilitators should finalise the BOCA report and submit it to the Branch BOCA mobiliser and the NHQ BOCA Coordinator
- After the workshop, the Branch BOCA Mobiliser should convene the branch leadership to:
 - Review and refine the Branch development roadmap and integrate this into any existing branch planning structure
 - Assign roles and responsibilities for implementation
 - Develop a budget for implementation (ideally integrated into the branch’s annual plan and budget) and identify funding sources
- The Branch BOCA mobiliser should prepare a simple PMER (Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting) approach
- The Branch BOCA mobiliser to share the final Roadmap/plan with NHQ and follow-up with the NHQ BOCA coordinator.



Step 9 completed



Step 10 completed

STEP 11

Monitoring and follow up

The BOCA coordinator should collect all the BOCA reports (from the BOCA facilitators) and the Roadmap/Plans (from the Branch BOCA mobiliser) and define the approach used to monitor and follow-up. For example:

- Run regular check-ins with BOCA mobilisers to get updates on progress and any additional support needed
- Include branch development updates in regular branch reports
- Encourage branches to share updates for example in a shared whatsapp group, teams channel etc.
- Facilitate stocktaking meetings with Branches to discuss progress and challenges
- Organize Branch Development forums to facilitate learning and progress among branches.

Based on monitoring results, the BOCA Coordinator should explore and mobilise internal or external expertise to support Branches in areas of need.

At branch level, the BOCA mobiliser should continue the monitoring of progress by continuously revisiting the plan/roadmap with the governance and team to discuss progress made. The aim is to make branch development an integral part of the day-to-day work and internal discussions of the branch.

STEP 12

Analysis of results

When a certain number of branches have conducted BOCA, it will be useful for the BOCA coordinator, together with other relevant HQ colleagues to analyse the results of the BOCA to identify trends or shared challenges faced by the branches, and use this analysis to help inform or strengthen the approach to Branch Development and support to branches. If you see that a specific challenge is recurring across several branches, this might be your opportunity to find solutions to this, working closely together with relevant departments at HQ.

RECOGNITION AND INSPIRING OTHERS

STEP 13

Celebrating achievements

Remember to recognise branch efforts to prioritise Branch development and continuously motivate branches to implement their roadmaps. Consider using the online [IFRC Branch Development Community](#) to share achievements with other NS. Use any existing internal communication channels, such as websites, intranet, teams channels, chat groups etc. to spotlight and celebrate branch efforts. National Societies may also develop a recognition system (e.g. certificates, rating, or spotlighting stories) for branches completing BOCA and actively implementing their roadmaps. This can help motivate and reinforce commitment across the branches.

STEP 14

Peer support and maintaining motivation

Link branches up with each other for peer support and mentoring where relevant. Consider engaging with another NS in the process of implementing a Branch Development roadmap or strategy using BOCA to exchange experiences. You can also use the [IFRC Branch Development Community](#) to get in touch with other NS or branches and foster exchange and learning opportunities.

Step 11 completed

Step 12 completed

Step 13 completed

Step 14 completed