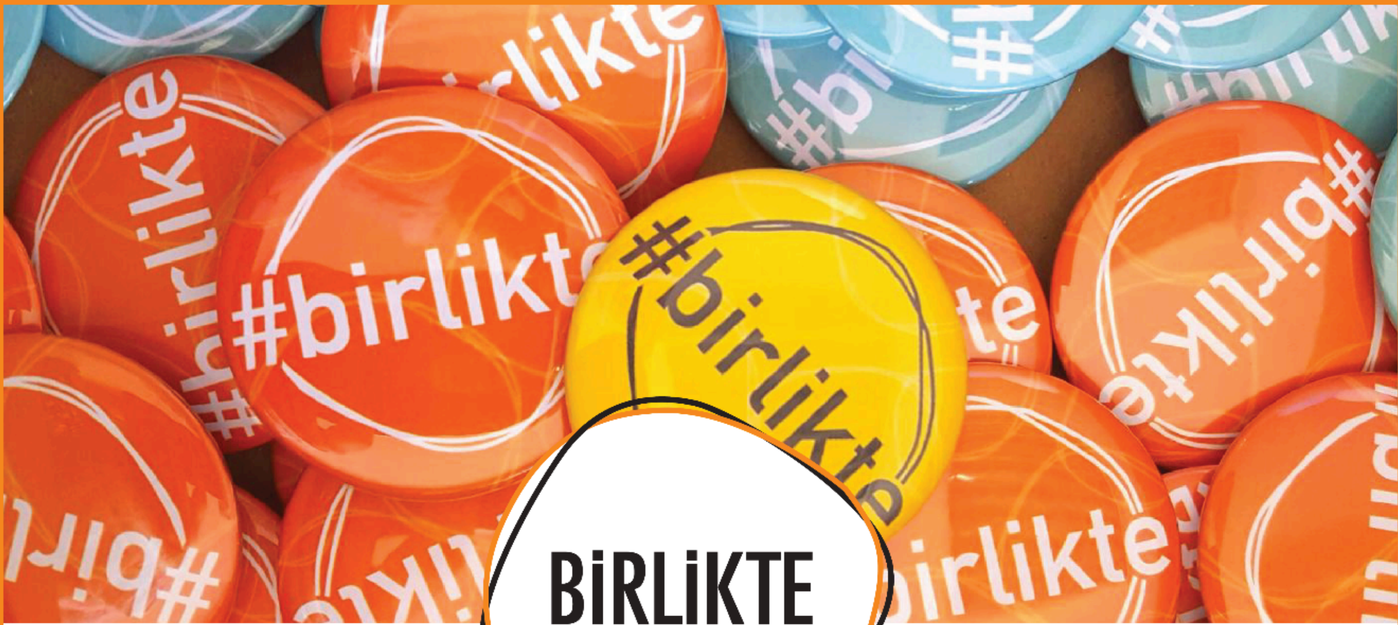


BİRLİKTE
STGM Instutional Support Programme
"let'schangetogether"

# "BİRLİKTE"
## Institutional Support Program

# Organisational Development Model and Self-Assessment Process Guidelines for CSOs

Funded by
the European Union

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# Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to provide a detailed explanation of the **BİRLİKTE Organisational Development Model** and its associated working process. This model forms the backbone of the organisational development efforts undertaken by civil society organizations (CSOs) in the **BİRLİKTE Institutional Support Program (BİRLİKTE Program)**, facilitated by program mentors and implemented by the **Civil Society Development Center Association (STGM)** over a two-year period.

The BİRLİKTE Program is a comprehensive institutional support model developed by STGM in 2017 to support CSOs that carry out their work with a human rights-based perspective. During its first phase (2018-2020), the program supported 42 CSOs, and the second phase, which began in February 2023, currently includes 25 CSOs from across Turkey. BİRLİKTE is implemented as a Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP) modality, funded by the European Union.

Through BİRLİKTE[1], organizations receive **general operating grants** to help them fulfill their core functions. This support is complemented by "**mentoring for organizational development,**" which focuses on enhancing and strengthening their management systems, as well as their administrative and operational infrastructure and processes.

During the first implementation period of BİRLİKTE, an **Organisational Development Model** was designed and introduced**.** This model outlines the framework for institutional management tailored to the unique conditions and needs of civil society organizations, following a systems-based approach. At the start of the second implementation period, the model was revised based on field learnings and has been finalized in this guide, reflecting the priorities and needs of the new implementation phase.

The BİRLİKTE model is designed to ensure that the principles of a **human rights-based approach to development**, along with universally accepted good governance standards, are effectively applied across various areas of organizational management. It outlines specific criteria and standards to guide this implementation. Detailed explanations of these principles can be found in section 1.2 of the guide.

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[1] For more detailed information about the BİRLİKTE Program, see "https://www.stgm.org.tr/projeler/birlikte-kurumsal-destek-programi"

One of the standout features of this phase is the integration of **gender equality mainstreaming (GEM)** throughout the entire program and organizational development model. GEM was thoughtfully incorporated into the program's design, announcement, and application evaluation processes. It is also embedded as a cross-cutting theme under each management area in the organizational development model, with specific standards set accordingly. This allows organizations to assess their current status across all management topics while simultaneously adopting a GEM perspective, helping them identify relevant needs and areas for improvement. In Section 1.3, where we present the management topics in the model in detail, the standards and explanations related to GEM are included at the bottom of each topic.

The model and process proposed by BİRLİKTE is a somewhat arduous but highly effective roadmap that many civil society organizations in Türkiye and even around the world can follow in their institutionalization. Organizational development isn't a one-time event; it's a continuous process of self-reflection, needs assessment, and improvement. Organisational strenghtening should be a core focus for any organization seeking to achieve lasting social change.

BİRLİKTE's goal is to empower CSOs to become self-aware, **learning organizations** capable of identifying their needs and developing their own institutional systems. By adopting this model, organizations can evolve into effective structures that significantly impact their target groups and stakeholders, ultimately driving the desired social change.

BİRLİKTE's model promotes **a systems approach** to core management areas, i.e. governance, strategic plannings, communications, etc., guiding organizations through a baseline assessment and improvement roadmap. This model is based on a **self-assessment method** that enables CSOs to assess the current situation in the organization, its strengths and areas with potential improvement from this perspective. Although the process is facilitated by program mentors (or any other external facilitator), it is the organization itself that actually conducts the assessment. To be used in the self-assessment, the model-based **BİRLİKTE Self-Assessment Toolkit** has been developed, which includes a set of questions for each management area, scoring and evaluation sections, a prioritization matrix and an improvement planning template. Organizations wishing to experience the process can conduct their own self-assessment processes based on the explanations in this guide[2] .

[2] This guide describes the general framework of the organizational development process. You can obtain the Self-Assessment Tool prepared in Excel and Google Sheets version from STGM. You

We believe this guide, a culmination of extensive efforts by a dedicated team, will inspire and guide CSOs seeking to strengthen their organizational structures. We extend our gratitude to the BİRLİKTE Program team for their invaluable contributions to the development of this guide. We also commend the CSOs that are making a significant impact through their institutionalization efforts.

# 1. BİRLİKTE Organisational Development Model

BİRLİKTE's model was developed with a deep understanding of CSOs' unique structures, challenges, and needs. It incorporates lessons learned from STGM's previous projects and hands-on experience, as well as insights from organizational development models and standards used in other sectors[3]. Additionally, the model draws on resources related to monitoring, evaluation, and learning, ensuring its alignment with best practices in organisational capacity development.[4]

## 1.1. BIRLIKTE Organisational Development Model Cycle

The BİRLİKTE Organisational Development Model is a model proposal that defines standards for securing the basic principles underlying the model *(see Section 1.2)* in the

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can contact us at **birlikte@stgm.org.tr** to obtain the tool and / or for questions and support regarding the model and the self-assessment tool.

[3]
- Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA), Continuous Improvement Cycle (see https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/PUKÖ (Turkish), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PDCA (English); access date: 06.03.2024)
- ISO 9001 Quality Management System (see https://www.tse.org.tr/ts-en-iso-9001-kalite-yonetim-sistemi/ access date: 06.03.2024)
- European Foundation for Quality Management EFQM Excellence Model (see; https://www.kalder.org/efqm_mukemmellik_modeli; access date: 06.03.2024)
- MDF, The Integrated Organisation Model (IOM) (see: https://www.sportanddev.org/sites/default/files/2023-01/organisation_assessment___iom_checklist.pdf, English; accessed 06.03.2024)
- UNDP, A Users' Guide to Civil Society Assessments (see https://www.undp.org/publications/users-guide-civil-society-assessments)
- Empowerment of Women and Women's CSOs Project; Civil Society Organizations (CSO) Management (Part 1) (see: http://yayin.gap.gov.tr/sivil-toplum-kuruluslari-stk-yonetimi-bolum-1-yayin-df8707e154.html; accessed 06.03.2024)
- Technical Assistance for Civil Society Organizations (TACSO), CSO Management Implementation Tools for Organizational Development Analysis
- Guidelines for Self-Assessment Teams for the "Improvement of Institutional and Operational Capacities of Local CSOs in Turkey" Project implemented by STGM under the Concern Strengthening the Capacity of Local CSOs Program

[4] A bibliography on this topic can be found in Chapter 10.

organization's management processes and practices under the headings determined for the planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and learning processes of a CSO. It also includes a toolkit (see *Chapter 2*) that supports the identification and planning of organizational development priorities needed to achieve these standards.

BİRLİKTE's model adopts a systems approach to organizational management. It recognizes that organizations are complex systems composed of interconnected elements, including administrative functions, operations, products, services, and the people who make up the organization. The combination of all of these sub-components creates the organization with its own unique structure, functioning mechanism and culture. Changes in any one part of the system can affect the entire organization. This perspective underscores the importance of evaluating all management topics in relation to each other, as integral components of a unified whole.

The model is basically divided into two main parts:

**1) Planning and Implementation;**

**2) Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning**.

These two main parts were designed according to PDCA cycle[5], i.e. the continuous improvement cycle, with the aim of enabling CSOs to realize improvement in their organizational structures. The PDCA cycle involves planning, doing/implementing, controlling, and acting on the results. The cycle involves planning systems and services, implementing them as planned, continuously monitoring and evaluating implementation processes, results and targeted changes, and making improvements for subsequent planning with the resulting learnings. The **"Planning and Implementation"** section of the model outlines nine key areas that organizations should address to establish effective governance (*see Figure 1, BİRLİKTE Organisational Development Model)*. **The "Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning (MEL)"** section is grounded in the principle that effective evaluation requires ongoing monitoring. It emphasizes the importance of regularly assessing whether an organization's practices, strategies, and interventions are aligned with its goals and target groups, and whether they are leading to desired results. By monitoring, evaluating, and learning, organizations can adapt and improve their work in a cyclical manner, returning to planning and implementation for refinement.

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[5] The PDCA or Shewart cycle; was originally developed by Walter A. Shewart during the 1930s and later developed by W.Edwards Deming during the 1980s. More information available at: https://deming.org/explore/pdsa/

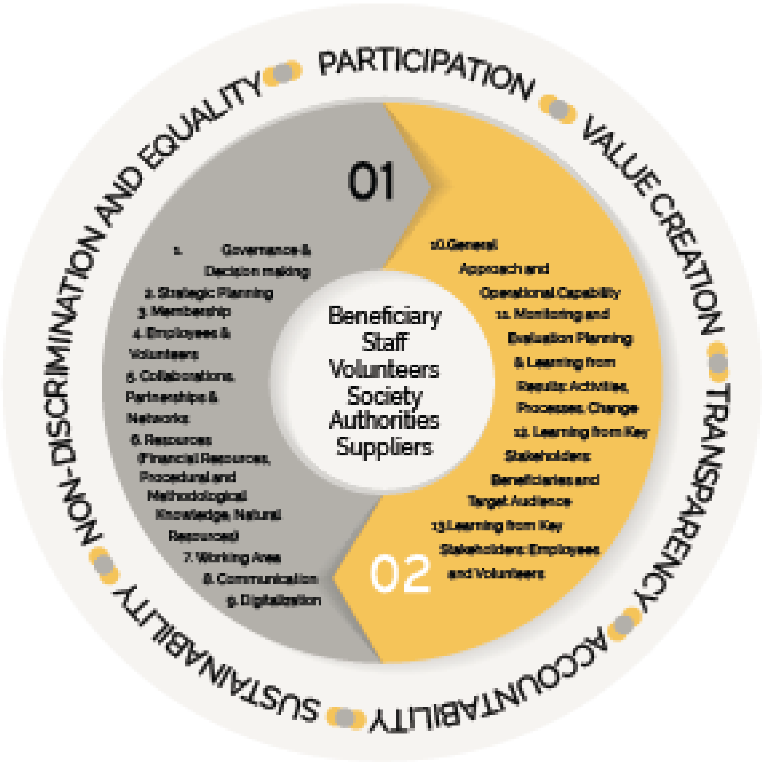


Figure 1: BİRLİKTE Organisational Development Model

## 1.2. Principles of the Model

Rights-based CSOs generally undertake the task of protecting and strengthening the rights of people and the rights holders, believing that this will lead to a more equitable society. To build trust and support, these organizations must adhere to universally accepted principles of good governance and operate transparently, accountably, and reliably.

For effective change, organizations should align their desired outcomes, self-assigned roles, and strategies. Principles related to specific rights can guide organizations in defining their missions, goals, and operational approaches. These principles serve as a foundation for developing strategies to recognize or prevent rights violations, shaping how organizations plan and intervene to achieve their objectives.

BİRLİKTE's Organizational Development Model is grounded in six interconnected principles. These principles are rooted in a human rights-based approach to development, STGM's founding principles and values, and universally accepted principles of good governance in civil society.

The model also proposes specific management standards for implementing these principles in the areas of planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and learning.

The model is implemented through a self-assessment process, which encourages organizations to internalize these principles through participatory discussions and identify their own unique priorities.

The six fundamental principles underpinning the model are described below:

1. **Participation:**
   This principle involves ensuring that all stakeholders have a voice in the decision-making processes of the CSO and that the CSO participates in relevant decision-making mechanisms at a broader level. Key methods for participation include being open and accessible to stakeholders, providing information and opportunities for consultation, inclusion, and feedback. By increasing participation, CSOs can enhance transparency, accountability, and reliability.

2. **Value Creation:**
   This principle emphasizes that a CSO should design, implement, and evaluate its policies, strategies, plans, and activities based on its vision and mission of creating change and social benefit. In essence, value creation means that a CSO actively contributes to awareness and positive transformation in its field of work.

   CSOs possess unique potential to create social benefits through their very existence and activities. Their ability to unite for a common purpose and engage in collective thinking and action is a valuable resource for the well-being of target groups, communities, and society as a whole. Today, CSOs are increasingly effective in addressing numerous social challenges. Their expertise, resources, and ability to mobilize can create awareness and transformative impact on individuals, communities, and broader issues, from participatory democracy to disasters, the environment, health, poverty alleviation, education, culture, and sports.

   The principle of value creation reflects an organization's effectiveness in responding to problems and driving change. Therefore, it is a central focus of organizational development efforts.

3. **Transparency:**
   Transparency involves making information about an organization's structure and functioning accessible to relevant stakeholders.

   CSO transparency can be categorized into three levels: institutional, operational, and financial.

   - Institutional transparency encompasses information about governance, decision-making, personnel management, organizational structure, and operations.
   - Operational transparency relates to information about activities undertaken by the organization.

- Financial transparency includes financial statements, audit reports, and budget management information.

Transparency strengthens trust, legitimacy, and sustainability for CSOs, making them appealing to employees, volunteers, target audiences, stakeholders, donors, and funders. It is essential for participation, accountability, and sustainability.

4. **Accountability:**
   This principle requires organizations to be responsible for the proper use of their resources and powers, responsive to relevant parties, and committed to fulfilling their obligations. Decisions and practices should be justifiable, and individuals representing the organization should be accountable for their actions and communications. To demonstrate accountability, organizations should maintain clear records of decision-making processes, administrative procedures, and financial transactions that are accessible to relevant stakeholders.

   While transparency focuses on the availability of information, accountability emphasizes the obligation to act responsibly and justify actions. Accountability also demonstrates an organization's commitment to its non-profit nature and aligns its actions with its mission.

5. **Sustainability:**
   This principle refers to the creation of resources and managerial capacity to sustain the existence of the CSO. It is necessary for sustainability for a CSO to provide the necessary labor and financial resources for all its work towards achieving its goals and to regularly plan and review its activities. In the event of a change in the CSO's management, executive team and volunteers, successfully transferring the organization's vision, mission, values and governance processes to the newcomers is also one of the requirements of sustainability.

   Beyond its own sustainability, a CSO should also contribute to the environmental, social, and economic sustainability of society and the world. This includes developing policies, plans, and actions that support these goals.

6. **Non-discrimination and Equality:**
   Non-discrimination and equality refers to the principle of equality and inclusiveness in terms of rights, freedoms, resources and opportunities, and strengthening these elements in the CSO's organizational structure and functioning. This principle includes the observance of standards of service and information production that are accessible to all, both in administrative processes within the organization and in all the work carried out by the organization for third parties. An important element of this principle is gender equality. Gender equality requires taking active measures to ensure equality, both in all management processes within the organization and in all activities such as field research,

support and services provided, advocacy work, policy formulation and development.

This guide outlines the concrete steps organizations can take to transform these principles into a living organizational culture. Section I, "Planning and Implementation," discusses the nine systems that organizations need to plan and manage for effective governance. Section II, "Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning (MEL)," addresses the approach, methods, and systems for monitoring, evaluating processes, and transforming findings into actionable learning.

## T1.3. Scope of the Model: Management Areas

## I. PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

### 1. GOVERNANCE AND DECISION MAKING

Good governance in civil society organizations roughly means creating an organizational climate where basic principles such as participation, value creation, transparency, accountability and sustainability can be implemented. This is only possible in a structure where decision-making mechanisms and processes are well defined. A civil society organization answers basic questions such as where, how, when and with whom decisions will be taken, how they will be announced, implemented and monitored. In a structure where these are not defined, the principles of participation, transparency and accountability cannot be realized.

**1.1. The composition of the administrative/executive team and the level and manner in which decisions are taken are defined. Decisions are made through participation and common sense.**

The administrative/executive team, essentially the board of directors, is the team responsible for planning, implementing and evaluating the work. However, civil society organizations are dynamic structures and each civil society organization develops an appropriate organizational structure over time. In addition to the board of directors, civil society organizations can create mechanisms such as executive teams, units, commissions, advisory boards, etc. to increase participation and bring in different perspectives. It is necessary for good governance to define the roles of these structures, how they relate to each other, how regular communication and coordination between them will be ensured, and their place in decision-making processes. The ability of a CSO to realize its true potential depends on who are Involved, and how much they are involved in decision-making processes. In a civil society organization where good governance is dominant, one of the main responsibilities of the executive team is to ensure that members, volunteers, target group, relevant experts and employees, if any, are involved in decision-making processes, as well as making decisions with common sense as the executive team, and to create mechanisms, methods and tools for this.

**1.2. The administrative/executive team regularly conducts work on the future orientation of the organization (vision, mission, review of values, definition of strategies and goals).**

In CSOs, the more common the goal, the easier it is to act together. The ideal of the organization and its role within the framework of this ideal may require review from time to time due to changes in the needs of both the organization and the field in which it operates. As it is one of the responsibilities of the executive team, It both actively participates in the review process and designs the processes and tools that will make it possible for all parts of the organization to participate in this process. This is done first and foremost as a requirement of the principle of participation. If this is not done, the goals of the organization may be embraced by a narrow group of people and may even be met with resistance within the organization.

In parallel with the review of vision, mission and values, the organization should define which goals it needs to achieve first for the change it wants to create and by which means/strategies it will achieve these goals. In order to determine result-oriented goals and strategies that are in line with the principles and values of the organization, where resources are used effectively, the participation of all people of the organization, especially the administrative/executive team within their responsibility, is necessary.

**1.3. The administrative/executive team creates awareness and maintains communication with all parties through unity of language and a common message in line with the mission of the CSO.**

The administrative/executive team is the mirror of the civil society organization In a sense; therefore, it should reflect the mission, principles and goals of the civil society organization in the most accurate way. Failure to do so creates confusion and mistrust among stakeholders and damages the sense of belonging of the organization's members and volunteers. In order to maintain communication in a manner consistent with the organization's mission, the administrative/executive team should know the organization well, internalize its goals and principles, and communicate regularly and openly with team members. As the representatives of the organization, the administrative/executive team maintains communication with all stakeholders with consistent and common messages.

**1.4. The administrative/executive team designs and directs the organizational structure, processes, projects and systems that need to be defined in line with the strategies.**

Designing and directing the organizational structure, systems, processes and projects appropriately is one of the main tasks of the administrative/executive team. In order to achieve this, the administrative/executive team is involved in and adopts decision-making processes at a more macro level, such as setting the vision, mission, strategies and goals, keeping abreast of current knowledge in the field and examining the best practices. Once the mission, vision and the strategies to achieve them have been determined, the organizational structure is reviewed for its suitability and the processes, projects and systems needed to implement them are planned. A structure or system that works very well in one civil society organization may not be suitable for another. For this reason, all advantages and disadvantages must be discussed and evaluated with the relevant parties before the examples are implemented.

**1.5. The administrative/executive team is a guide/leader/consistent/exemplary in the elements that form the basis of the organizational culture (basic principles and values, norms, behaviors, style, etc.) and at the same time identifies the needs for change and manages the processes.**

Creating and sustaining culture in the organization is one of the responsibilities of the administrative/executive team. The administrator/executive team is expected to act consistently, setting an example with their behaviors especially in the important cultural elements (such as basic principles and values, behaviors, style) that make the organization an organization, because stakeholders adopt the culture not by hearing about it, but by seeing and living in it. The culture represented by the administrative/executive team constitutes the dominant culture of the organization. In order for the culture to be established within the organization, they first set a guide/example in this regard with their own behaviors and clearly and explicitly expect other people to embrace this culture with their behaviors.

**1.6. Does the administrative/executive team take measures to foresee and manage the administrative, financial and other risks in the management of the organization, including the organization's legal obligations?**

Risk refers to uncertain situations that may prevent the organization from achieving its organizational goals. Identifying the risks, deciding how to manage them and monitoring them is one of the most important tasks under the responsibility of the administrative/executive team. As with all the work carried out, the risk management process should also be participatory. After determining the organizational goals within the framework of the strategic plan, the administrative/executive team identifies the risks, i.e. the uncertain and negative situations that may prevent the achievement of these goals. One of the mistakes made in risk management is to identify a negatively experienced situation as a risk. A risk is an uncertain event, whereas a negatively experienced situation is a problem. After identifying the risks, the administrative/executive team decides how each risk will be managed and starts the Implementation of the risk management.

**1.7. The administrative/executive team makes the necessary arrangements to ensure gender equality in the decision-making mechanisms of the CSO and to include a gender equality perspective in decision-making processes.**

The administrative/executive team ensures that the gender equality policy document is prepared in a participatory manner and that all existing policy documents of the organization are reviewed with a gender equality perspective in order to include a gender equality perspective in decision-making processes and management areas. It makes the necessary arrangements for equal representation in the decision-making mechanisms and participation in all processes. It organizes the necessary work to strengthen the gender equality perspective of everyone involved in the decision-making processes and to develop a common approach and language in the organization on this issue. For all these activities, it establishes and maintains the necessary cooperation with CSOs and organizations working in the field of gender equality at local, national and international levels.

**Self-assessment Questions**

**1. Governance and Decision Making**

1.1. Who does the administrative /executive team consist of? To what extent are the decision-making bodies defined? Are decisions at different levels made with participation and common sense? How often does the administrative/executive team change and how is handover done?

1.2. Does the administrative/executive team regularly carry out work on the future orientation of the organization (vision, mission, review of values, definition of strategies and goals)?

1.3. Does the administrative/executive team create a unity of language and a common message in line with the organization's purpose, values and strategy and disseminate this message within and outside the organization while representing the CSO?

1.4. Does the administrative/executive team design and guide the organizational structure, processes, projects and systems that need to be defined in line with the organization's strategic plan?

1.5. Does the administrative/executive team set an example in the elements that form the basis of the organizational culture (basic principles and values, norms, behaviors, style, etc.) and at the same time identify the needs for change and manage the processes?

1.6. Does the administrative/executive team take measures to foresee and manage the administrative, financial and other risks in the management of the organization, including the organization's legal obligations?

1.7. Does the administrative/executive team make the necessary arrangements to ensure gender equality in the decision-making mechanisms of the CSO, to include a gender equality perspective in the decision-making processes, and does it implement practices in this direction?

## 2. STRATEGIC PLANNING

Organizations need long-term plans in order to achieve what they want to achieve in the future. Strategic planning can be briefly defined as long-term future plans. Understanding the expectations of stakeholders for the future, conducting internal and external analyses, and looking at the work of similar organizations constitute the preparatory phase of the strategic plan. Goals and strategies are designed in the light of these analyses. After the strategies and targets are set, an activity plan and budget are created. After the implementation of the plan, progress and deviations are reviewed in interim periods and necessary measures are taken. The strategic plan is reviewed every year. Every organization needs to prepare its strategic plan together with the relevant people in order to achieve its goals and manage its future.

**2.1. The CSO analyzes stakeholders and their expectations.**

During the preparation phase of strategic plans, the stakeholders of the CSO are identified or reviewed by the CSO. The expectations of the identified stakeholders from the organization are learned through different methods such as surveys, workshops or field studies. Through stakeholder analysis, the organization understands the different needs of different stakeholders and conducts preliminary work to ensure that the plan is participatory and pluralistic.

**2.2. The CSO conducts internal and external analyses (self-assessment, problem analysis, field/existing situation/needs analysis, SWOT, PESTEL, domestic and international similar analyses, stakeholder interviews).**

In order to achieve its long-term goals, a CSO has to evaluate its own performance and current conditions as well as the external conditions. Strengths and weaknesses are identified through internal analysis, and opportunities and threats are identified through external analysis. The organization includes In this analysis process all kinds of monitoring, evaluation, organizational learning and reporting studies that it thinks can provide input to the strategic planning process. In addition to these analyses, the structure and work of similar organizations with high performance can be examined to discover strengths and weaknesses and to be inspired to formulate strategies and action plans.

**2.3. The CSO determines its long-term goals and strategies in line with the analysis. Objectives are measurable and time-bound.**

The CSO reviews its mission (raison d'être), vision (the dream it wants to achieve in the long term), values and principles, in the light of stakeholder analysis, as well as internal, external and similar analyses It conducts. It determines its main goals (sub-goals of the vision) and the strategies it will follow to achieve them for the term it envisages to plan. While the goals answer the question of "where", the strategy answers the question of "how to get there".

**2.4. The CSO reduces the strategic plan to organizational processes, projects, annual activity plans and budgets.**

Annual activity plans and budgets are prepared In order to implement the strategies. Success targets and projects are set for processes. When these are realized, strategies and main objectives are achieved.

**2.5. The CSO reviews and monitors the progress in the strategic plan at specified intervals, and conducts root cause analysis and measures If there are deviations.**

During the implementation of the strategic plan, the status of the realizations according to the targets is reviewed at certain intervals with the participation of the relevant people. If the realizations are far from the target, the organization tries to understand the root cause. Once the reason for the deviation is understood, necessary changes are made, which can be different solutions such as taking the necessary measures to achieve the target, determining a different strategy or activity.

**2.6. The administrative/executive team ensures that a gender equality perspective is included in all stages of the strategic planning process.**

The administrative/executive team ensures women's participation at all stages of the strategic planning process, starting from the planning stage. It Includes gender-based issues and needs in all the relevant analyses. It seeks opinions from stakeholders active in the field of gender equality. It addresses gender equality as a specific objective in the strategic plan and ensures that a gender equality perspective is integrated into all the objectives and related activities. It ensures that data on indicators to be used in the monitoring of the plan are collected in a gender-disaggregated manner, specific gender-related indicators are defined, and data are analyzed with a gender perspective. It creates the strategic plan budget within this framework. The administrative/executive team obtains expertise from within the organization for all of this, and if not available, organizes support from a CSO or external expert.

**Self-assessment Questions**

**2. Strategic Planning**

2.1. Do you analyze your stakeholders and their expectations?

2.2. Do you conduct internal and external analyses (self-assessment, problem analyses, field/existing situation/needs analyses, SWOT, PESTEL, domestic and international similar analyses, stakeholder interviews)?

2.3. Do you set your long-term goals and strategies in line with the analysis? Are the goals measurable and time-bound?

2.4. Do you reduce the strategic plan to organizational processes, annual plans and budget?

2.5. Do you review the progress on the strategic plan at specified intervals and take measures for deviations?

2.6. Do you include a gender equality perspective in the strategic planning process at the level of analysis, strategy, target, activity and budget?

## 3. MEMBERSHIP

CSOs emerge and operate with the collective will of individuals who come together on a voluntary basis around a specific purpose. These voluntary individuals constitute the members of the organization. One of the most fundamental elements that distinguish CSOs from other organizations is that they are member-based structures. Members also constitute the primary resource of the organization. For these very reasons, it is essential to establish a functional membership policy and member management system that will meet the needs of the organization for a sound and sustainable institutional structure in organizations. In addition to the basic principles and values of the organization, a CSO is expected to manage all processes related to membership in accordance with the principles of participation, transparency and accountability.

**3.1. The CSO has a defined system that sets out the principles, standards and approach to membership (including procedures for admission and termination of membership).**

The organization has a defined approach to the membership mechanism, which is one of the fundamental elements of its existence, and Its related processes. It determines its organizational priorities In accordance with this approach, and reviews them according to the conditions of the day. If It Is aiming to expand its membership base, it takes the necessary measures, determines and implements the right methods. Criteria and values for the admission of members that do not lead to conflicts of interest in the organization but ensure the necessary inclusivity are defined. The processes of admission, orientation, development, communication with executive committees, employees and volunteers, and dismissal of members in accordance with the bylaws and laws are also defined.

**3.2. Information about members in the CSO is regularly recorded, updated and securely stored.**

The organization keeps an up-to-date and secure record of the profile of its members. It generates and analyzes this information as and when needed to provide input to the organization's strategy and membership approach (e.g., identification of potential areas where members can contribute to the organization's work, an event registration system to identify and encourage members who are less likely to participate in events, etc.).

**3.3. The SCO defines and maintains information sharing environments for the regular sharing of information on Its administrative, operational and audit processes with members.**

The organization defines to what extent and through which channels it will share information and documents related to planning, execution, decision-making and control processes with its members and maintains communication. It plans the methods and channels used, taking into account the different needs of Its members. It monitors the effectiveness of the processes and takes measures in case of problems. Intra-organizational information sharing systems are critical in reflecting the principles of participation, transparency and accountability in practice.

**3.4. Mechanisms for members to ensure their participation and contribution and to provide feedback are defined.**

In order for members to add value to the organization, the organization defines the necessary methods and mechanisms to ensure and improve their participation in the organization's administrative and operational processes (participation in policies and strategies, general assembly, contributing to working committees, taking part in activities, etc.). It monitors the effectiveness of the functioning of these methods and mechanisms. In this context, it receives feedback and evaluations from members. This feedback is periodically analyzed and evaluated and feedback is provided to members regarding the steps taken in this direction.

**3.5. It is defined how a gender equality perspective will be included in the processes of member recruitment, member communication, inclusion of members, receiving feedback from members and termination of membership.**

The Administrative/Executive team reviews the relevant institutional texts and policy documents and makes the necessary arrangements to ensure diversity and inclusion in terms of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc. in the CSO. It adopts the principle of non-discrimination based on gender, gender identity, sexual orientation etc. as a criterion for admission to membership, member relations and termination of membership. It organizes activities to strengthen the gender equality perspective of its members. It disaggregates, monitors and evaluates the data on member profile, member participation in activities and member feedback by gender.

**Self-assessment Questions**

**3. Membership**

3.1. Do you have a system that sets out the principles, standards and approach to membership (including the procedures for admission and termination of membership)?

3.2. Do you regularly record and update the information about members and store it securely?

3.3. Are your information sharing environments defined and maintained for regular sharing of information on the administrative, operational and audit processes with members?

3.4. Do you have defined mechanisms for members to ensure their participation and contribution and to provide feedback?

3.5. Do you have arrangements and practices to ensure that the processes of member acceptance, member communication, member participation in activities, receiving feedback from members and termination of membership are carried out on the basis of gender equality?

## 4. EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

Employees and volunteers play a key role for a CSO to achieve Its vision and to realize its goals. The people of a CSO, namely its employees and volunteers, are one of the most important implementers of the CSO in realizing its short and long term plans and achieving its goals. In addition, since they are concerned about the same problem as the CSO and look at the world from a similar perspective, they are both the actors and the ultimate beneficiaries of the impact that will emerge, i.e. social change. Therefore, they are among the key stakeholders of the CSO, directly affect its success and are directly affected by all kinds of decisions taken within the CSO. For this reason, every stage related to employees and volunteers should be organized in a participatory manner, objectively, based on the principles of equality and non-discrimination, and in a way that realizes the principle that the CSO supports its employees and volunteers in the strongest way possible.

### 4.1. Defines criteria and methods for the selection of the executive and administrative team, and for the selection of staff and volunteers in line with strategies and needs.

Employees and volunteers, as well as the entire executive and administrative team, should be selected based on predetermined, non-personalized and objective criteria according to the needs of the work, mission and strategic objectives. Each CSO defines recruitment, assignment and volunteer management processes appropriate to its own culture and structure. These processes can be defined separately for the selection of the executive and administrative team, volunteers and staff. What is key here is that the cornerstones of these systems are based on the principles of non-discrimination, equal opportunity, right person for the right job, transparency and objectivity.

### 4.2. It has a policy that protects the rights of employees within the organization, including their legal rights (salaries, leave, fringe benefits, duty of care, indemnities, managing conflicts between employees and management, defining separation of authority and responsibility, etc.).

CSOs need to consider the productivity and efficiency of individuals together with the well-being of employees. Employee rights are an important key that brings these elements together and ensures labor peace. To this end, workers' rights should be written down in a way that does not fall behind existing national and international regulations, and contracts and policies should be prepared accordingly. Working conditions and working environment should be regulated in a way to prevent violations such as exploitation, burnout, bullying and mobbing by addressing them within the scope of social rights and other areas of rights that intersect with these rights.

Policies should address the need, the problem and the prevention of violations and conflicts. Policy documents that will provide this environment should be organized and implemented in as participatory a manner as possible. Tools such as information, orientation and training required for the implementation of policies should be regular parts of the functioning. The functionality and impartiality of the mechanisms to be activated in the event of a violation must be guaranteed. The prepared policies should be reviewed and updated.

**4.3. Development plans such as orientation and trainings for employees and volunteers are in place and implemented.**

In order to achieve its goals and contribute to social change, the organization empowers and supports its employees and volunteers in various aspects (such as being equipped in their field of work, being aware of new national and international developments, having the necessary qualifications and skills to achieve the mission, vision and strategic goals). To this end, CSOs make effective plans to support and monitor the development of their staff and volunteers in line with their means. The planning process is carried out through participatory methods and can be annual depending on the working period of the CSO.

**4.4. Defines and maintains knowledge sharing environments for the dissemination of knowledge in the organization.**

All staff and volunteers need to have full access to key information and tools to fulfill their responsibilities in their field of activity. The CSO establishes mechanisms to ensure that everyone has access to the information they need to fulfill their responsibilities. At the same time, it creates mechanisms to support staff and volunteers to share their knowledge, experiences and other information they access from the field with the rest of the team; and encourages them in this respect.

**4.5. Monitors and provides feedback on the effectiveness of the work of the executive team, employees and volunteers in their own fields of activity on issues such as fundraising and representation.**

Mechanisms are established to monitor and provide feedback on the effectiveness of the work carried out by employees and volunteers at all levels in their areas of responsibility and activity, their compliance with and contribution to the mission, vision and strategic goals. On this basis, the development of employees and volunteers is supported. These mechanisms include methods to ensure the participation of the CSO's people in decisions to be taken in their areas of responsibility and activity. The people of the CSO should be strengthened in their fields of activity through constructive feedback and their experiences, perspectives and ideas should be included in decision-making mechanisms through appropriate methods.

**4.6. Recognizes and appreciates employees and volunteers at appropriate times and methods.**

The efforts of all employees and volunteers and their contributions to the CSO's mission, vision and strategic goals should be recognized and appreciated equally, without discrimination. In addition to the establishment of appropriate recognition and appreciation mechanisms for this purpose, an equitable management structure in which all people of the CSO have full confidence that they are treated equally and fairly is turned into an organizational culture. It is the responsibility of the managers of the CSO to establish a working environment where solidarity, sharing and caring for each other among all the people of the CSO are realized as basic working principles and where work peace is high. Such a work environment both increases the confidence of CSO employees that the mechanisms of appreciation and recognition are fair and robust, and also increases their loyalty to the organization.

**4.7. Collects and analyzes employee and volunteer feedback through appropriate methods (feedback surveys, idea and suggestion sharing environments, exit interviews, etc.).**

The CSO should determine the method, by whom, according to which criteria and how often the feedback to be used for employees and volunteers will be provided. The outputs of the defined feedback mechanism should be used for empowerment, change and development in the organization. In order for the information and data from the feedback to be understood and used in a transformative way, organizations must plan time for this and identify the people responsible for it. When there is feedback that cannot be turned into action due to time, resources, context, etc., a briefing can be provided, including the rationale for this situation.

Feedback should not be seen only as a means of criticism and complaint. It can be used to eliminate deficiencies and to improve what is wrong, and also to sustain what is good. The empowering contribution of positive feedback to individuals and its function in sustaining what is good is important. The organization should consider the uniqueness of its own work, the functionality of the method it determines for feedback in line with the number of volunteers and employees and should not hesitate to update it when necessary.

**4.8. The Administrative/Executive team makes arrangements to ensure gender equality in areas such as the selection and development of employees and volunteers, rights and opportunities provided to employees, protection of employees from violence, and the working environment, and implements practices accordingly.**

The administrative/executive team makes arrangements to prevent discrimination and inequality based on gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc. in terms of selection of employees and volunteers, assignment to a position or special work, working hours, undertaking defined and undefined jobs, salaries, rights and conditions. It establishes and operates mechanisms to prevent violence in the work environment. It also informs its employees about gender and gender-based violence and includes gender equality policies and practices in the orientation program. It receives feedback from its employees on regulations and practices in these areas and makes improvements in line with the feedback.

**Self-assessment Questions**

**4. Staff and volunteers**

4.1. Are the tasks to be performed by the administrative/executive team, employees and volunteers within the organization, and criteria and methods for their selection defined In line with the strategies and needs?

4.2. Do you have a policy that protects employees' rights within the organization, including their legal rights (salaries leave, fringe benefits, duty of care, indemnities, managing conflicts between employees and management, defining separation of authority and responsibility, etc.)?

4.3. Do you have and implement arrangements to support the orientation and development of staff and volunteers, such as trainings?

4.4. Do you have information sharing environments? How do you utilize technology that supports internal communication (e.g. e-mail, document storage, intranet, common areas)?

4.5. Do you monitor the effectiveness of the executive team in matters such as coordination, fundraising and representation, and the effectiveness of the work of staff and volunteers in their own areas of activity? Do you provide feedback through appropriate methods?

4.6. Do you recognize and appreciate staff and volunteers at the appropriate time and through appropriate methods?

4.7. Do you collect and analyze employee and volunteer feedback through appropriate methods (feedback surveys, idea and suggestion sharing environments, exit interviews, etc.)?

4.8. Do you have regulations and practices in your organization to ensure gender equality in areas such as the selection and development of employees and volunteers, rights and opportunities provided to employees, protection of employees from violence, and the working environment?

## 5. COLLABORATIONS, PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKS

CSOs are involved in local, national and international networks, and establish collaborations and partnerships in order to realize their mission, vision and strategic goals and contribute to the social change they desire. Collaborations, partnerships and networks are analyzed to determine whether they are in line with the CSO's strategies and policies, whether they support the CSO's goals, whether they contribute to the desired social change, and this area is organized in a way that will provide the most benefit.

**5.1. Evaluates organizations and networks for cooperation and partnership in international, national, regional and local contexts, including their values and objectives, work and functions.**

The field of work is regularly scanned to analyze potential organizations and networks for cooperation and partnerships, and other CSOs, umbrella organizations, other institutions and organizations active in the same or similar fields are listed. Other CSOs, institutions and organizations that can make the greatest contribution to the CSO in terms of vision, mission, principles and values and strategic objectives, have a sphere of influence for advocacy and network development, can provide the CSO with ideas for creative and innovative activities and from which it can learn in terms of improvement are identified. The list is divided into potential partnerships, collaborations and networks. Each organization/institution/network on the list is analyzed in terms of its strength in supporting the strategic objectives, its functionality and potential contribution to the desired long-term impact, as well as its potential benefit to the area of work, goals and objectives. They are assessed in terms of their alignment with the CSO's principles and values and the basis and framework for collaboration or partnership with the institutions and organizations concerned, how this will contribute to the CSO's mission, vision and strategic objectives, and the financial and human resources required for this collaboration. The knowledge gain resulting from this regular analysis enables the civil society organization to develop the skills and capabilities it needs to enter into effective partnerships and collaborations in its field of work and to become a member of important networks or create new networks.

**5.2. Identifies and implements appropriate policies, working methods, channels and tools to work effectively and harmoniously with partner and collaborating organizations.**

In order to work effectively and harmoniously with partnering and cooperating institutions, principles and values agreed upon by all parties (which should not conflict with the principles and values of the CSO), working methods, information sharing environments, distribution of duties and responsibilities, etc. details are determined to ensure that the partnership and cooperation work smoothly, create value for all parties, and maximize its impact on achieving the targeted results. A working culture based on mutual trust, transparency and sharing is created.

**5.3. Monitors, analyzes and evaluates the impact, mutual performance and functionality of the work carried out together within the scope of partnerships, collaborations and networks.**

Measuring the impact of partnerships and collaborations and the impact of the networks involved is key to understanding the contribution of these joint efforts to the goal and maximizing their impact. The decision to continue or terminate the joint work can be based on this monitoring and analysis. Monitoring and analysis is based on some basic indicators.

**5.4. The Administrative/Executive team analyzes CSOs active in the field of gender equality, exchanges information and experiences with them, and develops cooperation with these organizations.**

The Administrative/Executive team follows the work of organizations active in the field of gender equality, shares information and experience with these CSOs in line with their strategies and goals, carries out joint work, and participates in relevant platforms. It evaluates the policies, practices and discourses of CSOs and organizations with a gender equality perspective and defines this as a criterion for cooperation. Receives feedback from CSOs active in the field of gender equality on both their organizational arrangements and their work in the field.

**Self-assessment Questions**

**5. Collaborations, Partnerships and Networks**

5.1. Do you evaluate organizations and networks to cooperate and partner with in the international, national, regional and local context, including their values and objectives, work and functions?

5.2. Do you define and implement appropriate policies, working methods, channels and tools to work effectively and harmoniously with partner and collaborating organizations?

5.3. Do you monitor, analyze and evaluate the impact, mutual performance and functionality of the work you do together in partnerships, collaborations and networks?

5.4. Do you monitor and analyze CSOs active in the field of gender equality and exchange information and experiences with them?

## 6. RESOURCES

Resources for CSOs can be considered in a very broad perspective. The volunteers and employees mentioned above are important resources for CSOs in terms of the labor and knowledge provided, and the potentials created by partners and collaborations are resources for CSOs. In addition to the financial resources mentioned here, infrastructure, equipment, information and technology are also CSO resources that are expected to be managed correctly and efficiently. Therefore, CSOs plan and manage resources not only in terms of money but also in a broader framework.

### 6.1. Processes and procedures for identifying suppliers and procurement are defined.

All principles and processes applicable to CSO procurement should be defined in a policy document. In all procurement, the CSO should evaluate the most economically advantageous offer, i.e. the one that offers the best price-quality ratio, in accordance with the principles of transparency and fair competition and taking care to avoid any conflict of interest. For good procurement, the principles of transparency and non-discrimination, fair competition, understandable specifications/job descriptions, use of relevant objective criteria, and avoidance of conflicts of interest should all be followed in harmony. However, in line with its own basic principles and ethical standards, the CSO can also positively discriminate against companies that do not employ child labor, have an environmental protection policy, have a GE policy document, or are owned by women, have more women employees, etc. An important aspect of the process is adequate record keeping. All documents related to procurement (bids, evaluation, reports, contracts, etc.) are filed and recorded at the headquarters of the organization.

### 6.2. The CSO plans, monitors and updates the general budget of the CSO (including cash flow, debts and receivables) in line with a system.

The CSO plans the income it needs to obtain in order to realize its goals and objectives and its expenditures for the resources it will use in its budget annually. The income section of the budget may consist of items such as dues, donations and aids, project and grant revenues, and commercial activities. The expenses section can be considered in two parts; the first part is operational expenses, which include the process and project activity expenses of the CSO to realize its objectives. The second part consists of administrative and managerial expenses for the management of the CSO. In addition to achieving its objectives, the organization follows the budget it has planned in order to monitor its financial sustainability and to monitor the performance of the income to meet the expenses. In ideal conditions in terms of holistic management, a CSO designs its strategic plan and the activities to realize this plan and plans the resources it will create and use to carry out these activities in its budget.

Another financial performance that CSOs should monitor is the debt and receivable situation. If the debts are much higher than the receivables or if the receivables are high but cannot be collected, this creates a financial risk for the CSO. For this reason, the CSO monitors cash flow in order to be able to follow the debt and receivable situation and make the right financial decisions. In short, cash flow is the monitoring of incoming money (receivable settlement) and outgoing money (debt settlement). In terms of financial performance, the receipt of receivables and the payment of debts are monitored. The CSO management should have access to this information at any time. In terms of accountability, while the CSO management has this information, it is also in a position to make the necessary interventions regarding them.

**6.3. Manages the obligations of financial support received from third parties (regulatory obligations, execution of grant agreements, reporting, etc.) within a system.**

All financial transactions under the financial support received are carried out within the framework of the grant agreement signed with the contracting authority and in accordance with both Turkish legislation and EU financial regulation rules. In this context, the contractor shall implement the requirements of the contract with efficiency, transparency and due diligence, in line with the principle of sound financial management and best practices in the field. The data required for the preparation of technical and financial reports, other information or supporting documents required by the grant agreement and its annexes, as well as any information needed for audits, controls, monitoring or evaluations, shall be transmitted to the contracting authority in a timely and accurate manner. Expenditure and payment documents and supporting documents relating to all financial transactions made under the contract shall be kept properly for the period required by the contract.

**6.4. Carries out income generation activities (funds, projects, donations, dues, sponsorships, etc.) in a planned manner in line with the organization's strategy.**

After determining its goals and objectives, the CSO calculates the income it needs to generate to realize them during the budget planning period. In order to generate this income, it prepares a resource development plan and carries out its activities. It is not the right approach in terms of accountability and benefit creation for a CSO to passively wait for income and carry out activities according to the income received. The CSO treats resource development as a process that it actively manages. An actively managed process includes planning, implementation, monitoring and taking measures. A risk for CSOs in fundraising is that after a while it becomes too money-oriented and the purpose of the fundraising is forgotten. The CSO carries out fundraising activities without forgetting its mission and vision.

**6.5. Mechanisms are put in place to ensure transparency and accountability of the organization.**

The highest body of the CSO is the general assembly composed of its members. After the general assembly delegates its powers to the management it elects, it elects the audit board to control the work done in terms of transparency and accountability. The audit board audits the CSO in terms of legal, financial and performance compliance at specified intervals. The audit committee reports to the general assembly that the management has used its powers and resources appropriately for the CSO's purposes and complied with legal requirements. A properly conducted audit is the most important mechanism to prove the transparency and accountability of the management. The audit board is also the body that exonerates and guarantees the management. Its effective functioning is in the interest of CSO management, but when it is not, it means that the management is left unsupported and vulnerable in terms of transparency and accountability. In addition to the audit committee, proper reporting, determining what information will be shared, with which parties, in which environment and when is also necessary for transparency and accountability. External audits are also among the mechanisms that can be used.

**6.6. The CSO establishes a structure so that the information produced in the organization is stored securely in appropriate environments within the organization and can be accessed by the relevant persons.**

One of the most important resources for CSOs is information. The CSO is aware that the information produced through individuals belongs to the CSO and takes the necessary measures to transfer this information to the institutional memory. The CSO categorizes information accordingly. One of the CSO's knowledge is the way of doing business (e.g. processes, regulations, procedures). These are dynamic knowledge that can be developed and improved. Another type of information is data (e.g. member and volunteer information, monitoring records), i.e. static information. This information can be in paper or electronic form. The CSO stores all this information in appropriate organizational environments. These environments are the ones that can ensure the security of the information and enable the right people to access it at any time.

The organization also determines where to store its information after classifying and identifying it in paper or electronic media. In terms of information security, these areas should be places where the information will not be damaged, where the right people can access it, where it will not be dispersed uncontrollably, and where it will not be accessible to parties who are not appropriate to know about it. For example, storing application forms containing member information in a room where people frequently enter and exit may create a security weakness. Where, for how long and how to archive inactive information is also defined in terms of the security of the information. Destruction methods for information that has completed its archive period are also one of the issues to be defined by the CSO. For example, using a confidential document as a scratch paper with an environmentalist approach may create a security vulnerability; thus, an appropriate destruction rule should be defined for the type of information these documents contain.

**6.7. Makes arrangements for transferring the knowledge accumulated and produced in individuals to the institutional memory and transforming it into institutional practices.**

The knowledge accumulated in organizations can be considered in its simplest form under two headings: data and ways of doing business. Data can be thought of as statically generated and stored information. For example, member information, employee information, participant information, survey results, reports, etc. Ways of doing business, on the other hand, is the knowledge of how the work carried out in the organization is done. This is dynamic information as ways of doing business can change and evolve. For example, procurement, selection of volunteers, organization of trainings for the target group, project management. All these tasks are done by practitioners using certain methods to produce a certain result. Processes, procedures, documents and policies are prepared in order to transform this accumulated knowledge into organizational ways of doing things and to do them in a certain standard. Organizational ways of doing business are needed to get rid of the dependence on individuals and to do things in a certain order. Anyone who needs guidance to do these things can benefit from these documents, and they are improved as better ways of doing things are discovered. This enables organizational learning and transfer to institutional memory. Institutional memory is most easily and commonly captured and transmitted in writing. However, if done regularly and well, storytelling and training can be used to pass on organizational memory, as in the case of a recipe that has been passed down for generations.

**6.8. Pays attention to the sustainability of natural resources in institutional planning and implementation processes.**

Although CSOs contribute to the society in line with their mission, they are aware of the environmental impact of their work. It is aware of the impact of the natural resources it uses (such as water, electricity, natural gas) and the wastes it generates. The CSO analyzes the environmental impact it creates while carrying out its activities and determines measures, including recycling, to minimize it.

**6.9. While managing the budget, the administrative/executive team takes into account gender needs in the organization and work area. Maintains budget management processes based on gender equality and ensures women's participation in the processes.**

The administrative/executive team ensures the participation of women in the budget planning process. It makes arrangements and allocates resources to facilitate the participation of members, volunteers and interns with care obligations. It includes activities to ensure gender equality in the budget. It adopts gender equality commitments and practices as a criterion for relations with suppliers, sponsors and donors. It prioritizes cooperation with women's cooperatives, economic enterprises of women's organizations and enterprises established by women. It ensures the security of sensitive data, monitors whether there is gender-based inequality in access to information sharing environments and takes necessary measures.

**Self-assessment Questions**

**6. Resources (Financial Resources, Procedural and Methodological Knowledge, Natural Resources)**

6.1. How do you manage your processes and relationships in identifying and purchasing from your suppliers?

6.2. How do you manage your overall budget (planning, monitoring, taking measures, etc.)?

6.3. How do you manage the obligations (regulatory obligations, execution of grant agreements, reporting, etc.) of financial support received from third parties?

6.4. How do you generate income (funds, projects, donations, dues, sponsorships, etc.)?

6.5. What kind of audit and reporting mechanisms do you have In order to ensure transparency and accountability of the organization?

6.6. Do you have practices in place to ensure that information is stored securely in appropriate environments within the organization and accessible by relevant persons?

6.7. Do you have arrangements for transferring the knowledge accumulated and produced in individuals to the institutional memory and transforming it into institutional practices?

6.8. What methods do you have to ensure sustainability of natural resources in organizational planning and implementation processes?

6.9. When managing your budget, do you take into account gender needs in your organization and field of work? How do you ensure women's participation in budget management processes?

## 7. THE FIELD OF WORK

The focus of the social transformation that a civil society organization wants to create is its main field of work. The framework of the organization's field of work is drawn with its vision and mission. Since civil society organizations are constantly developing and renewing structures, their field of work may expand or contract over time. Many factors such as correctly defining and analyzing the problems in the field, involving its target group in decision-making processes, setting achievable and time-bound goals that coincide with its vision, being known and trusted by the society, and good governance determine the impact of a civil society organization in its field of work. The more effective a CSO is in its field of work, the more benefits it can create for its target group.

**7.1. The CSO receives the expectations of members, beneficiaries and target groups in its field of work. It develops its processes, projects and activities in line with these needs.**

In order to create change in the field of work, civil society organizations get to know the field and analyze it correctly. The way to achieve this is to hear the voices of those who are affected by the problem and want to change it. Civil society organizations use various methods and tools to identify the problems, needs and expectations of their members, volunteers and beneficiaries, especially their target group. They evaluate these and reflect the results both in organizational processes and advocacy activities.

**7.2. Follows the field to develop activities (processes, projects) in the field of work, and learns from other organizations.**

There are many systems, methods and tools developed by civil society organizations in both organizational management and advocacy. Transferring this accumulated knowledge in the civil sphere to the organization contributes to the organization using its resources more effectively and carrying out effective work in the field of work in a shorter period of time. Especially in a digitalized world, accessing this knowledge is much easier and less costly than in the past. It is not necessary to be active in the same field to benefit from the experience of a civil society organization. It can benefit from examples working in very different areas such as governance, resource development, communication and advocacy. This is a particularly useful exercise to undertake prior to strategic planning.

**7.3. Involves the target audience in its activities.**

A civil society organization exists primarily to create a lasting transformation in the lives of its target group. In order to achieve this, the target group should be included in the planning, implementation and evaluation processes of policies, projects and activities through appropriate methods. Methods such as collecting opinions through surveys, conducting focus group studies, inviting them to meetings, and receiving feedback after the activities can be used. In this way, the CSO can act together with its target group while realizing participation.

**7.4. Collects and uses beneficiary feedback, including satisfaction and grievance feedback, to improve its activities.**

The best way to find out whether the work is achieving its purpose is to look at how the target audience is affected by it. This can be a project, campaign, service or event. The civil society organization evaluates the impact of its work through face-to-face or other methods. It creates reporting and complaint mechanisms, introduces these mechanisms to its target group and ensures that they are used. It evaluates the feedback, reflects it on its work and informs its target audience about the results.

**7.5. Shares the experience and lessons learned in the field of work with organizations working on similar issues in the civil sphere, generates, disseminates and provides expertise in information and resources.**

Civil society organizations share the experience they have accumulated in their field of work with other actors and civil society organizations in the field. Thus, they play a role as a resource in strengthening the field of work in particular and the civil sphere in general. The sharing of knowledge and experience of organizations with other organizations is one of the components of the rights-based approach. The rights-based approach aims to empower target groups and the Civil Sphere. Therefore, organizations conducting rights-based work share the data they obtain from the field and the research, guides and other resources they prepare based on this data with relevant stakeholders and the public through various communication channels. Organizations can share their knowledge and experience by making their resources accessible to everyone, or they can offer their expertise to the field through peer coaching, training, workshops, etc. In addition to expertise, making other resources such as office sharing and meeting room use available to the civil sphere contributes to the strengthening of the field.

**7.6. Conducts negotiations with key decision makers and influencers.**

Much of the success of CSOs in this communication is found in the message they give to decision-makers. For this reason, the organization reflects the situation analysis of the field it works in to its communication plan. These include having a good command of numerical data on the field of work, conducting research, getting to know the people and organizations working in the field and knowing their stance, and getting to know the actors and stakeholders who affect the process, have the potential to affect the process and will be affected by the results.

**7.7. The Administrative/Executive team analyzes gender-based problems and needs in the field of work; determines policies, objectives and activities in line with these analyses.**

The administrative/executive team monitors the gender equality agenda in the field of work, participates in relevant platforms and meetings, and follows current research and studies. It reflects gender-based problems and needs in the current situation analysis and takes into account multiple/intersectional forms of discrimination. Assesses in advance how the results of any work to be carried out will affect women and men. In order to reflect a gender equality perspective in its work, it seeks to strengthen the capacity of the organization and receives support from experts and CSOs working in this field. It monitors and evaluates the data on the participants of the CSO's work and activities and beneficiary feedback by gender and reflects them in its work.

**Self-assessment Questions**

**7. The Field of Work**

7.1. Do you receive the expectations of members, beneficiaries and target groups in your field of work? Do you develop your processes, projects and activities in line with these needs?

7.2. How do you follow the field to improve your activities (process, projects) in the field of work, do you learn from other organizations?

7.3. Does your target audience actively participate in the relevant activity?

7.4. Do you collect and use beneficiary feedback, including satisfaction and grievance feedback, to improve your activities? Which methods do you use?

7.5. Do you share and disseminate the experience and lessons learned in your field of work by transforming them into information and resources for organizations working on similar issues in the civil sphere?

7.6. How do you negotiate with key decision makers and influencers?

7.7. Do you analyze gender-based problems and needs in your field of work and reflect these analyses in your work at the policy, target and activity level?

## 8. COMMUNICATION

Communication in general terms is the transmission of ideas and information. For CSOs, communication means conveying the true nature of the organization, the problems it deals with and what it brings to society. CSOs carry out communication work on, but not limited to, awareness, visibility, cooperation, advocacy, promotion, dissemination and change.

**8.1. The CSO analyzes Its stakeholders and target audience in order to communicate the right message to the right audience through appropriate methods in line with Its goals and priorities.**

In its communication activities, the organization defines its target audiences (the people and groups to whom all activities are directed and from whom action and thought change is expected as a result of these activities). It uses different communication strategies and tactics to appeal to different target audiences. It identifies which platforms the target audience is on and how they communicate. It makes the necessary analyzes to communicate with them on those platforms. The communication plan is more successful when the CSO correctly identifies and narrows its target audience for each message it will convey. The organization regularly monitors its target audience, reviews its analyses at regular intervals and identifies needs for change.

**8.2. In line with the analysis, there is a communication approach (plan, strategic communication plan, annual communication calendar, etc.) that includes the medium (digital channels, web, social media, software, printed materials, etc.) to communicate with stakeholders (including internal stakeholders), the messages to be conveyed and risk management.**

In order to plan the implementation of the communication approach it adopts, the CSO can put its foresight on which stakeholders and which messages it will share through which channels into an annual calendar. This communication approach also includes the planning of the communication channels required for the period (digital platforms, social media, conventional tools, etc.) to ensure effective outreach to stakeholders and target groups. Ideally, a communication plan that includes the organization's communication approach, communication strategies for all activities and programs that the CSO plans to carry out, communication activities and a budget for the resources needed for these activities.

The CSO takes strategic targeting and continuity into account when preparing its message. It designs different messages for different target audiences, uses compelling narratives, stories and memorable images for its messages. The CSO is aware of the wide variety of communication media and tools. It is aware of the contribution of digital tools, but the use of traditional channels (brochures, billboards, etc.) may be more effective locally. Examples of mediums include email, weekly letters or newsletters, e-newsletters, web page, billboards, intranet, magazines or leaflets, SMS, social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, YouTube, Tumblr, Instagram, Snapchat), #hashtags, influencers, public or community leaders, famous people, promotion.

The organization has a monitoring, evaluation and learning mechanism to ensure that the communication activities carried out within the scope of its planning are used efficiently, effectively and meaningfully in accordance with the purpose and needs. It regularly monitors its data for the targets set within the scope of the plan. It periodically evaluates this data, draws conclusions from lessons learned, identifies new needs and reflects them in planning processes.

**8.3. It has an institutional identity and a policy for communication.**

Even if CSOs do not sell products or services, their advocacy activities, events, fundraising, etc. promise a better future because they serve a social value. For this reason, the organization's institutional identity provides concise messages, consistent/relevant visual language, and more effective communication of the CSO's objectives. An institutional identity guideline and/policy (from visual standards to message guidelines) creates a solid framework for external communication, donations and working with donors. As a result, a brand message and identity that is aligned with values and objectives will enable more effective use of resources.

### 8.4. It has a strategy for digital communication.

Digital communication is the communication of CSOs through internet-based applications in order to generate, develop and disseminate ideas, information and messages. Digital communication takes place through various digital content (digital media) such as video, audio, text or animation, using digital devices such as computers, tablets, smartphones, game consoles, etc. Having an online presence is one of the most effective ways for CSOs to talk to potential supporters.

Digital communication enables to do the following in the shortest and most effective way:

- Strengthening word of mouth (WoM-Word of Mouth)
- Connecting in new ways
- Building communities of support
- Collecting donations
- Making the previously invisible more visible (good and bad!)
- Nurturing donors, volunteers and supporters,

A digital strategy addresses various aspects of the CSO's needs. It transforms organizational goals and objectives into a strategy that optimizes the impact of digital marketing initiatives on the organization. This is done through the following:

- It analyzes and prioritizes target audience/group needs and objectives that the CSO can adequately address and develop,
- It identifies opportunities and challenges for the CSO as a whole and more specifically where digital assets and tactics can help,
- It creates a strategic framework for how digital assets will meet fundraising and audience/group needs, as well as a plan to measure their effectiveness.
- It identifies and prioritizes the digital assets and tactics that can be delivered within this framework and implements the appropriate measurement plan.

### 8.5. The Administrative/Executive team makes the necessary arrangements for internal and external communication based on gender equality.

The Administrative/Executive team analyzes all data that will form the basis of the communication strategy, disaggregates It by gender, and determines its messages and communication tools accordingly. It ensures that the principles and rules to be taken as basis in internal and external communication cover equality-based communication and takes necessary measures to ensure that none of the publications contain gender discriminatory language. It Includes gender-related problems and needs in the field of work in negotiations with key decision-makers and influencers. It organizes necessary trainings/workshops to ensure the use of egalitarian language within the CSO and in its work.

**Self-assessment Questions**

**8. Communication**

8.1. Do you analyze your stakeholders and target audience in order to communicate the right message to the right audience through appropriate methods in line with your goals and priorities?

8.2. In line with these analyses, do you have a communication approach that includes the medium (digital channels web, social media, software, printed materials, etc.) through which you will communicate with your stakeholders (including internal stakeholders), the messages you will convey and risk management?

8.3. Do you have an institutional identity and a policy for communication?

8.4. Do you have a strategy for digital communication?

8.5. Do you have arrangements and practices in place to ensure internal and external communication based on gender equality?

## 9. DIGITALIZATION[6]

Digitalization looks at how the CSO's digital assets and digital processes are handled. Digitalization can be viewed in two ways.

- Digitization means converting something into a digital format and usually refers to the encoding of data and documents.
- Digitalization means transforming business processes to use digital technologies instead of analog or offline systems such as paper or whiteboards. The simplest examples are using e-mail instead of fax, storing files in the cloud instead of storing files in a closet.

In summary, digitization refers to data creation and information, while digitalization refers to processes.

While digitalization is a technological process, digital transformation is a cultural process. The focus is not on technology, but on the needs and experience of the people of the organization and the target group/audience. With digitalization, it may be possible to reach more stakeholders, respond better to their needs and facilitate business processes.

**9.1. When determining the digital infrastructure (hardware, tools, services, channels and policies), the CSO assesses in a holistic way at the organizational level how the use of these tools will be ensured and sustained to meet the strategic needs of the organization in the long term.**

[6] The content in this section is based on Creating a Digital Strategy for Nonprofits (see; https://mb.cision.com/Public/3847/9287562/b2d76349a4c04c81.pdf accessed 06.03.2024)

When determining their digital infrastructure (hardware, tools, services, channels and policies), CSOs take into account the long-term goals of the organization and the needs and expectations of the target audience and employees. The selection of a digital infrastructure that responds to the work to be done in the long term, meets the needs of the target audience and is user-friendly for the people of the organization ensures the right use of resources and ensures that the right work is done with the right infrastructure in the long term. Infrastructures that are not selected in this way become unresponsive to the needs in the short term and are not used by the people of the organization, that is, they become idle. In this case, the investment is wasted. Organizational information in the idle digital infrastructure may not be retrieved and users may become frustrated. Digital infrastructure is determined in line with the organization's strategies and its long-term sustainability is evaluated holistically in terms of goals, stakeholder needs and business requirements.

**9.2. With a defined approach and methodology to improve the digital literacy of key internal stakeholders, the CSO ensures their adaptation to the tools and channels used in the organization.**

The CSO communicates the digital infrastructure that it determines in the long term and for the needs to the people who need to use it within the organization as a standard. The information about which activities will be carried out using which digital infrastructures is equally available to the individuals. After this information, people are empowered to use these infrastructures at the same level. This empowerment can be done through methods such as face-to-face or online trainings on the use of the digital infrastructure, information notes, videos, coaching and mentoring. It is also aimed to bring the knowledge of the use of digital tools used in the organization to a common level in individuals.

**9.3. CSO ensures its digital security (licensed anti-virus, security software, secure-institutional-sustainable encryption, account management, web domain name, hosting panel password, etc.).[7]**

Digital security means protecting our online identity. It includes content we can use to secure our presence in the online world.

CSO assesses the digital risks faced by stakeholders, the organization, and the projects and activities carried out. Standard operating procedures (SOPs) and effective policies are developed to ensure the digital security of the organization and guide users in the organization in their use of technology. Digital security policies provide clear guidance on security in the digital environment and cover the following topics:

- Internal platform and devices: Employee access and exit procedures, password protection mechanisms, antivirus software/firewalls, data backup protocols, software update arrangements, including deletion of personal data.

[7] This title is based on the document "Security to go: a risk management toolkit for humanitarian aid agencies" (see: https://gisf.ngo/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Security-to-Go-3rd-Edition.pdf. accessed 06.03.2024)

- Information security: privacy policy and classification system, such as confidential, restricted, internal or public use, legally compliant information sharing arrangements.

- Communication: Encryption arrangements, voice communication protocols, use of applications for work-related communication.

- Travel and network access: Guidelines on the use of Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) or public or unsecured networks, guidance and regulations on device protection.

- Social media: Guidelines for posting sensitive information consistent with the code of conduct, rules on the delay required when posting travel locations (including geotagging), systems for reporting abuse and attacks on staff or the organization.

### 9.4. Ensures the sustainability of computers and other equipment owned by the organization (maintenance of existing equipment, identification and elimination of new needs, software updates, etc.).

It is ideal to establish a system to guide the use, maintenance and security of computers and equipment in the organization. It is necessary to pay attention to what the maintenance requirements for technological equipment include (usually 3-5 years for most equipment and applications). The term "maintenance" refers to the preventive, diagnostic, updating, replacement and repair procedures that a CSO undertakes to keep its technology running effectively and efficiently. Maintenance can be provided by individuals within the organization who are equipped to do so, or through external contractors. Maintenance items may include:

- Replacement of wearing parts and consumables;

- Repair or replacement of defective components;

- Provision of cleaning equipment;

- Monitoring the status and functionality of networks and equipment, including testing the website access and connections;

- Redeployment of equipment;

- Updating or upgrading hardware and software, including installing new versions of the operating system;

- Adding/deleting users to a system or changing user rights and properties;

- Backup of stored files;

- Documentation of usage trends and patterns of applications or equipment;

- Removal and disposal of equipment and applications.

**9.5. The Administrative/Executive team makes the necessary arrangements to ensure gender equality in access to digital information and digital tools in the organization and implements practices accordingly.**

The Administrative/Executive team regularly monitors whether there is gender-based inequality in access to digital tools and information on digital space in the organization, and if it detects any inequality in this regard, it investigates the reasons and takes measures. It ensures that all data on the CSO and its work in the digital environment is gender-disaggregated. It takes necessary measures to protect sensitive data on gender-related issues. It observes gender balance in participation in trainings in the digital field. It Informs the organization about gender-based digital violence, risks and measures. It takes into account the possibilities of gender-based positive discrimination in the provision of digital tools and technological equipment and in the selection of relevant experts.

**Self-assessment Questions**

**9. Digitalization**

9.1. When determining the digital infrastructure (hardware, tools, services, channels and policies), do you consider in a holistic way at the organizational level whether it meets the strategic needs of your organization in the long term and how to ensure and sustain the use of these tools?

9.2. Do you have a defined approach and methodology to assess and improve the digital literacy of the key internal stakeholders in your organization? How do you ensure adaptation to the tools and channels used in the organization?

9.3. How do you ensure your digital security (such as licensed anti-virus, security software, secure-institutional-sustainable encryption, account management, web domain name, hosting panel password)?

9.4. How do you ensure the sustainability of computers and other equipment owned by your organization (maintenance of existing equipment, identification and elimination of new needs, software updates, etc.)?

9.5. Do you have arrangements and practices in your organization to ensure access to digital information and digital tools on the basis of gender equality?

## 10. GENERAL APPROACH AND OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY (MEANS, METHODS, RESOURCES)[8]

An ideal monitoring, evaluation and learning cycle consists of four main stages: the design and planning of the program or project (stage 1), its implementation and monitoring (stage 2), its closure and evaluation (stage 3), and the learning process resulting from the evaluations (stage 4). In the next step, the learning gained in this last stage of the cycle feeds into the design and planning processes (stage 1) of the ongoing or upcoming program/project, and necessary improvements and adaptations are made accordingly. And so the cycle is completed (see diagram X).

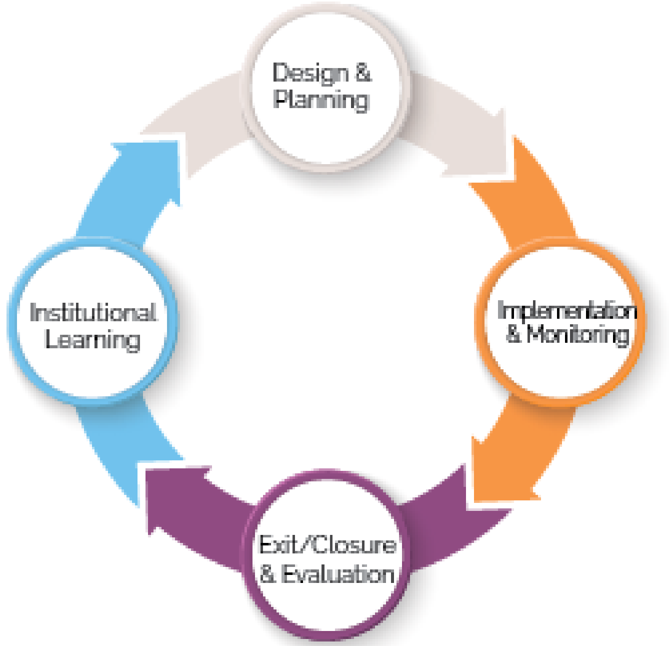


*Diagram X: Key stages of the monitoring, evaluation, learning cycle*

[8] The content in this section has been created with reference to the following sources:
Bourgeois, I., & Cousins, J. B. (2013). Understanding Dimensions of Organizational Evaluation Capacity. American Journal of Evaluation, 34(3), 299-319. DOI: 10.1177/1098214013477235
Cousins, J. B., Goh, S. C., Elliott, C. J., & Bourgeois, I. (2014). Framing the capacity to do and use evaluation. In J. B. Cousins & I. Bourgeois (Eds.), Organizational capacity to do and use evaluation. New Directions for Evaluation, 141, 7-23.
Gagnon, France., Aubry, Tim., Cousins, J. Bradley., Goh, Swee C., & Elliott, Catherine. (2018). "Validation of the Evaluation Capacity in Organizations Questionnaire." Evaluation and Program Planning.
Rohacek, Monica. (2017). Research and Evaluation Capacity: Self-Assessment Tool and Discussion Guide for CCDF Lead Agencies, OPRE Report #2017-63. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
Volkov, B. B., & King, J. A. (2007). A Checklist for Building Organizational Evaluation Capacity.

This chapter addresses what institutional capacity development in the field of monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) means and what kind of organizational changes and initiatives it should involve, with a particular focus on program evaluation. In this respect, it addresses institutional capacity development in M&E under three closely interconnected and sometimes intersecting pillars and related questions:

1. Organizational culture supportive of MEL (10.1),
2. Holistic approach to MEL within the organization (10.2) and
3. Planned organizational capacity development in the field of MEL (10.3).

Keeping the above-mentioned cycle in mind while exploring the issue of MEL capacity development under these three headings will serve as a compass to remind us why we need them and for what purpose we want to use them.

**10.1. The organization's administrative/executive team attaches importance to and supports monitoring, evaluation and organizational learning, and adopts an open and positive approach to learning. It takes the necessary steps to make all these a part of the organizational culture.**

From a general perspective, in an organization that has fully adopted and implemented the monitoring-evaluation-learning culture[9] , organizational actors adopt a curious attitude in their work. They believe in the value of the findings. They ask productive questions about the organization's current and potential interventions (projects, activities) and the field of work; they try to develop a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding by questioning and evaluating them from different perspectives. As a result, they develop a more critical yet constructive view of their organization, themselves and their actions. Decisions about the organization and its interventions are informed by this approach to thinking and the findings and analyses that result from it. In summary, the functioning of such an organization is based on systematic questioning based on findings and observations, thinking by asking productive questions, learning, changing/improving and doing all these together as a team.

If we take a closer look, an organization that has adopted a monitoring-evaluation-learning culture is expected to have the following characteristics:

- The administrative/executive team knows and acts with the awareness that monitoring & evaluation and learning activities are primarily intended to inform decisions about the organization and its activities and to facilitate the work of decision-makers at many different levels. The organization evaluates the process of implementing an activity, project or program in the organization as an opportunity for organizational learning and development. The M&E system and processes and other organizational practices are designed and implemented to facilitate all of this *(see also 10.2 and 10.3).*

[9] This approach is called "Evaluative Thinking" in the literature. Reference: Buckley, J., Archibald, T., Hargraves, M., & Trochim, W. M. (2015). Defining and Teaching Evaluative Thinking: Insights From Research on Critical Thinking. *American Journal of Evaluation*, *36*(3), 375-388.

- In their daily practice, employees/members actively ask questions, collect and analyze information and data relevant to their work, and critically reflect on how they can improve and develop their work. Processes, formats and opportunities to do this exist in the organization and can be reviewed and improved as needed.

- The organization adopts a constructive-critical approach to team interactions that facilitates and supports organizational learning. The team can openly discuss successes and things that have gone well, as well as issues and mistakes that have gone wrong; constructive criticism of observations and learning is discussed within the team with the motivation to improve the work of the organization. This approach is encouraged, welcomed and accepted as a natural part of learning. Where necessary, professional training is used to build the capacity of the organization in this regard.

- As far as possible, the administrative and executive team emphasize basing their decisions on data and findings. Team members request and provide these data and findings to each other.

- The organization's implementation team has the necessary data collection and analysis skills. The administrative and executive team supports and promotes all these processes and ensures the necessary time and resource planning. The team supports and promotes professional and technical development in the area of monitoring-evaluation-learning and related areas in the organization (e.g. information management, etc.).

- The organization has a resource (budget) line item (regardless of amount) dedicated to necessary monitoring, evaluation and research activities; these activities are considered an essential component of resource planning.

- The administrative/executive team tries to follow and understand as much as possible the (external) environment and dynamics in which the organization is located and their possible effects on the development of MEL capacity, the opportunities and possibilities they offer and take them into account as part of the MEL capacity development. The organization's responsibilities towards the public, grant providers, final beneficiaries and other actors, such as transparency and accountability, reporting, etc., and expectations from the organization in this field are reviewed, assessed and integrated into the work as a component of MEL capacity development and M&E activities. *If possible, opportunities to create synergies and capacity building opportunities can be discussed and negotiated with grant providers in relation to the organization's M&E commitments.*

**10.2. There is a planning, monitoring and evaluation approach that addresses the activities of the organization in a holistic manner and is consistent with organizational planning.**

Monitoring-Evaluation-Learning processes are in place to support the organization as a whole in all its processes, activities and the changes/transformations it wants to create. Ideally, all activities of the organization, whether part of a project or not, should be aligned and consistent with the organization's vision, mission, principles and strategic plan. The planning and, where necessary, the adaptation of activities should be carried out in accordance with the route that the organization has set for itself through these core documents. In addition, the work to be carried out needs to respond to the needs of the target audiences (ultimate beneficiaries, rights holders) and to the requirements of the environment surrounding the organization's field of work. Such an approach supports the organization to produce meaningful, useful benefits, to use its resources more efficiently, and to contribute more effectively to change, contributing to the permanence (sustainability) of results.

For this to happen, the organization must have (a) an approach to planning, monitoring and evaluation that is determined within its own capacity and resource limitations and (b) MEL systems that facilitate the implementation of this approach and the sharing and dissemination of learning within the organization. In an organization that has fully implemented these, the following can be observed:

Understanding that MEL is primarily about learning within the framework of principles and using this learning to inform decisions about the organization and its activities, and to facilitate the work of decision-makers at many different levels, the administrative/executive team defines, plans and implements MEL processes with this understanding:

- Processes are designed so that monitoring and evaluation findings contribute to organizational decisions in a timely and useful manner. These processes/practices may include regular team meetings, systematic correspondence and documentation, structured team assessment and reflection exercises. Existing communication or engagement plans can also be reviewed to support these processes.

- The administrative /executive team encourages and broadly promotes data-based discussion and evaluation of the difficulties, negatives and failures as well as the successes of the organization and the positive changes it contributes to and records them for learning purposes, putting them into practice by establishing the necessary mechanisms.

- If these processes/practices can be followed on a regular basis, it will also serve as a monitoring and evaluation capacity building function for people in the organization, which they will learn in interaction with their peers, and will facilitate the organization's adoption of an evaluative mind-set.

The organization organizes and manages information and data in line with its specific needs and capacity, and in a way that supports monitoring, evaluation and institutional learning. It has adequate capacity, tools and infrastructure to do so.

- Tools are used for data collection, storage, analysis, sharing and visualization. They have the function of facilitating the organization's (and people in the organization's) access to and sharing of data and the results obtained from data. When determining the tools to be used, the organization chooses the ones that fit its needs and capacity. It acts with the motivation to establish a long-term system that the team will learn and use easily.

- The organization creates a monitoring-tracking-reporting mechanism appropriate to its needs and capacity, and this system is used on a daily basis by all relevant parties within the organization.
- There is a clear and agreed division of tasks-responsibilities-division of labor structure for monitoring and evaluation practices within the organization. Accordingly, monitoring and evaluation is not seen as separate from implementation, but as an important component of implementation that supports and feeds it, and job descriptions and interactions between different tasks are determined accordingly.

The organization has an approach and planning for what kind of learning is needed during and at the end of the intervention/implementation processes and how this information will feed into the organization's long-term plans and strategies. At the end of the implementation processes, evaluations are made both by practitioners within the organization and external stakeholders. Relevant findings are recorded, focusing on how the process contributed to learning, whether it met the objectives, and how the lessons learned can be reflected in subsequent processes.

**10.3. There is a plan for the development of existing monitoring and evaluation capacity within the organization in line with needs and priorities.**

In order for MEL practices and consequently organizational learning to take place at the desired level within the organization, the organization must have the MEL capacity it needs and build this capacity. For most organizations, this is an area of continuous development, as both organizations and the environment in which they work are constantly changing and monitoring and evaluation is a relatively new field. Having a clear and realistic MEL capacity building agenda and plan will not only accelerate and facilitate progress in this area but will also put it into a meaningful perspective in the context of the organization's other work.

In an organization that prioritizes MEL capacity development, the following can be observed:

- The administrative/executive team cares about, supports and takes responsibility for the development of MEL capacity. MEL capacity development is adopted as part of the strategic plan and related steps are defined. Effective communication is established with organizational practitioners on this issue.
- Needs for planning and MEL capacity development within the organization are identified. These needs may be in the following areas:
    - technical know-how on how to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework (logical framework approach, developing theories of change (theory of change), developing indicators, developing a monitoring plan, etc.);
    - technical knowledge and skills on how to conduct monitoring;

    - research methods (which can be relevant to both planning and evaluation, e.g. needs assessments, innovative qualitative evaluation methods, etc.);
    - use of information-management systems (information storage, efficient sharing, information protection, etc.);
    - analysis and reporting skills (written reporting, data visualization, analysis programs);
    - effective and constructive communication skills, critical thinking skills;
    - skills on how to do monitoring-evaluation-learning planning in general; etc.
- The identified needs are prioritized within the needs and possibilities of the organization and a plan is created accordingly. When formulating the plan, it is prioritized that the plan is realistic, feasible and directly corresponds to the needs of the organization.
- Planning for tools takes into account the needs of the organization on the one hand and its resources (financial, time, human) on the other. Preference is given to tools that people in the organization can learn relatively easily and quickly, that are simple enough and that the organization will not have access problems in the medium and long term. This is also taken into account in the context of the development of knowledge and skills of the people in the organization; skills development planning is carried out according to these tools; the necessary personnel are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills on how to use these tools and for what purposes (e.g. applications such as Excel, PowerPoint, Word, or open freely available tools for data visualization, conceptual framework development, information management, planning, participation, communication, etc.).
- If there are people within the organization who are resistant to the MEL-based approach and capacity development in this field, they are identified and efforts are made to understand and meet the reasons for their attitudes and their needs. For example, if, in the past, monitoring and evaluation activities have not worked well for practitioners within the organization and have only created additional work for them, there may be a natural resistance to this field among these people within the organization. The MEL capacity development plan needs to be developed in a way that understands and addresses such resistance based on real experiences and concerns and supports people to do their work better.
- People (current or potential staff / members / volunteers) within the organization who have an interest and skills in monitoring and evaluation are Identified. These people are actively engaged in MEL capacity development and play key roles in both organizational capacity development and communication with their peers.

The administrative/executive team tries to follow and understand as much as possible the (external) environment and dynamics in which the organization is located and their possible effects on the development of MEL capacity, the opportunities and possibilities they offer and take them into account as part of MEL capacity development.

- The organization's responsibilities towards the public, grant providers, final beneficiaries and other actors, such as transparency and accountability, reporting, etc., and expectations from the organization in this area are reviewed, evaluated and integrated into the work as a component of MEL capacity development and M&E activities. If possible, opportunities for synergies and capacity development can be discussed and negotiated with the donors on the organization's M&E obligations (e.g. budget item for MEL capacity development, budget item for staff recruitment, etc.).

- Other non-organizational actors that can support MEL capacity development and innovative ways of thinking are identified and opportunities for collaborations, unilateral or mutual capacity development possibilities with them are explored. These actors can be peer organizations, learning communities focusing on MEL, or experts working on these issues. In certain cases, organizations may also want to support the formation and development of learning communities related to MEL.

**Self-assessment Questions**

**10. Overall Approach and Operational Capacity (Tools, Methods, Resources)**

10.1. Does the administrative/executive team have an open and positive approach to learning that attaches importance to and supports monitoring, evaluation and organizational learning? Does the team take the necessary steps to make these a part of the organizational culture?

10.2. Is there a planning, monitoring and evaluation approach/system that addresses the organization's activities in a holistic manner in parallel with organizational planning?

10.3. Is there a plan for the development of the existing monitoring and evaluation capacity within the organization in line with needs and priorities?

10.4. Does the administrative/executive team find it important to understand the impact of gender inequalities on the organization and its interventions? Does it also take concrete steps to strengthen the organization's capacity (expertise, tools, etc.) for this purpose?

## 11. M&E PLANNING & LEARNING FROM RESULTS: ACTIVITIES, PROCESSES, CHANGE

In an institutionalized civil society organization, implementation takes place in several stages, depending on the size, complexity, scope and duration of the objectives. These range from the most far-reaching and long-term "program" to a single activity with a very specific goal, a narrow scope and a very short time frame. A program is a two-year or longer-term implementation method, covering a geographical region or country, and comprising multiple projects and activities. Within a program there are projects, and under projects there are a wide range of activities such as training, meetings, trips, campaigns, feasibility studies, scientific research, etc. All projects and activities carried out under a program must be compatible with and complementary to the objectives of the program, and the program itself must be in line with the raison d'être and purpose of the organization. A project is a series of activities that plan the use of time and resources to achieve a specific goal. The point that should not be forgotten at any stage in all interventions at the level of programs, projects, processes, activities or events related to the field of work is to respond to the needs of the groups that will benefit from the results of the work in the right (meaningful and relevant) way; to carry out all these activities in an effective (producing the desired results) and efficient (achieving with optimum resources / with the least waste) way, that is, to create benefit. Proper adherence to transparency, participation and accountability will ensure that these benefits are lasting and sustainable. For all these, the monitoring and evaluation framework needs to be well and realistically planned.

### 11.1. What will be monitored in the relevant areas (targeted activities, outputs, outcomes) is defined within a logical structure.

In all designed programs, projects, processes and activities, the organization should direct work towards a specific goal; ensure planning of time and resources; plan monitoring and evaluation; find funding; develop foresight about risks and obstacles to goals and take action; plan effective communication to facilitate the transfer of the thinking that led to the work. It should ensure meaningful participation in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and plan steps to strengthen the sustainability of results. From the program level to the activity level, it is necessary to define what will be monitored for each of the planned activities, identify the right indicators for them, identify and implement monitoring and data collection methods. These methods should reveal the extent to which the organization has achieved its objectives for each activity, what it has achieved or failed to achieve, why it has failed to achieve, where it has encountered problems, and its capacity to solve these problems; and provide the opportunity to understand, interpret and correct its strategy. In this context, measurements can be defined under the following headings to assess results related to the field of work: Financial results, service-related results, collaboration results, project results, process results, communication effectiveness results.

### 11.2. Indicators are identified and qualified: (SMART) measurable, time-bound, aspirational and realistic for the CSO.

It is important that each study, albeit at different scales, is designed and implemented to bring about change. In organizational work, it is recommended to change the sources of problems rather than changing the results of problems, that is, to focus on the causes of problems and change as a goal when planning work. The beginning of change is the current situation. The current situation is the conditions and characteristics of the things that the organization wants to change, the situation of the parties involved, their thoughts and attitudes. That is, the current situation is an initial snapshot of the problems and causes that the organization wants to change. After collecting accurate and reliable information about the current situation, it is necessary to set goals and indicators that represent change very well, and to continuously monitor the achievement of these goals on the basis of indicators. Indicators are temporal expressions of the direction and degree of the desired results. As mentioned in the previous section, once the activities to be monitored (target activities, outputs, results) have been determined, indicators are defined for them. For the indicators to be qualified and useful, they should be clear, achievable (realistic), measurable, accepted by the executing parties and timely (SMART). When defining indicators, baseline values and target values for the target times should also be specified.

**11.3. Data on indicators are regularly collected and tracked/monitored.**

Data on the indicators to be monitored should be collected at appropriate intervals and with appropriate methods and stored securely. Data collection strategy, data collection methods and tools, type of data (qualitative, quantitative) and possible data sources are important elements of planning. In other words, which data will be collected by whom, by which method, from where, with what timing, where and how it will be stored and archived, and the measures regarding the compliance of these processes with the legislation (KVKK, etc.) should be planned and determined. While collecting data, an approach and methodology on how to transform this data into meaningful information for the organization and relevant actors should also be planned simultaneously.

**11.4. The monitoring data is analyzed and evaluated and plans and practices are improved in the light of constructive stakeholder input and evidence-based learning.**

After the monitoring methods and data collection, the collected data should be objectively analyzed and evaluated. The evaluation should be carried out with the participation of relevant groups and the parties should be as open to criticism as possible, i.e. failures should not be seen as "failures" but as a learning process for the organization. The process of analysis and evaluation can be carried out in different ways and at different times in terms of relevance (usefulness), coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and ultimate impact.

The evaluation in terms of relevance (usefulness) criterion is mainly related to the planning and finalization phase and reveals whether the work is an appropriate response to the problems of the target group, how well it responds to the problems, how acceptable it is to the beneficiaries, budget and activity appropriateness. During implementation, this evaluation is used to monitor the extent to which the activities respond to the needs of the target group and to make necessary adjustments and adaptations if needed. In the concluding phase, it provides the necessary analysis for the improvement of the next program. An evaluation in terms of the coherence criterion looks on the one hand at the internal coherence of the work: is it in line with the vision and mission of the organization, is it consistent with other work within the organization, etc. On the other hand, external coherence is assessed: is the work consistent and compatible with other work in the country, region, sector, etc.? An evaluation in terms of the efficiency criterion can be carried out during and at the end of the work; it can look at elements such as the management of the work (financial, administrative, technical, risk), communication and collaboration with stakeholders; the comparison of cost/value created; the quality of monitoring processes. An evaluation in terms of the effectiveness criterion is the stage where the extent to which the study has achieved its planned results is questioned; it will show the elements that led to achieving these results, whether there were behavioral changes in target groups or systems, the extent to which communication, risks and assumptions were managed, and the functioning between partners/stakeholders. The evaluation to be made in terms of the sustainability criterion looks at the extent to which the results achieved by the work are permanent and sustainable. Here, various factors such as economic, social, environmental, etc. necessary for the permanence of the results are also included in the analysis and evaluation. Finally, the evaluation in terms of the ultimate impact is an evaluation phase related to the overall goal of the organization and the study. It will show the extent to which the work contributes to the organization's goals and overall objective, whether it contributes to economic and social development, and the extent to which the work takes into account multipliers such as gender, environment and poverty. In line with the logic of continuous improvement, plans and practices are improved according to the results and recommendations. It is recommended that the monitoring and evaluation methods, frequency and responsibilities for improvements related to the field of work are defined in writing.

**11.5. The administrative/executive team evaluates the activities, processes and project results with a gender equality perspective and makes necessary arrangements in line with the results obtained.**

The administrative/executive team disaggregates the data on activity, process and project results by gender. It ensures that the activity, process and project planning, monitoring & evaluation criteria include gender equality. It involves organizations and individuals with gender expertise in the analysis and interpretation of data and other activities for organizational learning.

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| **Self-assessment Questions** |
| **11. M&E Planning and Learning from Results: Activities, Processes, Change** |

11.1. Is what will be monitored in the relevant areas (targeted activities, outputs, outcomes) defined in a logical structure?

11.2. Have the indicators (SMART) measurable, time-bound, aspirational and realistic been determined for the CSO?

11.3. Is the data on indicators regularly collected and monitored?

11.4. Is the monitoring data analyzed and evaluated? Are plans and practices improved in the light of stakeholders' creative ideas and learning?

11.5. Does the administrative/executive team evaluate the activities, processes and project results from a gender equality perspective and make the necessary arrangements in line with the results obtained?

## 12. LEARNING FROM KEY STAKEHOLDERS: BENEFICIARIES AND TARGET AUDIENCE

Depending on their field of work and priorities, civil society organizations can be active in every aspect of social life, and the audiences they seek to create changes in thought and behavior can vary. Within this wide range, those directly affected by the organization's work are the target groups (target audiences or targeted stakeholders). Target groups may differ depending on the scale or scope of the work. Moreover, the organization's target groups may not always be human communities; the organization may also have as its mission the protection of an ecosystem (a particular plant or animal species). In any case, it is essential that the target group, which the organization strives to improve the quality of life in line with its vision and mission, experiences the organization's work positively and benefits from it. Therefore, the organization needs to understand the purpose and expectations of the people or communities with whom it engages in all its work, and to plan, implement, evaluate and improve its work with the participation/support of these people or communities (see also 7.1). Such collaboration is essential for the ownership, effectiveness and sustainability of the work by the target audience and strengthens the organization's accountability, transparency and approach to creating value.

**12.1. What will be monitored in the relevant areas is defined.**

Depending on the scale and scope of the activities, results should be defined for each target group, indicators should be identified, the right measurement and data collection method should be selected and implemented in order to assess to what extent the activities correspond to the needs of the target group, to what extent they are relevant to these needs and how they affect the target group. Surveys, workshops and face-to-face interviews can be conducted to assess the impact of the work after the activities, and regular stakeholder surveys can be conducted to measure the impact of the work on the target audience and their perception of the work. The organization should clarify how and for what purpose it will use the data resulting from these monitoring activities, at what stages and for what decisions.

**12.2. Indicators are identified and qualified: (SMART) measurable, time-bound, aspirational and realistic for the CSO.**

After defining the results of the activities related to the target group mentioned above, indicators are created in order to monitor and evaluate these definitions. Indicators are the temporal expression of the direction and degree of the results to be achieved. These indicators should be determined on the basis of the principles of participation, value creation, transparency, accountability, sustainability and equality and, if possible, should point to change. In order to target a change, the current situation or baseline (baseline data) in the relevant measurement area needs to be known. In this context, for example, an increase in the number of beneficiaries participating in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes or the active participation of some of the beneficiaries in the organization's work as members or volunteers after the work can be set as targets. Targets should be clear, achievable, measurable, agreed upon by the parties to be realized, and time-bound (SMART)

**12.3. Data on indicators are regularly collected and tracked/monitored.**

Data on indicators should be collected at appropriate intervals and with appropriate methods, in accordance with the objectives set, and kept securely. Data collection strategy, data collection methods and tools, type of data (qualitative, quantitative) and possible data sources are important elements of planning. In other words, which data will be collected by whom, by which method, from where, with what timing, where and how it will be stored and archived, and the measures regarding the compliance of these processes with the legislation (KVKK, etc.) should be planned and determined. While collecting data, an approach and methodology on how to transform this data into meaningful information for the organization and relevant actors should also be planned simultaneously.

**12.4. The monitoring data is analyzed and evaluated; plans and practices are improved in the light of creative ideas and learning from stakeholders.**

The data collected in accordance with the identified monitoring and evaluation methods should be analyzed objectively and systematically in the next stage. In the analysis phase, indicators related to results and whether they are realized as planned are examined. If the results are far from the target indicators, the reason is tried to be understood by going to the root cause and using the available data. In cases where data is insufficient, additional methods and evaluation activities may be used (surveys, interviews, etc.). This stage is also the right time to question whether the indicators are realistic and achievable. As a result of all these, in line with the logic of continuous improvement, necessary improvements and corrections are made in plans and practices in the light of the evaluation results. It is recommended that monitoring and evaluation methods, frequency and responsibilities for improvements are defined in writing *(See 10. General Approach and Operational Capacity (Tools, Methods, Resources)).*

**12.5. The administrative/executive team evaluates the impact of the activities on the beneficiaries and target groups with a gender equality perspective and makes necessary arrangements in line with the feedback received.**

The administrative/executive team disaggregates all the data on beneficiaries and target group by gender. It determines appropriate methods for women and girls in line with the principle of doing no harm while collecting data, and informs its staff on this issue. It involves organizations and individuals with gender expertise in the analysis and evaluation of the monitoring data.

**Self-assessment Questions**

**12. Learning from Key Stakeholders: Beneficiaries and Target Audience**

12.1. Is what will be monitored in the relevant areas (targeted activities, outputs, outcomes) defined in a logical structure?

12.2. Are the determined indicators (SMART) measurable, time-bound, aspirational and realistic for the CSO?

12.3. Is the data on indicators regularly collected and monitored?

12.4. Is the monitoring data analyzed and evaluated? Are plans and practices improved in the light of stakeholders' creative ideas and learning?

12.5. Does the administrative/executive team evaluate the impact of its activities on beneficiaries and target groups from a gender equality perspective and make the necessary arrangements in line with the feedback received?

## 13. LEARNING FROM KEY STAKEHOLDERS: EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

An organization's human resources policy should cover both paid managers and employees and volunteers. It should be fair, transparent about the expectations of employees and volunteers, and allow for meaningful and effective performance evaluation.

**13.1. What will be monitored in the relevant areas is defined.**

In line with the organization's human resources policy, in order to measure employee and volunteer satisfaction, it is necessary to set the right goals (results), define indicators, select and implement a measurement and data collection method for identifying, training and supporting employees and volunteers. Surveys to measure satisfaction can be conducted at regular intervals; mutual evaluation processes can be defined with employees; volunteers' perception of satisfaction can be measured through stakeholder surveys at regular intervals; or indicators can be identified to monitor and evaluate employee and volunteer satisfaction in process- or outcome-oriented monitoring. In this context, objectives (results) can be defined under the following headings to measure employee and volunteer satisfaction: Leadership, equal opportunities, development, performance management, finding meaning and commitment at work, finding meaning and commitment at CSO, working environment and conditions, information sharing environments, representation, motivation, outcomes related to participation, outcomes related to development, outcomes related to communication, number of volunteers, volunteer loyalty, employee loyalty

**13.2. Indicators are identified and qualified: (SMART) measurable, time-bound, aspirational and realistic for the CSO.**

Following the identification of objectives (results) that will support or strengthen staff and volunteer satisfaction, indicators need to be identified. Indicators are the temporal expression of the direction and degree of the results to be achieved; indicators express what is to be achieved in concrete terms. These indicators should be based on the principles of participation, value creation, transparency, accountability and sustainability and, if possible, should point to change. For staff and volunteers, change in habits, culture, practices and approaches to the work of the association can be targeted, either by strengthening the factors that enable change or by eliminating the factors that prevent change from taking place. In order to target a change, it is necessary to know the current situation (baseline) or the core values/current state of affairs in the relevant field. In this context, for example, an increase in the number of volunteers participating in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes, a decrease in the frequency of employee turnover, an increase in the number of volunteers who continue to contribute to the work of the association after volunteering, or improved systems in human resources management (for example, an increase in the number of in-service or field-related trainings) can provide a basis for determining indicators. Indicators should be clear, achievable, measurable/quantifiable, agreed upon by the realizing parties, and time-bound (SMART)

**13.3. Data on indicators are regularly collected and tracked/monitored.**

The data to be collected should be collected at appropriate intervals and with appropriate methods, in accordance with the objectives set, and stored securely. Data collection strategy, data collection methods and tools, type of data (qualitative, quantitative) and possible data sources are important elements of planning. In other words, which data will be collected by whom, by which method, from where and with what timing, where and how it will be stored and archived, and the measures regarding the compliance of these processes with the legislation (KVKK, etc.) should be planned and determined. While collecting data, an approach and methodology on how to transform this data into meaningful information for the organization and relevant actors should also be planned simultaneously.

**13.4. The monitoring data is analyzed and evaluated and plans and practices are improved in the light of stakeholders' creative ideas and learning.**

The data collected after the determined monitoring and evaluation methods and data collection activities should be analyzed systematically. In accordance with the logic of continuous improvement, plans and practices are improved according to the results and recommendations. It is recommended that monitoring and evaluation methods, frequency and responsibilities for improvements are defined in writing in the organization's human resources policy and procedures.

**13.5. The administrative/executive team includes a gender perspective when evaluating employee and volunteer satisfaction and makes necessary arrangements in line with the feedback.**

The administrative/executive team disaggregates data on employee and volunteer satisfaction by gender. It ensures that the CSO's policies and practices both for itself and its field of work are evaluated by the employees in terms of gender equality. It involves organizations and individuals with gender expertise in the data analysis and interpretation process.

**Self-assessment Questions**

**13. Learning from Key Stakeholders: Employees and Volunteers**

13.1. Is what will be monitored in the relevant areas defined?

13.2. Are the determined indicators (SMART) measurable, time-bound, aspirational and realistic for the CSO?

13.3. Is data on indicators regularly collected and monitored?

13.4. Is the monitoring data analyzed and evaluated? Are plans and practices improved in the light of stakeholders' creative ideas and learning?

13.5. Does the administrative/executive team evaluate employee and volunteer satisfaction with a gender equality perspective and make the necessary arrangements in line with the feedback received?

# 2. Organisational Development Process and Self-Assessment

## 2.1. Organisational Development Process

Institutional capacity can be briefly defined as "management maturity to produce desired outputs and results". Within the scope of the BİRLİKTE Organisational Development Model, institutional capacity and management maturity point to self-aware, learning organizations that produce these outputs and results through the principles and values they adopt.

In order for an organization to sustain the impact and change it aims for, it needs to develop its institutional capacity in a planned and systematic manner in addition to the activities that will lead it to its vision and mission goals; in other words, it needs to plan and implement organisational development processes. The most important expected outcome of organizational development efforts is that the organization is sustainable and continues to create value for its beneficiaries for years to come.

Daily tasks that produce short-term results may take precedence over, or occupy us more than, the organizational capacity work that will bring us to our real goals in the long run. Realizing that this is a trap for organizational development and sustainable impact and change, and **feeling the need for organizational development** should be considered as the first step in organizational development. Institutional capacity development is a process and should be on the organizational agenda as long as the organization exists.

The BİRLİKTE **Self-Assessment Tool,** which accompanies the BİRLİKTE Organisational Development Model and is based on the self-assessment method, has been developed to facilitate the organization's planning for improvements in organisational development[10]. **Self-assessment is** essentially the process of evaluating an organization's own institutional capacity according to a management model and understanding its current situation. This process consists of the basic steps of "identify, prioritize and improve" and is repeated every year (*see Figure 2, Organizational Development Process Flow*). Based on the current situation, the organization determines improvement priorities according to its own needs and capacity and aims to realize these priorities according to a plan. These plans are prepared annually. It is recommended that the self-assessment should ideally be reviewed every year to update the current situation and needs. In this way, the organization can systematize institutional improvement efforts and make organisational development continuous.

[10] You can obtain the Self-Assessment Tool, which is prepared in Excel and Google Sheets version, from STGM. You can contact us at birlikte@stgm.org.trfor obtaining the tool and/or for questions and support regarding the model and the self-assessment tool.

Identification of a Capacity Building Officer and team within the organization

Capacity Building Team's review of the BİRLİKTE Organisational Development Model

Establishment of the self-assessment team and calendar

Conducting self-assessment and identifying organizational strengths and improvement potentials

Identifying solutions for improvement potentials

Prioritization of solutions

Establishment of an improvement plan for the prioritized solutions, identification of responsible persons, time schedule and resources

Preparation of the self-assessment report

Taking steps in accordance with the action plan for improvements, establishing/developing systems and processes

Identifying monitoring, evaluation and learning objectives and indicators related to the systems and monitoring the implementation

Making adjustments in systems and practices when necessary on the basis of MEL targets and indicators

Figure 2: Organizational Development Process Flow

## 2.2. The methodology of Self-assessment

### 2.2.1. Formation of the self-assessment team and issues to be considered in self-assessment

Before implementing the self-assessment method, it is necessary to establish a team that will carry out organizational development program activities in the organization, know the organization well and support the organization during the program in order to create a common working environment. One member of this team serves as a capacity building officer/communication person. It is desirable that the team carrying out the self-assessment consists of at least three people to ensure a sufficient wealth of ideas and a maximum of eight people to ensure efficient work without getting bogged down. It is an important criterion for the self-assessment to accurately reflect the strengths and needs of the organization that the team members are well acquainted with the topics of the BIRLIKTE Organisational Development Model. In organizations with a small team, it may be possible to conduct the entire self-assessment with the same team. However, for organizations working with larger teams, it may be necessary to identify different teams consisting of people with knowledge and experience related to each topic in the model. The people who will conduct the self-assessment can be employees, members, volunteers, experts, BoD and Audit Committee members who are familiar with the work of the organization related to the topic in question. Representatives, especially from the Board of Directors, ideally participate in the whole self-assessment process.

The recommended duration for the self-assessment is at least three full days. This will vary according to the work of the organization and the team's need for discussion.

In order to ensure that the self-assessment is carried out objectively to the maximum benefit possible, the following issues need to be considered:

- Involvement in the self-assessment process of people at different levels, with different authority, experience and expertise, who know the work of the CSO well.
- Having a long-term perspective; considering self-assessment as a process to be repeated every year, rather than a one-off exercise.
- Identifying a facilitator for each or all topics during the self-assessment to ensure that discussions are objective and result-oriented. The facilitator ensures that everyone participates, i.e. has a voice.
- Team members allocate sufficient time to complete the self-assessment.

### 2.2.2. Identifying and scoring the strengths and improvement potentials of the organization

During self-assessment, the organization evaluates itself in the different areas specified in the model described comprehensively above and identifies its strengths and potential for improvement. While evaluating itself under these headings, it also reviews the extent to which the principles of participation, value creation, transparency, accountability, sustainability, non-discrimination and equality are adopted and implemented in the organization. All ideas are written in the relevant place in the assessment tool as strengths and areas for improvement.

Based on the evidence of strengths and potential for improvement, the organization assigns a score for the relevant topic. When scoring, it should be kept in mind that this is not a test, but rather a tool for the organization to look at itself objectively for improvements. While a low score indicates some shortcomings, it also indicates a high opportunity for improvement. When scoring, the score is determined in line with the following explanations.

**1 Point; "No implementation":** There is no practice in the organization related to the specified sub-heading.

**2 Points; "Ad hoc implementation":** Some practices and activities are occasionally carried out in the organization related to the specified sub-heading. However, these are not carried out within a defined organizational method that is known by the relevant parties.

**3 points; "System defined":** There is a clearly defined methodology, a good organizational description of how the work is to be done in relation to the topic to be assessed. At this point it should be noted that the existence of relevant practices and even their successful implementation does not necessarily mean that the organization has an appropriate institutional system. For example, the existence of a large number of volunteers and the occasional exchange with them about the organization's work cannot be interpreted as the existence of a system for selecting, orienting and developing volunteers. There must be a defined organizational method of selection and development. If the system is not defined at this level, awarding a score of three or more would not be the right approach in terms of the functionality of the tool.

**4 Points; " Implementation is disseminated and periodic in line with the system":** There is a precisely defined system under the given heading. The necessary information about the system in question and the implementation process has been provided within the organization. Tools and documents relating to the processes and method are accessible to the relevant parties and are used effectively. The defined system is reused at regular and meaningful intervals.

**5 Points; "Implementation is disseminated, periodically reviewed and improved in line with the system":** Systems are continuously improved as a result of monitoring, review and learning to sustain the organization's intended impact and change.

| 1st YEAR SELF-ASSESSMENT | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Planning and Implementation** | **1st Year Strength** | **1st Year Improvement Potential** | 1:No implementation<br>2:Ad hoc implementation<br>3:System defined<br>4:Implementation is disseminated and periodic in line with the system<br>5:Implementation is disseminated, periodically reviewed and improved in line with the system |
| **1. Governance and Decision Making** | | | **Grade** |
| 1.1. How is the composition of the administrative/executive team? To what extent are the decision-making bodies defined? Are decisions at the various levels made with participation and common sense? How often does the administrative/executive team change and how is the handover organized? | | | |

Figure 3: An excerpt from the assessment tool

Low-scoring sections indicate that there are opportunities for improvement in these areas and that there is room for improvement in institutionalization. Highly rated areas indicate opportunities to develop exemplary models and practices in these areas and to disseminate them in the civil sphere. Depending on its strategic orientation and resources, the organization may also plan to disseminate models for strengthening the civil sphere.

### 2.2.3. Prioritization of improvements

Once the organization's strengths and potential for improvement have been identified and the corresponding title has been evaluated, the identified improvements are transferred to the tool's prioritization form in clear sentences. Possible solutions and steps for the elements to be improved are defined by the team. These proposed solutions are evaluated according to the following criteria, depending on the impact of the work to be done on the organization's objectives and the use of resources (personnel, money and time).

1. **Impact:** The contribution of the improvement to the organization's strategy and objectives. A four-point scale is used to score impact:
   [Proposed solution's] impact on the CSO's strategy and objectives: 1) Not effective; 2) Partially effective; 3) Effective; 4) Very effective.
2. **Resource:** The human, time and financial resources required for the improvement. A four-point scale is used to score resource requirements:
   1) Very; 2) Medium; 3) Little; 4) Very Little.

| 1st Year Prioritization | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Items | 1st year Improvements | 1st year Solution Alternatives | Impact of improvement on CSO's strategies and objectives 1) Not effective 2) Partially effective 3) Effective 4) Very effective | Time to be used for improvement 1) Long 2) Medium 3) Short 4) Very short | Prioritized Improvement (ImpactxResource) The highest score is 16, themes with the highest score have the highest priority. |
| 1. Governance and Decision Making | | | | | |
| 1.1. How is the composition of the administrative/executive team? To what extent are the decision-making bodies defined? Are decisions at the various levels made with participation and common sense? How often does the administrative/executive team change and how is the handover organized? | | | | | |

Figure 4: An excerpt from the prioritization page

The scores given to the resource and impact sections are multiplied by each other to calculate the relevant total score. Solutions with high impact and low resource use are prioritized. There may be two limitations in this study: a solution to the problems may not be found right away, and resources may not be easy to estimate at this stage. Prioritization is easier when these constraints are taken into account.

### 2.2.4. Planning improvements

An improvement plan is drawn up to translate the prioritized proposed solutions into concrete activities. The improvement plan contains the tasks/activities to be carried out as well as the persons responsible for the tasks and the schedule. Different teams can be formed to carry out the relevant work, but a responsible person must be appointed to monitor the entire improvement process and the teams.

This plan is monitored regularly at certain intervals and according to certain methods. If the targeted activity is realized, this is noted by the person responsible in the realization column of the table, and if it is not realized, this is noted in the justification column with explanations. If the activity is not realized, the reason is analyzed and the necessary measures are taken.

A simple table is proposed by BİRLİKTE on the improvement plan for prioritized improvements.

| | | 1st Year Improvement Plan | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Related title | Is it a GEMI specific activity? | Plan | Responsible (Person/Team) | Planned End Date | Output | Resource Needs (Request from STGM, other) | Considerations for GEMI | Realization | Justification in case of non-realization |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |

Figure 5: A section from the improvement plan

Learning by benchmarking from other organizations can also be done in order to move forward quickly and accurately with improvements. Improvement activities to be carried out as a result of learning from other organizations are also included in the plan.

### 2.2.5. Self-assessment report

After the self-assessment is completed, a self-assessment report is prepared. The strengths and improvement potentials under each heading are written in the report in a comprehensive and explanatory manner. Scores are entered at the bottom. At the end of the report, all scores and the relevant graph are included.

The self-assessment report is prepared specifically to commit the self-assessment work to institutional memory. The report can be used to share with relevant parties, to be used during strategic planning, to refer back to it when needed, and to track progress over the years.