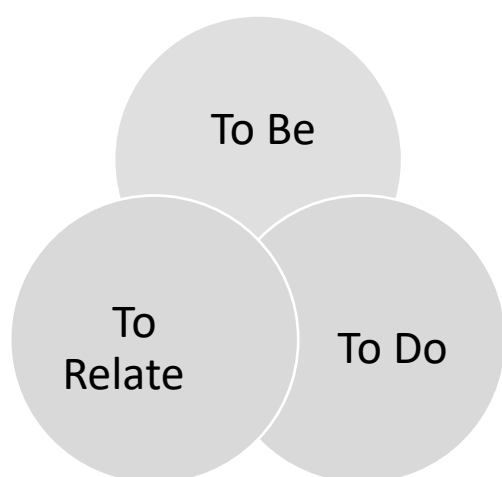




Three Circles Tool

ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT & PLANNING TOOL

Name of Organisation	
Date of 1 st Assessment	
Date of 2 nd Assessment	
Date of 3 rd Assessment	



capacity TO BE

Organisational identity, leadership, membership, structures and systems

capacity TO DO

Delivering effective activities which contribute to achieving the organisation's mission and objectives

capacity TO RELATE

Linking with external organisations and individuals to increase the impact of the organisation's work

ABOUT THE THREE CIRCLES TOOL

This tool has been developed by ADD International for use with partner DPOs, based on existing good practice in the development sector. It was developed with input from MEL staff across the organisation in July 2016, based on ADD's long experience of organisational capacity building practice with DPOs¹, and was then piloted with DPOs before being finalised. It replaces the Five Core Capabilities tool which we have previously adapted for

¹ For further info see 'Capacity Building, ADD International's Approach – A Learning Paper' 2016, available on ADD International's website ([here](#)).

use within ADD International's programmes. The key elements of the Five Core Capabilities tool have here been incorporated into a simpler model with three main categories – the three circles – and includes a system for identifying progress against specific plans within each capacity area by exploring a total of 23 different aspects of capacity within these three broad areas.

The three circles tool supports organisational capacity building in the following ways:

- To support discussion and learning within partner DPOs on the key aspects of organisational capacity
- To analyse gaps and weaknesses in organisational capacity, and to identify and prioritise practical action needed to address these.
- To identify specific organisational capacity building support needed from ADD/other sources to address the issues raised
- To track progress on strengthening organisational capacity over time

WHO USES THE THREE CIRCLES TOOL, AND WHEN?

- Capacity Assessment and planning should be done with DPOs annually, by ADD MEL and programme staff working together, as the process is as much about planning as it is about monitoring and evaluation.
- There is no need to do assessments quarterly. In cases of short projects, for example an 18-month long project, it would be acceptable to only do two assessments, the first to establish a base line and agree priorities for action, and a second to see what did actually happen and whether the organisation gained from any inputs.
- As the Three Circles assessment identifies priority action needed to strengthen organisational capacity, we can monitor progress through the year against the agreed action, thereby demonstrating progress when needed (e.g. reporting to donors/ other stakeholders) between full annual assessments.
- Each assessment should be done **on the same document** for each organisation so that we can build up a picture of progress over time.

HOW DOES THIS TOOL LINK TO ADD'S GENDER ASSESSMENT TOOL?

- You may also be conducting gender assessments with the same organisation, using ADD's Gender Assessment Tool designed to help us support DPOs to become more gender sensitive and inclusive in all aspects of their work.
- The Gender Assessment and Three Circles tools support and complement each other: The discussion and findings from Gender Assessments will feed into the Three Circles Assessments, particularly with reference to questions 3, 5, 11, 12 and 21.

HOW TO USE THE THREE CIRCLES TOOL

1. TRANSLATE THE TOOL

Where appropriate, you will need to translate this tool (or at least the matrix) into local language(s) before you can use it with partners. Key ADD staff will need to be involved in agreeing local language terms which are appropriate and relevant to DPO partners and the local context.

2. ORGANISE GROUP DISCUSSIONS

The assessment should be done through **group discussion** with key DPO leaders, staff, and members. It will be important to ensure that those involved in the discussions are representative of the organisation's membership (gender, impairment group etc.)

3. INTRODUCE THE TOOL AND CONCEPTS

Particularly if you are doing a first assessment, you will need to start with a general discussion of organisational capacity and by clarifying what we mean by 'to be', 'to do' and 'to relate' – and how these three aspects combine to reflect overall organisational capacity.

It is important to emphasise that we do not expect to see progress against all of the 23 aspects of capacity listed within the three circles. The tool provides a way to discuss organisational capacity systematically, identifying areas of strength and weakness so that priorities can be identified. Different DPOs will focus more on some areas than others, depending on the context, their size and stage of development, and on the focus of their work.

4. ALLOCATE A SCORE FOR EACH ASPECT OF CAPACITY

Go through and discuss each of the 23 aspects of capacity: Using the questions provided, discuss and allocate a score from 1 – 5 for each using the score ranking here. At this stage, do not identify priorities for improvement – this is to avoid producing too many priorities for improvement, which would be unrealistic and overwhelming!

In the 'description of strengths and weaknesses' box, summarise the main strengths and weaknesses which you have identified which led you to decide on the score.

Organisational Capacity

Score Ranking:

1. No capacity
2. Low capacity
3. Average Capacity
4. Good capacity
5. High capacity

5. IDENTIFY PRIORITIES FOR THE COMING YEAR

Once the scoring is completed, and you have discussed and identified strengths and weaknesses across all three capacity areas, you can start to identify priorities for strengthening capacity over the coming year. Focus on the areas where there are clear gaps and weaknesses which may be blocking organisational effectiveness or progress.

Remember – priorities should be **realistic and achievable for this DPO over the coming year**, and not a list of everything that might be possible, at some point, with unlimited resources. It is important to take into consideration the context within which the DPO is working – there will be external factors which may help or hinder progress on building organisational capacity.

Once you have agreed on priorities, write them down in the relevant boxes ('priorities for improvement over the coming year'), and agree a target score to be achieved within the coming year. If you are realistic in your planning, you will probably find that most of the 'priorities' boxes will be left blank – this is fine. In fact, when you come to do the reassessment in the following year you may find that progress has been made even where priorities were not identified.

6. IDENTIFY SUPPORT NEEDED FROM ADD

Discuss what ADD can do to support progress against the identified priorities over the coming year, and agree on a plan which is realistic and achievable with current resources. You may need to focus on just one or two of the Three Circles – don't feel that we need to make a commitment to working across all areas at once, as this may not be realistic or achievable – agree on priorities for ADD's support. You should consider the different ways in which ADD supports organisational capacity development:

- ✓ **Technical support** – including training/ information etc. This can be provided by ADD or other external providers
- ✓ **Strategic inputs** – could include equipment/ infrastructure/ staff costs associated with strengthening gender capacity

- ✓ **Accompaniment/mentoring** – working closely with DPOs through project planning, implementation and MEL to ensure that gender issues are considered at every point.
- ✓ **Brokering links** - Identifying key external stakeholders/powerholders and facilitating initial links; advocating for DPO representation at key meetings in governmental/non-governmental fora

Once you have agreed a package of support with the DPO, this should be set out in **the partnership agreement** for the coming year. This will help us to identify more clearly the capacity building support we provide, to communicate this to our partners, and to be accountable to them for delivering against this agreement.

7. IDENTIFY SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Where possible, evidence from interviews should be backed up by reviewing documentary evidence from the following sources:

- DPO status and documents
- Organisational reports and documents to assess the delivery and impact of the organisation's work
- Evaluation / audit reports

8. REASSESSMENTS

Reassessments should be done against the whole tool annually, using the same document so that ADD and the partner can review whether progress was made as expected. You may find that unexpected progress was made in areas where priorities/action had not been identified. Where progress against priorities has been made it will be important to discuss and identify the extent to which ADD's support has contributed to this progress, and how much other factors have influenced positive or negative change.

TO BE**1. Capacity to develop and maintain a clear identity**

Is there a vision or mission statement?

Is there a strategy?

Is the organisation legally registered according to local law?

Are the staff united around shared vision and values?

Do they have an established office or centre of communications?

**1st assessment
#1-5:**

Description of strengths and weaknesses

1st target #1-5:

Priorities for improvement over coming year

**2nd assessment
#1-5:**

Description of strengths and weaknesses

2nd target #1-5:

Priorities for improvement over coming year

**3rd assessment
#1-5:**

Description of strengths and weaknesses

3rd target #1-5:

Priorities for improvement over coming year

2. Capacity to recruit, motivate, enthuse and maintain effective and safe staff

Do staff have necessary skills and experience for the needs of the organisation?

Are there clear team roles and responsibilities?

Are there checks on staff as part of hiring process—references, police checks?

**1st assessment
#1-5:**

Description of strengths and weaknesses

1st target #1-5:

Priorities for improvement over coming year

2nd assessment

Description of strengths and weaknesses

#1-5:	
2nd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
3rd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year

3. Capacity to maintain effective operational systems

Is there a basic accounting system that guards against the misuse of funds?

Is there a basic MEL system?

Are there HR policies/guidelines for recruitment?

Do HR policies and practice reflect principles of gender inclusion?

1 st assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
1 st target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
2 nd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
2nd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
3rd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year

4. Capacity to deliver effective safeguarding

Is there a culture which encourages staff, members and supported PWD to speak out or challenge behaviour which may harm individuals?

<p><i>Is there an accessible system in place through which the organisation can receive and respond to concerns and reports about safety and harm?</i></p> <p><i>If an accessible system is in place, do all organisation members and supported PWD understand how to use it?</i></p> <p><i>Does the organisation receive and respond to concerns and reports about safety and harm?</i></p>	
1st assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
1st target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
2nd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
2nd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
3rd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year

5. Capacity to maintain secure financial resources (funding/resources)

What is the process of fundraising? Has it been successful?

Is there a clear financial model/approach to resource mobilisation? Is it sustainable?

Do they have a plan to cope with funding cuts?

1st assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
1st target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
2nd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
2nd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year

3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
3rd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year

6. Capacity of leadership to lead and inspire

*Do people respect and look to the leadership for guidance?
Does the profile of leaders reflect the organisation's membership, including gender balance?
Is there a route to develop new leaders, including from among less well represented groups (e.g. women and girls/different impairment types)?
Is there a system to regularly elect new leaders/ their board?*

1st assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
1st target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
2nd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
2nd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
3rd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year

7. Capacity to use participatory M&E for learning, improvement and safeguarding

*Are clients/members regularly asked for their opinions during monitoring/evaluation?
How is learning from MEL captured and used?
Are DPO members/staff who participate in monitoring briefed on how to appropriately respond to safeguarding issues that might arise while monitoring?*

1st assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
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1st target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
2nd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
2nd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
3rd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year

8. Capacity to engage in strategic learning and planning.

*Do staff and others meet to discuss success or failure?
Are these discussions/decisions recorded anywhere?
Does the organisation develop and use theories of change?*

1st assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
1st target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
2nd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
2nd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
3rd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year

9. Capacity to anticipate external trends and adapting in the face of those trends the opportunities and threats.

Is the organisation in touch with or a member of national bodies which can assist with understanding major trends?

Has the organisation adapted to external changes?

1st assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
1st target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
2nd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
2nd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
3rd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year

10. Capacity to encourage and accept flexibility and creativity

Examples of changing to meet new challenges? Examples of adopting new innovations?

1st assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
1st target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
2nd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
2nd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year

3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
3rd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year

11. Capacity for governance

Does the Governing Committee/Board reflect the organisation's membership, including gender balanced representation?

How is the Governing Committee/Board chosen?

Is the Governing Committee/Board effective - does it meet? are decisions recorded?

1st assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
1st target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
2nd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
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3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
3rd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year

TO DO

12. Capacity to deliver on planned and relevant outputs and services.

What is the organisation's record of delivering services/helping members to access services?

What is the organisation's record of carrying out outreach/building membership?

What is the organisation's record of raising awareness of PWD/disability issues?

What is the organisation's record of securing changes in policies and practice to benefit PWD?

Have they influenced the way services are provided/accessed by PWD?

1st assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
1st target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
2nd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
2nd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
3rd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year

13. Capacity for equity, inclusion

*How does the organisation reach and include the most marginalised PWD (different impairment groups – depending on scope of the organisation/gender/location/economic status etc)?
Does it have a balance of gender, impairment group etc. at all levels of the organisation?*

1st assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
1st target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
2nd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
2nd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
3rd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year

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14. Capacity to plan strategically and translate plans into action.

Is there a strategic plan they work to? Is progress monitored and reviewed?

Is there evidence that they have ever adapted the strategic plan because of changed circumstances?

1st assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
1st target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
2nd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
2nd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
3rd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year

15. Clear plan of activities

Is there an operational plan the organisation follows to implement their ideas or is it all unplanned and decided day by day?

How are operational plans adapted when circumstances change?

Is there regular risk assessment during planning to ensure activities are done in a 'safe' way—so as to do no harm?

1st assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
1st target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
2nd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses

2nd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
3rd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year

16. Capacity to support other organisations through capacity building (for federations/district/national level)

What evidence is there that the organisation has helped other DPO groups to build their capacity?

1st assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
1st target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
2nd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
2nd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
3rd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year

17. Capacity to mobilise

*Evidence of mobilising grassroots organisations/other stakeholders to achieve targets?
Evidence of mobilising PWD membership to achieve targets?*

1st assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
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1st target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
2nd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
2nd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
3rd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year

TO RELATE

18. Capacity to collaborate with like-minded organisations

*Are they a member of a higher-level body? (e.g network, consortia, umbrella group etc)
Do they regularly meet other similar organisations?*

1st assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
1st target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
2nd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
2nd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses

3rd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
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19. Capacity to engage with service providers

Do they have contacts with local service providers in health/education credit etc?

1st assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
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3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
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20. Capacity to engage with government/decision makers at different levels

*Do they have contacts with local government officials at appropriate levels?
Have they influenced decision making through these contacts?*

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2nd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
2nd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year

3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
3rd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year

21. Capacity to engage different stakeholders in planning and implementing processes

Examples of range of stakeholders they engage with regularly

1st assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
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3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
3rd target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year

22. Capacity to be accountable to PWD

*Are there multiple feedback/grievance mechanisms? How often are they used?
How often do supported PWD/members engage in planning and monitoring?
What steps are taken to ensure both men and women feed in to/can access these systems equally?
Have they asked supported PWD and survivors of harm how they would like to report concerns/complaints?*

1st assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
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1st target #1-5:	Priorities for improvement over coming year
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3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
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23. Capacity to relate to and be accountable to donors

Is the organisation able to account to/maintain good relationship with donors?

1st assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
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3rd assessment #1-5:	Description of strengths and weaknesses
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