INTERNAL DEMOCRACY SELF-ASSESSMENT

TOOL #1

A CHECKLIST

The checklist contains four key areas for internal democracy, which are more or less recognised standards or definitions of internal democracy in non-profit organisations. Each one of the core areas has attached questions, in total 44. The use of the checklist is flexible and can be applied in different situations, as an internal list for staff and elected representatives as an exercise in relation to the annual plan, the annual meeting with members or for organisational development in general. It could also serve for fundraising, application for projects or reporting to donors, authorities or others. The four key areas finalise with an exercise on conclusions of needs for eventual improvements.

Authors: Sonny Östberg and Jocke Nyberg

PlanDoLearn | RIOBAMBA HUMAN RIGHTS AB

May 2021

OLOF PALME
INTERNATIONAL
CENTER

1. Participation: Member-based organisation, membership and member's rights

QUESTIONS AND REPLY ALTERNATIVES	Yes	No	Partly	Don't know
Does your organisation have members?				
Do you have a definition of who is or can be a member? (In the statues or other steering document)				
Do members have to pay a membership fee (annually or with other certain frequency)?				
If you do not have membership fees as an obligation, how do you define membership?				
Are members registered by your organisation?				
Do you update the member register with a certain frequency?				
Do the statues or any other steering documents define the rights of the members to participate/be involved in your organisation?				
Do you on a regular basis inform or communicate with the members?				
Are members seen as resources, encouraged and given opportunities to participate in the activities your organisation organises or co-organises?				
Are the members invited to attend annual meetings?				
Are the members involved in the development of strategies, annual plans, evaluations or other important				

Conclusions of your self-assessment: eventual needs for improvement or no need to the level they should be prioritised

Given the answers on the above questions, do you think there is a need for improvement related to members and membership or no need?			
No, no needs for improvement to the extent it should be given priority		**Yes, needs for improvement**	
Why not:		Why:	
		On what:	
		How or specific tasks:	

2. Accountability mechanisms and aspects

QUESTIONS AND REPLY ALTERNATIVES	Yes	No	Partly	Don't know
Do you have a functioning board in your organisation?				
Is the board elected by the highest decision-making body in the organisation, like the annual meeting/congress or similar?				
Are board members changed with a certain level of frequency (yearly, bi- or triannual)?				
Is there a clear division of roles and duties between the executive/operational management and elected representatives (like the board), set out in the statues or any other steering document?				
Is the board's role to oversee, monitor and also guide the executive/operational management of the organisation?				
Does the board have the authority to sanction and even dismiss the top manager/director of your organisation?				
Does your organisation have written regulations on decision making procedures?				
Can ordinary members be nominated to become board members?				
Does it happen that members are elected to the board or other decision-making bodies of the organisation (like working groups or specific thematic or organisational committees)?				
Are staff of the organisations recruited based on their merits?				
Does your organisation have a whistle blower mechanism or system or similar in place, where members, sympathisers, beneficiaries, targets groups or the public can complain and/or require actions against mismanagement, corruption, including conflict of interests and cronyism?				

Conclusions of your self-assessment: eventual needs for improvement or no need to the level they should be prioritised

Given the answers on the above questions, do you think there is a need for improvement related to members and membership or no need?			
	No, no needs for improvement to the extent it should be given priority		**Yes, needs for improvement**
Why not:		Why:	
		On what:	
		How or specific tasks:	

OLOF PALME
INTERNATIONAL
CENTER

3. Transparency issues

QUESTIONS AND REPLY ALTERNATIVES	Yes	No	Partly	Don't know
Does your organisation have functioning routines and mechanisms to share and interchange information with members?				
Do you have a web page/web portal where your organisation is presented?				
Are key documents like by-laws/statues, plans, projects/programmes, financing sources, activities, and events published on the web?				
Does the web page also include sections where you present the results/the impact of your work?				
Do you also regularly publish on your web page opportunities for work/jobs and consultancies?				
Are external evaluations and reviews published on your web page (with exceptions related to organisational and personal security and safety issues)?				
Are representatives of the organisation accessible to journalists and others who wants to ask for information about your CSO?				

Conclusions of your self-assessment: eventual needs for improvement or no need to the level they should be prioritised

Given the answers on the above questions, do you think there is a need for improvement related to members and membership or no need?			
	No, no needs for improvement to the extent it should be given priority		**Yes, needs for improvement**
Why not:		Why:	
		On what:	
		How or specific tasks:	

4. Representation, non-discrimination and gender equality

QUESTIONS AND REPLY ALTERNATIVES	Yes	No	Partly	Don't know
Do you have a policy, a strategy, an action plan or a similar ambition on broad representation/representativity within your organisation (not only referring to groups you work for/with)?				
Are women, ethnic and/or religious minorities, LGTBI-people, young and old people who are other often vulnerable or discriminated groups in the society welcomed in your organisation, as ordinary members, board members staff and other bodies?				
In practice are any or some of these groups represented in your organisations, as staff and/or elected representatives?				
Does your organisation have a gender policy, a gender strategy, a gender action plan or a similar ambition to improve gender equality within your organisation?				
If you have a gender policy strategy, is it implemented and daily practiced at most levels of the organisation?				
Do you devote specific human, financial and material resources to work with gender equality?				
Is a gender outcome or impact assessment included in all proposals, plans and activities?				
Do you have a policy/strategy/action plan to prevent, detect, sanction and eliminate sexual harassment within your organisation and the work you are conducting?				

Conclusions of your self-assessment: eventual needs for improvement or no need to the level they should be prioritised

Given the answers on the above questions, do you think there is a need for improvement related to members and membership or no need?			
	No, no needs for improvement to the extent it should be given priority		**Yes, needs for improvement**
Why not:		Why:	
		On what:	
		How or specific tasks:	