# Organisational Capacity Assessment Frameworks

**Background**

Following the work that has been done by the TUDCN on the Trade Union Development Effectiveness Principles (the drafting of the Principles and Guidelines and the elaboration of the Trade Union Development Effectiveness Profile -TUDEP), and the research “Insight into the Results of Trade Unions’ Development Work”, several organisations manifested their interest in going a step further.

This implies deepening the reflection on the relation between trade union solidarity projects and the impact of those on the actual partner organisations, specifically in terms of structural improvements. In other words, the question that we should tackle is to what extent our solidarity programs contribute to the strengthening of partner organisations in the South, and how (on what criteria) we can assess it. Trade Unions have already clear cut points of reference in this respect[[1]](#footnote-1), linked to their very nature of representative and membership based organisations. However, there is no common approach when it comes to assessment. Quite surprisingly, during the elaboration of “Insights into results”, it was registered that TUs are currently using different methodologies and instruments in the field of organisational capacity assessment (OCA)[[2]](#footnote-2). Therefore, the elaboration of common **Organisational Capacity Assessment (OCA) frameworks** will help us to build up a coherent approach in supporting organisations in the South, and also to strengthen ownership of development processes.

**Preliminary considerations**

Union growth is set as one of the three main strategic goals of the ITUC for the next period.In this sense **“organising”** is one of the priorities of trade union work. The elaboration of common OCA frameworks will contribute to “organising” and will help shape National Trade Union Development Strategies with clear objectives, results and indicators.

Although we already have a basis for our work on OCA frameworks it is important to deepen our efforts with respect to strategies that we can adopt and specific indicators we can agree on. In this process it is essential to give special attention to the views of organisations in the different regions. There is a need for solid OCA frameworks, but these have to be adapted to and work for the organisations which are undergoing the capacity building process.

Most existing OCA frameworks are mainly drafted for NGOs but do not respond to the specificities of trade union development cooperation. It would be important to retrieve these specificities so they will be taken into account in the work to be done.

A question of special interest would be to identify and agree on common indicators that can allow us to measure properly the impact that capacity building strategies have. In this process it is important to keep things simple and practical, as we do not want academic analyses that will prove to be too complicated and distant from the needs of the organisations.

**Proposed methodology**

The TUDCN WG on TU Partnership (former TU dev effectiveness) will be the Network’s point of reference for this work. Therefore, all interested organisations are invited to express their interest in joining the group/mailing list.

The starting point will be continuing the mapping of the different OCA frameworks used by trade union partners and analyse the effectiveness in implementing them as well as the problems found. We already have the 10 different models of OCA mentioned above that we could share, as not all of the interested organisations have had access to them, but there are also other initiatives that might be worth studying.

This work will lead to a specific OCA seminar (that could take place during the first half of 2015), in which the debates could be presented and discussed. The overall aim is to reach common conclusions by the end of 2015, launching a shared TUs framework on OCA, with policy guidelines for the trade union movement.

1. For instance increased membership; collecting dues; political autonomy etc… [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. A mapping of 10 OCA frameworks used by different SSOs was done in the “Insight into results of trade unions’ development work” research. This already sets a basis for the work to be done on OCA. In chapter 3 of the publication a framework on OCA was elaborated based on the “Five Capability Model”, contextualised and adapted on the basis of the 10 different OCA frameworks analysed (see Annex). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)