

Framework for technology assessment: *These steps are provided to help you conduct a technology assessment, the first step to building a technology plan. Use the following as a framework: change it, add to and adapt it.*

What is technology assessment for organizations? *Technology assessment assists an organization in defining its current opportunities and needs. It is the basis of an organization's technology plan. Below are some key steps involved in conducting an assessment.*

- 1) **Build organizational commitment:** Get commitment from the organization to explore using technology to strengthen your organizing.
- 2) **Develop a committee:** Create a small committee of staff and leaders (2-4 people) who are responsible for carrying out the assessment.
- 3) **Collect information to address the following topics:**
 - a. Describe your basic organizational goals and structure
 - b. Define areas of work that technology can advance
 - c. Assess member and staff skills in using technology
 - d. Conduct equipment inventory
 - a. Define your basic organizational goals and structure**
 - What are your organizational goals?
 - How many members?
 - Committees? Staff?
 - Who do you work with?
 - What is your budget for communications?
 - What are your biggest challenges?
 - b. Define parts of your organization that technology can assist with, for example:**
 - Communications
 - Media/materials creation
 - Participation
 - Research and analysis
 - Administration and program
 - Campaigns

Identify questions and answers for each area:

 - How are these tasks done now?
 - How frequently?
 - Do you have goals for each? If so, what are they?
 - Who is involved in getting them accomplished?
 - How effective are your current methods?
 - What equipment do you use to make them happen?
 - c. Assess member and staff skills**
 - What technology do you use now?
 - What would you like to be able to do?
 - d. Conduct an Equipment Inventory**
 - How many computers and how old?
 - How many have Internet access?
 - What other equipment do you use? To do what?
 - What software do you use? To do what?
- 4) **Compile all the information in a document. Share it with others.**
- 5) **Use the assessment to begin your technology plan.**