

A photograph of three Black women in conversation. The woman on the left is partially visible, wearing a pink top. The woman in the middle is wearing a pink top and a green and brown striped scarf. The woman on the right is wearing a blue t-shirt with white text that includes 'PULSE' and 'RICA'. They are all looking towards the right side of the frame. The image is partially obscured by a large white triangle that points downwards, which serves as a background for the title text.

EVALUATION OF THE COMMON GROUND INITIATIVE PHASE II

2014-2020

by Cathy James & Isabel Turner



COMMON
GROUND
INITIATIVE



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This evaluation demonstrates the lasting and significant impact of the £20 million Common Ground Initiative phase II (CGI II), co-funded by Comic Relief and the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (then Department for International Development – FCDO) from 2014-19.

The programme built on Comic Relief's commitment to UK 'diaspora' organisations, where the majority of trustees is of African heritage and 'small' organisations whose annual turnover is under £1 million. Building on CGI Phase I, CGI II had two components: the first supported four diaspora strategic partners to maximise their unique contribution to development in Africa; the other provided grants to both small and diaspora organisations for projects supporting disadvantaged people in Africa.

Over the five-year period, changes in Comic Relief's context as a result of new strategies and structures have shaped how the programme evolved over time. However, the evaluation lands at a time when its findings are of great relevance for Comic Relief, FCDO and other funders in relation to debates about shifting power, sustainability, organisational resilience and response to Covid-19.

Impact

Social and economic changes in people's lives in Africa

- **Increased and diversified diaspora investment:** Ground-breaking work by AFFORD, one of the four diaspora strategic partners, showed that you could unleash and more strategically channel diaspora funding to bring systemic and sustained change in Africa. AFFORD increased diaspora investment in small and medium enterprises and improved business effectiveness, leading to social and economic change. It also tested other ways to galvanise diaspora skills and resources to benefit Africa through crowdfunding, pro-bono support, an effective professional volunteering programme, and by setting up a commercial bond for affordable housing in Rwanda.
- **A new generation of African women change-makers:** The other three strategic partners contributed to significant improvements in women and girls' lives in Africa. iSpace and ATBN brought African young women into tech and raised a cadre of problem-solvers in Ghana who led change for other women and girls, and their families and communities. FORWARD's work in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and Britain inspired African young women to action against gender-based violence. It raised young leaders who carried out their own projects and who joined voices together to influence national and global policies and implementation.
- **Other outcomes in social and economic wellbeing for disadvantaged people:** Grants to UK small and diaspora organisations reached remote and marginalised people in Africa and brought about a range of outcomes: improved food security, land tenure and management and better livelihoods; women's leadership, empowerment and protection; improved access, retention and performance in school; safety and integration for children at risk; better access to health services, improving maternal and child health; and reduced stigma and more support for those with HIV/AIDS.

Stronger organisations

CGI II strengthened the funded organisations and their partners, resulting in better programmes and organisational resilience. Smaller organisations developed their strategic capacity and core functions. Larger ones improved their effectiveness and efficiency and inclusiveness. Many linked to new contacts and networks. Most particularly improved monitoring, evaluation and learning, using the evidence

generated to leverage funding and scale up their work. However, fundraising remains a big challenge.

Learning

What makes for sustainability

The evaluation highlighted three keys to sustainable approaches:


- **Good research and consultation:** £10,000 'Generating ideas' grants improved ways of working, capacity and partnerships; leveraged further funding; and influenced others to play their part.
- **Catalysing the system:** Effective partners aligned to, and influenced, governments; supported community ownership; and galvanised movements and network, achieving greater scale.
- **Problem-solving:** Approaches that enabled communities and groups to solve their own problems, rather than bringing a solution to them, created more sustained change.

The evaluation also identified three keys to organisational resilience:

- **Accompaniment:** Quality mentoring enabled a deeper identification of priorities, increased the culture of learning and helped partners embed new skills in their approaches.
- **Adaptive and strategic funding relationships:** Effective partners managed to adapt and use donor priorities and funding to support their core development and mission, not allow it to divert them.
- **Peer learning and support networks:** Developing links with peers for learning, sharing challenges and joint action or advocacy enabled partners to draw on this support beyond project funding.

Distinctive contribution of UK diaspora and small organisations

Testing assumptions about the distinctive contribution of diaspora organisations particularly was core to CGI's purpose. This evaluation evidences the '**4 Rs**' that apply to those that are most effective:

 Responsiveness	 Relationships	 Resources	 Resilience
- bridge cultures - can tackle harmful norms - relevant to context	- link to wide eco-system - identify good partners - give effective support	- mobilise skills - bring new resources - reach left-out groups	- commit for long-term - support resilience

CGI II's UK Small and Diaspora fund conflated the contribution of small organisations with diaspora and thus often overlooked what makes each effective. The evaluation shows that two sub-groups of small organisations can be particularly effective: **i)** those that have a strong niche; and **ii)** faith-based organisations (and those with strong values). It affirms an increasing body of evidence that faith-based organisations often demonstrate similar characteristics to diaspora organisations (see box above).

Other more general qualities of effective small NGOs that are evidenced in the evaluation include:

- **Close relationships with local partners** that are respectful, listening, accessible and long-term.
- **Effective organisational strengthening**, accompanying partners and mutually agreeing priorities.
- **Agility**, responding to changing partner needs and contexts with minimal bureaucracy.

How funders support that distinctive contribution

The evaluation demonstrated key strengths in CGI II's design in its distinct focus on a cohort, the choice of strategic partners, availability of small research grants, investment in organisational development and supporting partners to tell their own stories. In addition, Comic Relief's flexible and adaptive grant management combined with rigour in monitoring, evaluation and learning meant that the programme mitigated risk well. Assessing small and diaspora organisations against their assumed qualities and strengthening the system of report rating would have improved this further. CGI II's distinctive identity

diminished as it progressed. Organisation development was less structured than the first phase and Comic Relief lost opportunities for strategic engagement with partners during and after the funding.

Way forward

Relevance to context

Global interest in the role of the diaspora in development has increased greatly. In 2018, the diaspora contributed \$86 billion in remittances to Africa (money sent to family and community), highlighting their importance to the development of the continent. Debates about sustainability and shifting power to the South are amplified by Covid-19 and the Black Lives Matter movement.

Both Comic Relief and FCDO are going through significant change. The evaluation presents the opportunity to understand and strategically maximise the unique contribution of effective small and diaspora UK organisations, without significant risk.

Implications for future work and support

The evaluation recommends that funders:

- **Acknowledge and communicate data** about the contribution of effective diaspora organisations and their relevance to the current context; creating opportunities for strategic conversations; strengthening diaspora representation in donor structures; and recognising the value that small organisations can bring particularly in strengthening southern partners.
- **Engage and convene**, maximising Comic Relief's 20+ years of work with diaspora organisations and evidenced impact to celebrate CGI II, give a platform to partners and connect them to other donors and networks; developing long-term more strategic co-designing relationships with key partners to maximise their contribution; and supporting more peer learning initiatives.
- **Invest**: optimising the positive momentum of CGI II to sustain and scale up important work; investing strategically in diaspora organisations as part of funding initiatives; integrating other effective modes of partnership and funding into the shifting power approach; and building organisational strengthening and small research/ consultation grants into programmes.
- **Create an enabling environment**: developing a clear strategy for diaspora work, integrating it into policy processes and removing barriers to investment; supporting research; influencing UK Development Financial Institutions to partner in diaspora investment and social enterprise schemes; and influencing platforms to raise awareness of diaspora contribution.

What has taken root?

The evaluation evidences the distinctive and unique contribution of *effective* diaspora organisations and the overlapping advantages to *effective* small UK organisations. It emphasises the importance of assessing organisations against these qualities, rather than assuming they exist. It shows how to strengthen sustainability of approaches, moving away from service-delivery to systemic, research-based, problem-solving approaches. It also highlights the importance of accompaniment, peer support and adaptive, strategic funding relationships in strengthening organisational resilience.

In a context where these findings are particularly relevant because of reducing budgets, debates about sustainability and shifting power to the South – all amplified by Covid-19 – the evaluation provides realistic recommendations to funders for the way forward.

INTRODUCTION

Background to Common Ground Initiative Phase II

The Common Ground Initiative (CGI), co-financed by FCDO and Comic Relief supported:

- UK African 'diaspora' organisations, where most trustees define themselves as of African heritage
- And UK 'small' organisations, with an annual turnover of under £1 million.

The programme built on Comic Relief's strong commitment to these organisations dating from 1999:

Comic Relief support for small and diaspora pre-2009

180 grants to small organisations

80 grants to diaspora organisations

FCDO approached Comic Relief due to its reputation in this area

£110 million
Comic Relief

Common Ground Initiative Phase I – 2009-2014

Project grants up to £1 million over 3-5 years

Diaspora advocacy: Africa UK and 'ChangeMakers' programme

Organisational Development grants of up to £40,000 over 3 years

Research, consultation and planning grants of £25,000

£45 million
FCDO - £20m
CR - £25m

Common Ground Initiative Phase II 2015-2020

a) CGI for African diaspora partners - £7 million

4 grants of £45,000 to £2.9 million over up to 3 years

b) Small and Diaspora UK NGO fund - £10.4 million

28 Generating Ideas grants up to £10,000 over about 6 months

26 Implementing & Adapting grants up to £750,000 over 3-5 years

£20 million
FCDO - £12m
CR - £8m

CGI II components and outcomes

Components **a)** and **b)** above link to three outcomes for CGI II:

- Increased and diversified diaspora investment in small and medium-sized enterprises in Africa**
- Improvements in the lives of women and girls**
- Improved social and economic wellbeing of disadvantaged people**

Outcomes **i** and **ii** were delivered by four UK diaspora organisations, proactively selected by Comic Relief. These became known as '*Delivery Partners*'. Component **(a)**, referred to as 'CGI' (see box above), aimed to fund and enhance partnerships between UK diaspora and African organisations.

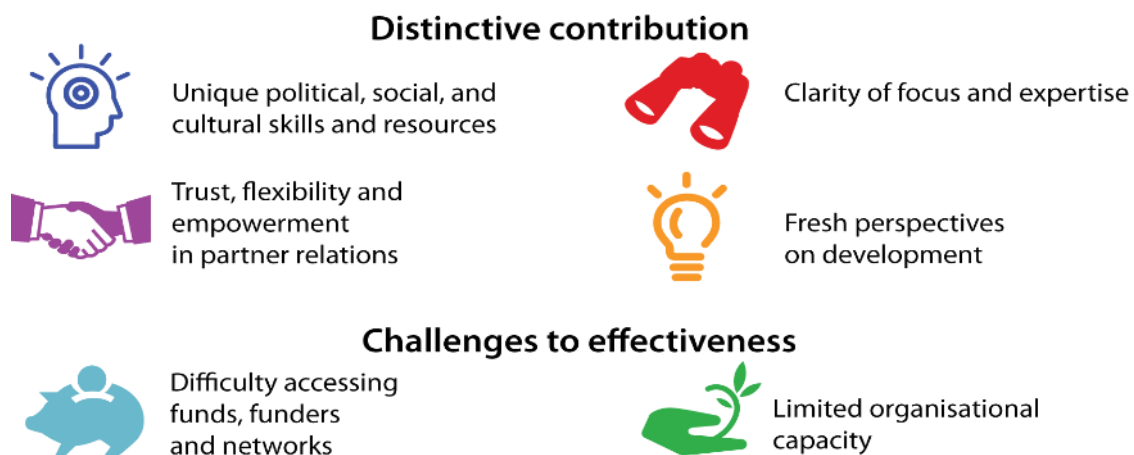
Outcome **iii** was delivered through the Small and Diaspora UK NGO fund (component **(b)** in box above) which aligned projects to Comic Relief's strategic themes at that time of health, HIV, education, street and working children and young people, women and girls, people living in slums, and trade and enterprise.

CGI II funding from FCDO ended in March 2019, but the initiative continued into 2020. A 2014 external evaluation of the first phase (Chapman 2014) found that it was an *“immensely valuable initiative”* and *“immensely relevant”* to the aid context, where it is hard for small and diaspora organisations to access funding, especially for organisational development. CGI II aimed to draw on learning from the first phase:

- Continuing the initiative but emphasising more the unique strengths of diaspora organisations by proactively identifying and investing in ‘Delivery Partners’ for specific streams of work
- Focusing on UK-Africa partnerships, supporting advocacy and building capacity
- Encouraging and enabling funded partners to tell their stories and develop their own narratives

CGI II theory of change

CGI I’s evaluation (Chapman 2014) recommended developing a theory of change for phase II. An iterative process between Comic Relief and FCDO resulted in a final agreed version in November 2015 (App 1). The theory of change reflects the complex nature of the programme and the struggle to pull together the different strands. It focuses on the diaspora contribution, under which the role of small UK organisations is subsumed. The phase I evaluation validates learning about some of the unique qualities of each group, but the phase II theory of change does not reference these. This evaluation therefore tests the assumptions laid out below from the CGI strategy presented to FCDO (CR 2015):



CGI II context and relevance

Delivery of CGI II needs to be set against the changing context in both Comic Relief and FCDO over the five-year period. Comic Relief carried out two strategic reviews entailing restructuring. This meant that a dedicated CGI team no longer managed the programme and grant management was divided across the broader team until a CGI manager was again contracted from July 2018. FCDO also expected increasing rigour in Comic Relief’s approach to grant and risk management and introduced new Safeguarding Due Diligence Standards, against which each co-funded partner had to be assessed.

Despite these changes, this evaluation lands at a time when its findings are of great relevance for both FCDO and Comic Relief. Research and media have raised awareness about the role of the diaspora – *“people of African origin living outside the continent, irrespective of their citizenship and nationality and who are willing to contribute to the development of the continent”* (African Union). FCDO is developing a strategy on remittances (the money the diaspora sends). Covid-19 amplifies the importance of responding to debates about sustainability in approaches and organisations, shifting power to the South and reducing budgets. Comic Relief continues to test and develop its Social Change Strategy, funding southern partners directly and supporting them to tell their own stories.

Evaluation aims and approach

The evaluation aims to:

- Enable Comic Relief and FCDO to determine the extent to which CGI II met its intended outcomes
- Draw out learning about what worked, what did not, and why
- Provide insights to Comic Relief and FCDO on how lessons from CGI can inform future work

CGI II methodology and limitations (see App 2 - sources)

Independent consultants carried out a desk study of CGI documents, including: a review of the Generating Ideas model (Turner 2018); the FCDO Project Completion Review (Millard 2019); an Organisational Development review (Lipson 2019); and assessments, reports and evaluations from all 31 grants. They also carried out semi-structured interviews with past and current Comic Relief key informants, FCDO and 'Delivery Partners'. The evaluation involved funded partners and some of their Southern counterparts, FCDO and Comic Relief in validating, analysing and sharing learning through virtual sessions.

The report is structured in line with the three evaluation aims:

- Section A describes the changes that have taken place in people's lives and in organisations.
- Section B analyses sustainability of changes achieved and the evidence for the distinctive contribution of both UK diaspora and small organisations.
- Section C provides summary conclusions and Section D recommendations for the way forward.

Evidence is referenced according to its sources (box right). While Comic Relief asked for external evaluations for all grants, Covid-19 and other factors such as conflict led to delays and some evaluations will have to be carried out remotely. Six Implementing and Adapting grants do not yet have final reports or evaluations. Among the 'Delivery Partners', AFFORD had robust external evaluations; ATBN's and iSpace's were limited by budget constraints; and FORWARD's was not done because of Covid-19.

Evaluation sources

- external evaluations/ research
- other documents e.g. reports
- partner interviews and inputs
- funder interviews and inputs

A. OUTCOMES

Section A provides an overview of grants made to the four diaspora 'Delivery Partners' to strengthen diaspora investment and women's rights; and grants made to small and diaspora organisations under the UK NGO fund which aligned to Comic Relief's overall strategic priorities. It covers communications produced as an explicit output for 'Delivery Partners', but also by other partners for a range of purposes.

A1. CGI II outputs

A1.1 How the grants were used

Delivery Partners' work

The CGI component – The first of the two strands of the programme focused on four diaspora 'Delivery Partners', selected pro-actively. Comic Relief identified organisations to submit an expression of interest by drawing on relationships from other funding phases, from CGI I's 'Changemaker' programme, which supported 100 diaspora individuals in networking and advocacy and from partner networks.

The table below outlines their focus, geographic coverage and distinctive character:

Funded partner	Theme	Countries	Distinctive character (grant documents & funder comments)
AFFORD (Africa Foundation for Development) Funded by CR since 2001	Diaspora investment	Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“widely recognised legitimacy”</i> across diaspora • <i>“strong identity and values”</i> • <i>“an invisible army”</i> of voluntary resource people • strong networks in & outside diaspora
ATBN (Africa Technology Business Network) – first grant ever received	Women and Girls	Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • only registered as a limited company • start-up tech initiative with 500 members, only running networking events before • <i>“really interesting and transformational”</i>
FORWARD Funded by CR since 1998	Women and Girls	Britain, Tanzania, Uganda, Somaliland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“leading diaspora women’s organisation”</i> • significant experience in tackling FGM • strength in choice of partners & networks • getting young people leading change
iSpace Foundation - new to Comic Relief	Women and Girls	Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working in tech space in Ghana & London • developing an eco-system for entrepreneurs • <i>“exciting and innovative hub organisation”</i> • focus on inclusion of women in male space

The Small and Diaspora UK NGO fund

This fund for both small and diaspora organisations offered two types of grants:

- 28 Generating Ideas grants** of £10,000 supported 16 small and 12 diaspora organisations in research, planning, consultation or developing an idea: Across Comic Relief strategic themes at that time, most of these grants went to Street and Working Children, Education, Trade and Enterprise, and Health – with one to Women and Girls and one to Slums. 71% supported work in East and Southern Africa, 22% in West Africa and 7% in Central Africa. Half the funded partners were new to Comic Relief. Out of these, only five went on to secure project grants, known as ‘Implementing and Adapting Grants’ and one an Organisational Development grant.
- 26 Implementing and Adapting grants** of up to £750,000 supported 17 small and 8 diaspora partner projects. Two others were cancelled. Only six partners (23%) were new to Comic Relief. 76% of grants supported work in East and Southern Africa, 12% in West Africa and 12% in Central Africa. Many worked in places and with groups that were hard to reach and facing difficult issues:

Small NGOs’ niche work in tackling harmful norms and practices

Chance for Childhood and KUAP Kenya focused on street connected children with **communication disabilities** and other special education needs.

Project Harar in a remote region of Ethiopia brought life-changing impact for **children with cleft palate**, believed to be ‘cursed’ and hidden away.

Chemin Neuf in DR Congo brought together government, judiciary, NGOs and others to tackle the issue of **children accused of witchcraft** who face abuse and end up on the streets.

The grants reached a total of **327,110 people**. Comic Relief initially aligned the grants to its seven strategic themes at the time of grantmaking and then later to four main themes: investing in children; empowering women and girls; improving health and wellbeing; and building stronger communities.

A1.2 Communicating the stories

Comic Relief's communications' strategy in CGI II supported diaspora partners to tell their own stories and raise awareness of their contribution to development. Comic Relief provided training for 'Delivery Partners' in social media and crisis communication. Partners generated a significant number of strong communications materials – with a range of purposes that went beyond original expectations. Comic Relief missed an opportunity for wider influence during CGI II as it did not follow up, share or amplify the stories. However, it has drawn on these stories more recently, for example in Sport Relief 2020.¹

Changing the narrative

FORWARD, ATBN and iSpace (diaspora 'Delivery Partners') all created strong communications about the role of African women. ATBN received a second small grant from Comic Relief to produce an e-book celebrating women in technology across 13 African countries. They used the book to generate ongoing discussions, for example inviting female entrepreneurs to a roundtable to share their stories and taking part in a BBC World Service panel discussion. They and iSpace strengthened their use of social media: iSpace increased engagement about the role of female entrepreneurs by 38% and ATBN generated 5000 engagements on a campaign. iSpace, ATBN and FORWARD all carried out social media campaigns linked to international events. FORWARD gave voice to young women in online and offline networks, challenging gender roles and norms. AFFORD and i-Space both improved their websites, creating better visibility for themselves as organisations.

"We know how important it is not to have a single story of African women - either on the continent or in the diaspora, so we want to put our voices front and centre as we work with and for ourselves to attain our rights and freedoms" (partner)

Evidence for advocacy, awareness and scale-up:

Documenting evidence as a basis for advocacy is integral to **AFFORD's** work. They developed 'Remittance fact sheets' for governments, enabling them to understand the barriers and opportunities in money sent by the African diaspora. These led to the governments of Gambia and Sierra Leone developing action plans. AFFORD contributed a chapter to a peer-reviewed book on diaspora networks in international business – a ***"significant achievement"*** (evaluation). They produced policy briefings on finance for their annual conference and a submission outlining evidence and recommendations to the House of Lords in 2020, resulting in an immediate action to categorise Money Transfer Organisations as essential during Covid-19 lock-down. They carried out global research with the World Bank and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and contributed to the Global Forum on Migration and Development. **FORWARD's** partners created films² to raise awareness of gender-based violence that fed into panel discussions at the Women of the World festival in London in 2018 and an on-line video series and report on sexual harassment in UK higher education. **i-Space** also carried out a film-based gender campaign.

Implementing and Adapting partner **Project Harar** came up with an innovative use of 'Dagu', a traditional communication system in north-eastern Ethiopia to raise awareness about health and tackle harmful beliefs about congenital abnormalities. **Women and Children First** developed a lessons-learned report to lobby government for scale-up of their work to strengthen health systems in Ethiopia. **DeafKidz'** Generating Ideas research highlighted the immense obstacles to reporting abuse of D/deaf children in hospitals in South Africa. It enabled them to set up a national programme, making services accessible.

¹ <https://www.comicrelief.com/news/unlocking-women-and-technology/>; <https://twitter.com/sportrelief/status/1237798659548426240>; <https://www.comicrelief.com/news/ivys-story/>

² https://youtu.be/hicth_Rk0w; https://youtu.be/3al_oKLk1Y

Shared learning

FORWARD developed an innovative, comprehensive leadership manual and monitoring guide for its TuWezeshe Akina Dada project (Empowering our Sisters). From the Implementing and Adapting (project grant) partners, **Chemin Neuf** published their methodology on street-connected children with a leading French publisher; **Cecily's Fund** produced a best-practice guide on peer education; and **Gaia Foundation's** regional partner, WoMin, produced sample resources to support movement building, which they have now turned into a multi-media approach with visuals for women in communities.

A2. Social and economic changes in people's lives

This section A2 highlights changes achieved under each of the three CGI II outcomes:

- increased diaspora investment (through the one large grant to AFFORD)
- improved lives of women and girls (through the grants to the three other 'Delivery Partners')
- wider social and economic changes (achieved through the UK NGO fund)

A2.1 Changing the system of investment in Africa - AFFORD

£2.9 million CGI II grant over 3 years. (see App 4 & evaluation Annex for full case study)

Partners: AFFORD Sierra Leone; Enterprise Development Centre Nigeria; Empretec Zimbabwe; Private Sector Foundation Rwanda

This grant led to people investing more money better in Africa to bring wide-ranging improvements – from increased income to safer, better food supplies, to access to health care, to empowering girls and young women. Millions of people in Africa rely on money sent by relatives living outside of Africa – the diaspora. This money, known as remittances, is often the biggest source of foreign capital to go to developing countries. AFFORD opened ways to channel this money strategically, increased the amount given and reduced the barriers to sending it. They piloted new ways to invest in Africa to bring lasting change and reduce reliance on handouts. While narrowly missing a few of its specific outcome indicators and achieving narrower geographic coverage in its businesses than planned, AFFORD's reports and external evaluation demonstrate that it achieved more than expected – and in a very short time-frame for such significant and systemic work. It has exceeded hopes and proved you can unleash more strategic diaspora finance for wellbeing in Africa. Its main outcomes include:

- **Generating £447,000 diaspora funding** for small and medium size businesses in Africa – three times the target – and leading to 2,400 people across the value chain with increased income. The businesses not only provided work for people, but enabled them to develop greater confidence, skills and self-reliance and had multiplier effects through the social enterprises (see box p7).
- **Breaking barriers to investment in Africa:** changing attitudes of governments, financial institutions and businesses to diaspora investment, leading to some governments like Nigeria changing policy; becoming the African Union's UK focal point influencing decisions about investment across five regions of Africa and the diaspora; and working with the IOM to map diaspora across UK, Germany, Belgium and Netherlands to provide data for policy formulation.
- **Getting people to invest in completely different ways:** AFFORD is structuring a commercial bond in Rwanda so people can invest in building 400 affordable houses. It has developed a professional volunteering programme that *"takes 50 years of learning from VSO and Engineers/ Doctors without Borders to bring a package that really makes a difference"* (funder)

Example of success: diaspora business partner empowers girls in Nigeria

Copdat, a successful UK diaspora tech business, supported by AFFORD, now outsources projects contracted in the UK to Nigeria. Just a start-up, it has already generated over £70,000 and created 13 new jobs in Nigeria. But beyond that, it has partnered with education institutions in Lagos to help young people develop digital skills like coding – and especially encouraging girls to break gender stereotypes in traditional society. Blessings, one of Copdat's new employees, finds creative ways to work with schools in tech, helps disadvantaged students see new choices and does market research. The job has helped her to become independent, find a home, win scholarships for study and mentor younger girls:

"I always tell them: if I could have done it, why can't you?"



A team of female students come up with ideas to solve challenges in Nigeria during a digital workshop in Copdat's classroom.

A2.2 Improving the lives of women and girls (see App 4 & evaluation Annex for full case studies)

The work of the three 'Delivery Partners' supporting women and girls to have a voice divides into two main areas of outcomes:

- **African young women in tech and entrepreneurship – ATBN and iSpace**
- **Empowering each sister to end sexual and gender-based violence – FORWARD**

Young women entrepreneurs solve problems – ATBN Ghana

£45,000 CGI II grant over 18 months. Partner: Women in Tech Africa (WITA), a pan-African network

ATBN's biggest impact was in **changing the mindsets of African young women to be problem-solvers**, using technology as a tool to impact the lives of other women. ATBN selected young women participants with ideas for starting a business to attend an innovation boot-camp, followed by incubation in iSpace's business hub and mentoring from local and international business-women. This short grant achieved:

- **Leadership and confidence of young women entrepreneurs:** 100% increased confidence; 94% problem-solving skills; 88% public speaking; and 75% incorporated digital tools in their initiatives.
- **Women-led initiatives impacting women and girls:** 80% were still active in business six months after the grant; their initiatives had spin-off impact, such as equipping women with coding skills, generating jobs and income e.g. as web-developers and a group waste management initiative.
- **Changing perspectives on African young women:** ATBN's e-book challenged stereotypes and demonstrated the success of 20 women entrepreneurs, generating debate and press coverage, including the BBC World Service panel, Africa Techy Roundup and East Africa Informer newspaper.

Although small, the grant had multiplier effects. It created a network of global mentors that is still active. A roundtable in Accra brought together key players in entrepreneurship and tech in Ghana; and a Gender Lens Innovation workshop in the UK demonstrated how businesses could better include women. ATBN

partnered with a UK tech company to put its successful boot camp accelerator programme online. The grant enabled it to source additional funding for a project working with multiple stakeholders in the digital sector to become more inclusive. ATBN also equipped its strong pan-African network partner, WITA, to take forward their own 'Girl-Code' programme, training 54 girls in four other cities in Ghana.

Promoting inclusion of young women in Ghana's tech space – iSpace *(reports & partners)*

£552,097 grant over 3 years. Partners: Mobile Web Ghana; Ghana Code Club; and Radical Leap UK

The CGI II grant enabled iSpace to change the narrative in Ghana about women in technology. It led to **28 new start-up businesses, 80% of which have female founders**. 300 women from diverse backgrounds **developed new skills** in programming and business development. Others improved their livelihoods: nine secured employment in ICT firms; five collaborated in developing a site for Ghana's national body of tech hubs; two worked in digital marketing; one set up a successful tourism business and one in cosmetics; and one is teaching tech. iSpace reached young women from low economic backgrounds and marginalised groups such as the Zongo (migrant settlements characterised by poor living conditions).

The programme also had a multiplier effect. Young Muslim women who would not otherwise have had the opportunity for work set up training schemes in their communities. It not only taught them technical skills, but expanded its remit to support them in soft skills: it taught participants *"to identify the problem and bring their own solution"* *(partner)*; and it set up start-up mental health clinics to help the women deal with issues at home. iSpace partnered with government and private sector, influencing how people think about women's role in society – and women in tech. It worked with government on including coding in the national school curriculum and set up a training programme, equipping teachers to run coding camps that recruited 60% female students to encourage them into coding and robotics. It succeeded in extending the programme nationwide, strengthening seven hubs across five cities in Ghana to reach young women in their communities. It also linked with partners in Nigeria and Kenya through international masterclasses to support groups there. It enabled others to see: *"if you invest in women ...when one woman helps another, amazing things can happen"* *(final report)*.

FORWARD – Empowering our sisters to end sexual and gender-based violence

£1,198,295 over 3 years. Partners: Akina Mama Wa Afrika Uganda; Children's Dignity Forum Tanzania; Somaliland Nursing and Midwifery Assoc; Kenya Women in Scotland; Sub Saharan Advisory Panel Wales

This grant has inspired a new generation of young African women to take action against gender-based violence. It has connected them across continents, and with older diaspora mentors from within the movement. It has amplified their voices and invested in their social action projects. As a result:

- **Young feminist leaders champion women's rights:** TuWezeshe Akina Dada means *'Empowering our sisters'* in Swahili. 178 young women are now self-assertive and confident to speak out and take action to transform the lives of others, each in their own unique way, reaching over 2,664 people.
- **Young activists' voices amplify and influence change:** Fellows have taken part in national and global advocacy. They have tackled: sextortion at higher learning institutes in Uganda; anti-FGM legislation in Somaliland; and gender strategy with the Tanzanian government and the Welsh parliament. The United Nations Population Fund has co-opted them into its 2020 campaign #AgainstMyWill.
- **A feminist movement has grown leading to changes in social norms:** The grant has led to 55 networks so that, as a critical mass, Fellows influence and create change. FORWARD is currently in conversation with the joint UN and EU Spotlight Initiative on eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls.

Example of FORWARD's success – 'Let her smile'

Betty (below right) participated in the 2017 TuWezeshe Fellowship. Her Social Action campaign, **Let Her Smile**, aims to restore hope and end all violence against women and girls, breaking the culture of silence, submissiveness and fear that hide under the guise of courtesy. During the project, she encouraged women and girls to speak out and challenge patriarchy because it seriously harmed women's status and performance in their public life.

She developed a media strategy for the campaign to educate and mobilise communities to raise the alarm against gender-based violence in Tororo Uganda, while pushing women and girls to change their attitudes. She engaged over 800 people in the activities and about one million people in radio talks. People reported more violations of violence, human rights and girl child education in communities. Leaders became more responsive to ending this kind of violence. They shared stories on media to empower the community and provide access to information on the issues. Nowadays, Betty is known in the region for being a leading voice for women and girl's freedom: *'We should speak out: silence is more painful than pain itself.'*



A2.3 Other social and economic changes - UK NGO fund

The Small and Diaspora NGO fund aimed to bring about outcomes for disadvantaged people linked to the Comic Relief thematic priorities at the time of grantmaking. It comprised both small 'Generating Ideas' research grants and larger, longer 'Implementing and Adapting' project grants.

A review of the **Generating Ideas programme** (small grants for research and planning) shows that it has achieved much greater and broader impact than envisaged – all for a total programme investment of £275,000 (Turner 2018). The programme aimed to support organisations to leverage funding; strengthen their organisational capacity; and change ways of thinking and working. For example, it helped a young start-up user-led disabled people's organisation, DeafKidz International (DKI), on its road to become *"a global leader for the protection of D/deaf and deafblind children"* (partner - see A3.2). Community Development Initiatives (CDI) built on its initial Generating Ideas grant through a further Implementing and Adapting project grant to secure lasting change for very vulnerable women and girls in Kenya:

Vulnerable women and children graduate from a Nairobi slum

Women and children working in a Nairobi dumpsite permanently left or significantly reduced time spent working in extremely hazardous conditions. CDI, working with partner Pendekezo Letu, helped women to increase their knowledge, skills and confidence. 72% stopped scavenging and ran small, safer income-generating activities that improved their household income and food security. They were less exposed to diseases and abuse and more able to get health care and treatment. Their children enrolled and stayed in school; and other community members learned their rights and how to benefit from government schemes. CDI's success resulted from combining short-term help through cash transfers with longer term approaches to develop women's health and livelihoods. CDI, whose founder took part in CGI I's Changemaker programme, brought high levels of commitment, energy, skills and in-country contacts to the project and enabled it to not only manage a change of local partner, but become a *"significant success"* (funder).

The Generating Ideas programme also influenced wider scale change for vulnerable people by catalysing different stakeholders to play their part in 50% of the grants (Turner 2018). For example, £10,000 for the **Consortium for Street Children UK** meant that 1000 street-connected children from across the world influenced the 2017 United Nations General Comment on children in street situations – a tool that now holds governments to account for implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Implementing and Adapting grants achieved outcomes summarised here (evaluations & reports):

Food security and livelihoods

Six funded partners (two diaspora-led) achieved the following outcomes in livelihoods:

- **Better food security and land management:** **Gaia Foundation** with Earthlore and WoMin in Zimbabwe promoted indigenous knowledge, biodiversity and local community ecological governance to improve food security and ownership. **Transform Africa** with Association for Rural Development (ARD) Sierra Leone, scaled up cassava production successfully, improving women's social and economic status, as well as for owners and the wider community. The grant led to improved farming practices, increased number of meals a day for most participants and improved employment opportunities. It also increased women's literacy and *"greatly reduced"* gender-based violence (evaluation). **Sunarma** stabilised forest management in remote North-west Ethiopia, helping user groups register and improve production of frankincense and get better market prices.
- **Improved income generation and employment:** **Pump Aid** and LUPPEN in Malawi trained entrepreneurs to run solid waste management services, employing staff, running a successful compost business and linking with Government Councils to provide effective services. **Lifeline Network International** and Lifeline Nehemiah in Sierra Leone helped former child soldiers and other unemployed youth gain technical skills and jobs (photo right). By the end of the grant, 73% had secured employment, with anecdotal evidence of also achieving reduced crime (evaluation). **Trust for Africa's Orphans** Uganda successfully brought vulnerable landless households of internally displaced people into organised commercial agriculture and secured land access – *"no mean feat even for larger organisations"* (evaluation). The grant improved farming practices, nutrition, and housing conditions; and led to improvement in women's status and in children going to school.



Education

Four partners (two diaspora) reached remote areas and marginalised groups to:

- **Improved retention and performance in school:** **Africa Future Development** (AFD) improved education for forest dwellers and marginalised pygmies in conflict-affected remote areas of Congo, with 84% retained in school. It trained inspectors and schools in data collection. In a second grant in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), with its partner APICOM, it achieved 87% retention, a 69% pass rate and reduced child labour. It also improved community capacity to analyse problems and come up with solutions. **Iftiin Education and Development Association** set up schools in a rural conflict-affected area of Somalia, where none existed, achieving good results.

Secondary student volunteers ran evening classes in remote areas and camps for internally-displaced people. Joint teacher and student campaigns allayed parents' fears of extremism, improved their support for education and addressed other issues like FGM. **Exeter Ethiopia Link** and DASCC in rural Ethiopia raised literacy levels. 92% improved their class position. **Cecily's Fund**, Afya Mazur and CHEP in Zambia improved school attendance, retention and learning for vulnerable children and engaged parents, guardians and communities in supporting them and creating livelihood opportunities for those not in school.

Children at Risk

As well as education-focused work, four grants to small UK organisations reached vulnerable groups of children, especially street-connected and those with disabilities, achieving:

- **Reintegration of street-connected children:** **Amos Trust** and Umthombo reintegrated street-connected children in South Africa, linking them to government provision and reducing their dependency on drugs. They helped young men into employment and pioneered work with young women on the streets to improve safety, developing an international network 'On her Terms'. They worked with government and community structures to support the children. **Chemin Neuf** and its partner LBM in DRC successfully helped over 600 children, including those branded as witches, back into their families, with a relapse rate of only 14% despite a difficult conflict-affected environment. They stabilised families and improved community acceptance and support for children. They also influenced the wider system by lobbying children's courts to improve protection and strengthened cooperation among different stakeholders through a local network.
- **Improved protection and reduced stigma:** **Chance for Childhood** and its partner KUAP in Kenya reduced stigma against street-connected children with special educational needs, reintegrating them in schools with learning support and improved practices to protect them, while also working with government to improve policies for street-connected children. **DeafKidz** and ChildLine South Africa made *"significant progress"* (evaluation) in building awareness of the threats to protection faced by D/deaf children and in addressing gaps in provision. The grant helped children report abuse and access counselling through SMS and web chat. It also piloted video-relay services so children could communicate directly with a counsellor while at school, with sign language interpretation. Police, court and judiciary improved their processes to support the children.

Women and Girls

While many of the grants, especially those working in livelihoods, also empowered women and girls, five partners (four diaspora) specifically tackled women and girls' rights to achieve:

- **Women's leadership and empowerment:**

Women lead community development and environment management

Gaia Foundation and its partners, as well as achieving better food security, have built women's movements in Zimbabwe. The women lead community dialogue and activities to revive traditional seeds and food sources, improve use of land and strengthen farming. They have worked to tackle climate change, raise awareness about effective use of resources and promote renewable energy. They have run feminist training at regional and national level. They have empowered women and their communities *"to say no to large projects"* (partner).

- **Protection from harmful practices:** **FORWARD** through an 'Implementing and Adapting' project grant (in addition to its main 'Delivery Partner' grant) and its partners CDF, UMATI and Wadada in Tanzania helped girls and women become more aware of the negative effects of FGM and child

marriage and of laws to protect them from violence. Girls in school clubs reported violence and improved their financial independence through income generating activities. Local authorities and professionals improved their response to cases of violence and their support for girls at risk.

Health and HIV/AIDS

- **Improved maternal and child health:** MIFUMI in Uganda worked closely with government district health services and the national Ministry of Health to improve ante- and post-natal care for women and girls. It also tackled gender power issues by engaging male partners through TB treatment and HIV counselling, testing and prevention of mother-to-child transmission. **Global One** and AMREF Kenya enabled 126 women to have Fistula repair surgery for post-labour incontinence and 400 to have treatment for other gynaecological diseases. Safe motherhood committees reduced stigma. **Project Harar** Ethiopia provided post-natal support for mothers of children born with cleft palate. The project enabled children to have corrective surgery but also developed a nutrition programme for mothers and helped to reduce stigma surrounding the issue.
- **Improved access to HIV/AIDS support and reduction of stigma:** CODA with TALC Zambia improved people's knowledge about HIV/AIDS and their access to services, using mobile phone technology to enable people to text for information and support. Unexpectedly the texting service also improved adherence to treatment, improving links with the clinics during the gaps between visits. **KwaAfrica** with KWO and CHAWO in Uganda worked with government to improve HIV services across five districts. They set up support networks to reduce stigma. It played a key role in challenging health workers' attitudes to female sex workers and young people that led to an increase in their use of services.

Strengthening health systems to bring change at scale

ACE Africa UK and Tanzania influenced change at scale for people affected by HIV/AIDS by strengthening the health system. 35,000 people accessed health outreach services; 15,000 went for HIV testing; and 4,600 students in schools took part in sexual and health education classes. It brought about *"great improvement in quality of HIV care and support and changes in health"* (evaluation). The project trained health management teams which are part of the government system. It also worked with district government, though with less success, on data management. 95% of participants reported improved hope and 83% reduced stigma from the community. The project adapted its approach, using community drama and dialogue at awareness events to surface sensitive cultural issues, tackling stigma, myths about witchcraft and Anti-Retroviral drugs, and family planning (when government policy banned publicity). It carried out night-time testing and counselling. The project had a multiplier effect as people shared information and numbers grew each year beyond targets.

A3. Stronger organisations - changes in partners

This section outlines changes in partners as a result of CGI II. It is complemented by section B1.2, which analyses *how* to support organisational resilience and effectiveness. Report and evaluation formats – except for *'Delivery Partners'* – did not explicitly ask about Organisational Development (OD), so little information exists. However, Comic Relief commissioned an OD review of CGI II (Lipson 2019), which collated data from interviews, surveys and workshops. This section draws on its findings as well as input from partners in the virtual meetings in the CGI II evaluation. The OD review concludes that the *"OD support has proved enormously beneficial for all types of grantees, with improvements in a range of organisational capacities and collaborative efforts"*. It highlights fundraising and securing a sustainable future as the most challenging area.

A3.1 Delivery partner changes

The CGI II grants to the four diaspora ‘*Delivery Partners*’ included OD as a core outcome. Responding to a survey of partner priorities, Comic Relief provided three-days training in Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL), in addition to the communications training referenced in A1.2. Each also identified their own priorities and approaches. Reports and evaluations evidenced the results.

ATBN: This grant catalysed ATBN, helping it develop an operating model to take forward its impact cost-effectively. Comic Relief’s requirement that it work with a local partner improved its multiplier effect, extending impact from the one city to five. ATBN registered as a Community Interest Company, put governance in place, improved financial management, strengthened MEL and supported its partner in monitoring and fundraising. ATBN subsequently secured funding to work with digital players to tackle gender. Its e-book raised its profile.

“No other funder has ever done this. That approach is the reason ATBN is where it is today and doing the work it’s doing and leading a multi-stakeholder project.”
(partner)

AFFORD’s OD evaluation concluded that this grant enabled it to nearly triple in size in financial and staff terms and expand its activities to three new countries. It *“successfully moved from a small-scale organisation to a medium one...and demonstrated a considerable level of capacity and resilience.”* According to the evaluation and reports, AFFORD made significant progress in its three OD outcomes:

- **Operational effectiveness, learning and sharing:** Staff became more confident and their work more integrated. AFFORD developed better internal systems, including a new website, IT, Human Resource processes and especially a *“robust and credible system”* (evaluation) for planning, monitoring, evaluating and learning. It went beyond improving MEL to help AFFORD influence policy much better than ever before. Evidence-generation was a huge part of its work in this grant.
- **Improved infrastructure to accommodate organisational growth:** The better office space strengthened the quality and efficiency of AFFORD’s work, making it more open and productive.
- **Increased resources to sustain projects and growth:** Despite an increasingly difficult funding environment, AFFORD secured new funding and partnerships, including from Open Society and Pharo Foundation (the latter through a link from Comic Relief). It used £150,000 unspent funds from this grant to leverage match-funding from the Swiss Development Corporation (SDC) to pilot similar work in Benin with the expectation of expanding it into a five-year programme there and in Cote d’Ivoire, Nigeria and Ghana. The UN’s IOM paid AFFORD consultancy fees to map the Rwandan diaspora; and the EU accepted AFFORD’s volunteer programme for accreditation. AFFORD also secured funding from the UN Capital Development Fund to undertake work in Kigali that will contribute to the Rwandan bond. The grant enabled AFFORD to raise its visibility and profile internationally through evidence generated: it ran international events and built significant links with the UK government, including a visit by the Foreign Office. However, AFFORD still needs other sources, including match-funding to roll out the SDC programme and will have to reduce staffing at least temporarily at the end of CGI II. Its OD evaluation recommends adapting to be less dependent on grants, registering as a social enterprise or CIC to launch financial instruments such as the commercial bond, while using its reputation and registered entities in Africa for fundraising.

iSPACE has become *“the go-to hub when it comes to women in tech and business support”* in Ghana (final report) and has secured several awards (see app 4 & annex case study). It has also developed an income stream from renting out its office space and charging successful graduates for training so it can continue to offer free support to new students. However, Comic Relief income has still made up the majority of iSpace income: the grant *“made us seem bigger than we are”* (partner). This grant enabled changes in iSpace in:

- **Enhanced communications capacity and increased media content online and offline** – focused on female entrepreneurship. iSpace improved its website and IT: sharing success stories with a large audience; increasing social media numbers; and uploading training content to YouTube.
- **Women are better represented across the organisation:** iSpace completely re-structured to take on almost all female staff; and put in place gender policies in place.
- **Stronger systems for finance and MEL** including an iSpace financial manual, staff training, and new employment policies and job descriptions. The team are now in good habits of collecting data, analysis and producing monthly graphics which will help ongoing learning and reporting.
- **Partnerships with relevant stakeholders in government and private sector:** The grant enabled iSpace to partner with hubs across Ghana and in Nigeria and Kenya. iSpace won project contracts from Google, the Ministry of Communication Ghana and the Ministry of Business Development.

FORWARD has continued to develop as an organisation, building on previous Comic Relief funding that strengthened internal structures and processes. It improved its partners' capacity in leading and delivering women's rights programmes. It brought youth voice into its own and its partners' governance, adding a youth representative to its board and setting up a Young Women's Advisory Council to shape its youth programmes. It helped its Welsh partner SSAP set up a youth wing and strengthen its position both in Wales and Africa: SSAP made new connections with funders, with partners in Somaliland and with policy-makers and influencers in Wales, including the Health Minister. This led to funding from the National Community Lottery for a leadership programme for Black Asian and Minority Ethnic communities in Wales. FORWARD helped the Children's Dignity Forum Tanzania learn from other partners and access funding, including from Comic Relief. The Somaliland Nursing and Midwifery Association was invited to sit on a cross-party group after an event that it held in parliament. Its baseline study on gender-based violence added to the knowledge base in the country. Akina Mama's baseline study also influenced its approach and it has strengthened its MEL.

A3.2 Small and diaspora UK NGO fund partner changes

This section outlines the OD changes that took place under the Small and Diaspora UK NGO fund, both as unexpected outcomes from Generating Ideas small grants and through the Implementing and Adapting grants. Each funded partner completed an OD plan for their counterparts and could also budget and plan for their own OD. However, only 9/26 made OD an explicit outcome and three budgeted more than 10% for it, including Make Every Woman Count (MEWC) which had a 100% OD grant.

£10,000 Generating Ideas grants for research and planning helped partners by (Turner 2018):

- **Strengthened organisational capacity:** 96% of partners said the grant impacted their capacity. 100% reported strengthened partnerships between the UK and Africa and with local stakeholders, and new types of partners. **Sunarma** in Ethiopia linked with tech companies to market products. **Lifebrooks** used private schools and supermarkets to resource their work in Nigeria.
- **Helped secure further funding:** While fewer partners than expected secured follow-on project grants from Comic Relief (only 5/20 succeeded), 79% said CGI II helped leverage funding from other sources – 48% significantly. **Team Kenya** is now implementing a three-year project with its local partner and **Yes! Tanzania** and **Malawi Fruits** both secured Scottish government funding.
- **Led to new approaches or paths:** The grant catalysed further research: **Grassroots Action** went on to research the causes of blindness in Zimbabwe; and **PADEAP** Nigeria worked with universities to understand issues faced by sex workers. PADEAP, later supported as an AFFORD business partner in CGI II, improved access to affordable drugs and health care for families and trained over 12,000

people in health issues. It helped refurbish health facilities and created seven jobs.

- **Strengthened project planning and design:** Grants helped partners develop an evidence base for their work and prioritise actions. 100% said it changed their way of thinking and working. For example, **Signal** already tackled societal attitudes to deafness in Tanzania, but discovered that it needed to strengthen communication too with teaching aids and training in sign language.

Risky start-up to international player

DeafKidz International (DKI)'s research with ChildLine South Africa into the abuse suffered by D/deaf children set out the evidence that led to Comic Relief funding its work in Jamaica and its CGI II grant in South Africa. The grant made *"significant progress"* (evaluation) exceeding the number of targeted children so they were confident and able to disclose abuse, adapting website counselling and setting up a school-based counselling programme. It also improved police and court processes. It tested video-relay technology so children could access live counselling on ChildLine's website through a sign language interpreter. Although not fully achieved in the grant, this paved the way for UNICEF support to cascade it globally. DKI has taken learning into work in India. ChildLine, with its global reputation for protection, has integrated support for D/deaf children effectively into its work, staff capacity and data monitoring. DKI has gone on to secure funding from Oak Foundation, Laureus, Save the Children and EU. It is helping INGOs mainstream work with D/deaf and is contributing to WHO resources:

"Comic Relief took a risk and invested in a start-up....It built this organisation. This funding gave us the credibility to establish ourselves as a global leader..." (partner)

CGI II's Implementing and Adapting partners saw organisational change in the following areas according to the OD review (Lipson 2019) and partner feedback during this evaluation:

- **Partnership/ relationship development:** Both UK funded partners and Comic Relief facilitated new connections, helping local partners broaden networks, increase negotiating skills and build confidence in dealing with a range of stakeholders. For example, **FORWARD's** project grant led to more collaborative work and better relationships with community and government.
- **Financial management:** Several partners developed better financial systems and processes, such as **i-Space**, **ATBN** and **MEWC**. Core funding enabled partners to recruit skilled staff in finance.
- **MEL:** Staff strengthened knowledge and understanding. Organisations improved data management systems, such as **Ace Africa**. **Chemin Neuf's** local partner LBM completed 12 MEL studies under this grant to strengthen its approach and published its methodology. **CODA's** partner TALC learned to use Stories of Change systematically, unearthing unexpected outcomes.
- **Programme development:** **AFD's** mentoring helped its partner APICOM develop an action learning approach that strengthened its ability to mobilise stakeholders and run programmes effectively. **Chance for Childhood's** support to its local partner enabled KUAP to manage and deliver its project more effectively and increased their capacity to carry out good quality ethical research themselves.
- **Further funding:** Seven funded partners secured grants to continue or extend work, including MEWC (see box below); Women and Children First; CDI from Big Lottery; Cecily's Fund from FCDO; DeafKidz International from Oak Foundation and UNICEF; and Exeter Ethiopia from FCDO. The OD Review (Lipson 2019) highlighted fundraising as *"an area where OD results are falling short of expectations"*, needing more attention and investment. However, learning from CGI II highlights the importance of planning for sustainability in systemic ways (see section B), rather than simply hiring consultants (the most common approach).

- **Overall strategic capacity:** OD funds supported basic functions like human resource management (freeing leadership to be more strategic), organisational strategic plans and staff learning events. A few start-ups focused on governance: for example, **Amos Trust's** grant helped Umthombo increase trustee capacity and enabled its Director to put in place short, medium and long-term strategies. The OD review concluded that these changes led to long-term impact in programme quality and organisational resilience, especially for smaller UK partners. Larger partners consolidated capacity, but some reached a plateau where they needed more investment to make a step change.

Investing In a unique African-led, woman-led diaspora organisation

Make Every Woman Count (MEWC) is a small, low-cost bilingual diaspora organisation working remotely across continents. Rai Sow, originally from Guinea, set up MEWC in her early 20s. Having watched leader after leader make proclamations at the 2010 launch of Africa Women's Decade, she wanted to hold them to account. Since then, MEWC has played a unique role collecting and sharing data in an annual report and on social media on laws and policies in Africa – particularly the African Union's Maputo Protocol for women and girls' rights. MEWC also helps young women's groups use the data for advocacy.

MEWC was a Generating Ideas grantee. Comic Relief offered it a £30,000 OD grant when it failed to secure follow-on project funding. With accompaniment from an independent consultant, MEWC identified priorities and focused on governance. It appointed a new board in a rigorous process; developed a new strategy; strengthened financial management; and opened an office in Guinea as a focal point for work in West Africa – with a project now funded by the Swedish government.

2020 is the end of the African Women's Decade. A major final report is in progress, funded by a regional women's network. Comic Relief has committed to publicising the report #MakeWomenCount.

B. LEARNING

This section draws out learning about what worked, what did not, and why in CGI II. Section B1 analyses what makes for sustainability, critical in the current context. It draws out funded partner learning about sustainable approaches (B1.1) and organisational resilience (B1.2). Section B1.2 assesses evidence from the programme about the distinctive qualities of effective small and diaspora organisations. Section B.3 analyses how programme design and Comic Relief's management have supported that contribution.

B1. What makes for sustainability - partner learning

B1.1 Sustainable approaches

Good research and consultation

The Generating Ideas review demonstrated that investing in good consultation resulted in a scale and scope of impact beyond anything envisaged (Turner 2018). It changed funded partners' ways of thinking and working; strengthened organisational capacity and partnerships; leveraged further funding and research; and influenced actions and policies of government and other stakeholders, thus activating more systemic work and impact. Success factors behind effective research and consultation included:

- Combining vision and clear outcomes with detailed plans for each stage of consultation and its use
- Using a theory of change framework to take a positive approach and prioritise what is important
- Ensuring local ownership by involving local partners and those benefitting, and linking work to

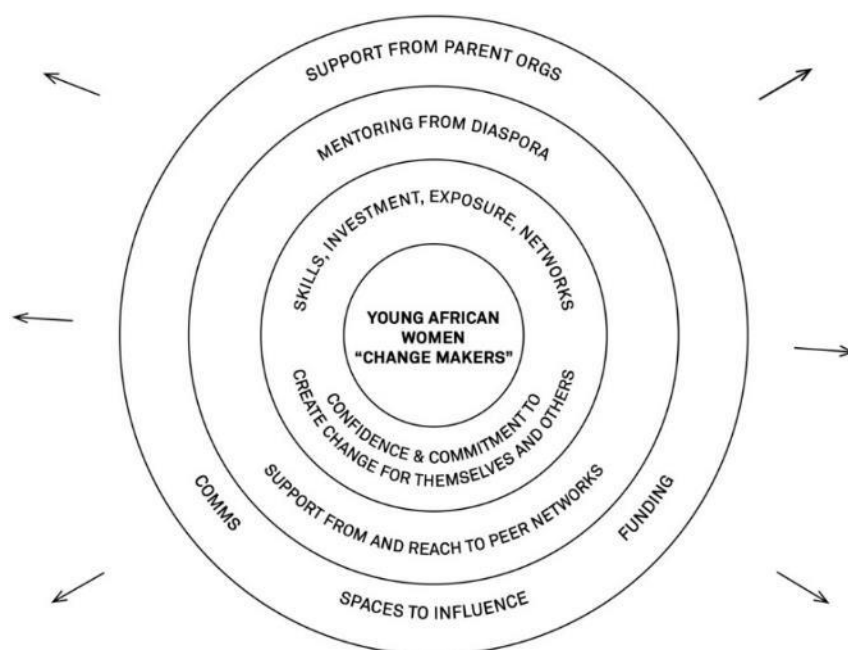
local priorities

- Taking a participatory approach using good qualitative tools to draw out marginalised voices
- Addressing ethical and safeguarding issues in relation to consent, referrals, feedback and confidentiality
- Identifying good external support to help in the research and taking forward the work
- Bringing together relevant actors for rigorous analysis to prioritise actions and agree responsibilities

Catalysing the system

The Generating Ideas small investment in research catalysed joint action. Good consultation gets everyone analysing and playing their part in the change process, so the work does not rely on project delivery alone but instead gets everyone taking action, even without external funding. This means it is more cost-effective and sustainable. All partners across CGI II that took a systemic approach achieved lasting change at greater scale because the project had a multiplier effect.

AFFORD worked at all levels from individual entrepreneurs to national governments, transnational businesses and to the African Union. The three '*Delivery Partners*' working on women and girls' rights all worked across the system (diagram right), displaying common elements in their approaches. Each of them placed individual African young women at the core, focusing on skills, exposure, networks and changing mindsets to instil confidence to solve problems. Each also catalysed peer collaboration and mentoring to support the women's social action initiatives; then amplified their voices to influence communities, governments and globally through their campaigns.



Some Implementing and Adapting funded partners also took systemic approaches, linking with government – which was also highlighted as a notable success by the CGI II Project Completion Review (Millard 2019). For example, **ACE Africa** created a "*snowball effect*" (funder) in Tanzania by strengthening existing government health systems and mobilising communities (see p12); **Gaia Foundation** Zimbabwe created movements of women farmers to lead change in their communities and influence Farmers' forums and government policy. **Chance for Childhood** in Kenya built a strong network of regional specialists in integrated education and child protection to ensure sustained change.

Other grants, though, delivered services in health and education. Their evaluations recommended strengthening coordination with and influence on government to improve sustainability. Some service-delivery could be justified by operating in remote and conflict-affected areas where government provision is limited. However, it is not clear what will happen to those that are still dependant on external funding and where government does not have capacity or will to continue the work.

Problem-solving

CGI II evidenced another important learning, perhaps less widely documented. It demonstrated that approaches that enable the communities and groups benefitting to solve their own problems create more sustainable change over the long-term. For example, young women entrepreneurs supported by **ATBN** in Ghana fed back that the most important impact in their lives was learning how to solve problems systematically – while tech was just a tool to enable them to do that better.

“We are not looking at one solution but how to go on... People underestimate the gaps in education in Africa – there is no problem-solving... We want to give people tools and mindsets, so we raise a continent of problem-solvers” (partner)

B1.2 Sustainable organisations

Also critical to sustainability is strengthening organisational resilience. Three important learnings stand out, in addition to the contribution of the UK partners (B2) and Comic Relief’s tailored support (B3).

Accompaniment

According to the OD Review (Lipson 2019), local organisations experienced *“quality accompaniment and mentoring”* from UK partners. This enabled a much deeper and more considered way to identify priorities (beyond a self-assessment standardised tool). It strengthened a learning culture by helping partners constantly review progress. Continuity of relationship helped to embed skills in partners’ approaches. UK partners **AFFORD**, **Chemin Neuf** and **MEWC**, all benefited also from accompaniment by an external consultant across the life of the grant. Grant assessment made this a condition for **AFFORD** to help them navigate their way through OD priorities and for **Chemin Neuf** to help them provide support to their local partner. **MEWC** asked Comic Relief to help them find someone to guide their growth.

“The approach let us sit with a consultant and identify what would be the most strategic...it helped us see priorities....assess strengths and weaknesses and see where to go in future.” (MEWC)

Adaptive and strategic approach to funding relationships

DeafKidz and **MEWC** both used the Generating Ideas grants to generate evidence and build relationships to bring in other funders. **AFFORD** initially recruited a fundraising consultant to help them, but without achieving the level of success they wanted. Adapting and learning from this experience and supported by their accompanying consultant, they developed a new strategy, using their MEL team to input into proposals and thereby increasing their quality and success. They have developed diverse ways to generate funds from leveraging unspent grant money to secure match funding from the Swiss government for another project, to pro-bono support, to consultancy to crowdfunding and structuring the diaspora bond in Rwanda.

Peer learning and support networks

Southern partners in the evaluation highlighted the importance of peer learning in developing their own networks and thus developing sustainable support systems. UK organisations in CGI II have helped them form new linkages, sometimes as an explicit strategy like **FORWARD** and sometimes informally. For example, **Transform Africa** linked their local partner to **AFFORD Sierra Leone** to learn how to plan and support successful social enterprises. **Chance for Childhood** identified joint activities they could do with **ACE Africa** in Kenya. **Gaia Foundation** connected its partners in Zimbabwe for more effective work.

B2. The distinctive contribution of diaspora and small organisations

Comic Relief based CGI on assumptions about the distinctive contribution that UK small and diaspora organisations make to development (see p2). However, despite CGI I evaluation learning, clarity about this has remained elusive for Comic Relief and FCDO. This is partly because ‘small’ and ‘diaspora’ are often conflated; partly because the assumptions do not always hold true for all cases; and partly because findings have articulated a long list of qualities with unclear evidence. This section therefore separates diaspora from small organisations, assessing the qualities of each group. It focuses on learning from **effective** organisations, recognising that not all of them will display these characteristics but providing the data to assess the evidence in each case. It structures learning about the qualities into some core areas that can be more easily referenced going forward.

B2.1 The distinctive contribution of effective UK diaspora organisations

This section evidences the contribution of effective UK diaspora organisations, beyond original assumptions (see p2), as the following ‘4R’ qualities, beginning with a case study from i-Space:



iSpace's distinctive contribution as a diaspora organisation

iSpace has been **responsive** to a rapidly changing context which provided opportunities as well as challenges, coming up with a relevant, creative and collaborative approach to the lack of women in tech in Ghana. In 2016, a new government came in with a drive to support entrepreneurship. This meant more funding was available to start-ups, but at the same time the government was penetrating the tech ecosystem organising coding training and operating similar programmes itself. iSpace was able to adapt. It has strong **relationships** - it engaged government on including coding in the national school curriculum; and trained 50 teachers to set up coding camps – insisting that clubs recruit 60% female to encourage them into robotics and coding. It seized the opportunity to take the programme to the national level and mobilise other skills and **resources**, working with new/emerging hubs across Ghana. These were all unexpected outcomes from the grant. As an organisation it has proved committed and **resilient** – investing in its own capacity and its partners.

Responsiveness to culture and context – beyond traditional development boxes

CGI II assumes that diaspora organisations bring better understanding of culture and context. External evaluations from the grants demonstrated that **effective** diaspora organisations are more responsive and their approaches and support relevant because:

- **They bridge cultures:** This goes beyond a simplistic assumption that they understand the culture. Many diaspora organisation leaders may have lived in the UK for generations or work in countries different to their heritage (funder). However, effective organisations understand that they are both outsiders and insiders, aware of their limitations and privileges, but bring cross-cultural perspectives, nuance, sensitivity and language skills. This resonates with CGI I evaluation findings

that diaspora organisations *“bridge the UK and Africa in the way they work on issues, lead transnational lives and have cross-cultural competencies, including language.”* (Chapman 2014)

- **They can tackle harmful norms and practices:** Diaspora organisations have the legitimacy to engage with local partners and communities on sensitive cultural issues. For example, **Iftiin** used their work in education to open conversations about FGM in Somalia. **MIFUMI** in Uganda tackles gender roles, domestic violence, bride price and polygamy. **Transform Africa**, working in Sierra Leone, not only improved livelihoods but achieved significant changes in women’s empowerment. The three ‘*Delivery Partners*’ focused on women and girls’ rights influenced narratives about African young women. **FORWARD** created a transnational cadre of young feminist leaders who address harmful practices and beliefs. Their grant helped Fellows turn the tide against harmful practices and gain confidence to take action. The CGI I evaluation (Chapman 2014) also found that diaspora organisations can *“work effectively on culturally sensitive issues like FGM.”*
- **They adapt to changing contexts, bringing new ideas and perspectives:** Effective diaspora organisations acted responsively in the face of challenges, rather than sticking to their approach. This led to all kinds of multiplier effects. Their range of networks and contacts, cultural sensitivity and agile systems enabled them to adapt and change plans and approaches. **ATBN** adapted its whole model of work; **AFFORD** constantly adjusted plans, for example: moving from creating a sovereign bond in Rwanda to a commercial one; changing their funding strategy; and reacting quickly to Covid-19 to advocate successfully for money transfer organisations to be recognised as essential businesses. **iSpace** introduced mental health into entrepreneurship, providing clinics for participants. The OD review (Lipson 2019) concluded that the UK partners brought *“new perspectives and skills not available in-country”* and the CGI I evaluation (Chapman 2014) that diaspora organisations *“experience Africa in different ways and can provide a variety of narratives and about Africa that challenge the dominant paradigm.”*

“We go beneath the surface to tackle harmful norms. Living in the UK forces us to question good and bad, so we can bring different stories to challenge our own culture and think how we approach this.” (partner)

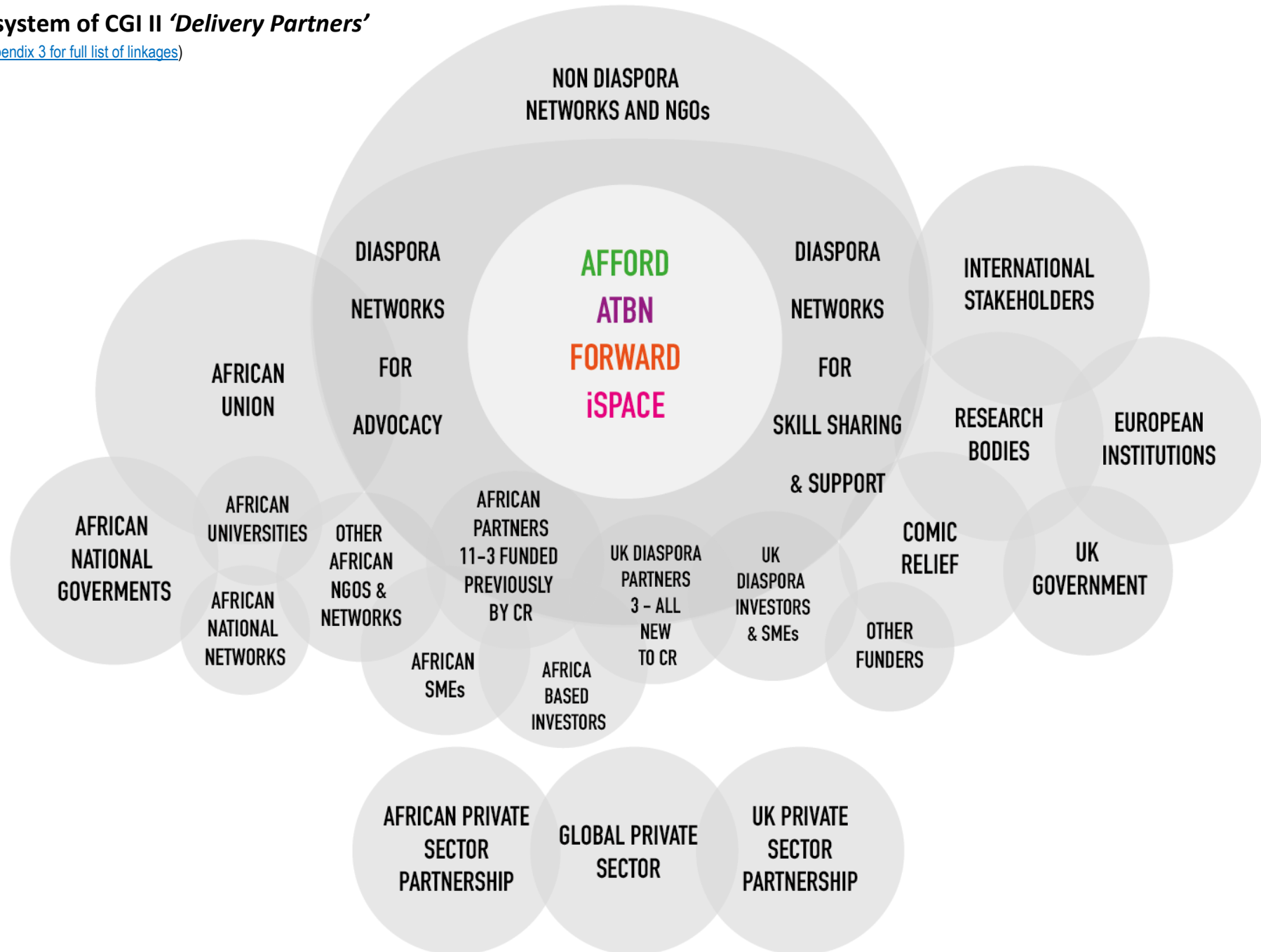
Relationships – beyond good partnerships

CGI II assumed that diaspora organisations contribute trust, flexibility and empowerment in partner relations. This evaluation found this to be true but with greater scope, depth and impact of relationships.

- **They link to a wide and different eco-system:** Good diaspora organisations connect to a much wider range of groups and organisations than most development NGOs, as shown in the diagram (p21) and accompanying detail (App 3) drawn from ‘*Delivery Partners*’ and documents. In this eco-system, the ‘*Delivery Partners*’ understand how the different parts contribute to systemic change and so invest time in building effective partnerships with and between them, for a range of purposes from peer support to advocacy. For example, **AFFORD**’s work developed, extended and activated partnerships in an extensive variety of spaces, creating new transnational networks between Africa and the UK and within Africa. Their Rwanda enterprise meeting was so successful in bringing stakeholders together that the government now want to expand the Expo Centre.

Eco-system of CGI II 'Delivery Partners'

(see appendix 3 for full list of linkages)



- **They identify good southern partners** that funders might struggle to find. **Transform Africa's** partner ARD was the first indigenous NGO in Sierra Leone to be managed and governed by nationals. It survived 20 years of war and Ebola because of its *"passion and professionalism"* (evaluation) and has branches across the country with close relationships to a network of community organisations, service providers and government. **ATBN's** local partner WITA was a pan-African network with influence over 30 countries, able to take forward learning from the grant into its wider work. **AFFORD** found a range of partners from grassroots to private sector who are *"robust, trustworthy and connected in a way that international organisations struggle to do"* (funder). **iSpace** identified three partners in Ghana with strong capacity and legitimacy. These relationships genuinely shifted power to the local partner, enabling them to transform their own contexts– and where problems arose, diaspora organisations responded quickly, without damaging project impact. In addition to these, they found interesting UK organisations like iSpace's partner Radical Leap, with whom **AFFORD** also linked:

RADICAL LEAP COMPANY: #DiasporaTransformer

Radical Leap Company, i-Space's UK partner, provides strategy advice and mentoring to start-ups and companies, including female-led, Africa-focused businesses who have a higher churn rate (more start-ups and closures). Noreen Makosewe founded it to transform businesses and communities connected to them. Radical Leap is all about helping African businesses compete on a global platform by being future-ready, more profitable and sustainable; also birthing more venture capitalists capable of investing in start-ups in their home countries. With the CGI II funding, Radical Leap organised networking and training events for diaspora women in three cities in the UK to help identify mentors for trainees at the incubator and accelerator stages of iSpace's 'Unlocking women and technology' programme. The relationship is ongoing even though CGI II funding has ended.

- **They take effective relationship-based approaches to strengthening partners:** The OD review concluded that diaspora organisations' in-depth knowledge of the context enabled *"more tailored and appropriate support"* (Lipson 2019). Effective diaspora organisations, whatever their size, develop sustainable partnerships with grassroots civil society in Africa that go beyond projects and funding. The quality of relationship means that they take an accompaniment role in strengthening partners. **Iftiin** (with only one staff member) was effective in linking its local partner in Somalia with government and educational contacts. **AFD** in Sierra Leone has a history with Comic Relief of *"building and professionalising community organisations in areas where they are non-existent or weak"* (assessment). **FORWARD's** 'FAST' model (funding, accompaniment, sustained support and technical input) responds continuously to partner needs. It enabled partners to engage with funders and influence power-holders such as UNFPA to begin working on FGM. It helped CDF Tanzania set up an influential network on FGM and child marriage.

"FORWARD has demonstrated the added value of diaspora organisations playing this strategic role of facilitating growth, mentoring and development of local organisations..." (Lipson 2019)

Resources – beyond value for money

The evaluation found evidence for CGI's assumptions that diaspora organisations bring unique political, social and cultural skills and resources in the following ways:

- **They mobilise and harness diaspora commitment, connections and skills:** All three 'Delivery Partners' working on women and girls' rights showed how they could develop and sustain high

quality professional international mentoring networks and systems. **AFFORD's** evaluation highlights the support it harnesses for its partner businesses from its constantly expanding pool of voluntary resource people, recorded in a database. Implementing and Adapting partners also draw heavily on experienced and professional voluntary time and commitment. Assessments found that **CDI** was *“highly experienced and skilled”*; **AFD** had *“very experienced coordinator, committed board and was low cost, efficient and reliant on voluntary help”*; and **Make Every Woman Count** is *“almost entirely volunteer run”* and yet *“punches above its weight”*.

- **They identify new and effective ways to resource and sustain work:** The **AFFORD** work under CGI II showed the extraordinary extent to which this can happen, through their strategic mobilisation of diaspora investment in business of £447,000, triple the target; the £500,000 of legal aid leveraged; the Rwandan bond pilot; the innovative partnerships with funders; and the crowdfunding. However, all the *‘Delivery Partners’* succeeded in leveraging other funding and developed cost-effective multiplier approaches and collaborations that brought social and economic change beyond targets and project timeframes. **iSpace** put in place plans from the beginning of the project for how to continue the work beyond funding, developing strong partnerships with government and private sector and strong communication of results to a wide audience. Other diaspora Implementing and Adapting project partners also mobilised resources from their communities: for example, **Iftiin** raises funds among the Somali diaspora.
- **They reach difficult and marginalised groups:** **AFD's** CGI II grants worked with forest-dweller ‘pygmy’ and other marginalised and remote groups in conflict-affected DRC and Congo. **Iftiin** provided education and holistic support to an area of Somalia without any schools and into camps for internally displaced people. **Transform Africa's** grant reached remote Northern Province of Sierra Leone recovering from years of civil war followed by Ebola. External research also confirms that *“in areas of conflict or disaster, Diaspora agents are particularly effective in providing rapid response to specific needs.”* (UCD Clinton 2018)

Resilience – beyond contextual and organisational constraints

Difficulty accessing funders and networks and limited organisational capacity were identified as underlying challenges that CGI could help diaspora organisations to tackle. Funded partners strongly highlighted the importance of a specific fund to support diaspora work and the benefits it has brought in their own capacity as well as social and economic change in Africa. They affirmed the assumption that it is challenging to break into traditional development funding, often because donors lack understanding of their contribution. However, this evaluation shows both that a) CGI II has been effective in helping partners leverage other funding and b) that effective diaspora organisations demonstrate a resilience and commitment that enables them to keep working through the vagaries of funding cycles. It shows that their collaborative approach to partnerships helps their local partners develop better resilience.

- **Their commitment continues beyond projects and funding:** Effective diaspora organisations’ passion for social change enables them to see beyond the struggle for survival that many small UK NGOs experience. They often keep going on a voluntary basis even through funding gaps. As the CGI phase I evaluation found, they *“have a long-term interest that goes beyond project timeframes.”*
- **They support local partners’ resilience:** This commitment extends to work with local partners to build their resilience too. For example, **AFD** believes that

“With or without support, diaspora are still going to do what they do – it’s a lifetime’s passion. The tenacity of diaspora is the story – it’s not the job; it’s not funding motivated; it’s not looking for acknowledgement...” (partner)

only local people, empowered, can create change effectively and so identifies, strengthens and mentors partners until they are independent. Under CGI II, it developed toolkits on areas like advocacy, finance, reporting, safeguarding and child rights to support their partners. Resilience also resulted from a collaborative approach to partnership that linked local partners to peers who became a support network for them. For example, iSpace (case study App 4) reports reference: *“our strengths and abilities to deal with the unexpected as organisations but also as partners... We are all locally based and therefore understood what was needed and how to provide solutions.”*

B2.2 The distinctive contribution of effective UK small organisations

The contribution of UK small organisations (defined under CGI as an annual turnover under £1 million) has often been conflated with diaspora or overlooked. The CGI I evaluation (Chapman 2014) concluded that *“their potential value is not being communicated or full acknowledged by Comic Relief.”* Again, it is not possible to assume that all UK small NGOs bring certain contributions. Some aspire to be large but just have not yet managed to achieve that goal. In analysing the distinctive contribution of small organisations, the evaluation focuses on those that are effective and the attributes of two sub-groups:

- **Niche small organisations:** Some CGI II partners have a strong focus on particularly marginalised groups, such as **Chance for Childhood’s** on street-connected children with communication disabilities; **DeafKidz’** on D/deaf children; and **Project Harar’s** on children born with cleft palate. **Gaia Foundation** has a niche in climate change and bio-diversity, working to promote governance and seed/ food sovereignty but with an emphasis in this grant on women-led initiatives. **Sunarma** focuses on supporting sustainable livelihoods in remote rural parts of Ethiopia.
- **Faith-based organisations** and others with strong values demonstrate many similar characteristics to diaspora organisations. External evidence highlights their contribution as relationships of trust, volunteerism, motivation, reach to marginalised, strong networks, long-term footprint – and legitimacy to tackle negative attitudes and beliefs (FCDO 2012, UNICEF 2019). 6/ 17 small organisations funded in the Implementing and Adapting grants were faith-based and others supported faith-based partners. Some examples of how they reflect these qualities include: **Chemin Neuf** and its partner LBM used their legitimacy as faith organisations to tackle branding of children as witches; **Global One** uses their faith and culture as tools to promote positive behaviour change in communities for women affected by fistula; and **Lifeline** reaches very marginalised groups with value based work:

Strong values turn around child soldiers’ lives

Lifeline Network International, a small faith-based organisation of three staff, worked with its Sierra Leone partner, Lifeline Nehemiah Project, to support ex-child soldiers in livelihoods. The youth missed out on school through civil war and Ebola and lacked motivation and skills. The project *“transformed...a community of ‘undesirables’ to productive youth”* (evaluation). By the end, 73% of the youth gained employment or income. Others were in voluntary work. Earnings went up and their number of working hours increased. Students reported improved skills, self-reliance, income and contribution to their families. The community saw better attitudes and behaviour, reduced crime and increased sense of responsibility. The project achieved this in an NGO context of bribery and corruption by combining vocational and life-skills with **strong values:** serving the community, teamwork, excellence, accountability and integrity. Despite no further external support since the CGI II grant ended, they have managed to self-fund the work. Learning also enabled them to expand the programme to rural areas to prevent young people migrating to the city.

A few clear qualities emerged in the evaluation that cut across all the effective small UK NGOs:

Close relationships with local partners

The evaluation showed that effective small, funded partners developed closer, more respectful and longer-term relationships with local partners than other development organisations. This validated CGI I evaluation findings (Chapman 2014) that they listened better, were more accessible, accommodated partners' reality and worked with them for the long-term. Southern partners in this evaluation fed back that the relationship with their UK NGO was based on mutual understanding, valued both ways, and went beyond work to care and love. UK funded partners also reported closer relationships and more shared power. Project assessments and evaluations further evidenced this and clear agreements of roles (for example ACE Africa, Amos Trust, Chance for Childhood, Chemin Neuf, Coda, DeafKidz, Send a Cow, Global One, Lifeline and Gaia Foundation). Southern partners also emphasised that they helped in *"cushioning us from the pressure of dealing directly with the funder"*. They appreciated their understanding and management of donor relationships and requirements, enabling them to focus more on the work itself.

"They respect our opinions and it feels like a real relationship where they actually care about us, rather than ask for a report. Their values are clear..." (partner)

Effective organisational strengthening

Effective small NGOs also took an accompaniment approach to organisational strengthening, rather than emphasising technical training and expert input. Partners reported that the strong relationships and mutually agreed priorities helped in capacity building, especially in:

- **MEL and financial management:** They strengthened basic functions by supporting reporting cycles and specific technical input, e.g. **Exeter Ethiopia Link** helped its partner learn how to assess reading levels, carry out focus group discussions and develop a simple Excel data spreadsheet.
- **Methodologies:** **DeafKidz** enabled ChildLine South Africa to integrate support for D/deaf children in its successful global model for child protection and to develop a system to collect and disaggregate data to identify impact and gaps to strengthen.
- **Peer linkages and strengthening:** Southern partners benefitted greatly from peer forums and interactions, enabled by the UK agencies, helping local partners to work together more effectively and to develop linkages and exposure that they would not otherwise have had. For example, **Cecily's Fund** brought in someone from World Vision to run a safeguarding session for partners.
- **Sustainability:** Some UK agencies supported their partners to secure further funding. For example, **Action Ethiopia/ Sunarma** helped its local partner make a successful direct application to the European Union: *"their skill level has raised and their awareness of what needs to be done – it has brought fundraising to a new level"* (Lipson 2019)
- **Scale-up:** UK agencies helped their southern partners share methodologies; access technology to reach a wider audience; and gain credibility in government advocacy. For example, **Chemin Neuf** helped LBM in DRC to publish its methodology for reintegration of street-connected children.

Agility

Effective small organisations can respond to needs of their local partners or changes in the context without the cumbersome and often bureaucratic processes that many larger organisations have to follow. For example, **Chance for Childhood** explained how, when Covid-19 hit, they went straight to their five partners to ask how they could best support them. They responded quickly and tangibly, albeit in a small way, by providing protective equipment and a ring-fenced fund for activities.

B3. How funders supported that distinctive contribution

This section presents a summary of the design and management of CGI II that has supported the distinctive contribution of effective small and diaspora organisations. The table captures the main findings and the narrative below picks up some of the most important learning for Comic Relief, FCDO and other funders moving forward. The findings need to be set against a background of change at Comic Relief: several strategy revisions and two restructures which mean that how CGI was managed and delivered shifted over the programme's lifetime.

"We are so impressed that Comic Relief did this. It was a no-brainer programme that no one has ever done – a special project with a special team." (partner)

What helped	What hindered
Programme design	
Recognised and evidenced the distinctive contribution of small and diaspora organisations	Conflated small and diaspora in the NGO Fund and lost some of CGI II identity as it progressed
Value of focused funding for a cohort: <i>"it felt like a separate good world within Comic Relief"</i> (partner)	CGI II was not mainstreamed in CR, so the impact and learning did not feed well into its wider work
Ahead of everyone in the choice of 'Delivery Partners' and focus on the selected issues	Lost opportunity for strategic engagement CR-FCDO-partners during CGI II and the current
The GI research grants and different phases of funding developed effective approaches & OD	No strategic approach to long-term relationship or planning for what should happen post-grant
Investment in OD, including core costs, was beneficial to all types of UK and southern partners	Less structured than phase 1, so missed peer learning benefits and follow-through on OD plans
Comms training for 'Delivery Partners' was effective in its emphasis on telling their own stories	FCDO/ CR missed opportunities to share the stories that came out of the grants
Grant management	
Set up and led initially by skilled team with experience in working with diaspora and small	Became incorporated into other grant management; CR experienced high staff turnover
Relationship-based listening, enabling interaction – took away the "wall" between funder and partner	Became more transactional as CGI II went on, according to many partners
Convening roundtables and influencing others brought funding and advocacy benefits	Convening was much reduced in CGI II – and partners had no interaction with FCDO
Flexibility enabled changes in partners, direction and budgets to happen to ensure grant impact	Increasing rigidity in how success is measured in Comic Relief report feedback ratings (see text below)
Rigour in the MEL helped many partners develop a strong evidence-base and learning for their work	Reporting demands & MEL support were over-cumbersome for smaller partners and changed
Design helped manage risks: choice of partners, adaptive management, OD and learning emphasis	Risk ratings and consequences were inconsistent and often subjective across grants

CGI II identity

Evaluation contributors and the other reviews affirmed the importance and uniqueness of CGI II and the value of a distinct fund. This is further evidenced by the impact of the grants. The design reflected the diaspora's distinct contribution in the CGI component focused on investment and women and girls' rights. The UK NGO fund was less well thought through, as it failed to differentiate the contribution of small and diaspora funded partners and did not weave into assessment how well the applicants matched assumptions. The UK NGO fund seemed to assume that either all organisations fulfilled these assumptions or that they were not true, rather than using them to identify the most effective partners. However, the grant models were well designed: the value of the small Generating Ideas grants is robustly evidenced (Turner 2018); and the project grants genuinely enabled an 'Implementing and Adapting' approach by allowing partners to adjust their ways of working and partnerships to achieve the goals.

As CGI II progressed, grant management was divided among Comic Relief staff, rather than held by a distinct team. Grants funded through Comic Relief's main fund were allocated to CGI II if the applicant was 'small' or 'diaspora', rather than because they applied to it, so one partner described it as *"a funding vehicle rather than a fund with a different approach to changing a continent"*. Many of the Implementing and Adapting partners that took part in the evaluation were not aware that their grants were made under CGI II. As staff went through *"a revolving door"* (partner) and Comic Relief lost some of its institutional memory, the programme lost its identity: *"From something that had been part of our DNA, it fell off our radar"* (funder). However, Comic Relief's appointment of the current full-time CGI II manager in February 2019 helped to stabilise the programme, raising its visibility in Comic Relief and providing more consistency in relationships, including end of grant meetings with partners.

Strategic engagement

One of the greatest strengths of CGI II was that it identified exceptional strategic partners. However, it was not able to capitalise fully on that relationship as intended, resulting in the greatest missed opportunity in CGI II. This could be partly due to Comic Relief's constrained capacity but also reflected an underlying culture of which the term 'Delivery Partners' is indicative. Comic Relief could have done more to build on their significant impact and explored how to complement direct funding with their input. It should also have realised that diaspora organisations were well placed to respond in Covid19 and to increase impact in the four strategic themes, rather than supporting less systemic and sustainable service-delivery work. Comic Relief staff question how well funding practices and approaches supported funded partners' contribution. However, the 'Delivery Partners' strategically managed the requirements to their advantage and benefitted from the emphasis on evidence generation.

OD support

"We dropped the ball, losing the peer element and structured thinking and organised support about OD." (funder)

In the transition between CGI I and II, OD became a less strategic part of programme design. In earlier versions of the theory of change presented to FCDO, OD was centre stage. Phase I's structured peer learning and OD grants largely disappeared, despite the positive findings from CGI I's evaluation. Communication was not clear to partners about available OD opportunities.

However, all types of organisations in the fund benefitted from the OD available. 'Delivery Partners' found the direct training in communications and MEL helpful and it had spin-off benefits in some continued collaboration among them. They and Implementing and Adapting partners that were strategic in their approach tailored funds towards their overall organisational effectiveness; while others found it more instrumental, directed to project management (Lipson 2019). Comic Relief's grant management added

value through its flexible approach to adapting plans and budgets, feedback on reports (though this varied in style and quality), signposting to resources and technical advice in feedback and follow-up finance and safeguarding support. The Generating Ideas review (Turner 2018) highlighted the importance of this “funder-plus” role, for example in providing guidance in how to go about good quality research.

Convening and communicating role

During phase I of CGI, Comic Relief’s convening of stakeholders helped forge some valuable links for partners, resulting in new funding opportunities. During CGI II, this was much reduced. However, Comic Relief played a positive role in important respects, especially when a dedicated CGI team was in place:

- **Delivery partner communication training:** Comic Relief carried out two one-day trainings. These strengthened relationships between the partners and were useful to them in content: for example, AFFORD’s crisis communication policy is directly based on that input.
- **Sharing of office space:** Strong and positive relationships between ‘Delivery Partners’ and Comic Relief meant that partners could use Comic Relief spaces for some events. For example, AFFORD used their rooms for a crowdfunding training and in its selection of small business grantees.
- **Diaspora in Development event:** Comic Relief encouraged ‘Delivery Partners’ to come together with partners and stakeholders to publicise CGI II and their work. FORWARD led in organising this, with expectations that Comic Relief would cover the cost. Some Comic Relief staff attended the successful event. However, costs were not reimbursed, so no more events took place.
- **Invitations and attendance at events:** Comic Relief invited ‘Delivery Partners’ to key policy events at their office and to other relevant meetings, which helped partners move into spaces to which they would not otherwise have had access. They also took part in diaspora events.

Approach to risk

CGI II was perceived as risky (Millard 2019) because it supported small and often emerging organisations, set ambitious targets and worked in challenging contexts. Comic Relief mitigated these risks most importantly by a) choosing strong ‘Delivery Partners’ (on which two programme outcomes depended); b) being flexible e.g. allowing funded partners to change local partners and re-visit outcomes and c) investing in strengthening organisations. It thus played an important intermediary role for FCDO. Small and diaspora partners also helped by identifying and responding quickly to issues e.g. four grants changed local partners but completed their work satisfactorily. Important learning emerged about:

- **Funding to encourage sustainability:** Some partners, both larger like AFFORD, and smaller like Transform Africa, have used phases of Comic Relief funding for different purposes, such as piloting an approach, generating evidence, scaling up or extending and adapting to a new country. It is important to distinguish between these effective and adaptive partners that need continued investment over time, from those that continue unsustainable service delivery. Comic Relief should be careful about the risk associated with not offering follow-on funding to these effective partners simply to avoid ‘over-reliance on Comic Relief funds’ and instead, build on its track record in CGI II and more widely in supporting innovative start-ups and young organisations, whether by directly funding them or helping them to link with other sources of funding.
- **Appropriate systems to manage risk:** Comic Relief could have strengthened risk management by:
 - a) Assessing diaspora and small applicants to the UK NGO fund against their assumed qualities.
 - b) Improving processes for flagging risk in RAG (red, amber, green) rating of grant progress. Ratings often did not balance missed numerical targets (even where not major) with impressive achievements in other areas. Furthermore, they were often subjective and varied greatly across the portfolio. For example, one grant to a long-standing diaspora partner, with an outstanding

track record verified in external evaluations, was rated as red. Feedback from the grant owner stated that it had not achieved its outcomes and had even had a harmful impact on community engagement; yet an external evaluation, supported by government data, showed good progress. On one hand, a grant externally evaluated as *“far exceeding initial expectations”* (CR feedback) in almost every target was rated amber, while others that missed several targets were rated green.

C. CONCLUSIONS

C1. CGI II's contribution to lasting change

CGI II was an ambitious and far-sighted programme that achieved significant outcomes for Africa that went far beyond traditional development projects. This success is attributable in a large measure to four *'delivery partners'* ranging from well-established to small start-ups who led on the first two outcomes – and recognising that some Implementing and Adapting partners also had some impressive results.

Unleashed effective investment for social and economic change in Africa

AFFORD's work in diaspora investment – by people of African origin living outside the continent – achieved significantly more than planned. In 2018, \$86 billion went to Africa from diaspora (Wambu 2020) to help family members in school, health and other basic needs. AFFORD showed that you could increase and use part of those funds more strategically to bring systemic and sustained change. It not only tripled its target for generating diaspora investment in enterprise, but it piloted new ways to increase and diversify giving through professional volunteering, crowdfunding and structuring a diaspora bond that will enable people in the UK to invest money in 400 affordable houses in Rwanda. The businesses led to 2,400 people increasing their income and to wide-ranging improvements in lives. The grant changed attitudes and policies of governments in Africa to make diaspora investment easier. It raised awareness of barriers to supporting business in Africa from UK visa restrictions and influenced the government to include money transfer organisations as essential service providers during Covid19 lockdown. AFFORD has also become the African Union's UK focal point, advising its diaspora investment fund.

A new generation of African women change-makers

ATBN and i-Space's work in Ghana brought African young women into tech and raised a cadre of problem-solvers achieving change for other women and girls, as well as their families and communities.

- **ATBN** developed a model to support local partners to equip young women entrepreneurs to run initiatives for women and girls, using tech as a tool, resulting in coding skills, jobs, income, confidence and action. It had multiplier effects through its global network of mentors; by its partner running their own coding training across four other cities; and through its e-book about successful African women entrepreneurs that challenged stereotypes and engaged groups across Africa and the UK in supporting their entrepreneurship.
- **i-Space** enabled women and girls from very marginalised backgrounds to learn new skills in programming and business development. Its business hub supported 28 new start-up businesses, 80% with female founders – an extraordinary achievement. It enabled other women to secure jobs and increase income in a range of areas from ICT to waste management to cosmetics. Its grant led to all kinds of multiplier effects: young women participants set up their own training schemes in their communities; iSpace extended the programme across the whole country; it influenced government to include coding in the national curriculum and set up a training programme; and it inspired partners in Nigeria and Kenya to establish initiatives there.

FORWARD's work with TuWezeshe partners in Tanzania, Somaliland, Uganda and Wales inspired young African women to action against gender-based violence. It raised young leaders, supported their projects and enabled them to join voices to influence national and global policy and implementation.

- The grant created 55 networks – a feminist movement for social change. They campaigned against sextortion in higher education institutions in Uganda and for anti-FGM legislation in Somaliland.
- It is having multiplier effects with young women leaders continuing their initiatives, partners securing funding to take forward their work and in becoming part of a global UN and EU initiative focused on eliminating violence against women and girls.

Improved social and economic wellbeing of disadvantaged people

28 small research and development grants and 26 Implementing and Adapting project grants aimed to bring improved social and economic wellbeing for disadvantaged people in Africa. Partners reached difficult and marginalised groups, such as those affected by conflict in DRC, Congo, Sierra Leone and remote parts of Ethiopia; children with learning disabilities, branded as witches, born with cleft palate and missing out on education; women suffering from fistula and living in dump sites; and people stigmatised by HIV/AIDS. The grants contributed to Comic Relief's main strategy outcomes, leading to:

- Improved food security, land tenure and management, increased employment and income generation
- Improved access, retention and performance in school
- Improved protection and integration for children at risk
- Women's leadership and empowerment, and protection from harmful practices
- Improved maternal and child health; and better access to HIV/AIDS support and reduced stigma

Many also had multiplier effects, securing funding from others to scale-up work; aligning work closely with government priorities and structures to extend the impact; embedding approaches in communities to facilitate continued action; and supporting movements to carry forward momentum.

Stronger UK and African partners

Funded organisations and their partners grew stronger through the OD support and wider grant processes. Smaller organisations developed their strategic capacity and core functions like financial management and human resources. Larger ones further improved their systems, becoming more effective and efficient and changing their structures and governance to become more inclusive. Better IT, websites and social media communication led to better visibility. Across all types of organisation, they adapted and strengthened approaches and improved MEL, resulting in strong evidence generation, leveraging funding and scaling up work. Many also developed new contacts and connections, broadening their networks for learning, influence and funding. Overall, the programme contributed to long-term impact on programme quality and organisational resilience. However, fundraising was least effective, leading to questions around sustainability, addressed below.

Sustained investments and partnerships for social and economic wellbeing in Africa

The evaluation found that these outcomes have contributed to CGI II's overall impact in investments, partnerships and approaches, resulting in sustainable change for people in Africa that will go on rippling out. However, two critical learnings need attention if the impact is to be maximised:

- Sustainability relies on more than leveraging further funding. Approaches need to be built on good research and consultation; activate the whole system to get government, communities and others with responsibility working together and drawing on their own resources; and enable those benefitting to solve their own problems, rather than delivering a solution to them. The evaluation

highlighted three keys to developing organisational resilience: by taking an accompaniment approach to OD; identifying and helping organisations take an adaptive and strategic approach to funding relationships; and in maximising peer learning and support networks. This means no longer supporting service delivery but investing in sustainable work and organisations.

- Shared responsibility for ensuring that important work and effective organisations can sustain and scale up their achievements. Some of the most effective work supported under CGI II needs further investment still. Even where it fulfils all the criteria, Comic Relief's niche has been in investing in organisations that are still developing their approaches and capacities. This is a critical time to celebrate successes and ensure that they will continue, even in a difficult environment and even where change of strategies means that this may have to be done in different ways.

C2. Overall lessons about diaspora and small organisations

CGI II has also evidenced how *effective* UK diaspora (where the majority of leaders define themselves as of African heritage) and small organisations (with an annual turnover below £1 million) contribute to lasting change. It has shown that these attributes provide a basis for assessing organisations.

Effective UK diaspora organisations bring the '4Rs':

- **Responsiveness to culture and context:** They bridge cultures, bringing nuance, sensitivity and cross-cultural skills and languages to partnership; are uniquely placed to tackle harmful norms and practices; and are able to adapt to changing contexts and bring new ideas and perspectives.
- **Relationships that are extensive and effective:** They connect to a different and wider eco-system, working across national and continental divides, generations and sectors to partner with an extensive range of organisations. They identify robust and effective partners that UK funders might not access; and they are effective in strengthening them, building on their more equal and empowering relationships to tailor support and accompany partners over the long-term.
- **Resources in new and diverse ways:** They mobilise diaspora commitment, skills and connections to harness high quality and sustained voluntary contributions; they identify new ways to fund and continue work through diaspora giving, innovative partnerships with funders, governments, communities and others; and they reach remote, marginalised and vulnerable groups.
- **Resilience:** Their passion for change goes beyond projects and funding and project cycles to ensure long-term follow-up, despite real constraints on their time. They support local partners' resilience too by taking a collaborative approach to partnership and to solving challenges.

Effective UK small organisations bring:

- **Close, quality relationships with local partners:** They listen better, are more accessible, in closer contact and enjoy more shared relationships than many other NGOs. They define roles clearly. They sustain partnerships over the long-term and often beyond funding. They cushion local partners from the pressure of dealing with funders directly, navigating their requirements.
- **Effective organisational strengthening:** They also take an accompaniment approach, walking alongside partners to strengthen basic processes like financial management and MEL, develop methodologies, strengthen peer support, help secure further funding and support scale-up.
- **Agility:** They respond more quickly to changing needs in partners and contexts, avoiding bureaucratic processes and barriers

The evaluation highlighted the value of small organisations that have a specific niche and that of faith-based organisations that demonstrate most of the same characteristics as diaspora organisations.

Supporting their distinctive contribution

The evaluation found that many elements of CGI's design supported this distinctive contribution, including: a discrete fund supporting a cohort of partners; the proactive way in which 'Delivery Partners' were chosen; the opportunity for research and consultation small grants; the investment in OD, including core costs and capacity; and the emphasis on supporting partners to tell their own stories.

Comic Relief's knowledgeable but relationship-based flexible management combined with the rigour in MEL worked well for funded partners, helping them develop an evidence base while also strengthening a learning culture. Its convening of peers and roundtables with funders and other stakeholders in the early stages of CGI II, though not a structured part of the programme, was of immense value to partners.

While funders expressed concern about grant management processes limiting partner's distinctive contribution, the evaluation found that effective organisations used OD and project funding to support their organisation and strategy. However, where relationships became transactional – something highlighted by partners of different sizes and from both strands of CGI II – this was a hindrance. Funded partners in the evaluation wanted a close relationship with Comic Relief and more peer learning. Comic Relief missed the opportunity to build on the strategic relationships developed with the 'Delivery Partners' and other effective organisations in the NGO fund to feed into its overall strategy and Covid19 response.

"It felt like we had gone back to wall between grantee and funder – we are on this side and you ask all the questions with no feedback..." (partner)

C3. CGI II programme theory of change

CGI II's theory of change (App 2) conflated the work with diaspora 'Delivery Partners' with the more diverse UK NGO fund. The Project Completion Review (Millard 2019) concluded that the theory provided a coherent framework to assess Comic Relief's contribution. The review rated all programme areas, also considering the likelihood of scaling and sustainability after projects end, as 'A' except the NGO fund. The NGO fund was rated 'B' as it narrowly missed targets in i) number of grants (56/60) and ii) in green performance rating (13/16) – though the reliability of these ratings is questionable, as discussed in section B3.

Learning from the programme affirms and extends assumptions about the distinctive contribution of diaspora organisations and about areas where they bring value, including diaspora investment and women and girls' rights – with tech as a cross-cutting tool. Some of the other most impactful work in CGI II linked livelihoods with women and girls' rights. The importance of sustainable and strategic partnerships on influencing government and on locally led action all held true.

However, the evaluation findings also highlight some key gaps in the theory of change (ToC):

- It focuses on diaspora contribution but contains very little about the small organisations. The behaviour changes articulated at intermediary level only refer to diaspora organisations.
- Organisational Development is missing from the theory, although captured in earlier versions and included for 'Delivery Partners' as an output indicator; yet it played a very central role.
- Apart from referring to disadvantaged people in the NGO fund outcome, the ToC does not capture inclusion; yet many of the grants were distinctive in their reach to marginalised groups.
- The theory does not articulate contextual challenges and how those are mitigated through Comic Relief's choice of partners and its flexible, relationship-based style of adaptive management.

Comic Relief and FCDO could have applied learning more effectively if they had held an annual reflection process to review and revise the theory of change. A retrospective theory of change would combine:

- the emphasis on supporting partnerships and networks with organisational strengthening and

- assessing the effectiveness of organisations against assumed attributes
- the importance of systemic change that influences decision-makers with supporting research and consultation and community owned problem-solving approaches
- the need for rigour in evidence with the need for good quality, flexible, adaptive grant management and relationships.

D. THE WAY FORWARD

D1. CGI II's relevance for the current context

D1.1 External context

Diaspora contribution

Big players on the world stage such as the World Bank, United Nations, European Union, USAID, African Development Bank and Ford research are all now aware of the potential impact of diaspora engagement. Remittances to Nigeria in 2019 outstripped the federal budget (Wambu 2020). This highlights the *“need to engage with the invisible social networking holding up the country”* (partner), and not

“There’s been an evolution of thinking and practice on diaspora roles in humanitarian and international development.” (partner)

only think in terms of development aid. The international focus on trade agreements and migration makes understanding the role of the diaspora all the more relevant. The BBC World Service (BBC 2020), FCO Twitter feed and other media has highlighted the importance of remittances during Covid-19 and provided some good examples of how to communicate this in simple ways. Interest from African governments in engaging with diaspora is also increasing. Evidence of diaspora contribution has improved. The Tropical Health and Education Trust partnered with SOAS to show the role of diaspora partnerships and volunteering in health, including mental health (THET 202). The Clinton Institute carried out a study of Irish diaspora, highlighting the range of partnerships between governments, private sector and diaspora civil society actors and the resulting programmes; and ran a ‘Diaspora: Diplomacy and Development’ Conference in which both Comic Relief and AFFORD took part (UCD 2018). Key informants also mentioned opportunities to tap into High Net Worth diaspora individuals; into diaspora youth with a renewed interest in their origins; and the growth of diaspora foundations (e.g. Konfidence and Ngozi).

Power shifts to South

As the aid and development world shifts focus towards southern organisations and the role of UK and Northern NGOs has come into question, the evaluation demonstrates that both effective and small organisations play a role in supporting, rather than undermining that shift, through:

- the more equal relationships with southern partners than other intermediaries display
- the empowering and effective accompaniment approach to organisational strengthening
- the emphasis on linking partners to networks and support systems; brokering of relationships with funders; management of risk; and the support to develop, evidence and scale up methodologies

Covid-19 and beyond

Covid-19 has opened up both challenges and a window to do things differently. Remittances have decreased by \$40-60 billion according to the World Bank (Wambu 2020). In many contexts, the pandemic has led to increased injustice and poverty, higher levels of violence, to fear and funding gaps. However, it also highlights the effectiveness of quick response by small and diaspora organisations with close community links and flexible systems; the reach to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities

most affected by Covid-19; the opportunities offered by diaspora networks and new investment models; the catalyst for digitalising resources; and the need to build on sustainable systemic approaches to food security, livelihoods and against violence. The Black Lives Matter movement further highlights the strategic importance of the diaspora to respond to global injustice and structural racism.

D1.2 Internal funder context

This section draws on input from key informants about internal organisational context, highlighting some specific areas of relevance, concerns and questions that can help tailor recommendations.

Perspectives on diaspora and small organisations

Comic Relief is currently ambivalent to diaspora, according to a number of key informants, and unsure how it fits within the new strategy. Some staff are not aware of the definitions, history or potential contribution while others are deeply concerned about losing diaspora expertise. In attempting to shift power to the South, Comic Relief has not considered the role of UK diaspora in making this shift effective. Diaspora were inadvertently missed out completely in the current strategy and in the Covid-19 response, even though support to BAME organisations in the UK was prioritised – thus missing opportunities for synergy between UK and Africa. Some staff perceive investing in diaspora as high-risk; and those that recognise their value are concerned that Comic Relief process will not support them effectively: ***“We decide the strategy and then ask where they fit in; yet when funded partners design a programme, we always expect them to hear from the community – the first rule is always participation (funder)”***. Comic Relief invests directly in organisations in the South, so small UK NGOs are not eligible to apply directly. While they can still be a technical partner in applications, very few have known or thought to do this.

For FCDO, currently merging with the FCO and without a specific programme for diaspora, learning from CGI is critical in shaping its understanding and response. This is particularly relevant in a context where it has aspirations for diversity and inclusion and in exploring how the UK can leverage ‘soft power’ abroad (funder). Different departments could build on different aspects of CGI from the economic interest in remittances and investment to the gender department and Africa hub (funder). It also has a Small Charities Challenge Fund offering grants of up to £50,000 to UK agencies working towards the sustainable development goals and recognises their value in reducing risk.

Strategic synergy

While both DIFD and Comic Relief have restructured in recent months, the evaluation presents some opportunities for synergy going forward in relation to:

- Shifting power discourse: as attention has shifted to direct funding, there is a danger of losing transnational links and networks and missing the “lived experience” of diaspora organisations.
- Organisational strengthening: investing in capacity building is ***“front and centre of Comic Relief’s new strategy”*** (funder) and the focus of programme development with FCDO.
- CGI II impact resonates with Comic Relief’s themes of ‘fighting for gender justice’, ‘children survive and thrive’ and tech as a cross-cutting approach, but also offers potential to explore systemic approaches to ‘global mental health’ where iSpace and AFFORD have begun some work.
- Story-telling: CGI II’s emphasis on supporting partners to tell their own stories had some significant successes, despite the lack of follow-through, in changing the narrative.
- Managing risk: contrary to expectations, CGI II showed that you could invest in small and diaspora organisations with minimal risk if enabling factors are in place of OD, good relationships, adaptive management, and strong partners with close relationships that accompany their counterparts.

D2. Implications for future work and support

This section captures recommendations for funders, based on shared analysis of the findings with funded partners, southern counterparts, Comic Relief and FCDO staff. It also draws on findings and recommendations from the Generating Ideas and OD reviews and the Project Completion Review. More detailed and specific recommendations for Comic Relief and FCDO are included in Appendix 5.

D2.1 Acknowledge and share internally

- Recognise and use the data evidencing the distinctive contribution of diaspora and its relevance to the current external and internal context. Share that information internally, including with trustees, identifying and maximising strategic moments to influence decision-making.
- Create opportunities for strategic conversations, linking influential people within your organisational structures with *'Delivery Partners'*.
- Strengthen diaspora representation and voice within funding organisations; build on CGI's contribution, making space for diaspora partner/ young diaspora women in the governance; and giving more voice to those already working at different levels, institutionalising their contribution.
- Recognise the evidenced value that small organisations can bring, particularly faith/ value-based ones and those with a specific niche. Integrate their role into strategy and initiatives, particularly in relation to strengthening southern partner organisations.

D2.2 Engage and convene

- Maximise opportunities offered by Comic Relief's 20+ years of work with diaspora and the current context to celebrate the impact of CGI II, give the platform to partners and connect them with donors and other stakeholders.
- Focus influencing on well evidenced themes from CGI II, including the distinctive contribution of diaspora organisations; diaspora remittances and other modes of investment; the impact on women and girls' rights, linked to livelihoods and food security; strengthening southern organisations' resilience; and effective use of tech across the work.
- Develop long-term strategic partnerships with diaspora organisations with a strong track record, opening up opportunities for joined-up thinking and co-design of initiatives and programmes.
- Support more peer learning initiatives to enable partners to share learning in relevant areas – the evaluation has shown this can be done virtually and cost-effectively.

D2.3 Invest

- Optimise the positive momentum of CGI II to sustain and scale up important work. CGI II shows the value of a dedicated diaspora fund but, where not feasible, explore ways to institutionalise diaspora within different departments and/ or to create new partnerships with other funders.
- Invest strategically in a few diaspora organisations in funding initiatives, based on the strategic conversations prior to launching an initiative, to maximise their different models and networks, rather than just opening up a standard initiative to them.
- Develop a strategic, coordinated approach to shifting power, explicitly communicating other models of partnership, such as southern partner applicants with UK partner as accompaniment. Assess against the distinctive contribution of diaspora, faith-based and niche organisations.
- Integrate learning from the Generating Ideas and Organisational Development into programmes and initiatives, with stand-alone funds where possible.

D2.4 Create an enabling environment

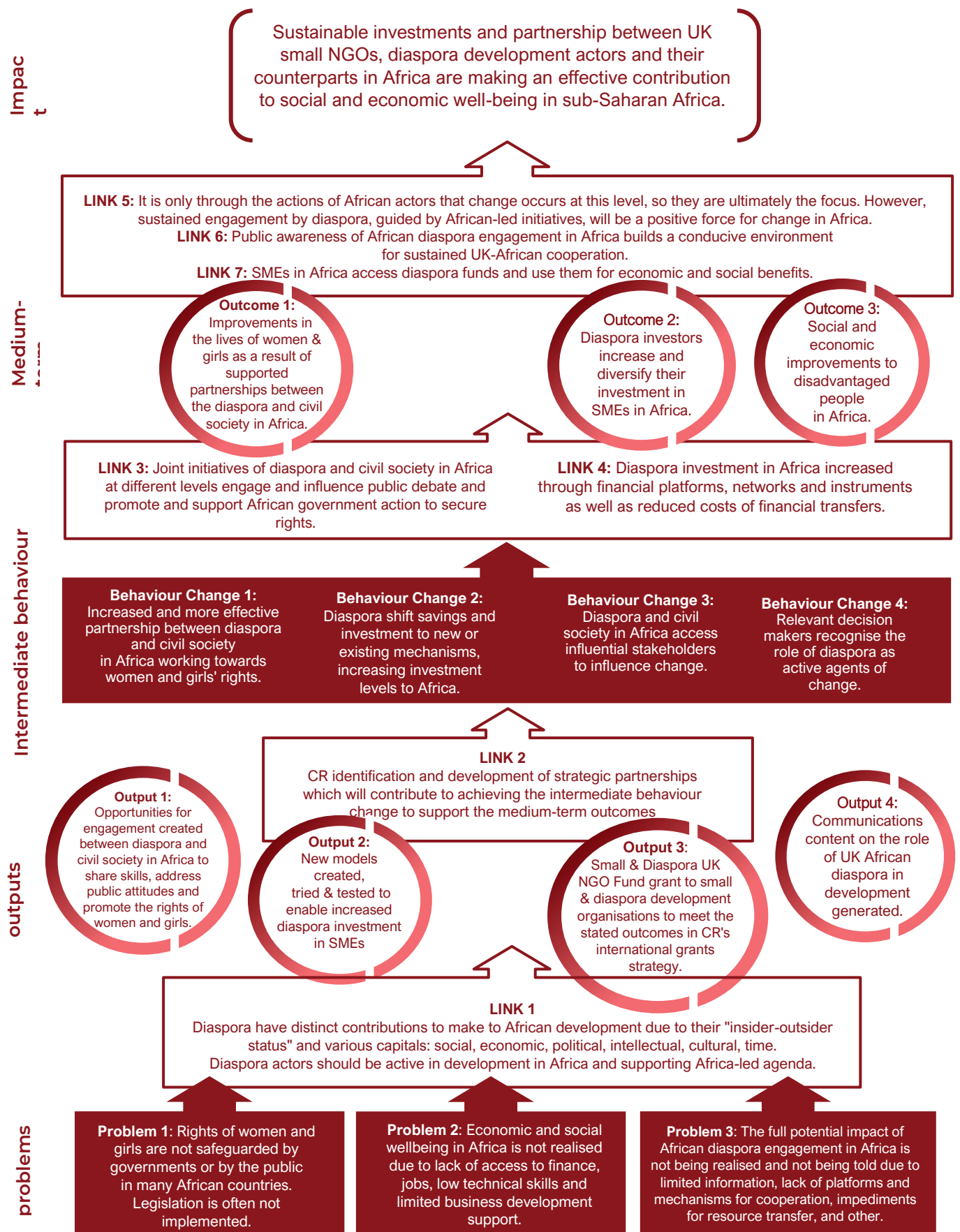
- Develop a clear strategy for diaspora work, integrating it in policy processes for Africa, development, migration and other related issues; and removing barriers to diaspora investment.
- Support research by diaspora organisations with other collaborators to generate further evidence and understanding of diaspora investment and how to support them e.g. through tax reduction.
- Influence UK Development Finance Institutions to partner with and invest in innovative small-scale diaspora investment and social enterprise schemes.
- Use comms and influencing platforms to raise awareness of the scale of diaspora contribution to development in Africa, maximising opportunities for them to tell their own stories and leveraging diaspora celebrities with genuine commitment to their country of origin to bring issues to life.

D3. What has taken root?

This evaluation demonstrates that CGI II achieved significant impact in mobilising and channelling more effective diaspora investment in Africa, in galvanising a new generation of women changemakers within Africa to innovate and solve problems and in bringing a range of social and economic improvements in the lives of some of the most vulnerable people. It also strengthened both UK and southern partners, increasing resilience and effectiveness. It demonstrated the unique contribution of effective diaspora UK organisations and the overlapping but different advantages that small UK organisations can bring, especially those with a specific niche and that are faith-/ value-based. Moreover, it showed that you could do this without exposing the funders to high levels of risk where they have strategically chosen partners and taken a relationship-based adaptive management approach. Accompaniment by small and diaspora organisations with closer more equal relationships with their counterparts helps to recognise and deal with risk more quickly. Comic Relief and FCDO need to build on the momentum of this important and innovative programme in the move towards shifting the power and supporting southern organisation resilience effectively.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - CGI II theory of change November 2015



Appendix 2 - Evaluation sources

Key Informants

Interviewees

Name	Organisation	Role
Comic Relief linked		
Beth Benedict	Current staff Comic Relief	Senior Investment Partner
Tom Colborne		Partnership Manager FCDO
Giancarlo Angelucci		Evaluation and Learning Manager
Harriet Jameson		Executive Director, Impact & Investment
Irene Vance		Senior Manager: Policy and Advocacy
Dilhani Wijeyesekera		Head of Influence
Dilys Winterkorn		Trusts, Foundations & Institutions Lead
Jacqueline Onalo	Comic Relief	Trustee
Gina Awoonor-Gordon	Former staff Comic Relief	Former CGI Programme Manager
Pontso Mafethe		Former Strategic Lead Women & Girls
'Delivery Partners		
Onyekachi Wambu	African Foundation for Development (AFFORD)	Executive Director
Stella Opoku-Owusu		Deputy Director
Josiah Kwesi Eyison	iSpace Foundation	Director
Eunice Baguma Ball	Africa Technology Business Network (ATBN)	Founder/Director
Naana Otoo-Oyortey	Foundation for Women's Health Research & Development (FORWARD)	Executive Director
Others		
Adam Pickering	FCDO	Senior Policy Adviser

Implementing and Adapting partner virtual learning session participants

Organisation	Name	Role	Country
ACE Africa (UK)	Stephanie Mooney	Trusts and Foundations Manager	Tanzania
Amos Trust	Chris Rose	Director	South Africa
ARUWE Uganda (UK partner: Send a Cow UK)	Agnes Mirembe	Executive Director	Uganda
Chance for Childhood	Gina Awoonor-Gordon	Director of Programme Development	Kenya
LBM DRC (UK partner: Chemin Neuf)	Jean-Pierre Godding	LBM director	DRC
DeafKidz International	Steve Crump	Founder & Director	South Africa
Exeter Ethiopia Link	Mark Smith	Education consultant	Ethiopia
Lifeline Network International Lifeline Nehemiah Projects	Jamie Singleton	International Director	Sierra Leone
	Prince Tommy Williams	Director	
Make Every Woman Count	Rai Sow	Executive Director	Guinea
Project Harar	Jackie Riley	CEO	Ethiopia
SUNARMA UK	Piers Langdon	CEO	Ethiopia
The Cecily Eastwood Zambian AIDS Orphans Appeal	Steven Barlow	Programmes Manager	Zambia
The Gaia Foundation EarthLore Foundation WoMin	Sara Davies	Grants & Fundraising	South Africa + Zimbabwe
	Method Gundidza	Director	
	Sam Hargreaves	Director	
Women and Children First UK	Jo Drazdzewska	Grants Manager	Ethiopia
Global One 2015	Najat Mohammad	Country Director, Kenya	Kenya
Comic Relief	Tom Colborne	Partnership Manager FCDO	UK
	Giancarlo Angelucci	Evaluation and Learning Manager	

Delivery partner, FCDO, Comic Relief analysis session participants

Organisation	Name	Role
African Foundation for Development (AFFORD)	Onyekachi Wambu	Executive Director
	Stella Opoku-Owusu	Deputy Director
Africa Technology Business Network (ATBN)	Eunice Baguma Ball	Founder/Director
Foundation for Women's Health Research and Development (FORWARD)	Naana Otoo-Oyortey	Executive Director
	Adwoa Kwateng-Kluyitse	Head of Global Advocacy and Partnerships
iSpace Foundation	Josiah Kwesi Eyison	Director
FCDO	Adam Pickering	Senior Policy Adviser
	Yemi Oluwakuyide	Private Sector Development Adviser
FCDO Ghana	Clara Osei-Boateng	Governance Adviser
Comic Relief	Tom Colborne	Partnership Manager FCDO
	Giancarlo Angelucci	Evaluation and Learning Manager
	Beth Benedict	Senior Investment Partner

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Appendix 3 - Additional detail

Implementing and Adapting (project) grant areas of work

Area of work	Diaspora / Small organisation
Food security and livelihoods	Transform Africa – Sierra Leone; Trust for Africa's Orphans – Uganda; Lifeline Network – Sierra Leone; Sunarma – Ethiopia; Send a Cow – Uganda; Pump Aid – Malawi
Education	Africa Future Development – Congo; Africa Future Development – DRC; Iftiin Education & Development – Somalia; Exeter Ethiopia Link – Ethiopia; Cecily's Fund – Zambia
Children at Risk	Amos – South Africa; Chance for Childhood – Kenya; Chemin Neuf – DRC; DeafKidz International – South Africa
Women and Girls	Make Every Woman Count – Guinea; FORWARD – Tanzania; Community Development Initiatives – Kenya; Gaia Foundation – Zimbabwe and South Africa
Health HIV/AIDS	MIFUMI – Uganda; Kwa Africa – Uganda; ACE Africa – Tanzania; Coda – Zambia; Global One – Kenya; Project Harar – Ethiopia; Women and Children First – Ethiopia

Diaspora 'Delivery Partner' ecosystem

'Delivery Partners': AFFORD ATBN FORWARD iSpace <i>Linked through initiative</i> <i>Board members linked into networks</i>	Africa partners: AFFORD Sierra Leone Enterprise Development Centre, Nigeria Empretec, Zimbabwe Private Sector Foundation, Rwanda Women in Tech Africa (pan African) Akina Mama wa Afrika, Uganda Children's Dignity Forum, Tanzania Somaliland Nursing & Midwifery Assn Young Women's Leadership Inst, Kenya Mobile Web Ghana, Ghana Code Club	UK Diaspora partners: African Women in Scotland (KWISA) Sub-Sahara Advisory Panel, Wales Radical Leap UK
SME related: Africa based SMEs Business development support institutions Chambers of commerce Start-ups & social enterprises in Africa Innovation hubs Skills initiatives Women entrepreneurs Enpact accelerator program	Diaspora networks (skill-sharing & advocacy): ADEPT Brussels (Africa-Europe Diaspora Devt Platform). ADEPT Brussels African Diaspora Network Diaspora business networks Diaspora entrepreneurs UK Diaspora women CSOs TuWezeshe fellows/mentors Diaspora women mentors for trainees at incubator and accelerator stages	Private sector partnerships: Impact investors Financial institutions Money transfer organisations CDC Facebook Impact investors Tech & business experts Google for Start-ups Regional tech hubs Ghana hubs network
African government: Inward Investment Promotion agencies Central banks Regional govt Municipalities Tanzania government Ministry of Comms Ghana Ministry Business Devt Ghana	African Union (AU): Citizens & Diaspora Directorate (CIDO) Economic, Social & Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) African Diaspora Finance Cooperation Dept for Political Affairs African Humanitarian Agency Peace & Security Department	Other African NGOs/networks AWDF Ghana African CSO partners UTI women Uganda Wazihub Ghana International tech hubs Includes orgs and networks set up by trainees e.g. Divaloper (iSpace trainee)
European govts & global DFIs GIZ Swiss Agency for Devt & Cooperation (SDC) DRC AFD (France) IADC? USAID UAE	International stakeholders/orgs: World Bank Intl Fund for Agricultural Devt (IFAD) Intl Organisation for Migration (IoM) UN Development Programme (UNDP) UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Intl Centre for Migration Policy Devt (ICMPD) EU departments UNFPA African Development Bank	Universities Universities (unspecified) Makerere University Dar es Salaam Uni College of Education Yali Regional Leadership Centre Bluecrest University College Ghana
		OD providers Mango
UK government: FCDO (funded since 2006) FCDO Tanzania FCDO Dept for Intl Trade (DIT) Home office Intl Relations & Defence Cmtee	Other funders: Comic Relief (all) Noel Buxton, Pharo Foundation National Lottery, OSF etc UK funders UK youth funders Hivos	UK & intl civil society orgs: Unspecified for AFFORD End FGM European Network Girls Not Brides UK Gender & Development Network The Girl Generation

Appendix 4 - Delivery Partner case studies

Changing the system of investment in Africa – AFFORD

£2.9 million over 3 years. Partners: AFFORD Sierra Leone; Enterprise Development Centre Nigeria; Empretec Zimbabwe; Private Sector Foundation

The big story: This grant led to people investing more money better in Africa to bring wide-ranging improvements – from increased income to safer, better food supplies, to access to health care, to empowering girls and young women. Millions of people in Africa rely on money sent by relatives living outside of Africa – the diaspora. This money – known as remittances – is often the biggest source of foreign capital to go to developing countries. AFFORD, supported by Comic Relief since 2001, opened ways to channel this money strategically, increased the amount given and reduced the barriers to sending it. They piloted new ways to invest in Africa to bring lasting change and reduce reliance on handouts. They have now shown that diaspora investment makes an immense contribution to sustainable development.

The approach: AFFORD took three main approaches to increasing investment for impact in Africa:

- It chose 20 small and medium businesses run by diaspora people in the UK to create jobs and solve social problems in Africa. It gave them small grants and found diaspora investors to match those funds. It provided mentoring, forums, and workshops to help improve the businesses and their impact.
- Its Business Club helped diaspora businesses in the UK that want to invest in Africa develop a strong business plan and gave investors in the UK information about effective ways to support Africa.
- AFFORD tested other ways to get diaspora skills and resources to impact in Africa: through professional volunteering; crowdfunding; pro-bono work; and by structuring a commercial bond in Rwanda.

AFFORD tackled barriers in the system to those investments by carrying out research and using that evidence to lobby governments and bring all players together to develop ways to make it easier to send money and operate business across countries.

Distinctive contribution: AFFORD identified partners that are robust, trustworthy and well-connected – ranging from grassroots to global. It supported them to strengthen their organisations further, to learn from each other and develop wider networks globally. Its networks and reach are extensive – for example it has become a trusted partner of the African Union, influencing decisions on investment across the continent. Its work taps into funding for development that has potential to change the face of aid. It has leveraged new resources and skills, like £500,000 of pro-bono legal aid and mental health professionals in the UK supporting change in Nigeria. Its work has a multiplier effect. Its knowledge of the context, extensive contacts and learning culture also mean that it has adapted its work to changing contexts and challenges.

The lasting impact: The grant proved that the diaspora are vital for Africa's development. It shows that AFFORD's approaches work. AFFORD itself is now stronger too. It is more effective and efficient in staffing and systems. Its robust monitoring generates credible evidence and good learning. It has a well-equipped space and business centre. It has also improved its visibility and its fundraising. The Swiss government is funding further work in Benin and then potentially in Nigeria, Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire. Half the existing businesses will survive without further help – more than the target and UK average. The Rwanda bond launches in Spring 2021.

Going forward, much can be sustained and scaled up — but all these areas needs more investment, with immediate need to match the Swiss funding.

ATBN – A new model and mindset for young African women in tech

£45,000 over 18 months in Ghana. Partner: WITA (Women in Tech Africa), a pan-African network

The big story: ATBN demonstrated that young African women, with no experience of tech, could change their mindset to become entrepreneurs, systematically solving problems to improve the lives of women and girls in their community and beyond. This grant helped ATBN work out an operating model to take forward this impact cost-effectively. Comic Relief's requirement that it work with a local partner showed it how it could have a multiplier effect, extending impact from the one city to five. The grant helped ATBN to register, put its governance in place, improve its financial management, strengthen monitoring and learning, attract other funders and support its partner, WITA, in its own monitoring and fundraising.

“No other funder has ever done this. That approach is the reason ATBN is where it is today and doing the work it's doing and leading a multi-stakeholder project.” (partner)

The approach: Recognising ATBN's potential, the CGI team invited it to apply for the grant, even though its set-up did not meet minimum criteria. Comic Relief agreed to fund a pilot and not the full project. It provided MEL training and a consultant to support them further on MEL and social media. ATBN identified young women who wanted to set up businesses but had no knowledge or contacts in tech. The women took part in a boot camp to develop skills in problem-solving, digital skills, business planning, research and networking; then linked up with iSpace for a three-month incubation with office space, workshops and support from mentors in and outside of Ghana. ATBN partnered with a UK tech company to put its course into online compressed videos for easy download. It brought together key players in entrepreneurship and tech in Ghana and the UK to show how to be more inclusive of women in business innovation. It secured a small follow-up grant to produce an e-book of stories of African women entrepreneurs, using it as a platform to bring together players to tackle barriers to their participation in tech.

Distinctive contribution: ATBN bridged the gap between cultures, identifying a gap to tackle – not in tech itself, but in problem-solving. Instead of bringing a solution to women and girls, they said ***“No, we want to do a programme to help local women develop their own solutions – create a support system that allows innovation to thrive”*** (partner). Its approach to partnership focused on bridging that gap between cultures, walking alongside WITA to share its own learning on MEL and fundraising, enabling WITA to access new sources of funding. The evaluation highlighted both its choice of a strong partner with a network across 30 countries in the diaspora and Africa and its good relationship with them, based on mutual respect, clear communication and commitment to supporting tech for community impact. ATBN also had good peer networks and connections, including its existing link to i-Space, and others which it built on to develop an effective mentoring system of support.

The lasting impact: ATBN was effective in attracting entrepreneurs to improve women and girls' lives. 94% significantly increased their ability to problem-solve; 88% to speak publicly; and 75% to incorporate digital tools in their initiatives. Follow-up six months afterwards showed that 80% of the women were still actively working on their venture. The impact extended to over 300 young women, including: setting up a business equipping women and girls with coding and tech skills; employment as web-developers; forming a team to run a waste management initiative; producing a successful e-book for children with strong female Ghanaian characters; and setting up an e-skills for girls initiative that won an award and led to training 20 other girls as developers. It established a network of 30 mentors from ten countries. The grant catalysed ATBN. It secured funding for a project to work with digital players to bridge the gender divide. Its e-book raised its profile. **Going forward, it needs funding to take the model it has developed to scale.** ATBN is finding it hard to go from pilot to new funder. It needs support to showcase and extend its work.

iSpace – Promoting inclusion of young women in tech in Ghana

£552,097 over 3 years in Ghana. Partners: Mobile Web Ghana; Ghana Code Club; Radical Leap UK

The big story: In 2015, African women were missing in the technological and digital space. Through this investment, iSpace proved that young women in Ghana from diverse backgrounds have the skills and potential to build a career as coders, programmers and to establish successful tech start-ups. 80% of new tech start-ups created by the project have female founders ‘a feat yet to be achieved in Ghana or Africa by any other hub’. The project trained over 300 young women, now employed in ICT and related jobs. Five participants are collectively developing a site for Ghana’s national body of tech hubs. The project has successfully challenged the narrative about young women in tech in Ghana. In 2018, iSpace won the global diversity and inclusion award from Google for Entrepreneurs. It has a strong equity focus, reaching women from low economic and marginalised groups, using the programme as a catalyst to encourage them to ‘identify the problem and bring their own solutions’. Check out www.ispacegh.com

The approach: From the outset, Comic Relief recognised iSpace was not a traditional partner. It was a young, exciting, innovative, entrepreneurial tech start up, socially driven, operating in a mainly corporate tech space in Ghana since 2012. It was well placed to develop a project focused on the inclusion of women in technology, but was not familiar with grant processes and MEL requirements. Comic Relief encouraged iSpace to invest in organisational strengthening and iSpace worked hard to improve its MEL and financial management, and to become more responsive to young women. It re-structured to take on more female staff and developed female-friendly policies. It ran a boot camp for young women, followed by a successful accelerator and diaspora mentoring programme, with the help of its partners. It learnt how supporting women-led initiatives can be different. Not all young women wanted to start their own business. Many were drawn towards collaborative initiatives. It enabled others to see *“if you invest in women...when one woman helps another, amazing things can happen”* (partner).

Distinctive contribution: iSpace has been **responsive** to a rapidly changing context which provided opportunities as well as challenges, coming up with a relevant, creative and collaborative approach to the lack of women in tech in Ghana. In 2016, a new government came in with a drive to support entrepreneurship. This meant more funding was available to start-ups, but at the same time the government was penetrating the tech ecosystem organising coding training and operating similar programmes itself. iSpace was able to adapt. It has strong **relationships** - it engaged government on including coding in the national school curriculum; and trained 50 teachers to set up coding camps – insisting that clubs recruit 60% females to encourage them into robotics and coding. It seized the opportunity to take the programme to the national level, working with new/emerging hubs across Ghana. These were all unexpected outcomes from the grant. As an organisation it has proved committed and **resilient** – investing in its own capacity and its partners.

The lasting impact: Sustainability was always part of the plan for iSpace. It has become the *“go-to hub in Ghana for women in tech and business support”* (partner). It has more capacity including improved project management, accounting, and communication skills as a direct result of the project. It continues to train young women and help them raise the finance required to start their own businesses. This can be a challenge. Its partnerships have endured, including with hubs across Ghana and beyond - helping them build capacity and reach women in their communities. These relationships are based on experience and a shared vision and are not solely reliant on funding. The programme has had a multiplier effect. As well as established start-ups such as Moberry Agro, Muqafrik, young women are employed in tech throughout Ghana and some have set up training schemes in their own communities, continuing to change mindsets and pave the way for more inclusion of women in tech in Africa.

FORWARD – Empowering our sisters to end sexual and gender-based violence

£1,198,295 over 3 years. Partners: Akina Mama Wa Afrika Uganda; Children’s Dignity Forum Tanzania; Somaliland Nursing and Midwifery Association; Kenya Women in Scotland; Sub Saharan Advisory Panel Wales

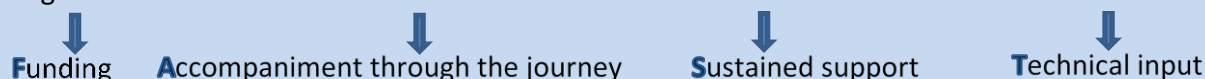
The big story: This grant has inspired a new generation of young African women to take action against gender-based violence. It has connected them across continents, and with older diaspora mentors from within the movement. It has amplified their voices and invested in their social action projects. As a result, there is a new cadre of over 150 young feminist leaders who are championing women’s rights, each in their own unique way. TuWezeshe Akina Dada means *‘Empowering our sisters’* in Swahili. Fellows have reached out to transform the lives of others. They have taken part in national and global advocacy - campaigning to tackle sextortion at institutes of higher learning in Uganda; advocating for anti-FGM legislation in Somaliland; engaging the Tanzanian Minister of Gender on the gender strategy; and with the Welsh parliament. The United Nations Population Fund has co-opted them for its 2020 campaign #AgainstMyWill.

The approach: Many young women’s leadership programmes exist. What is different about this one?

- Shorter, intense five-day residential leadership development programme with 23 at most per group
- Longer, one-year period of mentoring support and investment
- Funding for social action projects
- Inter-generational mentoring
- Intersectionality: work in a range of contexts *“need spaces for young African women in the UK too”*
- Expanded use of social media – Fellows sharing stories and inspiring others in their own way

FORWARD initially worked with participants in university but, based on learning, has subsequently adapted its model to reach and include young women from more diverse backgrounds.

Distinctive contribution: FORWARD is African- and women-led. It has a strong track record of tackling FGM and child marriage in the UK and Africa. Comic Relief has funded it since 1998, and continuously since 2010. This project is a diaspora collaboration. Akina Mama in Uganda was originally established in the UK. The Sub-Saharan policy initiative (SSAP) had newly started in Wales. The grant helped SSAP build their relationship with a partner in Somaliland. FORWARD was instrumental in setting up CDF in Tanzania, providing their founder with an £8,000 grant after meeting her during her PhD research in the UK on child widows. CDF has now received funding from Swedish International Development Cooperation, the UN Population Fund and its first direct grant from Comic Relief. FORWARD taps into emerging ideas and groups and builds strong linkages with and between partners and with local/ international networks. Each partner has a nuanced understanding of the local context. FORWARD respects this. Partners have ‘joint resources to tackle a common problem’. FORWARD does not want to hold or own everything. It strengthens partners using a **FAST** model:



The lasting impact: As a critical mass, Fellows are influencing and creating change. Young women in Somaliland – a tough context to break into on women’s rights – are galvanised into action. The TuWezeshe approach is now institutionalised in FORWARD and partner programmes, including in FORWARD’s new programme with young African women in the UK to discuss identity, racism and violence. Akina Mama and SSAP have adopted the model and secured funding for it. FORWARD is currently in conversation with the joint UN and EU Spotlight Initiative focused on eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls. Young women’s voices are enshrined in FORWARD and its partners. FORWARD now has a young women’s advisory council. One TuWezeshe Fellow sits on FORWARD’s Board. Partners have taken on Fellows as interns and staff; and they now influence their approaches.

Appendix 5 - Detailed recommendations

Acknowledge and share

Comic Relief

- Recognise and use the data evidencing the distinctive contribution of diaspora to develop more shared understanding and change the narrative internally, clarifying the difference between BAME and diaspora and emphasising the unique UK-Africa linkages.
- Meet with the Fundraising and Creative team to share communications impact of CGI II and stories of change; strategise ways to share these more widely learning from recent remittance media stories; identify diaspora celebrities to develop understanding of how they give back to their country/ continent of origin; and how to empower and give voice to diaspora organisations – not instrumentalise them.
- Organise a meeting with the Impact and Investment team and *'Delivery Partners'* to share evidence of CGI II impact and diaspora contribution and to strategise ways to build on that momentum.
- Share findings from the evaluation with specific contacts in FCDO, including in-country teams relevant to the work achieved.
- Strengthen diaspora representation and voice within funding organisations: Review representation and voice of diaspora people at all levels of the organisation; take on someone from a *'delivery partner'* at board level; and make space to draw strategically on their input in strategy development and initiatives, rather than siloing them in a distinct team.
- Recognise the evidenced value that small organisations can bring, particularly faith/ value-based ones and those with a specific niche. Integrate their role into strategy and initiatives.

FCDO

- Identify which stories and data from CGI II can be shared in which departments and break down sections of the evaluation to share with them in strategic conversations, including gender department, the Africa hub and the private sector teams.

Engage and convene

Comic Relief

- Plan an event to share the impact of CGI II and to celebrate Comic Relief's 20+ years of work with diaspora (as originally planned), involving partners, funders and other stakeholders. Do this virtually if not feasible to do in person before the end of 2020 so as not to lose momentum.
- Recognise that your role in influencing is not so much high-level advocacy as strategic convening and sharing of evidence to influence other funders and get them investing in effective diaspora organisations – especially where it is not possible to invest yourself.
- Share evidence about the distinct contribution of UK small and diaspora organisations with Bond and other networks.
- Bring together representatives from diaspora organisations when developing strategy or new initiatives to explore ways to maximise their unique contribution – especially in relation to mental health, gender justice and children survive and thrive.
- Involve diaspora partners and organisations in thinking about crises responses.
- Increase the use of virtual learning sessions with funded southern partners and any UK technical partners to share experiences around specific themes, relevant to their work – the evaluation has shown this can be done virtually and cost-effectively.

FCDO

- Support a CGI II event to celebrate impact and share evidence around the key themes of diaspora and small organisation contribution; diaspora investment; women and girls rights; opportunities for strengthening southern organisational resilience; and the role of effective tech across them.
- Make linkages between delivery and other effective CGI partners with other funders, such as Venture philanthropy movement, Scholl and European Venture Philanthropy

Invest

Comic Relief

- CGI II has evidenced the value of funding a cohort of organisations, especially where it links to their distinctive contribution, as in the *'Delivery Partners'* work. Continue to look for opportunities to work with other funders to offer this separate fund, building on the CGI programme, such as with diaspora foundations like Akon, Konfidence, Adebayor, Ngozi, exploring interest in specific themes.
- Explore opportunities to engage with High Net Worth diaspora around specific themes.
- Invest in match-funding opportunities, such as with the Swiss Development Agency.
- Include a separate stream in initiatives based on strategic conversations to enable diaspora to bring different and innovative approaches and that include core funding for their work.
- Include in call for proposals and guidance explicit encouragement to incorporate accompaniment from a UK small or diaspora partner or consultant to walk alongside them through the process.
- Avoid funding southern partners as regranteeing/ intermediary organisations unless that approach explicitly aligns to organisational mission so as not to impede good southern organisations (OD review 2019).
- Stop funding projects, however good, that are mainly service-delivery, even if they do some influencing work; look at strategic mobilising approaches that get everyone playing their part in problem-solving.
- Integrate learning about the importance of specific strategies for funding research and consultation and for organisational strengthening across all the work. Offer grants of £15-20,000 for a catalyst fund in the Shifting the Power initiative (not £5,000 as currently envisaged) as it needs to be enough to enable consultancy support and dissemination/ planning follow-up.

FCDO

- Incorporate learning about the value of small organisations into the Small Charities Challenge Fund processes assessing against the added value of diaspora, faith-based and niche organisations.
- Invest in proof of concept programmes, scaling up and research.

Create an enabling environment

Comic Relief

- Use comms and influencing platforms to raise awareness of the scale of diaspora contribution to development in Africa, maximising opportunities for them to tell their own stories and potentially leveraging diaspora celebrities with genuine commitment to their country of origin to bring issues to life.
- Explore the role of diaspora youth and how to engage them more through communications.

FCDO

- Develop a clear strategy for diaspora work, integrating it in policy processes for Africa, development, migration and other related issues; and removing barriers to diaspora investment.
- Support research by diaspora organisations with other collaborators to generate further evidence and understanding of diaspora investment and how to support them e.g. through tax reduction.
- Influence UK Development Finance Institutions, such as CDC and PIDG to partner with and invest in innovative small-scale diaspora investment and social enterprise schemes.

Appendix 6 - Acronyms and initials

AFFORD	Africa Foundation for Development
ARD	Association for Rural Development
ATBN	Africa Technology Business Network
BAME	Black and Minority Ethnic
CDI	Community Development Initiatives
CGI	Common Ground Initiative
CIC	Community Interest Company'
CR	Comic Relief
FCDO	Department for International Development
DKI	DeafKidz International
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FORWARD	Foundation for Women's Health Research and Development
GI	Generating Ideas programme (small research grants)
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IT	Information Technology
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
OD	Organisational Development
PCR	Project Completion Report
PIDG	Private Infrastructure Development Group
SDC	Swiss Development Corporation
TB	Tuberculosis
ToC	Theory of Change
WHO	World Health Organisation
WITA	Women in Tech Africa

Some key definitions

<i>'Delivery Partners'</i>	Strategic diaspora partners proactively identified from a pool of organisations to deliver outcomes in Diaspora investment and in Women and girls' lives
Diaspora	People of African origin living outside the continent, irrespective of their citizenship and nationality and who are willing to contribute to the development of the continent
Implementing and Adapting Grants	Project grants awarded by Comic Relief of up to £750,000 over three to five years for work aligned to its strategic priorities