# **INVESTING IN ORGANISATIONAL STRENGTHENING** FOR SOCIAL CHANGE #ShiftThePower **COMIC RELIEF OS WORKING GROUP** Facilitated by Isabel Turner and Rick James

## INTRODUCTION

This summary describes Comic Relief's approach to organisational strengthening (OS), see definition in section A. It captures the outcomes of a six-month accompanied process and complements the work to articulate the non-financial (funder+) support Comic Relief gives partners.

Comic Relief is taking a more proactive and deliberate approach to OS. It wants its approach to be clear, coherent, consistent and easy to communicate – internally and externally.

In its current social change strategy Comic Relief commits to:

- supporting meaningful social change as an investor, communicator and influencer;
- investing in organisations (UK & international) to strengthen the work they deliver;
- shifting resources and power to partners closest to the communities our funds are intended to benefit;
- enabling funded partners to pursue their own objectives for social change;
- supporting partners from the start to plan for the end of investment;
- leaving partners stronger at the end of Comic Relief's investment than at the start.

The primary focus is individual funded organisations. In some portfolios Comic Relief supports groups of organisations to strengthen the sector. Organisational strengthening is cross-cutting across all Comic Relief funding and is also sometimes the sole focus.

Comic Relief's partnership with the UK Government's Department for International Development (DFID) has been a key driver (and funder) of this work<sup>1</sup>.

Comic Relief itself has a <u>long and rich experience of organisational strengthening</u>. This guidance draws on Comic Relief <u>learning from that journey</u> and <u>best practice from the sector</u>.

## There are four sections:

- A. Terminology
- B. Comic Relief OS Principles
- C. OS and Comic Relief's funding cycle practical tips
- D. Measuring change

The consultancy process has been facilitated by Isabel Turner (independent consultant) and Rick James (INTRAC) working alongside a group of staff at Comic Relief led by Beth Benedict and André Clarke. Additional technical support was provided by Nigel Simister (INTRAC) on MEL and Rubert van Blerk (CDRA & Tamarind Tree Associates) in South Africa. Cartoon illustrations are by Bill Crooks.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In 2020, Comic Relief and DFID signed a new agreement to strengthen civil society in Ghana, Zambia and Malawi. Comic Relief and DFID together are considering how best to invest, what can be provided beyond funding, by whom and how, and how organisational change can be measured. This has been an important driver for this work and is reflected in the guidance.

# A. UNDERSTANDING THE TERMINOLOGY – what do we mean by Organisational Strengthening in Comic Relief?

Words matter, but in describing organisational strengthening they are far from perfect. The jargon is both contested and confusing. Coming to an agreed definition is like nailing jelly. There are any number of nouns (capacity, organisation, institution...) and verbs (building, strengthening, developing...) that you could use. And that is only in English, let alone the many other languages our partners work in.

Of the many different options, Comic Relief uses the term 'organisational strengthening', avoiding more mechanistic and paternalistic words like 'building' or ubiquitous words like 'development'. We see this strengthening taking place in any or all of these three areas:



- Strengthening partners can have a technical or programmatic dimension, helping them become better at the programme work they do, whether it is in health, education, women and girls' rights, or disability for example.
- It also has an organisational element to achieve their missions, partners need clear identities; good leadership; healthy internal culture and relationships; prioritised strategies; appropriate structures and systems; competent staff and adequate resources, as well as coherence between them.
- Increasingly we realise that an organisation's strength is also a product of its external relationships with beneficiaries, funders, government and other NGOs.

More important than the particular words we use is our understanding that sits behind the language. Comic Relief approaches OS of partners with the explicit understanding that:

- 1. Any change comes from within. It is not something that Comic Relief can do to partners. Comic Relief can, at best, cultivate the conditions in which organisations can strengthen themselves.
- 2. Organisational change is a complex, human process that engages values, emotions, and beliefs.
- 3. As such, it is impossible to predict OS with any degree of certainty.
- 4. OS often involves shifts in power and relationship, both internally and in the wider eco-system within which the partner operates.
- 5. The way Comic Relief behaves and manages funding can have a significant influence on whether or not partners get stronger (or not!).

# B. COMIC RELIEF'S ORGANISATIONAL STRENGTHENING PRINCIPLES



These six principles derive from Comic Relief's values and strategic direction<sup>2</sup>. To support OS in our programmes, Comic Relief will:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Comic Relief's refreshed social change strategy (June 2017); Internal reflections paper (Sept 2019); Internal guidance on OS design (ToR Dec 2019); CR working group values (OS workshop Feb 2020); Reflection on Comic Relief learning (OS workshop Feb 2020); Best practice in the sector (OS workshop Feb 2020).

## 1. Cultivate partner ownership

Putting into practice CR's value of Make Meaningful Change and Putting People with Experiences of the Issues at the Heart of Decision-Making. This takes unusual humility.



#### It involves:

- Supporting funded partners to strengthen the organisational priorities they set (within clearly communicated CR parameters). Unless there is a critical mass of support for the OS process from the partner, particularly their leadership, it may be better not to start.
- Self-assessment by the partner this is more likely to result in their ownership of any OS process that follows. External facilitation, if done well, may

help deepen partners' understanding of their needs and reveal blind spots.

- Leaving prioritisation of issues to address and scheduling in the hands of the partners. Implementing the OS process should grow, not lose, partner ownership.
- Making an engagement in OS an opt-in choice, not a funding condition (however implicit).
- Ensuring OS goals are harmonised and integrated with partners' programmes not viewed as separate

## **Practical options**

## Whatever the budget:

- i. Find out from other funders and OS organisations which local consultants they work with and trust in the context. Do not assume that because an international NGO says they do OS, that they do it well.
- ii. Share this information with funded partners.
- iii. Encourage other funders to collaborate on programmes to strengthen national OS providers.
- iv. Take time to understand an organisation's existing OS work, including work with other funders or partners, and harmonise where possible.

- i. Undertake a mapping exercise to identify reputable national consultants or organisations in core OS areas.
- ii. Create and maintain a database of trusted local OS providers.
- iii. Host a market place to bring together partners and providers.
- iv. Strengthen national OS providers either as online, blended or face to face learning. This will contribute to the local civil society ecosystem.

# 2. Enable access to quality local providers:

Comic Relief believes in rooting support with those closest to the context as they are best placed to find solutions (CR social change strategy)

Quality local providers (with the competence, commitment and character to catalyse change) are vital to ensure OS is adapted to the local context, culture and language. There is a greater likelihood of follow through from providers located closer to partners. Here are a few helpful things to consider when it comes to trustworthy consulting.

The most effective providers specialise in OS. If the OS provider is also involved in grant management, this can create a potentially dysfunctional power dynamic as partners are likely to be less honest with them (to not affect funding). OS also requires a distinct skill set from managing funding. National CSO networks are also not necessarily an easy option. Few have specific skills in OS and they may be already overstretched with other network roles of advocacy, coordination, grant making and even implementation.

Where good quality local providers do not exist, CR will consider how best to address this critical bottleneck – developing and strengthening the quality of what is there, where possible. Building the support structure for civil society shifts the power and may constitute a Comic Relief strategic intervention by itself, especially as funding for developing the quality of local providers has diminished in the last decade. Should outside providers be identified in the absence of local provision, including support to build local capacity as part of their brief is encouraged.

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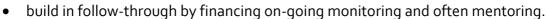
# 3. Ensure quality OS methods:

Living out CR values of Walk the Walk, Share the Stage; and Make it Personal

Quality OS methods are 'fit for purpose'. Different methods such as training, consulting, coaching, mentoring, action learning sets, peer-to-peer, communities of practice, exposure visits are more (or less) suitable for different issues and with different groups. There is a choice between offering group interventions (training, learning events, online courses etc) to a larger group of partners and tailored, individual support which is more resource-intensive. Comic Relief's experience suggests it may be helpful to offer basic support to the wider portfolio of partners and in-depth, tailored support to partners who demonstrate openness to change and where the tailored support will have the most impact.

Effective OS methods which strengthen ownership:

- take an applied and experiential approach, allowing space for learning and reflection;
- take an asset-based approach, building on what partners already have and helping them to see and take the next step;
- use consultative, participatory, and inclusive processes;
- address questions of power and relationships (including feminist analysis);
- make it personal engage with the emotional and intentions to understand the drivers and resistance/blockages to change;





## **Practical options**

Whatever the budget:

 signpost to free online materials in key OS areas, such as strategy, leadership, governance, financial management, MEL, safeguarding, resource mobilisation. Comic Relief already has many of these from its <u>CGI Peer Learning programme</u> (2010-2013)

- ii. With a cohort of partners, contract a high-quality local provider to offer applied and experiential training (online or face to face) in areas prioritised by partners.
- iii. Offer tailored accompaniment support someone to walk with or alongside the organisation on its development path to those who demonstrate openness to learning and change and are strategically significant to the programme.
- iv. Encourage and resource learning networks of partners in prioritised areas. This is already an established practice in some instances where Comic Relief is funding a consortium of partners. But do NOT expect partners to necessarily lead and facilitate on this as this may place an extra burden on them and take them away from their core mission. Comic Relief may need to fund facilitation of peer learning.

# 4. Adequately resource OS change processes:

This takes generosity and patience, living out CR's core value of generosity

Organisational strengthening can be financed through a number of channels including:

- Core funding (long-term, flexible, secure). In a context of relational trust, learning and good leadership core funding underlies authentic and sustainable change within organisations and their ability to do effective work and avoids organisations becoming locked in unsustainable and vulnerable project cycles. Specific OS objectives within the core funding helps ensure OS funds don't get diverted to day to day running costs.
- OS budget lines within programme funding.
- Creating an OS programme that proactively invests in a portfolio of partners.
- Creating a reactive OS funding pot, to respond quickly to partner requests for OS funds.

Within the parameters of support, we can offer, Comic Relief commits to:

- resourcing OS properly, acknowledging the hidden costs in participating in OS for funded partners. Peer-to-peer learning, for example, can be powerful, but also time intensive.
- taking a long-term perspective on financing OS, supporting follow through and regular adaptation to incorporate learning. We know from experience that OS takes time. Change is gradual and incremental.
- Harmonising OS and Comic Relief funding processes and systems so that how we fund partners reinforces our commitment to their organisational strengthening. Where our operations and funding practices inhibit this, we will try and change them.
- Working with integrity, doing what we say we will.

## **Practical options**

Whatever the budget:

- i. Reinforce the OS direction with better quality funding (longer project times, less reporting bureaucracy, more core funding)
- ii. Integrate OS into partners' budgets

- Explore whether to set up a separate fund for responding to OS requests from partners (often located in an anchor/infrastructure organisation who could oversee management of the fund on Comic Relief's behalf)
- ii. Ensure budget supports investing in high quality consultants to facilitate complex self-assessments, peer learning, consultancy, coaching and mentoring. If we take OS seriously, Comic Relief has to seriously invest in OS.

# Ensure PMEL systems reinforce ownership and learning/adaptation

This takes radical honesty about what is possible and the humility to learn from failure

• In planning OS, Comic Relief does not overpromise. We know 100% success is not possible. In more challenging contexts, change is normally more difficult.

I HAVE GOT THE QUESTIONNAIRES

- We commit to a 'do no harm' principle in OS – avoiding rushed planning, unrealistic targets, forcing partners into early bureaucracy, or creating dependence.
- Our MEL systems reflect our knowledge that organisational change is organic, iterative and non-linear.
- Our MEL will be proportionate and pragmatic, favouring retrospective, light touch systems where those closest to the situation reflect back on what has changed and why rather than over-simplistic, predictive before and after baselines.
- We avoid the temptation to overburden partners with requirements which
  undermine the capacity we are trying to build. We recognise 'mainstream MEL'
  requirements can add a huge burden on organisations the language and new
  competencies required are not easily learnt and integrated into organisational
  processes. Instead, we will listen for, validate and strengthen endogenous MEL,
  systems and processes used by funded partners, if fit for purpose.
- We will make learning paramount, as it is so intertwined with OS. We will invest in
  developing understanding of the best approaches for supporting CSOs' long-term
  resilience and the appropriate role of funders. This requires us to analyse our
  failures. We are prepared to say when we have got things wrong. We commit to put
  learning into practice. Our OS programmes take an adaptive management
  approach.

## **Practical options**

Whatever the budget:

- i. Encourage partners to set their own objectives for OS.
- ii. Consider what is reasonable to ask partners to do to measure organisational change (how would CR feel if the same metrics were applied to CR?).
- iii. Regularly review learning by Comic Relief about OS from the programme and adapt programme design accordingly.

- i. Fund retrospective learning evaluations based on the perspectives of change of the partners themselves
- **ii.** Fund a meta-evaluation bringing together learning from different CR programmes and contexts.

## 6. Influence other stakeholders

This takes courage and lives out CR values of Break Down Barriers – being brave to stand up for what is right and Share the Stage

Our OS programmes are harmonised with external stakeholders as much as possible



- We recognise that funded partners have demands from multiple stakeholders to respond to, not just Comic Relief. We actively collaborate with other funders, ensuring we align our approaches, avoiding costly duplication and extra burdens on funded partners
- We are courageous in negotiating and taking a stand with our own and other funders to do what is right (what we know from evidence and experience works in OS).

## Practical tips and options

Whatever the budget:

- i. Do not let the co-funder push CR away from good practice OS, in particular with their reporting demands and timeframes
- ii. Find out which other funders are involved with partners and their standpoint and approach to OS

Where resources are available:

i. If no existing networks exist, set up a network of funders working in a country (or theme) on OS to ensure synthesis and coordination of support

# C. APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES THROUGH THE COMIC RELIEF FUNDING CYCI F

Determining: aims purpose, geography, funder

All six principles need to be considered at design phase. Pay attention to principle 4 (resourcing) and 6 (influencing others); and 2 (quality providers) once geography is confirmed.

Particularly consider principle 1 - ensuring partner ownership in accessing opportunities

Grant size,
duration, eligibility,
application guidance
& templates

Review of applications, assessment, funding recommendations made

Consider principle 1 and how assessment provides an opportunity to listen to partners' priorities and gain an independent perspective. Principles 2 (quality providers) and 3 (quality OS inputs) apply as you think through how these might be best met.

Take time now to: To increase ownership, avoid making OS a funding condition.

Principle 1 remains critical at this point as expectations are set and the OS element of a programme takes shape. Consider principle 5 and how change will be measured and learning generated to benefit both CR and funded partners.





Reports, visits and learning events all provide an opportunity to formally and informally check in on grant progress. They are informed by principles 1 and 5, so that PMEL reinforces ownership, learning and adaptation. When reviewing partner progress reflect on principles 2 and 3 - are the OS provision and methods being well received and effecting change?

This is a good moment to listen and reflect on all six principles including 5 (PMEL and) and 6 (influence other stakeholders).



Below is a walk-through of the principles applied to the Comic Relief funding cycle. This will vary according to context, type of funding, collaborations with other funders etc so is only <u>indicative</u>.

#### PROGRAMME DESIGN

All six principles need to be considered at the design phase. Pay attention to principle 4 (resourcing) and 6 (influencing others); and 2 (quality providers) once geography is confirmed

Take time now to:

- understand the context by talking to existing funding partners, networks and other funders
- co-create solutions sectorally
- consider the funding mechanism (e.g. core funding, portfolio-level investment, OS funding within partner budgets, a reactive OS funding pot etc.)
- ensure resources are in place to support and monitor the OS process <u>throughout</u> the investment
- If a co-funder is involved, think about an outcome map (see section D)
- Is a local 'anchor' organisation needed?
- Align CR processes to principles

## **CALL FOR APPLICATIONS**

Particularly consider principle 1 – ensuring partner ownership in assessing needs and opportunities

- Clearly communicate the OS opportunity that exists & parameters of CR support
- Share the Comic Relief OS principles
- Help partners understand how they can integrate OS into application budgets

## SHORTLISTING AND ASSESSMENT

Consider principle 1 and how the assessment provides an opportunity to listen to partners priorities & gain an independent perspective. Principles 2 (quality provision) and 3 (quality methods) apply as you think through how these might be best met. To increase ownership, avoid making OS a funding condition

- Listen are the right OS ingredients there e.g. strategy, strong leadership, buy-in? See Comic Relief learning
- Find out which other funders are involved
- Ask about trusted providers

## **START-UP PHASE**

Principle 1 remains critical at this point as expectations are set, and the OS element of a programme takes shape. Consider principle 5 and how change will be measured and learning generated to benefit both CR and funded partner

• Invest time here to build strong relationships

- Be transparent about Comic Relief's own OS journey and aspirations. This could enhance authenticity and integrity in the relationship with partners and thereby facilitate ownership.
- Use start up meeting to agree aims & objectives; find common ground for group training/support; collectively agree methods; discuss how change will be measured and learning generated to benefit both CR and funded partners; seek recommendations about quality OS providers
- Consider development funding for good quality research/consultation to assist strategy development and allow the partnership to be gradually built.
- Fund facilitated self-assessment with trained national facilitators (resources allowing). Let partners prioritise their change objectives (find agreement within CR parameters). Agree budget and how change will be assessed.
- Contract providers to offer accompaniment support, tailored consultancy and training.

## PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION, REPORTING & COMIC RELIEF VISITS

Reports, visits and learning events all provide an opportunity to formally and informally check in on progress. Principles 1 and 5 feel important here, with PMEL reinforcing ownership, learning and adaptation. When reviewing partner progress, reflect on principles 2 & 3 – are the OS provision and methods being well received and effecting change?

- Take time to also informally touch base
- Create conditions for things to emerge evidence grounded in communities. Be a messenger for those constituents.
- What is going well? What do we need to change?
- Create space within CR to collectively discuss learning and adapt approach

## **FINAL REPORT & CLOSURE**

This is a good moment to reflect on all six principles. Consider 5 (approach to PMEL) and 6 (influencing other stakeholders).

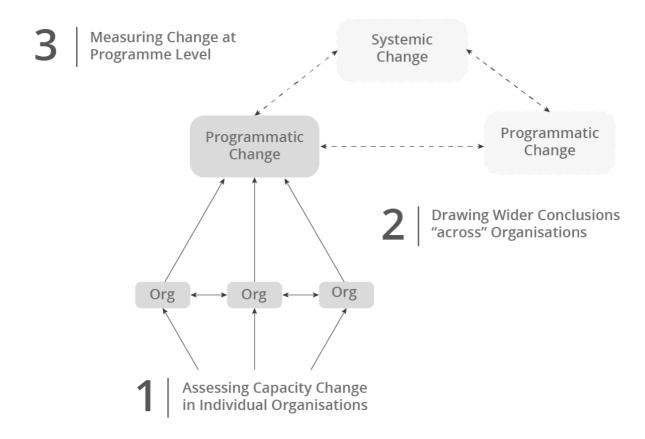
- What does success look like? Perspective of funded partners? CR/co-funders?
- What has worked, not worked? Validate with funded partners
- What has been learned?
- How might we want to use learning to influence other stakeholders? (principle 6).
- How have we (CR) performed against our six OS principles?

# D. Assessing Change - OS Model

Given our investment and commitment to organisational strengthening, is it important for Comic Relief (and co-funding partners where relevant) to understand whether OS is making a difference, and if so, to explore what this looks like in practice.

We can consider change at three levels (see diagram below):

- Assessing capacity change in individual organisations
- Drawing wider conclusions across organisations at portfolio level (e.g. in a given funding programme)
- Measuring change at a systems level (e.g. the education system if we have been funding CSOs to deliver education-related interventions)

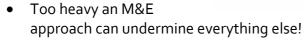


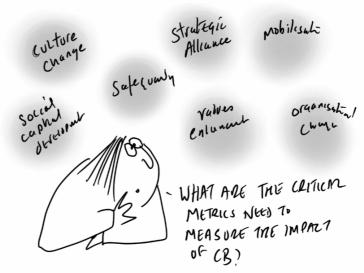
Monitoring and evaluation processes, while incredibly helpful, can derail rather than support OS if not designed and delivered thoughtfully. It is for that reason that you need to ensure that any effort to introduce such processes is in line with the guiding principle to ensure that they reinforce ownership, learning and adaptation – within and between the organisations 'receiving' support, Comic Relief, and our co-funders.

## Challenges to consider

Monitoring and evaluating OS is not without its challenges that must be understood and appreciated upfront.

- It can take a long time for OS activities to translate into outcomes.
- OS is not a linear process.
- "Scores" or selfassessment may go down as an organisation's selfawareness grows.
- The achievement of outcomes is dependent on the alignment of a range of actors: providers, 'recipient' organisations, funders.





## What's the purpose of your OS intervention?

Being clear on the purpose of your OS support is an important first step in designing any monitoring and evaluation process and will help you to determine the 'look and feel' of any monitoring, evaluation and learning system you establish.

- Technical capacity building
  This is a common approach to addressing particular knowledge gaps such as proposal writing, safeguarding or financial management. In these instances, the purpose of the OD intervention is more easily identifiable (See <u>Simister and James</u> (2015) p. 2)
- Organisational capacity building
   This approach is much more holistic and goes to the heart of an organisation's mission, vision and purpose and how they realise these. The purpose is this kind of support is quite varied and point to questions of their role in contributing to social change, their adaptability, resilience and sustainability. This requires a more nuanced approach to monitoring, evaluation and learning.

Within Comic Relief's approach, the primary accountability and ownership for the provision of OS support lies with the funded partner and their OS facilitator or provider. Our MEL approach is premised on learning and continuous improvement. Particularly where programmes are co-funded however, you may have to think about ways to also demonstrate accountability to co-funders which don't disrupt or minimally disrupt that primary accountability and ownership.

## Tools and Methods and when they work best

There are a range of tools and methods that you can use to understand changes in the capacity of organisations. Simister and James (2015) analyse the appropriateness and possible indicators for:

- 1. Informal (no consistent) method
- 2. Direct measurement
- 3. Action plans based on organisational assessments
- 4. Organisational Assessment tools / scorecards
- 5. Outcome mapping MSC / Case studies based on approved sampling methodologies
- 6. Surveys / client satisfaction forms

It important that you choose the right tool for the job and recognise that each tool or method comes with its own pros and cons. Click here to read more about the range of options to consider when designing the MEL system.

In Comic Relief, funding is often managed as a portfolio, and so it will often be important for us to monitor and evaluate across a number of different organisations. There are some examples below of how this can be done with five to ten partners and with a larger portfolio.

## A simple system for a small group

When working with a small number of partners (less than 10), and an excellent facilitator playing an 'accompaniment' role, you do not need a complex MEL framework. A strong capacity development facilitator should know an organisation's needs, sources of support and where it wants to go. At the start of the programme, the facilitator can complete a one-page baseline summary for each organisation, outlining:

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Sources of support
- Where they want to go in the coming year

At end of year one, the facilitator can work with the organisation to reflect back on that initial one-pager and articulate:

- What's changed?
- How have you changed?
- What's worked and why do you think it has?
- What's changed in the world?
- Who has supported, including Comic Relief?

However, as soon as a programme grows, and you are working with more than ten partners, you may need to take a more systematic approach as the above method generates considerable qualitative information.

## Outcome mapping for a larger partner portfolio (with co-funding partners)

In a co-funded programme with an agency like DFID, it is important to ensure that our co-funders' requirements or expectations do not lead to a burdensome approach to MEL for funded partners and one that compromises their organisational change as a result. One approach to consider is to complete an Outcome Map with your co-funder at the beginning of the programme. This approach presents a light-touch MEL framework for you to respond to over the life of the programme. Each year you could reflect on progress in each of these outcome areas and adapt accordingly. Together, you would co-define:

Over the course of our 5-year programme, at the level of the programme, we:

## EXPECT to see...

 This could include a) supporting capacity development provision to CSOs b) changes on more visible levels (lower in hierarchy) such as resources, skills, structure and systems c) some CSOs will increase in confidence and capacity in some priority areas d) some CSOs will see improvement in some key areas of operations (e.g. unrestricted income, audit results, brand recognition)

#### Would LIKE to see...

 This could include more behavioural changes, above and beyond the more traditional changes outlined above (e.g. CSOs feel in greater control over their mission & purpose as a result of reduced donor dependency; communities report greater CSO accountability etc.) These are often less tangible elements such as relationships (including gender and diversity), levels of cooperation and teamwork towards more conscious culture, value system and connection with core identity

## Would LOVE to see...

 This includes the most transformational elements of our intended work together and could include, for example, we as funders changing our funding practices based on the outcomes and learning of the programme or other funders' OD practices have changed as a result of the learning we have generated from our programme.

## Other considerations

- Cultivating a learning partnership between Comic Relief and our funded partners
   Comic Relief is also developing and learning as we deliver organisational strengthening programmes and interventions there is a huge opportunity to be transparent with our partners and to share our own intentions/strategies/learning ambitions in the same spaces in which our funded partners are sharing theirs.
- o Building on funded partners' existing MEL systems
  Organisational change is an adaptive, responsive process and so it doesn't lend itself well to measurement. Our MEL approach risks continuing to 'projectise' organisations and distract from their higher mandate and purpose. We need to ensure that our MEL approach does not erode organisations' own endogenous MEL systems. Any reporting should be built upon these existing systems, rather than introducing something completely different.

- o Considering research as a means of lessening the burden on funded partners
  Research expertise exists for larger scale evaluations and assessments of change,
  including academic research. In designing our MEL system, we can consider a potential
  role for research as a means of relieving funded partners of onerous processes/demands
  for MEL.
- Exploring Comic Relief's contribution to change
   It is also important for Comic Relief to explore, not just the changes that partners made, but the contribution that Comic Relief's support made to this. Jim Coe & Rhonda
   Schlangen' 'No Royal Road' (2019) suggest a new way of approaching evaluating advocacy efforts, which might be applied to OS, exploring questions related to Comic Relief's role in the change process. Source: <a href="https://www.evaluationinnovation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/No-Royal-Road.pdf">https://www.evaluationinnovation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/No-Royal-Road.pdf</a>

## CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Strengthening an autonomous organisation (often in another country and culture) is an incredibly complex process. Given the complexity of any human change and the turbulent environments we operate within, it is impossible to guarantee success of any OS programme. We should always approach OS with an appropriate degree of humility.

However, experience tells us there is much greater likelihood of catalysing sustainable change if we apply these six core principles throughout the partnership journey:

- 1. Cultivating partner ownership
- 2. Enabling access to quality local providers
- 3. Ensuring quality OS methods
- 4. Adequately resourcing OS processes
- 5. Ensuring PMEL systems reinforce ownership and learning
- 6. Influencing other stakeholders

This takes courage and commitment from Comic Relief.

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