



GALVANIZING
AFRICA CONSULT

ORGANIZATION STRENGTHENING EVALUATION: Emerging Learnings & Insights

FINAL REPORT FOR COMIC RELIEF: DECEMBER 2023

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FINAL REPORT FOR COMIC RELIEF'S ORGANIZATION STRENGTHENING EVALUATION: EMERGING LEARNING & INSIGHTS

Background and context of these findings:

Comic Relief (CR) commissioned a review of their Organization Strengthening (OS) work towards the end of 2022, focusing on three funding programmes: All in All Learning, Maanda and Mental Health In Kenya. The 18 funded partners in these programmes were piloting CR's revamped OS principles, which built on learning from several years of OS work. The new principles were now more intentional to improve and apply what they had learnt over the years, and captured in what has come to be referred to as their Organization Strengthening Framework (1). The partners in this pilot phase were from Uganda, Kenya, Malawi, Sierra Leone and Tanzania. Galvanizing Africa Consult (GAC) had the privilege of accompanying them over a period of one year, during which time they had several online conversations seeking to understand every aspect of their experience of the OS journey. The GAC team also managed to meet over half of these partners twice physically, during the year to build on the online conversations, dig deeper on the emerging learning, and play back to them what they were hearing. It was planned as a light touch and not burdensome process on the partners' time, and working with a lot of reflective questions, sought to understand the whole journey of having receiving OS grants, right from how they got engaged, to what they had done with the funds, what benefits and challenges they had experienced, as well as what they were taking forward after the grants ended.

It was obvious by the end of what was undoubtedly a rich learning experience, that the world view on OS for the majority of the CR partners, especially those who made it to face to face convenings, had expanded tremendously. The opportunities to connect and hear from one another, challenge each other, and listen to stories on the journeys of other organizations, all served to widen their perspectives on OS and its potential for growth. They were not only energized, but many gained great clarity on where they wanted to go in their efforts to become more resilient civic actors, despite their different contexts.

This document shares the broad insights that emerged from this process, which we hope will complement the provided more operational OS funding guidance for CR programme teams, going forward. The reflections are, however, certainly relevant for many other like-minded funders, who work in what is commonly called the 'global south', especially countries in Africa, where this accompanying reflective process took place.

The document begins with a brief highlight of what worked well from the partners experiences of the OS process, which was mainly shared with the CR teams during the regular feedback sessions organized in the course of the year, as part of their learning journey.

Highlights from CR partner's view of the OS process:

Through both online and physical meetings that the GAC team had with the CR partners over the year, there was no doubt that the partners found the process very relevant and productive, an eye opener, empowering, and one which without doubt grew their institutional capacity and 'world view' to be stronger, more purpose-driven organizations than when they began. On many occasions they described CR as a unique and open-minded funder compared to many other donors they had experienced. The following is a brief on some of the specific observations made by their partners:

- The assessment process was an eye opener for many boards and staff to fully appreciate the value of a well-functioning organization, with policies, procedures, strategic plans etc., hence raised the bar on their aspirations to be not only better organized, but also credible, accountable, and effective non-profits.
- The OS process was instrumental for most of the organizations in growing their internal cohesiveness, clarity and vision for their organizations, holistically. Many witnessed revamped and much more engaged boards, as well as teams who had bonded more deeply as they went through the challenging process, which enhanced their unity of purpose, and commitment to work more coherently across the board. They also began to recognize that OS is a continuing process, since increased growth and organizational complexity, begets the need to address new OS challenges.
- With improved internal systems, and increased visibility, many partners widened their networks and have become more attractive for bigger partnerships and teaming up arrangements, in efforts to vie for larger funding grants with other likeminded actors, including international NGOs. By the end of 2023, a good number of the partners reported significant growth in the numbers of funders now supporting their work.
- On the OS assessment process, the partners appreciated the quality of facilitation or accompaniment, which was primarily provided by Tamarind Tree consultants, which enabled them to reflectively and thoughtfully 'absorb' every step in a seamless manner. Their methodology allowed for time to reflect, explore, and eventually the partners were able to prioritize entry points for their OS interventions, since the available funding could not cover all the emerging issues. In time, many partners began to use the OS Assessment reports to seek support from other funders, further appreciating the value of the process they had gone through, as it enabled them to drive their growth more intentionally.
- The partners also appreciated the CR staff flexibility and enabling demeanor, their openness to discuss challenges the partners were experiencing, and in many cases adjusted timelines, budgets, etc., in response to genuine issues raised. Many partners reported their relationship with CR staff as enabling and facilitative, and often used words like 'easy', 'responsive', 'respectful'! They also held the overall

- oversight and quality control responsibility of the OS process, hence ensuring a good 'segregation of duties. See Section 4 below as well.
- One un-intentional outcome that many partners observed by the end of the OS evaluation process, was their revamped commitment to 'self-determination' on the future of their organizations. This was strictly speaking rekindled in the first face-to-face workshop in Nairobi, through visiting another local organization which had walked a similar journey and had not just moved into their own office premises but had also succeeded in diversifying their income sources. This reawakening made a good number of partners to consider moving away from the comfort of being one hundred percent covered by funders in everything, to become more intentional about working to solve critical needs like office space. They shared passionately with each other in the last face-to-face meeting on the progress they were making. Some had even started mapping a journey to develop 'centers of excellence' as part of a long-term effort to expand their programmes, but also diversify their income sources. The mental shift, which is a critical element for increased CSO resilience, was just amazing.

Finally, most of the areas of potential improvement have been integrated and captured in the general reflections on emerging insights and recommendations sections below, as CRs experience is not unique from what other funders have experienced or struggle with. It is worth noting, however, that from the CR OS principles perspective, majority (five out of six) of the principle areas were well worked on with very promising results. The main area not addressed was the aspiration to strengthen access to local (i.e. from the geographies where partners came from) quality OS service providers. This is well covered under Section 6, under the heading, Shifting The Power. The other five principles were largely tried and tested and had many positive results as already shown above, and is further expounded on, in the following pages.

Emerging Learning and Insights:

1) Grounding OS on a funder's firm philosophy and ideology:

At the very onset of undertaking the OS evaluation, the GAC team was soon introduced to key background documentation, clarifying the rationale and reasoning behind CR's engagement on OS support to their partners. CR's Organization Strengthening document demonstrates clearly their well-articulated rationale and philosophy for prioritizing and desiring to invest in OS process for their partners. The framework had been developed after a consultative process supported by external experts in the field, leaving no doubt that the funder was committed to implementing it as a matter of policy. Having a policy document, thus makes it much easier for the CR programme teams interacting with partners, to have a strong backing for their practice, policies and procedures. Initially, there may not have been sufficient clarity on exactly 'the how', which was the driver for this work.

This foundational grounding was an aspect the GAC team found extremely valuable to set the tone, place and importance of OS work within the organization. This 'internal tidiness'

within a funder, though important, is often missing within the ‘Aid’ industry. Consequently, many non-profits especially in Africa, get used to changing ‘donor trends’, which keep shifting. It is not uncommon for priority funding areas to shift not necessarily because the context on the ground has changed. Often, a major factor is the poor ‘ideological’ grounding for their work in the first place, among other possible factors.

As the evaluation conversations continued with CR partners, the GAC team found a lot of value in making constant reference to the six principles set out in the framework, as the main benchmark, in helping determine, if emerging reflections spoke to any of the key pillars or not, what worked well and what could be improved.

One partner in one of the face-to-face convenings, having been exposed to the tool on the 8 Levels of Organizational Complexity that has been extensively used by EASUN Center for Organization Learning, (<https://easuncentre.org/#>), reminded his colleagues in a very profound phrase captured here below in his own words;

‘When one of the key OS areas is missing, it clearly produces a ‘wobbly’ organization, which is really what you don’t want to have’.

In the same way, when one of the six components of the CR pillars is not adequately addressed, it is likely to produce a wobbly OS process’, hence the need for funders to support a balanced OS process, as well as work towards having a clear policy document, which provides the rationale and the approach they choose to undertake. When their drive for the work they want to undertake is shared and understood within their teams, it increases their credibility in pursuing genuine relationships with local partners.

Recommendation & Actions for Funders:

- I) Strive to achieve a common understanding of OS within your organization, that’s based on a clearly articulated ‘ideology’.
- II) Reflect: Where are you on the ‘donor-compliance and readiness’ to ‘a grantee-owned journey’? Only then, consider the operational details of how you fund OS work, and consider if it reflects this understanding.

2) The effects of ‘Context’ on Non-profits:

One of the areas which emerged quite early in the interactions with the CR partners was how much the contexts they experienced affected how they perceived things and operated. For many countries in Africa, most non-profits depend on external funding from international sources, which has forced many of them to invest in understanding what each funder wants to fund, and to ensure they tailor-make their ‘projects’ to fit donor priorities. Funding is also shrinking because of new challenges being experienced in so-called developed countries, sometimes due to new aid demands in those countries, e.g., countries affected by war in Europe. Also, in most of Africa, governments do not provide resources to nonprofits. The Aid industry has therefore had a big impact on the behavior of the non-profit sector, and it usually drives not only the funded sectors, but also the approaches that are adopted.

The other closely related contextual factor, is what is commonly called the remnants of 'colonization', where because of the need for resources coming from the north, many organizations will comply and embrace anything suggested by a funder, even if they don't understand it, maintaining a 'Yes, Sir!' mentality, however genuine the funder may be. In one of the reflection physical meetings, one Executive Director of one organization put it this way:

'While we would have wanted to prioritize social enterprise support as a key OS area, it made more sense to comply with what we knew Comic wanted to fund, as we would not have wanted to drop off the list of OS funded partners, being very much aware that they were not interested in supporting social enterprise'

Therefore, operating in regions like most of Africa, calls for consciousness about the unique and often historical contextual issues that affect the continent, which make non-profits behave like they do. Adopting creative mechanisms to understand exactly where partners are, beyond what may appear on the surface, is important, as they may not discuss it openly. There is need therefore to invest significant time and in a variety of ways, to develop the kind of relationships that allow for honest and authentic conversations.

Recommendation & Actions for Funders:

- i) Funders must ensure their teams operating in former 'colonised' environments are alive and alert about the real or perceived power they have in the course of doing their duties. This can be exemplified in simple things like how they conduct themselves, e.g., language (spoken or written), tone used, posture especially when relating physically to partners, response time to communications, time keeping, etc.
- ii) Ensuring new staff are exposed to the experiences and 'historical baggage' that many non-profits carry with them, as a result of poor funding environments is critical. At the same time, proper inductions for new staff which includes an exposure to the 'decolonization agenda' and how they can work in ways that contribute to deconstruct the phenomenon, is important.
- iii) In cases where funders do not feel they have the time to understand local dynamics, working through local and well-grounded grantmakers or 'intermediaries' who have the capacity to re-grant on their behalf, is an option that can be considered, which is also a way of leveraging on existing infrastructure resources that are readily available.
- iv) Identifying qualified local (geographically) technical advisers/service providers, capable of contributing to deconstruct negative mentalities among non-profits, and promoting approaches that build the confidence of nonprofits, is also an option that funders can adopt.
- v) Interrogating and regularly reviewing/reflecting on the approach that a funder is applying while implementing OS is critical, to check if it is really achieving what it was meant to achieve or not, as stated in the principles they have set for themselves.

3) The meaning of Organization Strengthening:

Another interesting insight the GAC team stumbled on midway into the OS review, was that there can be different meanings of OS. There are partners who initially took OS to be like

any other preferred area/sector of work that a funder is interested in supporting, just like there are funders who support interventions on environment, climate change, children, or even women rights, etc. With more interaction, we realized that those who adopted this meaning, just saw it as an opportunity to maximize on what they could 'extract' from the funder, while it lasted. They had not fully internalized the fact that what they made from the OS process, was really for their own benefit (in becoming a stronger organization), and nothing to do with the funder.

Closely related to this group, were those who despite being in agreement with the outcomes of the OS assessment reports of their organization, which was a process very capably undertaken across the different countries by an appointed reputable group of consultants, felt frustrated by the fact that the funder supported a 'diagnostic' process about the strengths and weaknesses of their organization, without committing to support them fully in addressing each of the emerging areas. Such organizations felt 'jilted', as they had not aligned their expectations with the funders.

One partner put it in this way....

'It is like diagnosing cancers in different parts of my body, and walking away without offering the all-round treatment, which was very agonizing for our organization.'

This partner from the beginning, had misinterpreted the idea of doing the OS assessment, even though they participated with a lot of enthusiasm, but also misunderstood the use of the OS assessment report. Partners need to appreciate fully not only the why, the how, and the what, of the OS process, ideally before the OS assessment process begins. This can be done through holding convenings for short listed partners or the broad universe of 'potential' grantees. Such forums can also be used to align with other aspects of programme work that they are considering to fund. This would ensure the partners own the process and see it as fully in their interest, in their journey of becoming stronger and more authentic organizations.

Having a strong basis of appreciating the value of OS, also allows supported organizations not only to own the changes they are making, but to work on them from a place of conviction, and not necessarily because funding is available. From an Organization Development perspective, it is a known fact that lasting change is best when it is an 'inside-out' process, rather than an 'outside-in' process, driven by funders. By the end of the evaluation, many partners no doubt appreciated that having knowledge and clarity about their strengths and areas to improve, provided an opportunity for them to ride on the OS assessment report to approach other funders for additional OS support for any outstanding areas. In addition, as some partners gained better understanding of the process, they confessed that there are OS areas they could have worked on supported by their experienced board members. A correct understanding of OS would thus have made the available CR resources, to go much further.

Recommendation & Actions for Funders:

- (I) Funders need to ensure there is a proper understanding and alignment of the meaning and purpose of OS from both the funder side, as well as the partners side,

before proceeding to embark on the funding work, so that all parties can get maximum gains from it. Clarity on what success will look like is equally important.

- (II) Funders could consider working with former 'OS alumnae' to share the value they got from similar processes in the past, as part of an approach to help new OS beneficiaries appreciate the process and its value for them.

4) Practicing *'Shifting the Power'* across all funder actions:

Another area that kept emerging in various conversations with partners was how much they appreciated the uniqueness of CR as a funder. When asked to unpack the meaning of such a statement, we got very similar responses, literally across the board.

Many used the following words to describe their funder or the kind of relationship they had:

'CR is a unique and an open-minded funder, a flexible funder. We have been able to re-negotiate timelines with our Lead Manager and will implement all the agreed areas of work over the next three months. They are very understanding when you share exactly what you are going through.'

Another partner said,

'CR is easy. We were able to go back when the need arose and re-negotiated our timelines. They even added us some OS resources to meet some of the needs which arose.'

These are not always common descriptions of funders especially in the African continent. Funders who work with the consciousness of the power they wield, in a context where international Aid professionals are often known for the opposite behaviors, are unique.

Cultivating funder behaviors like being flexible in defined implementation periods, allowing partners to adjust funded areas that no-longer make sense, just to mention a few examples, is the kind of funding relationship what would be most appreciated in most of Africa. Building such trust relationships contributes much to authentic conversations between funders and their partners. Hence, they are the practices and behaviors that need to be emulated and cultivated among funders who genuinely want to make a difference through their work.

Another area of 'Shifting The Power' which was observed, is that of supporting partners to take power, and learn how to contract for the services they need to address their OS needs. It was observed that many partners did not feel confident to contract, although they insisted that service providers were available within each of the countries where they are operating in. At the same time, it was common after the OS assessment reports were out, for many partners to take up the initiative and to find appropriate service providers (since they had budgets they could deploy), to support them through their prioritized areas of OS interventions, which included services like developing strategic plans, developing Human Resource and Finance Manuals, enhancing their monitoring and evaluation approaches, board trainings on governance, just to mention a few. In most cases after such processes

were undertaken, it was clear the partners were very invested in the ‘products’ that came out, often going through various stages of interrogating them thoroughly with their teams and their Board members, before adoption, and ensuring they met their needs. Such processes created ownership and a deep commitment to ensure they had met their desired set targets, and got good value for their money.

Unfortunately, the level of interest and commitment in following up on the assignment is usually not the same when the funder contracts for services for the partners (although the service may be well done like was the case with the service provider CR contracted, since the power to ensure delivery and the ‘pain’ of paying for the service remains with the funder. The dynamics around both approaches were observed while undertaking the OS evaluation, and it was clear, there is invested commitment, confidence, and ownership, when the partners take the power and struggle to develop clarity on the service they really want, and ensure it is done to their satisfaction. Going forward for CR, it is worth investing in resolving this area in line with one of their OS principles, which appears not to have had much attention in the pilot phase. The other advantage of challenging the partners to take that power is the fact that they are left stronger, and able to continue to figure out their solutions, even after the end of their CR or other funders grants.

These observations confirmed the importance of encouraging, and if necessary, supporting partners to take the power, learn and grow/enhance their skills on basics of contracting, e.g., developing Terms of Reference. When partners find themselves in that spot, they move and take charge, since that is the only way to practically affirm them and enable them to learn to survive without a funder’s oversight. Hence, although it is efficient from a funders perspective to undertake central contracting of service providers for their partners, it is more empowering and challenging to do what it takes to enable partners to contract for services they need, and for funders to work themselves out of these roles. In practically all the countries where the partners came from, or their surrounding countries, there were diverse OS service providers, and networks (for the same) even for decolonizing work, emerging, due to demand for suppliers who understand the local contexts in which the nonprofits operate.

Recommendation & Actions for Funders:

- i) Investing in enhancing partners skills/abilities to take power, in as many ways as possible is an important way of ‘Shifting the power’, and them to function into their future, whatever it will be.
- ii) Funders can provide partners with practical guidance on how to identify local service providers who share their values and have the expertise to support them to grow in their OS journey, e.g. tips on how to procure competitively, distill the different approaches that consultants use and appreciate the value of empowering approaches. This is unlike ‘expert-type’ of approaches, which produce the needed output (e.g. a strategic plan), but leaves the organization (client), without ownership or understanding of the product left behind.
- iii) Supporting partners to connect with appropriate local networks where partners are exposed to other relevant issues beyond what their funder is supporting, is an

important part of institutional strengthening. Such forums can help partners connect with local service providers, learn how other CSOs are managing to diversify their funding sources locally and expanding their financial sustainability, join other networks that can expand their world view, just to mention a few.

5) The place for group learning and exposure visits in supporting OS work:

As indicated earlier, there were two opportunities in this year-long evaluation process with Galvanising Africa, when a group of the CR partners had face to face convenings. In one case, a deliberate decision was made to select a venue run by another local organization, as an approach to stretch their imagination of OS possibilities. The excitement, the frank sharing of what they were each going through, the positive competitive spirit, the energy generated from visiting another local partner who had figured alternative ways of resourcing the work etc., all served to make it a real worthwhile learning venture. It sent a very clear message, that sometimes the best way of learning is not to tell them what to do, but to expose them to some of the ideas one wished they learnt and adopted. It was a very powerful eye-opening process. When the last convening was organized almost seven months after the first one, many organizations had something to talk about regarding the things they were now doing differently, following the first exposure visit.

This process confirmed there was a strong case for funders interested in investing in organization strengthening approaches, to consider opportunities to benchmark with other like-minded organizations, and to be intentional about creating group learning opportunities, and continuously scanning the environment for like-minded actors. Funders are also well placed to be intentional about expanding and growing that 'community of practice' in the contexts where they work, since this is the local influencing group even for their partners. Being intentional about inviting such actors to organized forums is a powerful way of continuously scaling up the desired practices that grow the sector. It is part of the much-needed institutional strengthening work within the non-profit sector.

Recommendation & Actions for Funders:

- i) Keeping a broader 'world view' by a funder, of the work and environments that their partners are operating in, is important, as part of the areas they can tap from to grow their partners and broaden their aspirations. Thus, Institutional Strengthening (IS) which focuses on the larger environment where partners are operating in, is an important way of growing the capacities of non-profits, an area often neglected when funders keep a narrow view of their work, oblivious of the broader environment within which the work they are funding is happening. *(Refer to writings by Prof Alan Fowler under Notes).*
- ii) Funders can be intentional about organizing learning events that allow partners to learn from one another and from others in their environment who are not connected to them, but have experienced similar journeys like themselves, and with reasonable success. It is also another way of encouraging partners to widen their networks and attract additional funders for their work.

6) Advocating for more funders to consider flexible grants with OS integration:

Funders have much more influence on their partners than they often realize. One of the areas interrogated unintentionally in group discussions towards the end of the OS review process, was what funders should do differently. Looking back on the whole OS process, it was without doubt a very positive experience, as the partners in this unique experience, had resources they could put into not just their programme work, but also strengthening their own organizations, which is rare. Unlike what CR did in funding this work, there is usually more emphasis on programme funding and less interest in the organization doing the work. In addition, the partners also recommended the importance of ensuring that the funds disbursements for the two areas, go hand in hand without big gaps between them, so that the organizational strengthening elements, continue to impact the mission work positively and simultaneously. This is important as many of them recognized that OS is truly an on-going concern, not a start and stop endeavor. New areas for strengthening tend to emerge with each growth level attained. A number of partners for example have appreciated the complexity of sustainability, initially giving very high premium to office ownership, but by the end of the process, many recognized that even the internal functioning of the organization's systems, policies and adapting with changes in the environment, etc., is just as important.

The other aspect which emerged was that after the partners had addressed most of the things they prioritized, new and more sophisticated challenges began to emerge. For example, for the greater percentage of CR partners, having clear strategic plans, better systems and having proper policies and procedures internally, began to make them more attractive for teaming up arrangements and bidding for funding opportunities together with other development actors. Many even got into the radar of international NGOs who discovered that partnering with local organizations gave them an edge to bid for big grants, even from Bilateral organizations, especially with the increasing discussions on decolonization and localization of Aid.

A couple of organizations complained of suddenly feeling swamped and overwhelmed by the number of invitations to funding collaborations, with some beginning to wonder what their criteria would be for making those decisions. They were clearly now at a new stage requiring a different kind of OS support, including in some cases the need to have some accompaniment arrangements for coaching, to meet their new challenges. If these partners could now receive flexible grants, they would be able to have portions of funds that can be ploughed into their new areas of need, which is important for their continued survival, consolidate existing gains, and further growth, as well as avoid mission drift, a real threat. Giving flexible grants is thus another way of shifting power, and trusting partners to make key decisions, not only on programming matters, but also on their own internal organizational growth.

Recommendation & Actions for Funders:

- i) More funders need to ideally consider OS as a core/critical part of programme funding, especially if they have a commitment to grow nonprofits to go beyond being 'contractors' for funder-prioritized programming.
- ii) Funders have many ways of adopting OS as a key area to support, either by just giving OS grants independently, integrating OS into project grants, or just providing institutional grants which allow partners to use funds according to where their need is greatest (both programme and OS matters), while pursuing their mission areas. The last one is sometimes adopted by progressive funders willing to fund the strategy of the organization they trust and have chosen to partner with, without going into specific details on what is programme and what is OS, hence core funding.

7) Other challenging areas for many partners:

The following two areas emerged as areas that funders need to pay attention to in supporting different areas of work among non-profits, as they either get marginalized or tend to appear to matter to the non-profits, but do not attract the needed attention by majority of funders, as expounded below:

i) **Learning and Documentation challenges:**

Throughout the OS review process, the areas of learning and documentation emerged as the two most 'neglected' areas by many partners. Further interrogation revealed that the reason for this is not because partners did not value them, but that they were largely overwhelmed by the pressing duties of their everyday work and life, and the need to address the many OS issues that had emerged and were pressing. The maturer or more established organizations who had attained a certain level of stability, even resource wise, appeared more likely to be able to pay attention to them, more than the younger organizations who were struggling with a lot of things.

The review team recognized that providing resources specifically for the two areas, as opposed to assuming they will be covered under the broad OS support seemed to work better, since it forced the organizations to make a point of prioritizing the time and effort needed to think through them, i.e., what their journey was like and what they had learnt, and finding different ways of tracking that movement, including capturing it in some documentation was important. Such learning, when well documented, can also feed into better donor funding practices as well.

- ii) **Resource Diversification:** The struggle for diversifying sources of funding is a real challenge for many organizations, especially within Africa. Among the CR partners, and with improved capacities, many began to consider working with their boards to explore what viable social enterprises could look like for them. From conversations held in the last face-to-face convening, it was clear this was of major importance and concern to them but contained loads of challenges. Many of the partners would greatly have appreciated some support to explore viable options for their unique

contexts probably by having a business coach to help them figure out major issues around governance of such outfits, structuring or even how to develop a business case that they can market to actors like venture philanthropists for funding.

Having resources to identify suitable service providers in an area like that would therefore have been a great OS intervention that emerged at the end, even when they knew social enterprise was not an area of interest for CR. It clearly showed an example where partners would need help from flexible funders, to support them in gaining appropriate knowledge, which would allow them to avoid many pitfalls that have befallen many nonprofits getting into this space.

In conclusion, most of the insights and reflections captured here from accompanying CR partners are generally relevant for many other funders. It is hoped that they will at least kick off conversations around these issues, and will encourage many to consider trying them out, as they seek to be more relevant in the challenging environments, they operate in. Funders are extremely influential in determining what happens in many poor countries. Intervening appropriately on their end, has lots of ripple effects on many vulnerable groups, who will never be in a position to say, 'thank you'! It is timely for funders to reflect on their current practices and make adjustments that will impact communities positively.

NOTES & REFERENECES FOR FURTHER READING:

- 1) Refers to 'Investing in Organisational Strengthening for Social Change. Written by Comic Relief OS Working Group, Facilitated by Isabel Turner & Rick James.
- 2) Time to Decolonize Aid – Insights and Lessons from a Global Consultation by Peace Direct.
3. The State of Institutional Philanthropy in East Africa, by the East African Philanthropy Network.
4. Reimagining Civil Society in Tanzania; A Scooping Study by Susan Njambi and Global Fund for Community Foundations.
5. Local Resource Mobilization: Trends and Practices in East Africa – 2022 by East Africa Philanthropy Network (EAPN).
6. Striking a Balance – A Guide to Enhancing the Effectiveness of Non-Governmental Organizations in International Development by Alan Fowler.
7. The Virtuous Spiral – A Guide to Sustainability for NGOs in International Development By Alan Fowler.