

How to support locally led processes

Positioning local expertise at the head and heart of the work

Yielding Power

- Nominate a national staff member as the key contact point on a program for all communications with donors and other key stakeholders. Reinforce this with all stakeholders on an ongoing basis. This needs to be a leadership role, not a comms or coordination role. Ensure that the national staff member has all the information and skills they need to be comfortable as the key contact point for the country program.
- Conduct a frank and open internal review of white staff to identify whether there is a perception that moving to more locally led processes will mean a reduction in the quality and speed of work. If that is the case, identify where staff believe the risks lie, and identify management strategies. Share this work with local staff.
- Have a frank and open engagement with local staff on whether they agree with the risks identified. Ask if local staff have anything to add to the risk management strategies. Work on identifying the improvements to output and outcomes which will result in more locally led processes. Socialise that understanding with staff and donors.

Wielding Power

- Proactively ensure that you have all the information, support, and resources you need to act as the contact point with donors and other stakeholders for your program(s).
- Be honest about where you have skills gaps or need further development and support. At the same time, be assertive about the centrality of your political, cultural, and contextual understanding of getting good results from your organisation's programming, for both stakeholders and donors.
- Work with black and brown colleagues to develop a clear shared position on the added value of locally led work and a shared 'script' that allows you to advocate for this within your organisation and with stakeholders. Develop a script for why building deep relationships takes time and why it is central to getting real, sustainable outcomes for a program.