

ECOSOCC
Economic Social & Cultural Council

The Voice of the
African Citizenry

ECOSOCC CSO MANUAL

Resource Mobilization For Civil Society Organizations

An Organ of the African Union

ecosocc.au.int

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FORWORD

This manual was developed to give capacity support and development to CSOs working in any sector. Regardless of where an organization sits in terms of capacity either—budding, emergent, or mature—this toolkit offers both new and experienced organisations ways to fundraise and sustain their interventions and achieving meaningful results. Recognizing that one size does not fit all, this manual contextualizes organizational development and the spectrum of capacity growth of organizations as they mature through the different stages.

In order to assess the fundraising needs of African CSOs, an online survey was conducted with a sample size of 50 CSOs with a regional balance of East Africa, Southern Africa, West Africa, North Africa, and the African Diaspora).The survey took place during in the month of January 2022.

The needs assessment yielded the following findings in support of the development of this manual;

1. CSOs have very limited and non-diverse sources of income. Many CSOs typically rely on two or three donors, leading some to resort to the provision of training and consultative services to generate additional income.Informational provision and proposal writing were named as key problems; the capacity and skills for attracting alternative funding is undeveloped.
2. Capacity in resource mobilization and proposal writing tend to be limited or lacking.
3. Lack of budgets to employ full time in-house resource mobilzation professionals, leading many CSOs to resort to foreign volunteers and/or temporary staff
4. Many CSOs do not have access to basic resource mobilization material or guidebooks.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ECOSOCC	Economic Social and Cultural Council
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
FBO	Faith-Based Organisation
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

INTRODUCTION

ECOSOCC has prioritized the development of this manual after the recognition that resource mobilization can be a challenging exercise for African CSOs. Figure 1 provides reasons why ECOSOCC considered the issue of resource mobilization as important. As such, the manual provides broad strokes on the process of resource mobilization informed by the fact that contexts where CSOs operate are different and the requirements in accessing the resources out there are usually specific. The manual however gives key principles and modalities which can be applied in any context. It is anticipated that the manual will contribute towards CSO sustainability when they are able to access adequate resources to fulfil the objectives

Figure 1: Importance of resource mobilization

Resource Mobilization



This manual has four sections:

Section 1:
Provides the conceptualization of resource mobilization. Before starting a resource mobilization initiative, it is important to understand the resource mobilization concept and the context in which it is best applied.

Section 2:
Provides the critical principles that need to be followed in the process of resource mobilization.

Section 3:
Provides step by step generic process to resource mobilization.

Section 4:
Addresses issues of partnerships.

The aim of this manual

This is one the many toolkits commissioned by ECOSSOC as part of the organ's efforts to continuously execute its mandate of promoting and strengthening the institutional, human, and operational capacities of African civil society. This manual intends to offer practical guidance to CSOs in fundraising and sustainability and will help in building the capacity of African CSOs to access a wide range of resources. CSOs will familiarize with a diverse range of funding sources and will receive guidance on how to establish successful fundraising mechanisms and access opportunities for diversifying sources of financing.

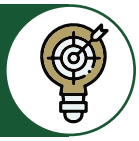
How to use this manual?

The manual seeks to provide guidance to CSOs that may have limited experience in resource mobilization. Each section has also been designed to be 'stand-alone' and can be referred to in isolation to refresh more experienced fundraisers. Sections can also be used as a kind of 'first aid kit' – for example, if you are suddenly asked to develop a logical framework and have no experience in doing such a thing. Throughout the manual you will also find valuable tips, usually learnt only through years of experience of fundraising.

This manual is designed to help you develop, write, and sell successful projects in your work. Although this manual is designed to benefit CSOs, the approaches outlined can also be applied to community-based organizations (CBOs) or local for-profit organizations. The approaches included in this manual are designed to increase capacity regardless of the actual knowledge or skill targeted.



SECTION ONE:
Conceptualizing Resource Mobilization



Resources are the means by which organizations secure the cash and non-cash inputs required to accomplish desired and planned projects and objectives. While there is a general tendency to consider resource mobilization as fundraising, it is, however, important to note that resource mobilization is much more than just fundraising because it includes:

i. Accessing a range of resources (rather than just money/finances);
ii. Building a network from a wide range of resource providers;
iii. Using a variety of mobilization mechanisms.

Types of resources

Resources can be grouped into four main categories:

1. Human	2. Social
3. Physical	4. Economic/Financial

1. Human Resources

Human resources are central to the work of CSOs. Without people, there would be no operations for the CSOs to undertake their functions. Without human resources, there will not be an opportunity for novel ideas that seek to design and implement programs that respond to vulnerability and need within communities. Your organization should map existing and desired human resources, taking account of the skill sets already available within the organization, whilst also identifying strategies of how these can be retained. The skills audit should also identify the required skills which are not available and explore ways to secure these skill sets in advancing the CSOs mission. This includes existing staff, members of your board and advisors, volunteers, as well as members of the community that you are working with. Individuals who live and work in a community are the human resources of that area, so, be curious, find out about people's talents, knowledge and passions and see if there are ways to bring these into your organization's work.[1]

Mobilized effectively, human resources are the most valuable resource of any organization. In addition to providing skills and services, individuals and groups can:

i. Provide consultation on what can work and what cannot;
ii. Offer support and commitment to a cause;
iii. Encourage the involvement of other organization's activities/projects;
iv. Support community fundraising efforts.

Volunteering is an important aspect of mobilisation for women's rights. When engaging support from volunteers make sure to define their roles clearly, acknowledge their work and capacity, and consider if they have needs such as around basic training, safety and security, transport, etc that your organisation could provide in order for volunteers to move safely and effectively contribute to your projects. You should aim to have some level of compensation – especially for all personnel that you engage within your organization.[2]

1 Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations and International Plant Protection Convention, (2017). IPPC Guide to resource mobilization: Promoting contracting party partnerships. https://www.ippc.int/static/media/files/irss/2017/10/24/10_IPPCGuideToResourceMobilization_W.pdf (Accessed 20 November 2022).
2 Ibid.

2. Social Resources

Various social resources are also important and available to support the effort of CSOs. Such resources include:

i.	Other social movements and community organisations
ii.	Supportive traditional authorities;
iii.	Youth associations;
iv.	Progressive religious organisations;
v.	Trade unions; and
vi.	Alumni associations

These various social groups can be mobilized effectively to support the CSOs work. Creating coalitions with external social organizations could result in sharing of physical, financial, and economic resources. It could also result in the identification of shared needs and joint application/strategy developed to access more resources, individually or as a coalition. In these times of intersectional practice and coalition-building initiatives, some donors are now seeing the benefit of resourcing cross sectoral work.[3]

3. Physical Resources

Physical resources range in type and are often sources at a local level. They include:



Water | Forests | Land | Good climate conditions, and | Technological and Mechanical tools

It is important to note that many communities will be facing increasing limitations and restrictions on their natural physical resources, and many communities do not yet have the infrastructure or economic wealth to overly rely on technological and mechanical resources. CSOs should be aware of the impact of their work on local physical resource supplies and make effort to assess the sustainability of their programmes if relying on physical resources. Economic and financial resources may be needed in order to strengthen, grow, or manage physical resources.

4. Economic and Financial Resources

Economic and financial resources should be mobilized from several sustainable sources using a wide range of mechanisms. Economic and financial resources can be mobilized from:

i.	International non-governmental organizations
ii.	(NGOs)
iii.	Bilateral and Multilateral Organisations (E.g.: The
iv.	World Bank, DFID, UN Agencies)
v.	National governments
vi.	Decentralized institutions
vii.	Private and philanthropic foundations
viii.	Corporate and academic institutions
ix.	Corporate sponsorships
x.	Subscriptions and Member donations

3 African Women's Development Fund (2017). A Practical Handbook on Techniques for Resource Mobilisation: For Community Based and Small Women's Rights Organisations in Africa https://documents.pub/document/a-practical-handbook-on-techniques-for-resource-.html?page=4 (Accessed 23 November 2022)

Overall, resource mobilization is more comprehensive than simply fundraising. Fundraising relies solely on financial and economic resources and does not factor in additional resources available at a local/community level.

Tips for Engaging Different Audiences:

i. Private individuals may respond better to the personal touch, one-to-one communication, personalized newsletters, and incentives.

ii. Government agencies may require a more formal written approach or to adhere to specific fund criteria.

iii. Small businesses or corporations may be more interested in a "business plan" or to show the added value of your project/ program.

iv. Members and Subscribers will want to see the benefit of their investment over time, including assets and incentives.

v. Philanthropic donors often draw from recommendations and existing relationships so maintain them and have champions who can speak on your behalf.

SECTION TWO:
Principles of Resource Mobilization



Resource mobilization is the process of identifying and obtaining resources for the organization. CSOs need both financial and non-financial resources.

When mobilizing resources to establish, manage or strengthen CSO work in any context, it is important to follow the following basic principles:

Principle One:
Resource mobilization should be anchored on a Strategic Plan

It is vital to note that resource mobilization should be preceded by the development of a strategic plan for the CSO. That way, the organization will have delineated its niche, value addition to the development sector and strategic priorities. The strategic priorities then inform the kind and quantum of resources needed to actualize the vision of the organization. Effective resource mobilization then stems from predefined commitments in changing an identified context of vulnerability or undesirability.

Principle Two:
Resource mobilization should align with existing normative obligations

The organization's strategic plan should plug into existing normative and policy commitments that a country or region has made. That way, the CSOs work will be complementary to the existing efforts such as Agenda 2063, human rights instruments, and Sustainable Development Goals. Such alignment will make it easy for would-be partners to locate the value that your organization will be adding. So, as you shall develop your strategic plans and subsequent resource mobilization plans, ask the question, what broader goal or obligation are we contributing to.?

Principle Three:
Institutional accountability systems are a precursor to partner confidence

One of the critical elements in resource mobilization is to make sure that your organization has the relevant systems and checks to be able to account for resources that are secured. Partners hesitate to invest resources where there are no checks and balances and where audits are not conducted. As a precursor, therefore, put systems in place which will demonstrate transparency on how the resources will be used and be acquitted for.

Principle Four:
Relationships with resource partners are fostered for mutual trust

As a strategy, work on establishing rapport and amicability with potential partners. This usually fosters mutual trust as the potential partners know you, your value systems, and what you are trying to achieve or solve with your organization. It is therefore encouraged to break the restrictions of formality by, for example, playing golf together, do lunch or tea or a beer. Such social gestures build a relationship that can be worthwhile both at your individual level as well as at your organizational level.

Principle Five:
Demonstrate Impact

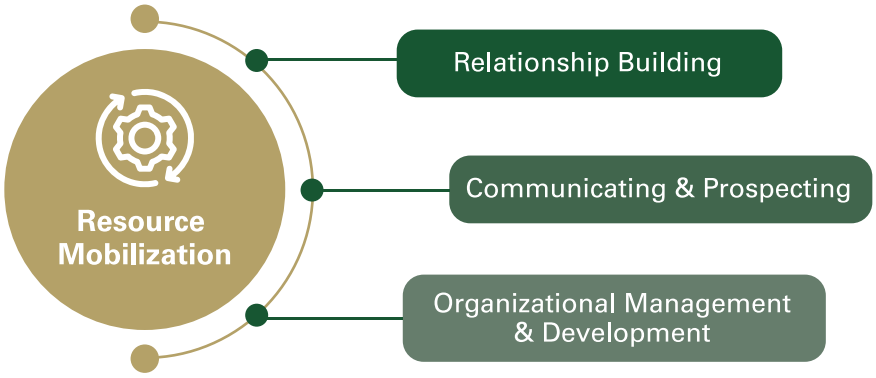
Generally, everyone wants to be associated with something that is flourishing, successful, and growing. So, from the current capacity you have, document it well to show the impact and the potential for up-scaling. This means that you have to invest in knowledge management and online presence so that the impact of your work is readily available. In some cases, it may be prudent to partner with the media so that they can help you in broadcasting the excellent work your organization does. Consider opening a YouTube Channel with quality content highlighting your organization. Get an intern to work on your organization's social media presence. The caution on social media presence is that your organizational footprint should be associated with valuable information and quality content. You should not be on social media for the sake of it or to post content that is not well prepared, with typos and poor photographs.

In summary, the five principles above are encapsulated in Figure 2 as building of sustainable relationships of trust, building systems within the organisation to inspire confidence, and communicating your ideas and ambitions to prospective resource partners.

Figure 2: Key tenets of resource mobilization

Resource Mobilization

3 Integrated Concepts in Resource Mobalization



SECTION THREE:
Resource Mobilization Process

Step One: Identify funding sources

There are many different types of potential resource partners that can be engaged with. From your initial analysis of potential partners, you should look to match mutual interests in areas where you require support and where a potential partner will also benefit from the end result[4]. To do this, you can use web searches, subscribe to fora where members include potential partners, join groups and networks, and engage other organizations who have been successful in their resource mobilization efforts to learn from them.

When undertaking Step One, it is important to consider the current resource environment, which can change frequently. This can include a potential partner's interests, the mode of funding or support, and the terms which may accompany a partnership agreement. With each type of partner, there will be different requirements and modalities.
The type of support a potential partner can offer will also vary. Apart from traditional financial resources, there are other kinds of support that may be beneficial to you. These can include in-kind contributions such as human resources (e.g., consultants, experts, interns, and volunteers), hosting meetings (e.g., venue, administrative support, and logistics) or provision of goods (e.g., printing of materials) or services (e.g., translation of documents).
Through the advancement of technological developments worldwide, there has been an intensification of in-kind resource contributions, as it is significantly easier to gain access to highly skilled human resources without ever needing to recruit, hire and relocate them to a specific location[5].

Step Two: Engage

When it comes to the engagement of potential partners, you should use every available opportunity to promote your organization and the project for which you are seeking resources. This should include approaching potential partners on a regular basis and being honest and transparent to build a good partnership foundation.

There are many aspects to consider when approaching a potential partner, to be sure that you communicate information in the most appropriate and appealing way. To do this, you should tailor your engagement with consideration of the below points:[6]

i.	Meet face-to-face as much as possible;
ii.	Have a mix of people (strategic, technical, negotiation) on your team to do 'the sell;'
iii.	Keep any documents clear and concise;
iv.	Develop interesting advocacy material;
v.	Use personal contact points as much as possible;

4 African Women's Development Fund (2017). A Practical Handbook on Techniques for Resource Mobilisation: For Community Based and Small Women's Rights Organisations in Africa https://documents.pub/document/a-practical-handbook-on-techniques-for-resource-.html?page=4 (Accessed 23 November 2022)
5 IPPC (2012) Resource Mobilization for the IPPC. International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). FAO, Rome, Italy. Accessible online at https://www.ippc.int/static/media/files/mediakit/IPPCResourceMobilization-en.pdf (Accessed 23 November 2022).
6 Ibid.

vi.	Ensure your information is correct and up to date;
vii.	Time your engagement with the potential partners' funding cycle;
viii.	Highlight past work successes to demonstrate competence;
ix.	Maintain communication and always follow up; and
x.	Use every opportunity to engage.

During the engagement of potential partners, it is always important to remember you are trying to sell yourselves to them. Therefore, you need to make sure your presentations, proposals, or concept notes are relevant to their interests.

Figure 3: Key steps to resource mobilization, (FAO 2015)



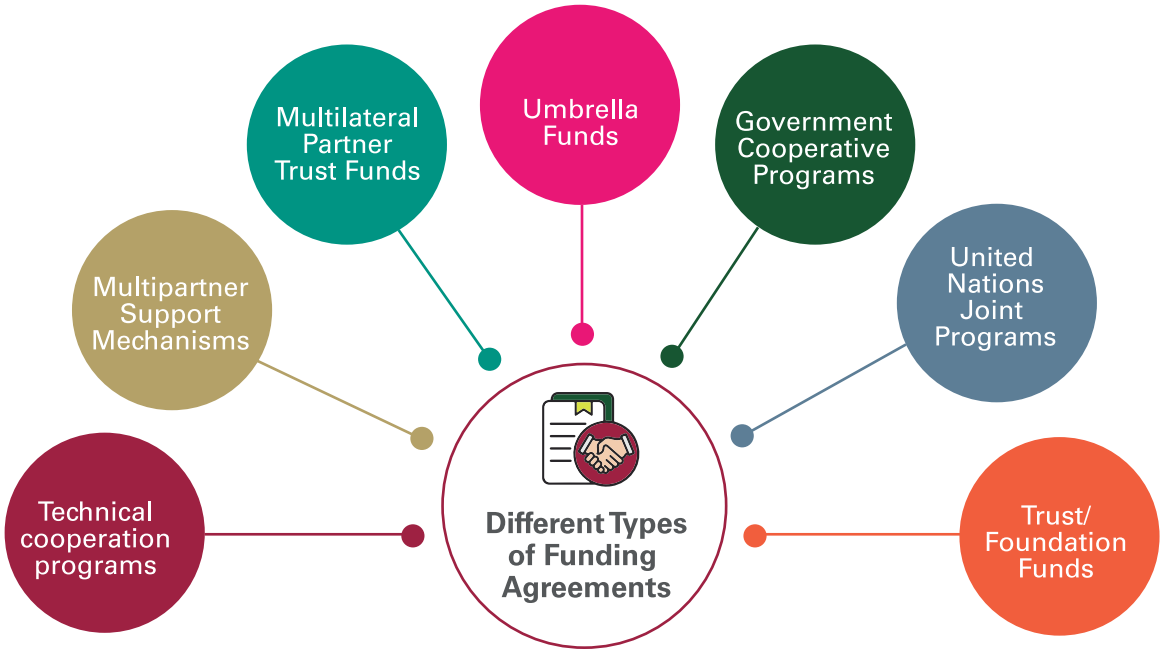
Step Three: Negotiate

Negotiation is perhaps the most complex step in resource mobilization; therefore, it is important you have the right people available on your team to undertake this role. This step occurs when you are finalizing the terms of your partnership, with the agreement the product of negotiations[7].

Often, a partnership will have a set of standard conditions to be met, including rules, procedures, and requirements for using the resources. Some of these may be open to negotiation and where possible your objective should be to keep the partnership and the resulting agreement as flexible (e.g., less-earmarked funds) as possible. This will allow for adaptability when small changes occur. However, if the circumstances around your agreement change too much, then it is likely an amendment will be necessary, which will be included as a clause in your agreement. The types of partnerships and agreements can vary, with examples of the latter represented in Figure 4.

7 African Women's Development Fund (2017). A Practical Handbook on Techniques for Resource Mobilisation: For Community Based and Small Women's Rights Organisations in Africa https://documents.pub/document/a-practical-handbook-on-techniques-for-resource-.html?page=4 (Accessed 23 November 2022)

Figure 4: Different Types of Funding Agreements



Once you have negotiated partnership conditions and drafted an agreement, you will need to ensure you obtain any necessary clearances before proceeding with finalization. Clearances may be internal within your organization or may require higher-level approval by a government department or official. How and from whom you must obtain your clearance will be specific to your country's or organisation's policies, constitution, or regulations . When your partnership is finalized it is important you record the signing of the agreement by taking photos, writing press releases, or having other types of media coverage.

Step Four: Manage and report

The appropriate management of a project or initiative for which you have gained support is very important to ensure effective and efficient implementation. Your first action in this step is to appropriately acknowledge your partner's contribution, which may be through writing a formal letter, press release, website article, at meetings, or using social media[8]. This ensures your partner has been recognized for their contribution and helps to maintain a positive partnership.

The management of your project or initiative throughout its duration may be formalized in your agreement and at a minimum will include requirements for a responsible officer to oversee the management of the project, reporting of work activities, and budget expenditure. This management is most effectively undertaken by closely following the project work plan and timeline as agreed in the project document.

The frequency and method of reporting should also be included in your agreement and are usually set for specific intervals in the project, e.g., inception, mid-term, and terminal report, or are at project milestones or some other frequency requested by your partner. Whichever way you report it is essential to comply with their requirements and submit updates on time to demonstrate you are effectively implementing the project.

8 FAO (2012) A guide to Resource Mobilization. Promoting partnerships with FAO. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Accessible online at http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/i2699e/i2699e00.pdf (Accessed 22 November 2022)

Step Five: Communicate results

To communicate the results of your project you should have communication planned at the beginning of your partnership. This communication can be done internally or by an external professional, which is dependent on what expertise you have available to you. Your messages should be appropriate for your audiences, which may result in developing multiple products to achieve this[9].

Project results can be used to advocate what you have achieved and the value of the work you do, in conjunction with your resource partner. The use of brochures and factsheets is an effective way to do this, as well as delivering presentations at conferences and relevant committee meetings. How you choose to communicate is up to your country/organization, but at a minimum should acknowledge your partner, key results, lessons learned, and opportunities for future work. It is for this reason that the promotion of a successful project is so beneficial, as it demonstrates to your partner and other potential partners that you are worth investing in and can add value to their reputation through association[10]. This provides a strong base to advocate for further support to continue your partnership.

Finally, as with highlighting the beginning of a project, it is important to publicize the completion of the project. The most effective way to do this is through a press release.

SECTION FOUR:
Resource Mobilization Mechanisms

Resource mobilization is the process of obtaining resources from resource providers. The actual processes of requesting or receiving resources, such as writing proposals, holding a fundraising event, selling services, or meeting in person, are referred to as mechanisms.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can broaden their understanding of resource mobilization and diversify their approaches beyond writing proposals by identifying various resource mobilization mechanisms. Which resource mobilization mechanisms are feasible depends heavily on the context.

a. Submission of a Resource Proposal

Proposals for resource acquisition are not one-time tasks that are done when the resource base is depleted. Instead, there is a need to prepare shelf projects in accordance with the strategic plan document direction and focus areas.

The resource proposal can be written in two ways:

i. Full proposal or
ii. Concept note.

b. Foundations

Private charitable foundations have had a significant impact on the funding of non-profit organizations. They have not only met existing social needs, but they have also helped to define problems and their solutions.

As a foundation relations fundraiser, your efforts will be directed toward matching your non-profit organization's specific financial needs with foundations that are likely to be interested in funding those needs. You will be the point person in your organization responsible for managing relationships with foundations that are potential sources of support.

9 Ibid.
10 Ibid.

c. Special events

Special events are fundraising activities that bring prospective donors into the environment of your organization. One of the most time-consuming types of fundraising is holding a special event. There are numerous details that must be addressed, the majority of which you have not even considered. Let's say you're throwing a dinner party. What are your plans for guests with dietary restrictions? You might require one.

Special events include galas, parties, open houses, art exhibits, grand openings, and celebrity appearances. In general, special events serve two primary functions:

i. **Publicity.** Special events are an excellent way to energize your supporters. They can elicit significant gifts and, if executed properly, can leave attendees with a favourable impression of your organization.

ii. **Raising funds.** Special events can generate revenue for your organization. Unless your special events inspire major donors to make large contributions, they are unlikely to be a major source of fundraising.

d. Social Networking

Resource mobilization via social networking is primarily focused on sending correspondence to prospective donors over the course of a year, and social networking can be a great tool for easily (and inexpensively) sending out resource mobilization/fundraising solicitations. If you have 2,500 social media friends, the social networking sites will allow you to send mass messages with just a few clicks. If you use social media to send annual fund solicitations, you must have a payment channel that allows you to accept online donations.

e. Web Fundraising

In comparison to other methods of fundraising, web fundraising is still growing. Before venturing into the web, you should probably start with the tried-and-tested methods of resource mobilization.
However, new services, networking sites, and technological advancements are appearing on a daily basis, indicating that the web will eventually be as important in resource mobilization work as traditional communication.

f. Unsolicited contributions

People who know the organization or are visiting for another reason may be interested in donating resources. The organization should encourage resource providers to contribute in an uncomplicated manner.

g. Activities that generate income

Diversifying income sources so that a program is less reliant on a small number of sources is the single most important strategy for financial sustainability. Nowadays, it is not uncommon to find that the majority of non-profit organizations derive the majority of their revenue from assets. Construction of multipurpose buildings for rent is one possible income generation strategy. As a result, acquiring land is a challenging task. To persuade funders to secure land for construction, the organization should develop a compelling proposal.

If done correctly, shareholding is another profitable investment option. Selling products and services in areas where the organization has a center of excellence can result in a significant profit.

h. E-Mail Solicitations

Although email is a good way to communicate with potential donors, it should not be your primary mode of communication. The reason for this is simple: most bulk e-mail is never read. A mass e-mail sent to your donor list will be read 20 to 30% of the time.

SECTION FIVE:
Building Effective Partnerships

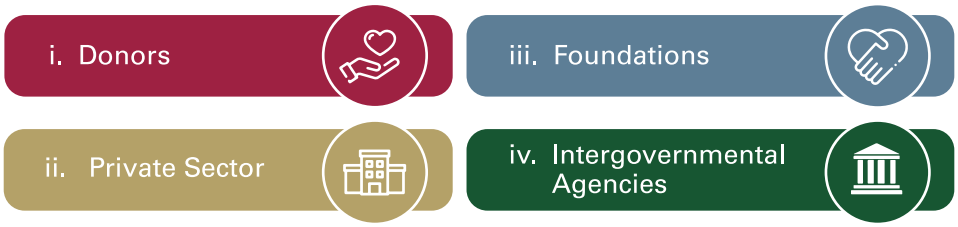
The sustainability of African CSOs is also anchored on partnerships. It is therefore critical to have a deliberate partnership strategy that accommodates uncommon partnerships since most of the issues that are being dealt with are multi-faceted therefore requiring many unusual partnerships. Linked with this issue of partnerships, is the need to ensure that the CSOs have systems in place to be able to account for the resources allocated.

Audits have to be conducted regularly, to prove that there is accountability on the use of resources. When potential partners see that the systems are in place and are followed, it will create confidence. The investment by partners may start small, you should not be discouraged. Make sure that you exercise utmost diligence in accounting for the small grant as that shall be a window for bigger grants.

If an organization has a number of partners giving small grants, it fosters confidence in a potential partner who may want to invest more. The quality of the partnerships which an institution has directly influenced its sustainability. As such, there are four typologies of partnerships that will need to be fostered:

1. Potential funders

The following are the key categories of potential funding partnerships:



2. Developing and maintaining good resource partner relationships

Approaching potential resource partners

It is important that you take the time and make the effort to find out everything you can about your potential resource partner before you make the first approach to them. It conveys the professionalism you will bring to your dealings with the donor.

Some questions to consider are:

i. Have they funded your organization before; if so, when, and why?

ii. Does anyone within your organization have a special relationship with this donor/inside knowledge?

iii. If this is a new donor – which organizations, do they fund and for which projects?

Often you can find information about who is funding the 'competition' in their annual reports, on their website and in their promotional literature, in fact anywhere where they are acknowledging donors.

As discussed earlier, certain types of partners have different application procedures, co-funding, and reporting requirements and will operate in a variety of ways: they will therefore require different approaches. Both bilateral and multilateral organizations often have two-stage application processes, and they usually require a concept note or Letter of Inquiry to be submitted so that they can determine whether they want a full more detailed project application from you.

Ideally, it is good to phone them and discuss your idea and get feedback before you send the concept or Letter of Inquiry to them. It can prove difficult to speak to them directly, but the time and effort spent on researching the organization and the contact people you need to deal with through the application process usually pays dividends.

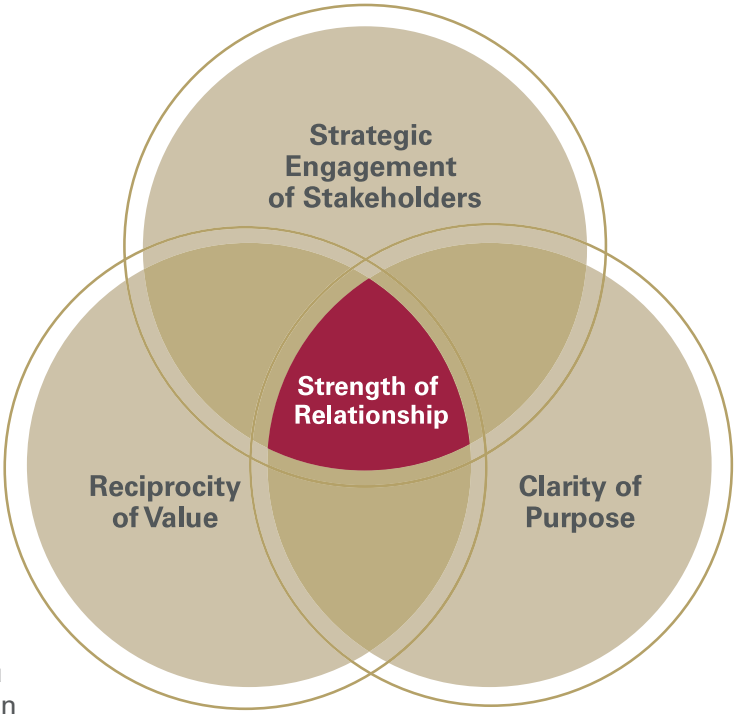


Figure 5: Components of a healthy partnership

If you plan to call them, it is critical to determine whom you need to speak to within the organization-this can be a maze, and you need to speak to the right person to ensure you get accurate guidance.

i. It is also important to determine if your organization or other organizations have enjoyed any success in securing funds for the type of project you plan to submit.

ii. If this is the case, then it is smart to look at past funding applications (if recent and the criteria have not changed) to get a feel for what is expected.

3. Resource partner Research and Mapping

International funding partners

Doing a Web search for each of the donors in your country or region is easy these days, but the list takes time to compile. Moreover, changes in funding priorities are not always reflected on the donor's website in a timely manner. Donors may also have their own specific funding policies which do not quite fit with your needs.

One effective way of tapping international donors might be to participate in donor roundtables for NGOs in your country where you will be able to hear donors speak about their own current funding interests and be able to interact with them personally. (Of course, going there means you need to be prepared to present your own cause clearly – refer to your organization strategic plan document).

You may also like to explore the relatively smaller funding available out of the development counsellor's budgets in the respective Embassies. These are usually easier to tap straightforward funding such as training courses, conferences, or seminars.

National/Local Government

Special government offices such as HIV/AIDS secretariats may have national or local plans for supporting networks or may target certain groups. Other parts of government, for example, the Ministry of Health may also have programmes that could be potentially tapped by your organization. The Ministry of Education would be interested in the area of adult education and new ways of delivering education on HIV/AIDS.

Private Foundations

Identify the key private foundations and philanthropic organizations in your own country and local community but there are bound to be many smaller ones that are not very high profile and deserve to be explored. As local businesses thrive, their owners are giving more back to society. You need to research who they are and match their goals with yours.

Corporate Partners

The business community may be closely linked with the private foundations and philanthropic organizations as they may be the ones to set up those private foundations (Microsoft, Gates, or Hewlett Foundations, etc.) Apart from their philanthropic arms, corporations, especially those with global outreach, very often have projects which may pose as good potential for their campaign. Companies that are actively engaged in corporate social responsibility may also be good potential partners or contributors.

Individuals

Individuals with the capacity as well as care and concern for your cause would be great allies. Try and identify community or business leaders who could be your spokespersons or champions. Other individuals from the community may also work for your campaign as long as they understand and share your vision and mission. Contact them by phone and talk through the idea with them – this can provide you with valuable feedback and can also save you time.

In some cases, they may tell you that they are not interested in the project that you were planning to submit but they may be interested in something else. You will also find out if their guidelines have recently changed and may be able to determine when the next trustee meeting will be held and similar nuggets of information. It is also your chance to make a good impression on them and inform them about your organization and the great work that it is doing, over and above the project you are seeking funding for.

Arrange a meeting to discuss the project – if you have time and it is feasible for both of you, this is an excellent way of presenting your organization and your project. It does not guarantee that your project will get funded and can be daunting, but it is well worth the effort, because it will provide you with the opportunity to start a dialogue with the donor about what they are looking for and start building a relationship.

But note their guidelines! If they do not want to be contacted by phone – do not phone them! Some trusts and foundations make it clear that they do not want to meet applicants, nor do they make a phone number available, so there is no chance of building a personal relationship. This can be frustrating, but your only course of action is to write a clear letter of introduction and a project concept (or whatever they specify in their application guidelines) and request that they contact you.

Some trusts and foundations say that they will not accept unsolicited applications; in most cases they really mean this and any application you send will end up in the bin. However, for some it just means that they will not accept full applications but that a Letter of Inquiry or a phone call would be acceptable.

SECTION SIX:
Appendices

1. Resource Mobilization Action Plan Template

The following template may be useful in operationalizing a resource mobilization strategy in support of the relevant programming frameworks.

Practical Steps	Activities	Responsible	Time Frame
Identify	• Develop a country, regional, sub-regional matrix of resource partners, mapping their interests to your strategic framework, and regional priority areas of action. • Use tools for identifying resource partners or local knowledge. • Ensure each resource partner listed is an acceptable resource source. It will be important to cross reference any adverse listing of the potential funder.		
Engage	• Develop or review concept notes and project/programme proposals to ensure they are in line with your relevant programming frameworks. • Refine the resource partner matrix, matched to specific concept notes/ proposals • Develop a communication plan detailing how each resource partner identified will be engaged. • Make sure all communications are in line with the organization's communication guidelines • Develop promotional materials and update website to communicate key priority programmes and projects. • Engage resource partners through field visits/workshops/meetings.		
Negotiate	• Liaise closely with relevant donor liaison officers to ensure the resource partner is an acceptable source and their rules and regulations are compatible with yours. • Review and use standard MOU agreement where relevant.		
Manage and report	• Ensure reporting is conducted in a timely fashion, both via your internal mechanisms and as agreed with the resource partner.		
Communicate results	• Develop project highlight sheets to widely communicate the success of programmes and projects. • Set up regular communication channels with resource partners e.g., newsletters, emails, field visits, etc. to foster relationships and build trust.		

Institutionalize resource mobilization as a key function	• Assign donor focal points within the office team, if possible. • Strengthen a team approach to resource mobilization by having regular meetings, information sharing, updating knowledge through training and developing contacts with local expert consultants. • Integrate resource mobilization activities into the office's work plan.		
Reflect on lessons learnt in resource mobilization	• Monitor programme and project budgets vs funding approvals to keep track of meeting the resource mobilization target. • Refocus efforts, where needed, through further outreach to resource partners.		

2. Resource Partner Matrix Template

Partner Agency	Sectors relating to our mandate	Period of current funding/ country strategy	Programmes/ Projects funded in the last .... years	Total contributions in the past .... years	Potential for future cooperation/ lessons learned	Potential volume of resources to be mobilized	Deadlime for submission	Any other comments	Contact at partner agency and focal point
Existing or potential partner	List the partners' stated priorities to your mandate	e.g, 2023 - 2025	List projects, as reflected by their symbol in your systems.	Add up total contribution to your organization	List any issues which are relevant for future cooperation	Estimate potential resource mobilized from partners	Does the partner require that proposals be submitted at a certain time?	Make notes that may require follow up action	Email of contact at partner agency
Government **1.** **2.**									
NGO **1.** **2.**									

Donors/ International Agencies 1. 2.									
Communities /CBOs 1. 2.									
UN System 1. 2.									

3. Resource Mobilization Strategy Analysis

Resource Mobilization Strategy	Vulnerability	Sensitivity	Criticality	Consistency	Autonomy	Compatibilty	Rank
S1							
S2							
S3							
S4							
S5							
S6							
1 = Not at all		2 = Somewhat		3 = Significantly		4 = Highly Significantly	

4. Donor Relations Audit Matrix

Evaluation Methods	Actions
Document Review	Gather information from pre-existing materials
Observation	Gather information on how the donor management framework operates and document visual changes that have resulted
Survey	Get information from individual donors about their knowledge, attitude, and behaviour towards the organization and its cause.
Interview	Obtain information from individual donors and supporters about their experience or to learn more about their answers to surveys.
Focus group discussions	Hold discussions with groups of people to understand in depth what they believe is their relationship with the organization and how they see the relationship going.

5. Resource/Goods received note/Receipt

Name and address of implementing agency: .....

Receiving officials of implementing agency: .....

Date: .....

Name of resource providers: .....

Date of supply	Description	Quantity	Unit Price	Total Value
Total				

6. Goods recieved have been certified as correct receipts

Name of receiving officer..... Signature..... Date.....

Certified by..... Signature..... Date.....

7. Procurement Plan for Goods (Equipment, Materials, Drugs and Supplies) [11]

Ref. No	Description of goods	Date when needed	Quantity required	Estimated cost	Procurement method

8. Procurement Plan for Services (Individuals, NGOs, Firms)

Ref. No	Description of services	Duration of service	Service provider (Individual, NGO, Firm)	Estimated cost	Procurement/Selection method

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9. Writing a Winning Proposal

Proposal development is part of an overall resource mobilization strategy, and is linked with all the other elements of financial sustainability planning. As such, remember to:

i. Know your organization (SWOT, track record, accountability).
ii. Engage in strategic planning (mission and vision).
iii. Develop a resource mobilization strategy.
iv. If your organization's strategy includes targeting donors: understand your donors (what kind of agency? what person? goals?)
v. Develop a proposal.
vi. Sell your proposal to donors.
vii. Follow up with donors.

Phase 1

Before Writing, Plan Your Project Proposal

It is very important to take the time to think out ideas BEFORE writing out the whole proposal. This could entail discussing the overall objective of the proposal with relevant team members, then developing an outline. The important part is you think through the following elements first:

Define Your Project Goal and Objectives

Ask yourself the following questions:

i. What do you want to achieve (your ends)?
ii. How do you want to achieve it (your means)?
iii. Who are the main beneficiaries?

Projects need two kinds of objectives: a general objective, and a specific objective. A general objective is usually not measurable. Organizations or projects cannot achieve general objectives, only contribute towards it. A general objective should be compatible with your organization's mission, and that of the donor, and is usually longer to achieve than specific objectives.

A specific objective is more operational — on what you will accomplish. The more specific the objectives are, the easier it is to design a process for achieving them. Specific objectives are measurable, and can be the basis for evaluation; are comprehensive; need to be feasible in time frame and scope of project; and should contribute to the general objective.

Developing Your Arguments

The next stage is to start developing your 'arguments' or case. Consider these questions, and back up your points. Use evidence, and cite sources and previous studies (including your own).

i. What is the main need this project is trying to address?
ii. What is the potential impact of this project? Who will benefit and how?
iii. What does this project bring or add to the community?
iv. What is new, innovative, and creative about this project?
v. What do your organization and staff bring to the project?

Think About the Process

Think about the process: the why, for whom, what, where, when, how, and who questions. These questions draw out more details on the project.

i.	What will you do? (activities)
ii.	Where? (general and specific)
iii.	How? (methods)
iv.	Who will be involved?
v.	What outputs will there be?
vi.	When will activities and outputs happen?
vii.	How will progress be monitored and evaluated?
viii.	What resources are needed? (financial, human)

The clearer you are on who you are, who you are writing for, and what you want to achieve, the better the proposal will be — more coherent, logical, appropriate, and successful. Remember, thinking through is the hardest part, and the most demanding. Commit time to it. Writing it down is actually the easier part if your ideas are clear!

Phase 2

Writing a Winning Proposal

Writing a proposal depends on the format of donor. Generally, a proposal contains the following elements:

Cover Letter

Introduces the proposal and establishes rapport between the grant applicant and the funding agency staff. The cover letter should:

i.	State why you are approaching this funder.
ii.	Mention any prior discussion of the proposal.
iii.	Describe the contents of the proposal package.
iv.	Briefly explain the project.
v.	Offer opportunity to set up a meeting and to provide additional information.
vi.	Provide the name of the specific contact person within your organization responsible for the grant application, and contact information of your organization.

Executive Summary

This is a one-pager that sums up the key points in your proposal. It is designed to be quickly read and absorbed, and sets the tone for what the proposal reviewer can expect to find in the body of the proposal. It covers the short version of:

i.	What the key problem is and its context.
ii.	What your organization plans to do to address problem; this can include objectives.
iii.	Why this is important.
iv.	Who will benefit, and how.
v.	Project duration.

Background/Rationale

This section should answer the following questions:

i.	What is the problem/need/research issue you are trying to address?
ii.	What is the nature of the problem confronting the target or service community area?
iii.	How will your project build on work previously done or add value
iv.	How does this project fit into the grant making agency priorities as well as your own organization? Make these linkages here.

Do not focus only on the problem, but point to the potential opportunities and possibilities (solution) to address the problem that will lay the foundation for your objectives. Most donors now request multidisciplinary projects; try to consider the problem through an integrated and interdisciplinary lens. Do not assume that the reader is familiar with the issues or the geographical area. Be clear and concise — this cannot be emphasized enough.

Objectives

Well written objectives should clarify for the donor what your main strategy is:

i.	State what you expect the project to achieve.
ii.	Describe the beneficiaries or recipients of the proposal.
iii.	Describe potential impact.

Process Description: Activities and Methods

This section should detail how you will accomplish the objectives and should be presented in sequential form with a clear link of activities with objectives. This details the nuts and bolts of the project proposal. It should have the following subsections:

i.	Methods.
ii.	Activities.
iii.	Staffing/administration.
iv.	Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) procedures.
v.	Impact and output.

This section should discuss dissemination strategies (target groups, multiple audiences at multiple levels and the different strategies and methods to reach these groups). It should describe the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) strategies; define the meaning of evaluation (external, participatory); and detail how the monitoring process will be conducted.

Management Description

This is comprised of three elements:

i.	Organization: information on your organization, brief history, relevance of proposal to priorities/mission, technical expertise to show capacity to manage project, programs and services offered to audiences or communities served.
ii.	Project team: who they are; their roles and responsibilities, and why this team is appropriate for the project.
iii.	Managing risk: institutional risks include organizational capacity to manage project, technical competency, and fiscal skills; other risks that can be addressed in the description of the organization are political, security and social risks.

Be honest even though it can be a challenge to be transparent and identify risks. It generally is better to identify the risk, but emphasize how your project is addressing (and will overcome) them, or what alternative arrangements will be made if you cannot adequately address the risks.

Impact

Consider what impact the project could have:

i. Think at multiple levels.
ii. Direct and indirect impact.
iii. Potential to influence policy.
iv. How will results be scaled up and out.

Budget

Be realistic and upfront. Make sure the size of the request is possible for the donor. Show other contributions from your own organization and other donors. Essentially, this section should contain:

i. Budget categories.
ii. Detailed budget notes.
iii. Organization contribution.
iv. Other donors' contributions.

Present the financial blueprint of the entire project. The budget should cover all operational and administrative expenses (personnel and non-personnel items) associated with the implementation of the project.

Conclusion

The conclusion should answer the following questions:

i. Why the project is necessary and important.
ii. Why your organization is the right one to implement the project.
iii. Why the donor should consider the proposal.
iv. What could be achieved?

This section summarizes the proposal's main points, reiterates what your organization wants to do and why it is important, and underscores why the organization needs funding to accomplish it. Draw arguments together, but do not be repetitive.

Appendices

Additional information like the following can go in appendices:

i. Bibliography, references.
ii. Detailed explanations on points from earlier sections.
iii. Use of planning tools such as the Logical Framework Approach or other formats specific to donors.
iv. Organization reports and information.

Writing Trips



Differentiate between content (the ideas) and style (presenting the ideas). Do not lose your ideas in poor style! Also, remember not to make your proposal too long. If the grant making institution has not specified a limit to the number of pages, 10-15 pages are fine. However, follow instructions if they do specify the maximum number of pages.

Some writing/layout tips:

- simple, jargon free
- active voice
- spell check please!
- revise, rewrite, revise, rewrite....
- consistency
- ease of reading (numbering, headings etc.)
- white space
- readable font

Have at least two other people proofread the proposal.

Do's and Don'ts in Proposal Writing[12]





DON'T expect to write and get a proposal funded in one week.	DO give time for planning, feedback, and revision of the proposal.
DON'T be over ambitious: " Global Warming will be eradicated by the end of this one-year project!"	DO be realistic. What is achievable — in the timeframe?
DON'T send so much documentation that 'your reader gives up.	DO be concise and easy to read. Keep it simple and as short as appropriate.
DON'T pad your budgets or try to hide information. DON'T Be vague: This project will help women get on the internet.	DO be specific, show detail, and show that you know who else is working in the field.
DON'T go overboard on emotion.	DO show that you care about the work but use arguments to substantiate statements (pitch the tone correctly).
DON'T be shy to show your proposal to others.	DO send drafts to colleagues, get feedback from peers.
DON'T take a one-size fits all approach.	DO tailor and target your proposals according to donor's requirements and preferences.

12 Resource Mobilization- A Practical Guide for Research and Community-Based Organizations

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