BECOMING LOCALLY LED AS AN ANTI-RACIST PRACTICE: A GUIDE TO SUPPORT INGOs
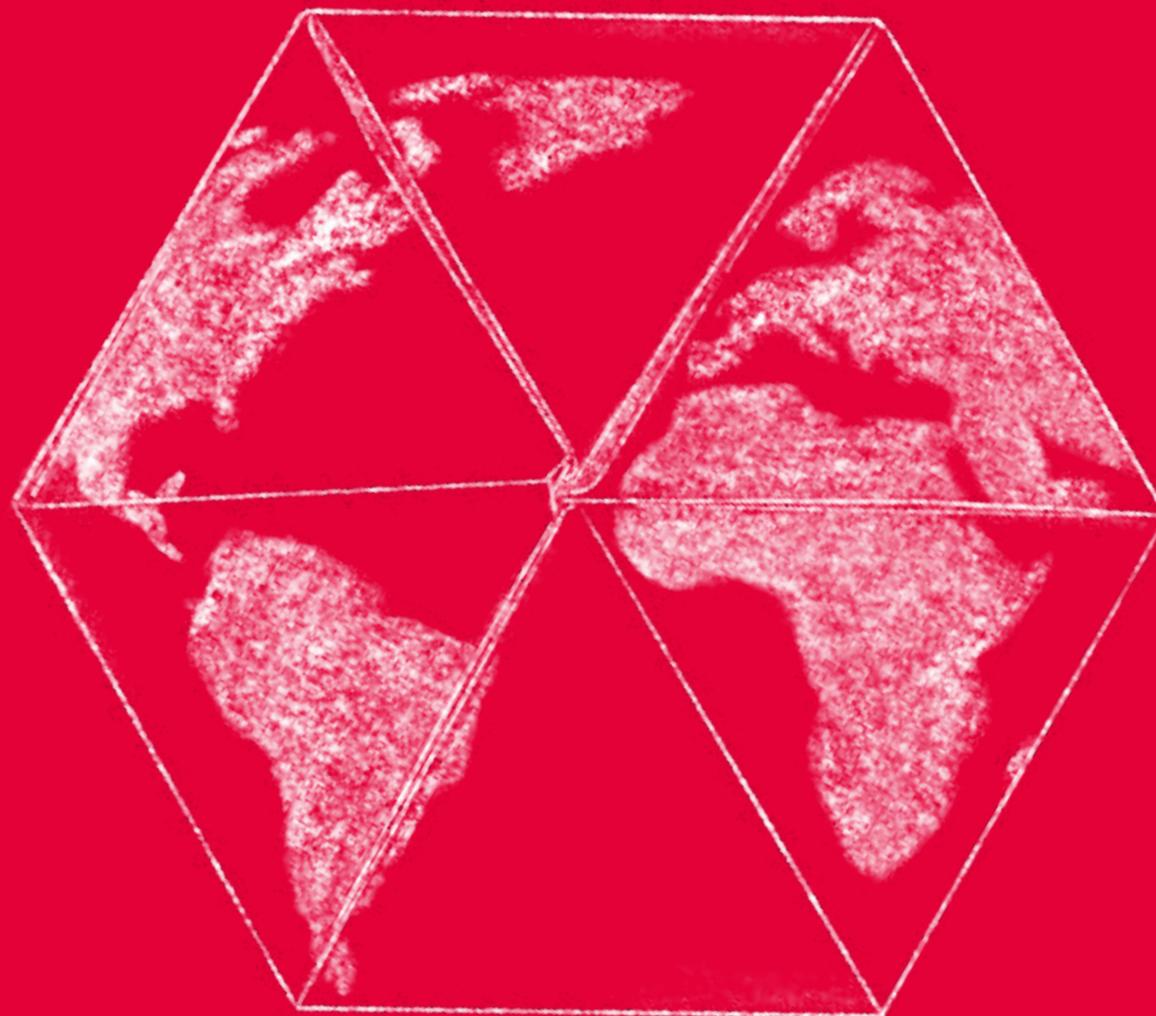
Version 1.0

Contents

Acknowledgements

About Bond

Bond is the UK network for organisations working in international development. We unite and support a diverse network of over 400 civil society organisations to help eradicate global poverty, inequality and injustice.

Glossary

At Bond, we are acutely aware of the power of language, and we believe that language should not be influenced by nor validate existing power structures.[1] During the development of this guide, we have debated the terms to use, and are aware that the terms we are using now are not sufficient - possibly imperfect - and will require more reflections and discussions. This glossary spells out the key terms used and our rationales.

Anti-racism: is defined as the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life.[2] (Source: Race Reporting Guide 2015)

Decolonisation: The action or process of a state withdrawing from a former colony, leaving it independent. Processes of decolonisation understand that colonisation is more than just a physical project – it has cultural and psychological components which determine whose knowledge is privileged. Decolonisation involves seeking restorative justice through cultural, psychological and economic freedom. Decolonisation is the process of deconstructing colonial ideologies regarding the superiority and privilege of Western thought and approaches.[3]

Locally led development: An approach to development to ensure that initiatives are owned and led by people in their own context. Local actors operate on a range of levels – community, subnational and national. The definition of local actors encompass a wide range of groups, including national civil society organisations or groups and local governments - more definitions of "local" can be found in the ODI report.[4] The concept of locally led development cannot be reduced to nationality or geographical location.[5]

Community-led development: An approach to development that puts the people most affected by development or humanitarian work in the lead. This approach ensures diverse representation in planning and decision-making, mobilises the community's own resources and uses feedback to improve the programme. Community refers to "those most affected by the work[6]".

Another definition of community-led development is a development approach in which "local community members work together to identify goals that are important to them, develop and implement plans to achieve those goals, and create collaborative relationships internally and with external actors - all while building on community strengths and local leadership"[7]. This concept is also referred to as "community-driven systems change" by Firelight Foundation[8] (a multi-donor public charity fund), which describes this as an approach to development that emphasises insight, leadership, and ownership at local/community level, in order to create lasting change in the system.

In Bond's report, Catalysing locally led development in the UK aid system[9], published in July 2021, the terms 'locally led development' and 'community-led development' have been used largely interchangeably to refer to the overall approach that prioritises the participation of people and their communities in their own development decisions.

This approach is underpinned by the belief that each person has a right to voice their opinions on decisions that affect their life throughout the creation and realisation of local goals. Similarly, in Bond´s Racism, Power and Truth[10] report, organisations are invited to reflect on their colonial roots of the international development and humanitarian system, which continues to insidiously perpetuate racism in the UK and beyond.

1. https://www.bond.org.uk/sites/default/files/resource-documents/bond_language_guide_v2.pdf
2. https://www.bond.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/bond_racism_power_and_truth.pdf
3. https://www.bond.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/bond_racism_power_and_truth.pdf
4. https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/ODI-SH-Localisation-Report-Oct21-Proof06.pdf, p.2
5. https://www.peacedirect.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/PD-Policy-Position-Defining-local.pdf

6. https://www.globalgiving.org/learn/community-led-philanthropy
7. Defining Community-led Development – The Movement for Community-led Development (mcld.org)
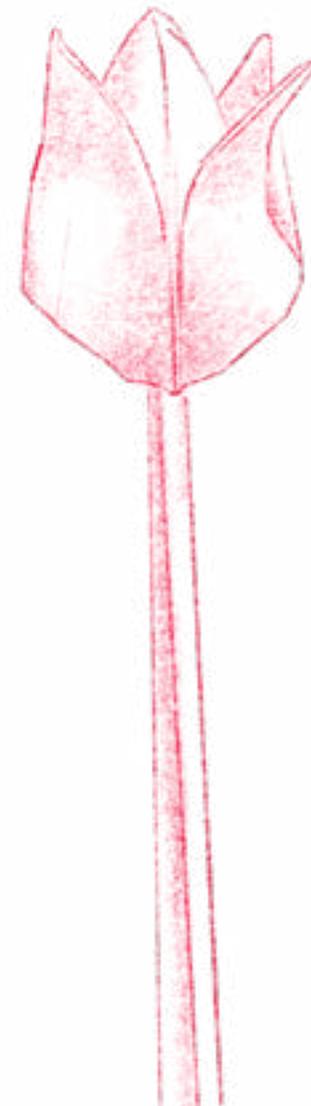8. Firelight Foundation, Community Driven Systems Change
9. https://globalfundcommunityfoundations.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/CatalysingLocallyLedDevelopment_BOND.pdf
10. Racism, Power and Truth - Bond

Since the publication of the report, discussions have evolved which have highlighted the nuances between these two terms which should not be conflated. This guide acknowledges the distinction between these two terms. For instance, locally led development implies that a wider range of stakeholders, beyond the communities, are involved - notably national civil society organisations. It is recognised that for INGOs to serve the needs and agenda of target communities, and for power to be shifted to those communities, national civil society must be strengthened to respond to their needs. Often, local and national Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are the counterparts of international non-governmental organisations (INGOs).

The term locally led development also responds directly to the localisation agenda, which bilateral and multilateral donors have officially committed to. However, locally led development as a term also has limitations, including implying a reductionist understanding of who is local, and not addressing the systemic legacies of colonialism.[11] We also understand that the term "local" may, in how it is used in the INGO sector, carry negative connotations, such as "less than" or "less valuable". We acknowledge these limitations and hope that this guide will serve as a starting point for new terms and languages to emerge and definitions to become refined and shared.

11. https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/opinion/2022/2/8/Localisation-lip-service-fixing-aid-colonial-legacy

Introduction

This draft guide has been developed in response to the growing demand from the international development sector, in the UK particularly, to ensure that organisations change how they work, make decisions, and are structured and governed to become more locally led and anti-racist.

This is within the wider context of the urgent need to address systemic issues of racism, decolonise the international development and humanitarian assistance sector, and reimagine the role of International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs). The guide is designed to provide organisations with practical advice on the nature and scope of the organisational change needed to achieve these aims.

It should be noted that this is a first draft of the guide. This version will go through a couple of iterations based on feedback and learnings from organisations piloting the guide. This draft guide has been developed based on a round of consultations and meetings between UK INGOs and their member or partner organisations in the countries we work in.
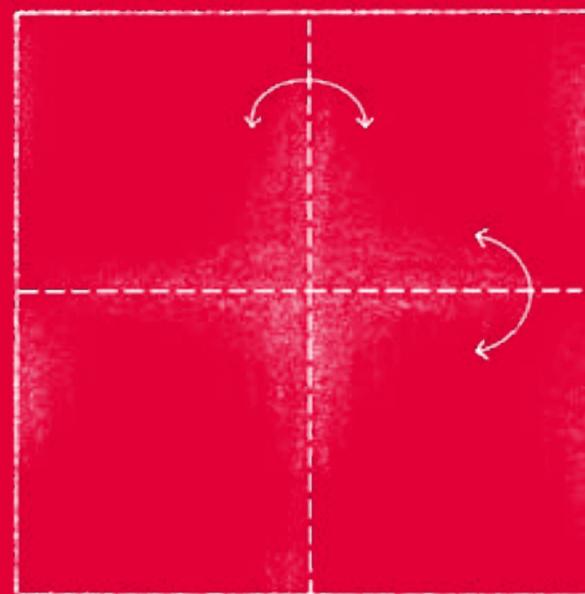
We recognise the need for local and national counterparts to be included when defining categories or phrases, as well as the importance of ensuring this guide reflects the needs of the people we work with. We also recognise that INGOs need to take action today and own the responsibility to change.
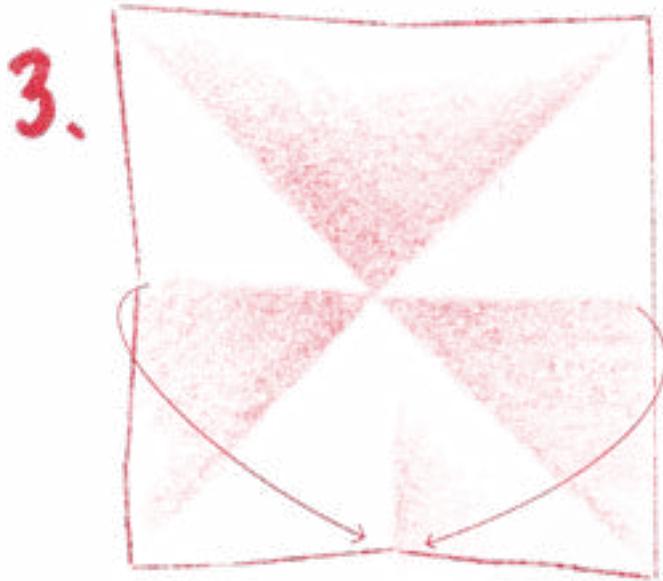
This guide is a work in progress and the next steps are to prioritise meaningful engagement with national and local organisations, ascertaining priorities of shifting to locally led development, identifying parameters that are important to these organisations and refining the guide accordingly. We will be paying particular attention to co-creating a common vision of the role of INGOs and what it means to be "locally led". We will also work to identify practical shifts made by organisations that have been successful in transitioning them towards becoming more locally led.

We understand this work as a contribution to decolonising the sector and to help achieve this it is important that the guide be approached through an anti-racist, feminist lens.
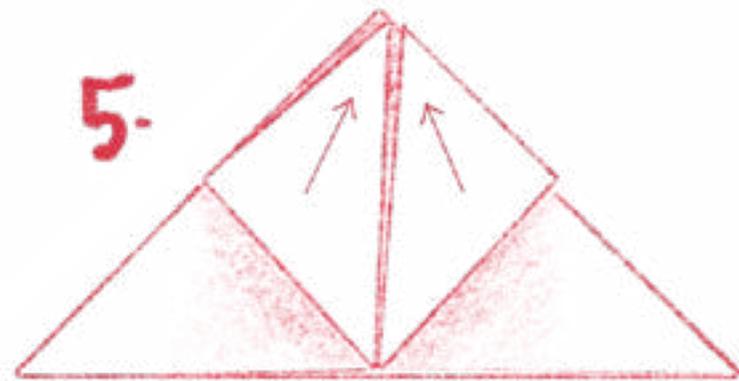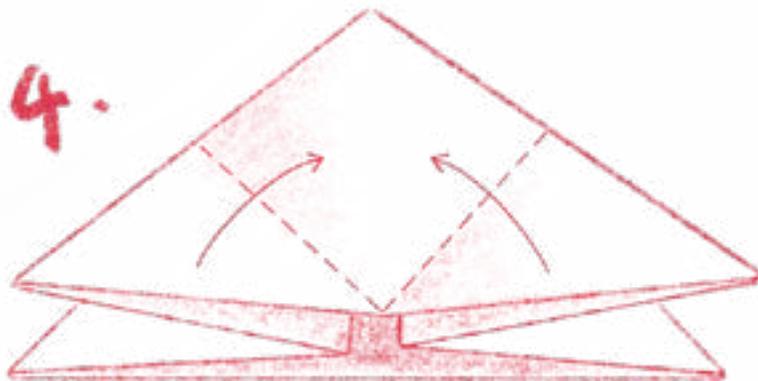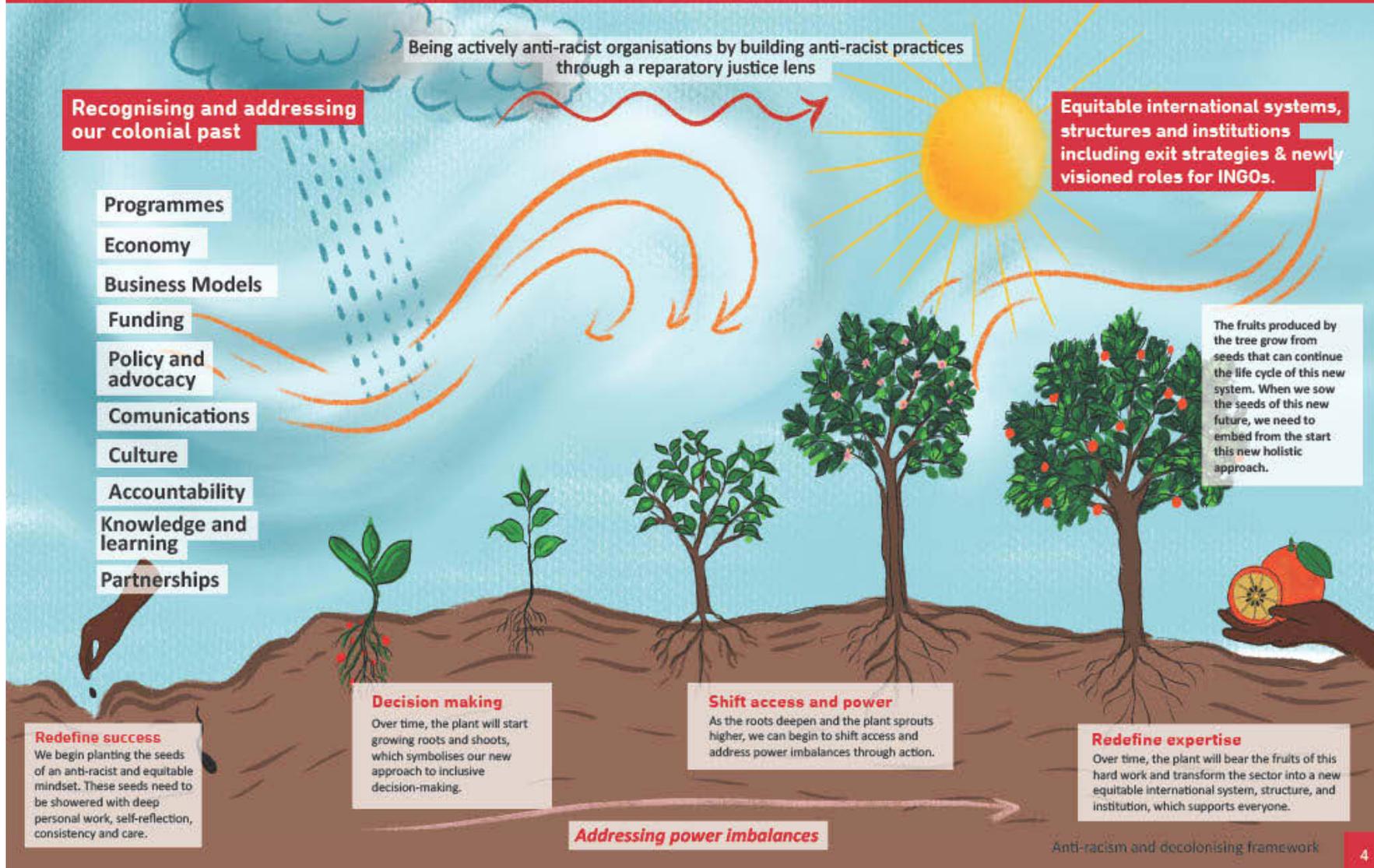
Figure 1: An illustration from "Anti-racism and Decolonising: A framework for organisations" Bond, 2022

What do we mean by locally led?

The locally led development paradigm used in this guide is based on Peace Direct's definition, as shown in Figure 1 opposite.

Commitment from INGOs towards locally led development must go beyond technocratic solutions to ensure organisations reflect on what needs to happen to challenge colonialist, sexist and racist behaviours and practices that still dominate the international development system, as well as reflect on how INGOs have benefited from the "aid" system.
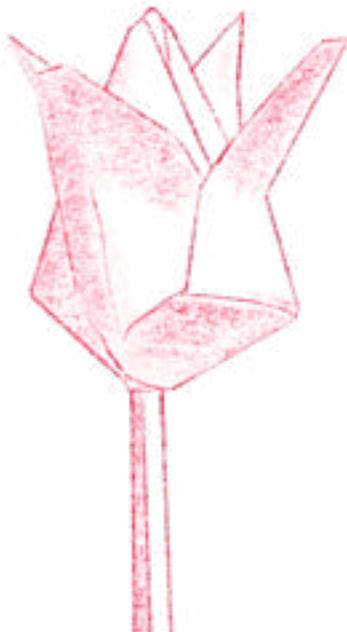
Defining locally led development (adapted from Peace Direct's definition)

Locally led development refers to initiatives owned and led by people in their own context. It is not based solely on geographical context.

Locally led and owned

Locally managed

Locally implemented

Where local people and groups design the approach, set priorities while outsiders assist with resources

Where the approach comes from the outside, but is "transplanted" to local management

Primarily an outside approach, including external priorities that local people or organisations are supposed to implement

MORE LOCAL OWNERSHIP

LESS LOCAL OWNERSHIP

Figure 2: An illustration of locally led ownership

Locally-led development is an anti-racist practice. We need to understand that the two are inherently linked. Building on the Racism, Power and Truth report, this guide urges organisations to explore how racism also manifests in practices, policies and mindsets with partners and communities they work with in order to become anti-racist and locally led.

What went into creating the guide?

This first iteration of the guide was developed with the guidance of a steering group of members who represent three existing Bond working groups: Practice for locally led development; Sector commitments and Roadmap for locally led development; Changing donor policy and practice for locally led development.

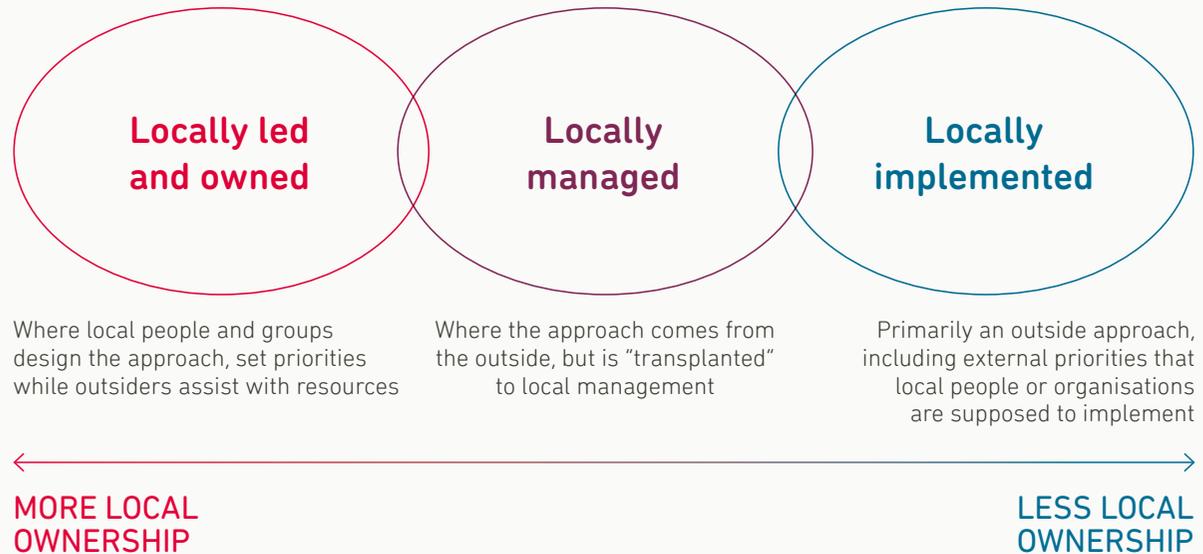The draft draws from previous work on this topic as well as the growing body of literature, research and evidence on decolonialising the development sector. This includes the work of different movements - from Shift the Power Network, the NEAR Network, Peace Direct, Global Giving, to name a few - that have either been led by or actively involved in national and local civil society organisations in the production of knowledge and identifying which practices need to change in the sector. This guide is about synthesising this existing knowledge to support INGOs to take actions. It is about building on learnings from others and contributing towards the wider effort to decolonise development. It is not seeking to duplicate existing efforts, or to provide a new conceptual framework for the localisation or locally-led development agenda more broadly.

Resources can be found via footnotes (pages 4-9), via hyperlinks throughout the document, while resources referred to in The Guide section can be found in the Endnotes on pg 33.

Why did Bond create it?

Following the publication of Catalysing locally led development in the UK aid system[12] and Racism, Power and Truth[13] by Bond, there is a recognition among Bond's members that while there is widespread acknowledgement of the importance of centering development on the lived experiences of people of colour and on locally led development, there are still barriers to reaching this goal, including the need for practical guidance.

Bond members recognise the need to ensure communities have the power to make their own choices and the importance of supporting the skills and resources they need based on those choices. However, the shift needed to ensure local actors have the power and resources to own their development is significant, and the pace of change is slow. This draft guide is designed to support organisations to make significant steps in the journey towards becoming anit-racist and locally led.

12. https://www.bond.org.uk/resources/catalysing-locally led-development-in-the-uk-aid-system
13. https://www.bond.org.uk/resources/racism-power-and-truth

Recap of principles in locally led development[12]

- Locally led approach is an anti-racist practice
- Locally led development is the sustainable approach
- Power dynamics between INGOs and local or community-based organisations must be recognised
- We can contribute and learn from other areas of work requiring similar sector-wide change: this includes from our previous work on transforming safeguarding and acts in tandem with the anti-racism work
- Diversity and plurality are key
- UK INGOs have a key role to play, but their role involves them evolving
- Focused action can drive larger change

14. https://globalfundcommunityfoundations.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/CatalysingLocallyLedDevelopment_Bond.pdf, p.6

Who can / should use the guide?

The framework seeks to support international organisations based in countries, such as the United Kingdom, of varying sizes and shapes to shift their practice and use of power to become more locally led. Anyone within an organisation that is wanting to, or already driving change, from leadership positions to more junior positions can use this guide.

For instance, you can use this to:

- **reflect** on your organisation's transformation and identify critical, practical steps towards becoming a more equitable organisation and locally led
- **start conversations internally**, achieve an aligned understanding on where the organisation is at and draw out any internal differences in views and opinions
- **have discussions with funders** on how funding models can be adapted to better support locally led development

We would be interested to find out any other uses organisations find from this guide. Moreover, we believe it is important to have the right mindset and conditions for the use of this guide, as summarised by Lloyds Bank Foundation's Organisational Resilience Tool[15]:

15. https://www.lloydsbankfoundation.org.uk/media/oxpnlp4e/lbf-organisational-resilience-guide-2022.pdf, p.7

Figure 3: Mindset and conditions for using the tool

Create the conditions

Creating the right conditions within your organisation or peer group is important. This guide will help you to think about some of these things, but you know yourself and the people involved best. Think about how best to support everyone to get the most out of the work.

Together is better

If you want to be right, do this alone. If you want to get it right, do it together. This journey can be done alone, but it will be better with diverse views. This might mean staff and the Board. Or it might mean within a group of peers.

Give yourself space

One important condition is giving yourself time to think through and reflect. This may mean setting aside specific time or just turning off notifications. However you do it, make sure you give yourself the best opportunity to focus.

Accept you can't do it all

There is a lot within this guide, and tackling it all at once is not advisable. The guide will help you prioritise. What you don't do is often as important as what you do do.

Recognise your assets

Your organisation has resilience. This guide will help you to recognise and build upon it.

Don't drain the battery

Look after yourself, your team and your peers. Your own wellbeing is important to this whole process.

Be reflective

To get the most out of this guide you will need to reflect on your own organisation and your resilience journey. What you learn from how you work in this guide is as important as where you end up.

Recognise the journey

Recognise the progress you have made and how you got there. This guide will help with this, but there may be other things that are important to you.

Accept this is ongoing

Resilience is a constant journey which requires active attention. It is never 'done'.

Be open

Be open to challenge, to new ways of working and to change.

Credit: Lloyds Bank organisational resilience tool: https://www.lloydsbankfoundation.org.uk/media/oxpnlp4e/lbf-organisational-resilience-guide-2022.pdf p.7

How to use the guide

We suggest that you rate your organisation, or the external environment, based on the statements.

Not everything in the statement will match your organisation or the external environment, so make a value judgment on what is the closest to your current situation.
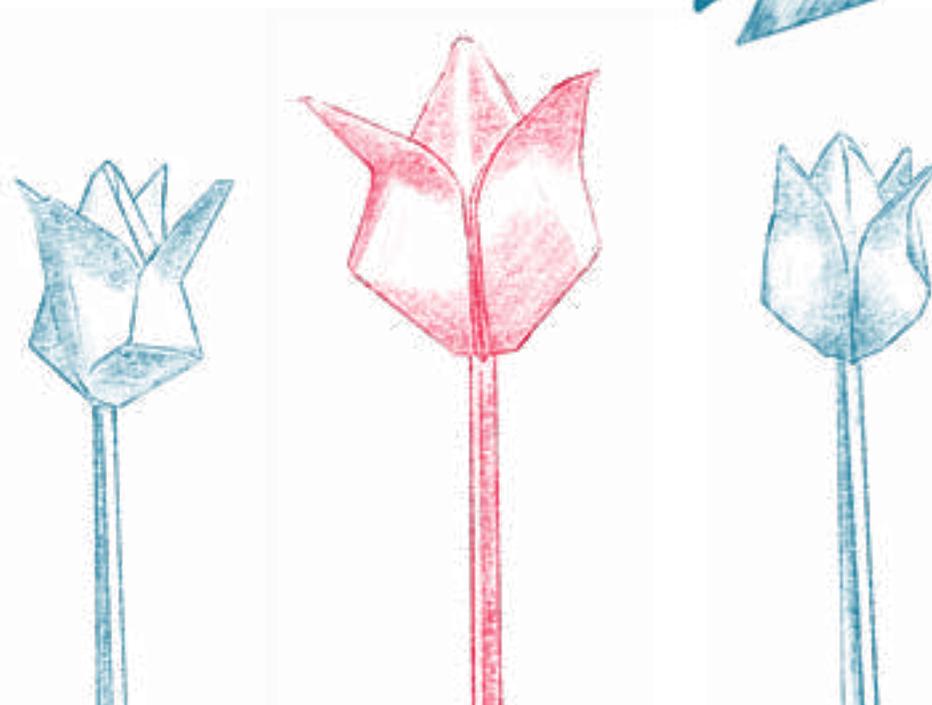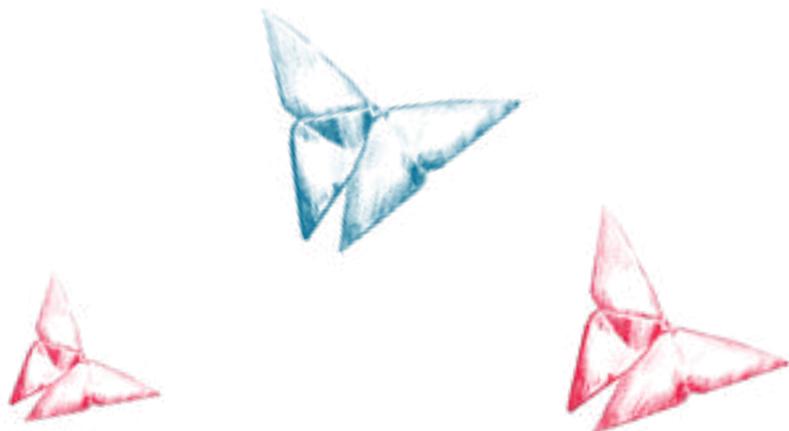
If your organisation circulates this as a survey for all staff to complete, the aggregate ratings can be used, and it'll be interesting to draw out any differences in opinion. This can also be used as a discussion tool in team meetings.

8.

9.

10.
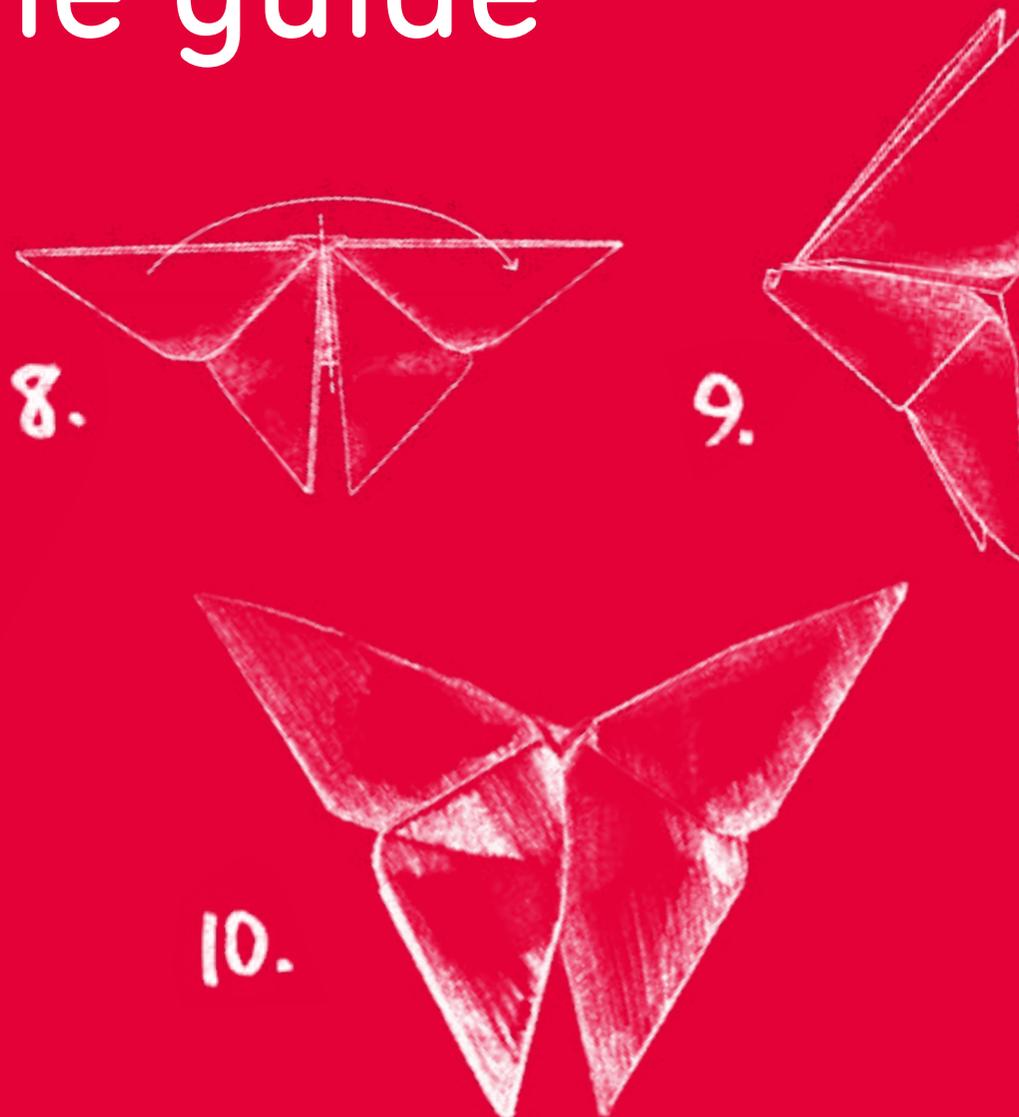
Before you start using the guide to rate your organisation and the external environment, we suggest the following to prepare:

1. Use the matrix on pages 8-11 to reflect with your teams and consult with further resources (provided in the matrix) for a better idea of best practices. Another report which contains helpful questions for INGOs is published by the ODI (Tables 2 and 3).

2. After you have gone through the list of questions, please rank the organisational elements using the table on page 12: which ones are you strongest in, and which ones are you weakest in? This will help orient your organisation before you go through the detailed guide. Go back to this ranking after you are finished with the rating.

1. Matrix: reflecting on best practice

Organisational elements: Category	Suggested guiding questions	Further resources	Notes
Values and culture	• Are you centring Black and people of colour´s voices in your organisation? Are you centring the voices of people from the countries where you work in your organisation? • How are you linking anti-racist practices and culture to locally led practices? • What anti-racist practices do we actively engage in? Where do we need to improve our anti-racist mindset and practices? • How can you better reflect on your levels of privilege and power and where you stand within a racist system? With this in mind, how can you take steps to interrupt racist dynamics in your interpersonal interactions with both colleagues in the UK and partners in LIMCs? • How would we describe the culture of our organisation? • What are some assumptions underpinning the way we approach things in our organisation? **Specific Questions:** • Have you explored the positionality, power and privilege you hold and how that effects you as a staff member of the organisation?	• Bond's Racism, Power and Truth report[1] • Ten Principles of Feminist leadership • Time to Decolonise Aid • Healing Solidarity • FRIDA's Culture of Care	

Organisational elements: Category	Suggested guiding questions	Further resources	Notes
Purpose and strategy	• Are we acknowledging the racism and racial inequity at the root of the development challenges and the prejudices that affect decisions and approaches in the present? • What is the ultimate goal of our organisation? Is there a difference between what we say publicly about our goal, and what is implied? Who informs the strategy? • Are we asking questions about our role/ added value as an INGO? • Is shifting power on the agenda of our senior management and Boards? Are we talking about decolonisation and taking active steps to reduce our footprint and power at HQ? • Is fundraising the most important target in our organisation? • Have we thought through what exit means for our organisation and programmes?	• Stopping as Success • Partos' "power awareness tool" • Shift the Power - A Manifesto for Change	

Organisational elements: Category	Suggested guiding questions	Further resources	Notes
Governance structures and decision-making	• What is the level of representation from lower-income countries and people of colour on our Board? • How can senior leadership and Boards consider anti-racism as a leadership responsibility and hold the CEO accountable? • Where is our Board based? • Are our headquarters based in the country of our programme operations? • Who is making the decisions and how are decisions being made? Are those we work with being represented in decision-making processes? • How can people, partners and donors hold our management and governing body to account on all accountability commitments? • How do we support responsible, visionary, innovative and accountable leadership at all levels? • How do we invite, analyse and respond to feedback from our key stakeholder groups, including staff? • How are course corrections decided and portrayed in our organisation? **Specific Questions:** • Are the Board aware of the refreshed Charity Commission's Code covering EDI and Integrity for Boards? • Does the risk register recognise risks around specifically not being anti-racist? • Has the Board had a conversation about anti-racism and locally-led development and their importance for an international development conversation? • Does the Board have a standing agenda item that reviews anti-racism, equity, diversity, inclusion and shifting power?	• Global Standard for CSO Accountability	

Organisational elements: Category	Suggested guiding questions	Further resources	Notes
Programmes and partnerships	• Who makes the decisions on the design and delivery of our programmes? • What are the power dynamics in our partnerships with local counterparts? • How do we add value to the work of existing and potential partners? • How do we ensure important decisions (eg from design and programme adaptation to resourcing) are taken collaboratively? • How often is co-creation implemented in our programme design and delivery? • How much of our partnerships are project-based versus long-term? • How do our collaborations contribute to reinforcing each partner's capacities, means, self-esteem and institutional strengths beyond your immediate intervention? • Is the capacity building of local counterparts demanded by them, or imposed by us? **Specific Questions:** • How diverse are those in decision-making programmatic roles? • Who makes the decision on the design and delivery of the programmes? • How do our collaborations contribute to reinforcing each partners' capacities, means, self-esteem and institutional strengths beyond your immediate interventions? • What decision making power do communities have in programming? • Have you explored the positionality, power and privilege you hold and how that affects you as a member of the programme team?	• Global Standard for CSO Accountability • Partos' "power awareness tool" • Participatory CLD Assessment tool	

Organisational elements: Category	Suggested guiding questions	Further resources	Notes
Funding and relationships with funding partners	• Who is responsible for sourcing funds, and who has access to funders? • Does the funding enable our local counterparts to build their own capacity, beyond programme delivery? • Who maintains the relationship with funders? Who is able to influence funders? • How are resourcing decisions made within partnerships? • Do we have commitments around budget share and resource share with partners, including overheads/indirect costs? **Specific Questions:** • Have you explored the positionality, power and privilege you hold as part of the fundraising team and what it means for the responsibility of raising funds, approaching donors and telling stories?	• NEAR's "localisation performance measurement framework" • Stopping as Success	

Organisational elements: Category	Suggested guiding questions	Further resources	Notes
HR & Operations	• Where are our strategic functions located? • Do all groups, including those we work with, have access to decision-makers and strategic functions? • How do we perceive expertise in our organisation, and are there ingrained biases? • Do we value lived experience in the same way we value academic qualifications or learned experience? • Are the policies and processes in our organisation adapted to the realities of different contexts? • Have we signed up to the Race at Work charter? • How does our organisation measure staff diversity and inclusion? • How are we maintaining, sustaining and progressing diverse talent? • How diverse is our senior management team? • How diverse is our HR team? • What are we doing today to create and sustain an anti-racist workplace? • What deeper conversations are needed in our organisation? **Specific Questions:** • Have you explored the positionality, power and privilege you hold and what it means for how you support, make space and grow diverse talent?	• Bond's Racism, Power and Truth report • Bond's EDI Development Programme • Project FAIR	

Organisational elements: Category	Suggested guiding questions	Further resources	Notes
Evaluations and understanding of impact	• What do we mean by impact, and what constitutes success? Is there an implicit assumption that evaluation is about quantifiable targets? • How is evaluation conducted? Is it conducted in a top-down manner, where communities are not truly included? Is there equitable budgeting? • Who conducts the evaluations? Are evaluators from higher income countries seen as the experts? • How is knowledge shared across our organisation and with the communities? • What defines what success of the programme looks like? • How diverse are those in decision-making roles? **Specific Questions:** • Have you explored the positionality, power and privilege you hold as part of the evaluations and learning team and what it means for the responsibility of evaluating impact? • How diverse are those in decision-making roles?	• Firelight Foundation's "indicators of CBO effectiveness" • Participatory CLD Assessment tool • FRIDA´s Garden of Change • Decolonising evidence: locally-led defined approaches of measuring programmes success	

Organisational elements: Category	Suggested guiding questions	Further resources	Notes
Communications and marketing	• Who makes the decisions on communications and marketing strategies and materials? Who is involved in producing them? • Are values of equity, inclusion and dignity embedded in our communications and marketing? • Are values of anti-racism, equity, inclusion and dignity embedded in our communications and marketing? • Where is decision-making for communications situated? Is that the most appropriate place? • Who has power in gathering content? • How diverse are those in decision-making roles? **Specific Questions:** • Have you explored the positionality, power and privilege you hold as part of the communications/campaigns team and what it means for the responsibility of telling stories? • How diverse are those in decision-making roles? • Do you have permission to tell a story or use an image? • How will you behave when gathering your content?	• Bond's "language guide" • Bond's "putting people in pictures first guide" • FRIDA's Garden of Change	

Organisational elements: Category	Suggested guiding questions	Further resources	Notes
Policy, campaigning and advocacy	• Who and what determines our policy, campaigning and advocacy priorities? Are these priorities reflective of the change local communities want to see? • How are local communities involved in the creation of our policy, campaigning and advocacy strategies? • Where is decision-making for advocates, influencing and lobbying efforts held? • How diverse is the team? • Who is invited to meetings with governments, funders or influential institutions? • Who can you collaborate with to bring in more diverse perspectives to your work? • How comfortable are the team in discussing the power you hold and racial equity within the team? **Specific Questions:** • Who can you collaborate with to bring in more diverse perspectives? • Have you explored the positionality, power and privilege you hold and what it means for the advocacy and influencing you do? • Do you recognise expertise of diaspora and marginalised communities to advocate and influence? • What one small thing can you do to use your personal power to bring in more diversity to meetings?	• The Advocacy Incubator's "reflections on locally led development"	

2. Ranking the organisational elements

Organisational elements	Rank the organisational elements below:	Provide your rationale for the ranking:
Purpose and strategy	1.	
Governance structures and decision-making	2.	
Programmes and partnerships	3.	
Funding and relationships with funding partners	4.	
HR & Operations	5.	
Evaluations and understanding of impact	6.	
Communications and marketing	7.	
Policy, campaigning and advocacy	8.	
Values and culture	9.	

STRONGEST

WEAKEST

The Guide

What does the guide consist of?

The guide includes nine organisational elements already identified by INGOs as key to becoming locally led, such as partnerships, governance structure, business models and organisational culture with some additional elements and modifications. The guide consists of questions that organisations should ask themselves and statements to help identify where they are at each stage of the journey. The three stages along the journey include:

1. JUST BEGINNING

2. MOVING ALONG

3. WELL ON THEIR WAY

The statements below can be used to:

- identify where organisations are on their journey to becoming anti-racist and locally led
- discuss what needs to change within organisations to become anti-racist and locally led

It is worth noting that this is guidance, so you can build on the statements to fit your organisation´s culture. As an additional step, you can also add another column beyond "Well on their way" and co-create it with partners and communities.

The guide also includes a section on "external enablers" (see page 28).

Organisational elements

Category	1. JUST BEGINNING	2. MOVING ALONG	3. WELL ON THEIR WAY	Selection / notes
				Just beginning ☐
				Moving along ☐
				Well on their way ☐
A. Values and culture Among many INGOs, there is still a lack of trust in locally led approaches, and a perception of "we know best" in HQ. INGOs need to move towards an organisational culture valuing locally led approaches, embedding an ethos of equity, inclusion and anti-racism.	**A.1** We have a culture of self-preservation, high compliance and risk aversion, and we lack trust in alternative, localised approaches. There is a pervasive narrative internally at HQ about a lack of capacity in the countries we work in, as well as a lack of consideration for unequal power dynamics.	**A.2** We have been on an internal journey of culture change, and parts of the organisation are moving towards more trust-based, open models of working with other INGOs and community counterparts. We acknowledge our duty of care and accountability to our local counterparts and communities, though that is not routinely implemented in practice. We are learning to let go of the desire to control and manage local counterparts' projects and activities.	**A.3** We are guided by values and principles of anti-racism, equity, inclusion, agency, and sharing power. Our role as an INGO is one of providing solidarity and support. We have a culture of trust and generosity, and localised approaches and lived experience are particularly valued. We prioritise our duty of care towards our local counterparts and are ultimately accountable to them. Both a deep, sustained and thoughtful analysis of the exisiting power relations in our work, and an open space for challenge, are embedded in our organisation.	

Category	1. JUST BEGINNING	2. MOVING ALONG	3. WELL ON THEIR WAY	Selection / notes
B. Purpose and strategy	**B.1** We define success predominantly based on fundraising targets - influenced by what funders want and by growth in fundraising income and headcount. Shifting the power/locally led development is informally discussed[2].	**B.2** Senior management is putting anti-racism and shifting power/locally led development on the organisation's agenda, internally and externally. We are starting to have discussions about evolving our mission and strategy towards locally led development, including considering sustainable exit strategies for some of our programmes. However, our organisations growth and survival is still the main priority.	**B.3** Our organisation has shifted our strategy and practices responding to a need to decolonise and decentralise the humanitarian and development system[3]. All strategic processes are co-designed and co-produced with our local counterparts and communities, which also hold us accountable for delivering on our strategic commitments. These could include: we no longer pay lip service to "working ourselves out of a job", but are actually working to shift power; our role has changed from being drivers of development to becoming facilitators, enablers and catalysts of change; we define success as downsizing our footprint, and giving space to others to adopt our expertise and work; and we have clear, responsible exit strategies across all our programmes.	Just beginning ☐ Moving along ☐ Well on their way ☐

The purpose of INGOs has not been focused on shifting power to communities but ensuring their organisational survival and longevity. Rethinking the purpose of INGOs can ensure the strategies align with becoming a more equitable organisation that practices locally-led development.

Category	1. JUST BEGINNING	2. MOVING ALONG	3. WELL ON THEIR WAY	Selection / notes

C. Governance structures & decision-making

Decision-making powers of INGOs are concentrated in the HQ in higher-income countries and the governance structures prioritise the views of those closest to HQ and those with monetary resources. Communities most impacted by the decisions made are excluded in decision-making and governance processes, which are inherently inequitable.

C.1 Our structure includes limited input from our local counterparts[4].

Local counterparts are excluded from the decision-making process and when it comes to allocating resources.

Our Board(s) is/are predominantly based in higher-income countries[5], and our governance body is not representative of the communities we seek to serve.

The onus of accountability is primarily placed on community organisations[6].

C.2 We have made attempts to devolve governance to a national level, and there have been many examples of local staff and communities in the countries we work in making decisions and controlling resource allocation, though this is not a systematised process or implemented on a regular basis.

We have been able to demonstrate the value of local leadership, which brings greater contextual knowledge, legitimacy, and accountability to the work we do[7].

C.3 At least 51% of our organisation is owned and led by people working in their own country contexts (e.g. The majority of our Board is made up of people working in their own contexts)[8].

There is diversity across all levels of our organisation, from Board governance to entry level positions, and this includes a quota of people of colour.

We are transparent about our decision-making processes, and we ensure that they are informed by and responsive to feedback from our local counterparts[9], and a genuine commitment to equitable power redistribution.

Our accountability shifts towards communities, and mutual community trust and engagement continue to improve[10].

Category	1. JUST BEGINNING	2. MOVING ALONG	3. WELL ON THEIR WAY	Selection / notes

D. Programmes and partnerships

Programmes are designed and delivered based on the views of HQ and donors rather than local counterparts, and power imbalances in the partnerships leave local counterparts little agency to create meaningful, lasting change. Shifting power to communities in designing and delivering programmes ensures that change is relevant to local needs and is sustainable beyond ad hoc programmes.

D.1 Our programmes are largely determined by our funding requirements, rather than community needs.

While we have partnerships with local counterparts, the partnerships are traditionally grant-funded, where they mainly act as subcontractors with little input into programme design, development and strategy.

We rarely focus on strengthening the capacity our counterparts beyond the projects. Power imbalances exist within many of our partnerships.

We tend to control and manage projects, budgets, and the activities of our counterparts[11].

D.2 We have introduced alternative association models and have provided new avenues outside traditional grant-funded partnership models for local leadership and organisations[12].

We recognise the inherent power imbalances and address how these may affect the success of partnerships with local counterparts[13].

We ensure that the roles and responsibilities of our organisation and our partners are clear and fair[14].

But while there is some community leadership and ownership, there is a low degree of trust between them and us. The partnerships are also often initiated by us.

D.3 Our programmes are co-created entirely with communities and local stakeholders.

Partnerships with local counterparts are equitable[15], and they feel they can exercise power in the partnerships[16], including being able to challenge our work and our role as an INGO, and select which INGO they want to partner with.

Partnerships with local counterparts are strategic and support their organisational development[17].

Partnerships are a way for us to redistribute power[18].

Category	1. JUST BEGINNING	2. MOVING ALONG	3. WELL ON THEIR WAY	Selection / notes
E. Funding and relationships with funders Sources and types of funding lead to short-term, restrictive, project-based activities that do not build local capacity. Funding and relationships with funders largely constrain what INGOs can or cannot do to adopt the locally led development agenda, but the right types of funding and trusting relationships with funders could transform this.	**E.1** Our HQ in higher-income countries are mainly responsible for managing funding relationships and our local counterparts are prevented from developing their capacity to fundraise, meet donor requirements and carry out their mission[19]. Funding goes towards funding programme delivery in countries but not to build other aspects of our counterparts' capacity[20]. Apart from donor compliance requirements, we also require local counterparts to fulfil stringent compliance when receiving funding from us.	**E.2** Our funders promote locally managed approaches through an appreciation for and desired understanding of local conditions and context[21]. We also ensure that our funding to local counterparts recognises, respects, and builds on local resources rather than overlooks, undermines and displaces them[22]. However, most funding relationships are still held by INGO headquarters in higher-income countries.	**E.3** Local counterparts have access to direct funding and donors[23], and lead the funding ask and relationships. Our role is primarily to support and make connections, create the environment for these connections to flourish and support where local counterparts see fit. Where funding is provided by us to local counterparts, the way to access funding is inclusive, and there are few restrictions with the funding. Local counterparts have robust, transparent and accountable financial management systems and procedures, and donors' requirements are locally appropriate[24]. Local counterparts also influence donor priorities in-country[25].	Just beginning ☐ Moving along ☐ Well on their way ☐

Category	1. JUST BEGINNING	2. MOVING ALONG	3. WELL ON THEIR WAY	Selection / notes

F. HR & Operations

Staff at HQ oversee most strategic functions while staff based in countries INGOs work in are often reduced to programmatic roles. Meanwhile, organisational policies are designed around the needs of HQ. Enabling more strategic functions to be based in countries INGOs work in, and changing policies and practices to be more culturally relevant, are steps to ensure a more effective locally led operations policy.

F.1 We are predominantly staffed by white people with limited degrees of knowledge surrounding the local context[26].

We hire "national" staff as our "local" representatives[27].

Western academic qualifications are valued over lived experiences and/or non-western degrees.

Organisational policies reward and value HQ staff over staff based in the countries we work in[28].

Staff who speak fluent English get further ahead than those who do not.

F.2 We tailor financial reporting framework to allow for culturally sensitive standards in different contexts and allow for contract or grant documents in the partner language to promote better local management[29].

Some policies are adapted to ensure cultural relevance. There has also been a review of transparency and fair remuneration in our organisation.

However, some of the operations are still managed by the HQ in higher-income countries.

F.3 All strategic and decision-making functions are staffed with people from the country we are working in*.

Practices and processes are shaped by the country context and culture[30].

Salaries and benefits are equitable across the organisation.

Community counterparts routinely participate in all aspects of the project cycle[31].

We have redefined what expertise means in our organisation – from learned experience to lived experience, and locally led solutions and impact[32].

We also work in different languages and there is no advantage given to those who are fluent in a particular language.

*INGOs may not have local / country offices in order not to displace national and local counterparts, but they may evolve to a more remote structure where staff can be based in different countries all across the world

Category	1. JUST BEGINNING	2. MOVING ALONG	3. WELL ON THEIR WAY	Selection / notes
G. Evaluation and understanding impact Our understanding of impact has traditionally been top-down, ridden with quantifiable, short-term metrics geared towards fundraising success. Moving towards a system of equitable evaluation ensures a more holistic understanding of impact, driven by the needs of communities.	**G.1** Internally, we make use of quantifiable targets to understand what "good" looks like, with a strong focus on efficiency, leading to monitoring and evaluation frameworks being donor-led. We routinely conduct evaluations but do not systematically share the evaluation findings with our community counterparts, and the evaluations are primarily used for fundraising purpose.	**G.2** We spend time with local counterparts in a non-extractive, collaborative way[33]. We ensure our work is informed by the views of communities[34]. We also ensure that the evaluation findings inform our own learning as an organisation, especially on how to advance our journey towards locally led development.	**G.3** We are led by communities' own definition of success and development agendas[35] – moving away from donor definitions of success. We co-produce any understanding of impact with our local counterparts and ensure that knowledge and learnings are held and retained within communities, and are implemented in an inclusive, participatory, community-led approach to evaluations. We understand the value of locally led development efforts because they produce more durable and lasting results as they respond to community timelines[36].	Just beginning ☐ Moving along ☐ Well on their way ☐

Category	1. JUST BEGINNING	2. MOVING ALONG	3. WELL ON THEIR WAY	Selection / notes

H. Communications and marketing

Historically, communications and marketing has been developed by HQ with little input from partner organisations and the communities that we work with. This guide hopes to help organisations move their communications and marketing so it is centred around the communities we work with.

H.1 Work delivered in partnership with civil society actors is presented under our organisational brand, with little or no mention of our local counterparts externally.

We have not considered how our narratives and use of imagery may have minimised the accuracy of our work nor the agency and dignity of our local counterparts.

Our marketing and communications are focused on achieving our organisational aims, especially using narratives that will drive the public to give donations, even if it is at the expense of portraying our local counterparts as passive recipients of support rather than co-creators.

H.2 Work delivered in partnership with civil society actors is predominantly presented under the organisational brand, with some mentions of our local counterparts externally.

We have undertaken a review/audit of our narratives and use of imagery from an equity lens but this has not been rolled out consistently across the organisation.

H.3 Work delivered in partnership with civil society actors is presented under the brand of our local counterparts, and local counterparts are fairly credited for the work they undertake, both internally and externally[37].

Local counterparts play a lead role in communicating national issues[38]. We centre communities first in what our work looks like and how we communicate[39].

Community organisations generate their own communications based on communities sharing their own stories.

Category	1. JUST BEGINNING	2. MOVING ALONG	3. WELL ON THEIR WAY	Selection / notes
				Just beginning ☐
				Moving along ☐
				Well on their way ☐

I. Policy, campaigning and advocacy

INGOs' policy, campaigning and advocacy priorities mainly reflect the priorities of donors or their own organisation's strategies, and local counterparts are selectively consulted. Given the systems change implications of policy, campaigning and advocacy work, local counterparts' perspectives must be at the forefront.

(This is closely interlinked with G. Communications and marketing)

I.1 Our campaigns mainly reflect priorities of our organisational strategies and our donors.

While we consult with communities for our campaigns, their feedback is not routinely incorporated or acted upon.

In policy space, it is mainly our organisation that is visible, and we are advocating on behalf of local counterparts and communities, rather than with them.

I.2 We have started to collaborate with advocacy movements rooted in countries we work in, including co-creating strategies. The campaigning and advocacy narrative shifts from "helpless victims" to working in solidarity with communities.

However, policy, campaigning and advocacy priorities still predominantly come from our HQ and donors, and do not always reflect the change communities want to see.

We have started to recognise the patriarchial and colonalist structures of these spaces but do not have a full plan to address these.

I.3 Our work has meaningful involvement of local stakeholders with lived experience, as they decide on the priorities of our policy, campaigning and advocacy priorities.

Our priorities reflect the change communities want to see[40].

We have equitable partnerships with local counterparts in policy, and wherever possible, our organisational presence in policy space is minimal.

Our role is to facilitate our local counterparts taking the lead in discussions and agenda, and to challenge the patriarchial and colonialist structures of advocacy and policy spaces.

External enablers

External enablers are elements in the external environment which organisations, including community-based organisations, may not have control over. These elements can enable, impact or hinder an organisation's capacity to achieve their own objectives.

Using the external enablers section, organisations can assess the external environment and consider tactics and strategies to build on potential opportunities, if the environment is enabling, or overcome these barriers, if the environment is constraining. The external enablers are as follows:
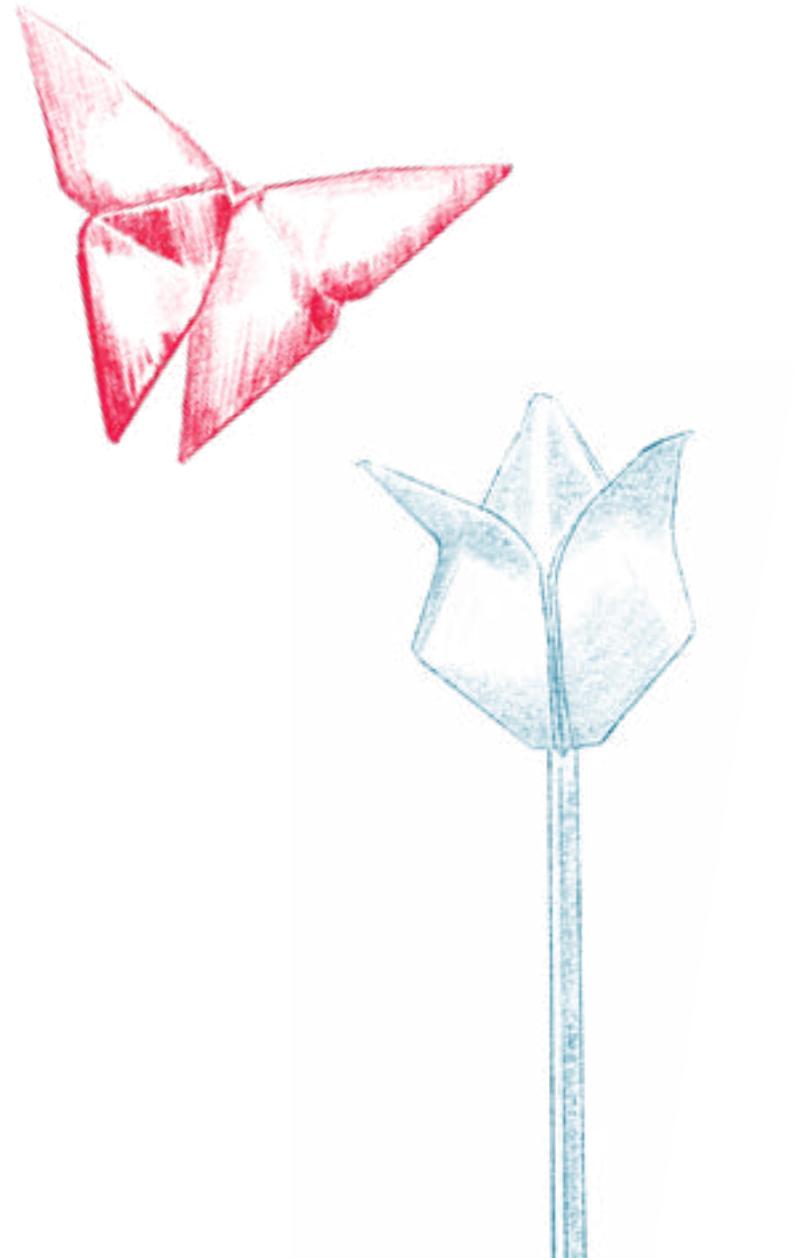
Not enabling   **Opening up**   **Enabling**

| Category	1. Not enabling	1. Opening up	1. Enabling	Selection / notes
				Not enabling ☐
				Opening up ☐
				Enabling ☐
J. Culture of UK INGO sector Beyond the organisational cultures of individual INGOs, there is also a pervasive sector-wide culture of self-preservation and racism. There needs to be a sector-wide reckoning on the inadequacy of the status quo, and a genuine commitment to becoming equitable and anti-racist, and pursuing locally led development.	**J.1** There is a culture of self-preservation, and racism that is widespread in the sector. There are still colonial and paternalistic mindsets among people working in the sector. There is a strong "Global North" (higher-income countries) versus "Global South" (lower-income countries) paradigm.	**J.2** The sector is interrogating its own culture and history, and there is a wide range of initiatives seeking to address these fundamental issues.	**J.3** The INGO sector has a transformed vision for the role of INGOs in supporting locally led development, and the culture is one of solidarity rather than "Us versus Them", and one of genuine collaboration rather than competition. The INGO sector is actively anti-racist, equitable, and power is devolved and held by those from working in their own contexts.	

Category	1. Not enabling	1. Opening up	1. Enabling	Selection / notes
				Not enabling ☐
				Opening up ☐
				Enabling ☐
K. Donor funding models and behaviours Restrictive donor funding models have led to power being concentrated in HQ and higher-income countries. Donors need to channel more funding directly to local organisations, as well as commit to equitable partnerships.	**K.1** Donors see their roles as rule-setters, and prefer to fund INGOs as they are seen as "safe bets", and donors put in a lot of requirements including providing only restricted, project-based and short-term funding. Donors impose their own agendas, requirements, and timelines; withhold information and arbitrarily change funding priorities[41].	**K.2** Donors are starting to place greater trust in the capabilities and accountability of community organisations, are starting to fund partnerships instead of only projects, and are starting to improve their funding practices, e.g. reducing the complexity of application forms, but they still require the presence of a higher-income country guarantor.	**K.3** Donors provide flexible, multi-year, unrestricted funding to community-led organisations; and provide non-financial resources for building the capacity of locally led organisations. Funders communicate openly, thinking about the impact on communities and making space for them, and work in partnership and demonstrate patience, an appreciation for and desire to understand local conditions and context - with humility[42]. Funders prefer to fund through locally led organisations rather than INGOs.	

Category	1. Not enabling	1. Opening up	1. Enabling	Selection / notes
	●	●	●	Not enabling ☐ Opening up ☐ Enabling ☐
L. Regulatory changes The regulatory environment currently limits an INGOs' options to shift power to local counterparts, and places onerous compliance requirements on local counterparts. Regulations and due diligence requirements should be proportionate and encourage more equitable risks-sharing.	**L.1** Political restrictions and regulations make it incredibly challenging for local organisations to access overseas funding. Charity regulators, such as the Charity Commission and Fundraising Regulator in the UK, have onerous compliance requirements for UK-based organisations working overseas. Regulation and due diligence requirements are disproportionate.	**L2** There is an increasing number of dialogues and initiatives aimed at overcoming regulatory constraints, so that more funding and power can be shifted to local counterparts, such as organisations working as fiscal sponsors, and innovative contracting arrangements. Risk sharing with Local/NGOs and/or advocating for donors to share risk and not pass it down the chain is key.	**L.3** A less restrictive regulatory environment and charity regulators understand the importance of locally led development and articulate it as best practice. They also no longer perceive or describe locally led organisations as beneficiaries.	

Category	1. Not enabling	1. Opening up	1. Enabling	Selection / notes
				Not enabling ☐
				Opening up ☐
				Enabling ☐
M. Local civil society Civil societies in lower-income countries often lack the resources and capacity to support their own development. INGOs and donors need to support the development of civil society infrastructures and local governments to enable a permanent shift in power.	**M.1** Local civil society organisations in the countries we work in have limited capacity and are reliant on humanitarian and development assistance and external funding, and often unwillingly participate in coalitions to satisfy outside funders.	**M.2** Local organisations have a stronger ability to stay true to their missions and respond to the priorities of their community, but still rely primarily on external funding.	**M.3** There is a vibrant, resilient local civil society where organisations have the autonomy and capacity to deliver on their intended missions. Community leaders form alliances to help meet goals and navigate complex political and cultural dynamics.	

Endnotes

1. [Bond - Racism, Power and Truth](#)
2. [Bond – locally-led development survey](#)
3. [Bond – Catalysing locally-led development in the UK aid system](#)
4. [Peace Direct, Towards locally-led peacebuilding; defining local](#)
5. [Bond – Catalysing locally-led development in the UK aid system](#)
6. [Peace Direct, towards locally led peacebuilding; partnership approaches](#)
7. [Peace Direct, Towards locally-led peacebuilding; defining local](#)
8. Anti-racism and Decolonising: A framework for organisations" Bond, 2022 (not yet published)
9. [The global standard for CSO accountability – indicator 11.2](#)
10. [Shift the power programme theory of change, Comic Relief](#)
11. [Bond, Locally-led development: what does this mean in practice?](#)
12. [USAID mission checklist for sustainable transitions](#)
13. [Peace Direct, Towards locally-led peacebuilding; partnership approaches](#)
14. [The global standard for CSO accountability – indicator 6.2](#)
15. [Bond – locally led development survey](#)
16. [NEAR localisation performance measurement framework, indicator 1.1](#)
17. [NEAR localisation performance measurement framework, indicator 1.2](#)
18. Bond's decolonisation framework (not yet published)
19. [Bond - Catalysing locally-led development in the UK aid system](#)
20. [Bond - Catalysing locally-led development in the UK aid system](#)
21. [GlobalGiving, What does it mean to be community-led?](#)
22. [#Shiftthepower: a manifesto for change](#)
23. [NEAR localisation performance measurement framework, indicator 2.3](#)
24. [NEAR localisation performance measurement framework,, indicator 2.4](#)
25. [NEAR localisation performance measurement framework,, indicator 5.1](#)
26. [Bond - Catalysing locally-led development in the UK aid system](#)
27. [Peace Direct, Towards locally-led peacebuilding; defining local](#)
28. [Bond - Catalysing locally-led development in the UK aid system](#)
29. [USAID mission checklist for sustainable transitions](#)
30. [Disparities in Funding for African NGOs: Unlocking philanthropy for African NGOS as a path way to greater impact." The Bridgespan Group and African Philanthropy Forum](#)
31. [NEAR localisation performance measurement framework, indicator 1.3](#)
32. Bond's anti-racism framework (not yet published)
33. [USAID mission checklist for sustainable transitions](#)
34. [The global standard for CSO accountability Accountability – indicator 7.1](#)
35. [The global standard for CSO accountability – indicator 4.2](#)
36. [Global Giving, What does it mean to be community-led?](#)
37. [NEAR localisation performance measurement framework, indicator 5.2](#)
38. [NEAR localisation performance measurement framework, indicator 5.2](#)
39. Bond's decolonisation framework (not yet published)
40. Bond's decolonisation framework (not yet published)
41. [Global Giving, What does it mean to be community-led?](#)
42. [Global Giving, What does it mean to be community-led?](#)
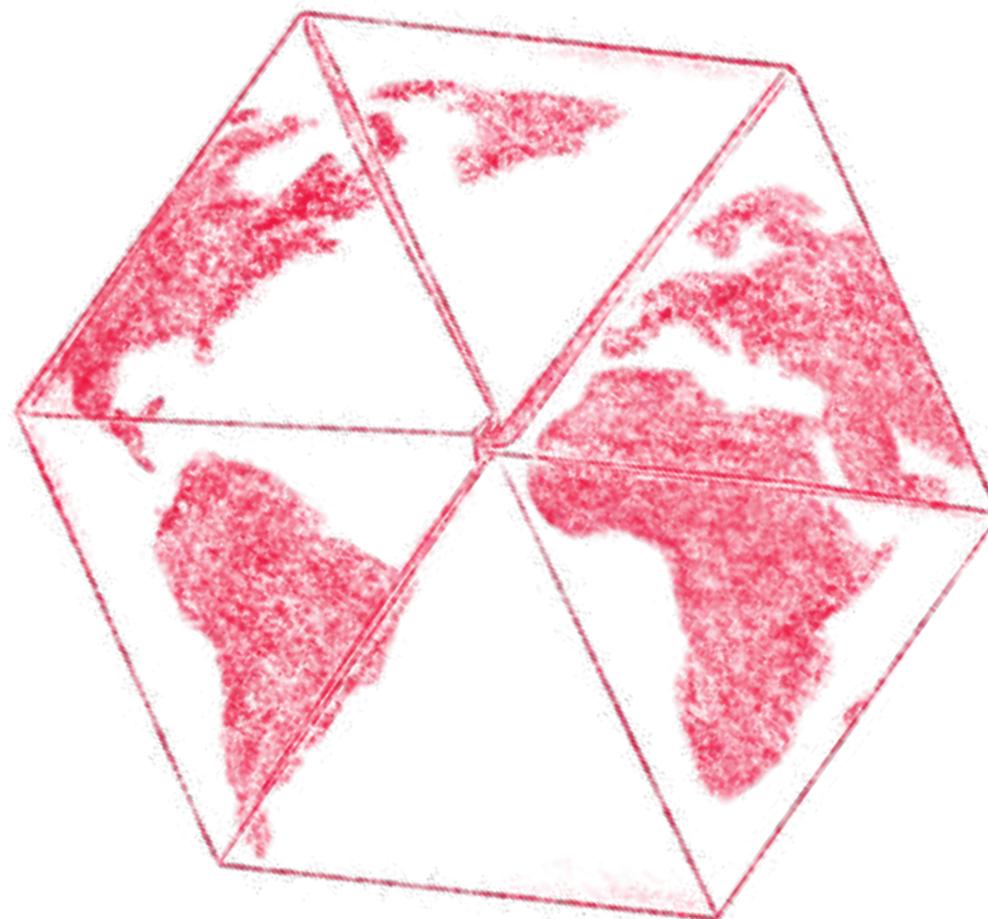
bond

Bond is the UK network for organisations
working in international development.

We unite and support a diverse network of over
400 civil society organisations to help eradicate
global poverty, inequality and injustice.

Find out more at bond.org.uk