

AUSTRALIAN  
COUNCIL  
FOR  
INTERNATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT

# Guidance for the Development of a Locally-Led Action Policy



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# Introduction

Locally-Led Development and Humanitarian Action (Locally-Led Action) has been progressing in various forms for decades and has gained increasing traction since the formation of the Grand Bargain, initiated in the humanitarian sector and subsequently, the Pledge for Change, which includes development organisations. Now, there is an increasing push for all global actors to shift power, decision-making, and resources to local actors, to lead change in their own countries.

ACFID members agree that Locally-Led Action is essential not just because it is the right thing to do, but because local leadership has a greater likelihood of achieving locally relevant and contextualised outcomes and has a higher likelihood of driving long-term impact.

Each organisation is unique in its purpose, structure, and impact model. Because of this, writing an organisational policy, statement or guidance document is not a simple process. It is dependent on understanding and unpacking unconscious bias, power dynamics, and relationships at the individual, organisational, and sector levels. There are also important intersections with decolonisation, racial justice, sustainable impact, principles of self-determination, and the rights-based approach. It is a complex journey, and each organisation will be at a different place in that journey.

To support member organisations, ACFID has developed resources, including a [Locally Led Action Toolkit](#), which uses a Continuum model to help assess and monitor progress toward Locally-Led Action. The use of the Continuum first requires organisations to interrogate who they consider to be local and external actors, and later to plan how the organisation can progress to a more local way of working. The Continuum focuses on who and how decisions are being made, closely linked to the concept of power. This continuum is used in the Measurement section in the Maturity Model example.

More  
External/Less  
Local



More  
Local/Less  
External

A. Externally Led, Local Actors Informed	B. Externally Led, Local Actors Consulted	C. Externally Led, Local Actors Involved	D. Locally Co-led with External Delegation.	E. Locally-Led and Externally Supported
Approaches, priorities, decision-making led by External Actors, without systematic engagement with Local Actors. Mostly one-way information flow of key decisions, approaches, priorities to Local Actors.	Approaches, priorities, decision-making led by External Actors, but with systematic consultation of Local Actors which may or may not inform these approaches, priorities and decision making.	Approaches, priorities, decision-making led by External Actors, but with actively sought systematic involvement of Local Actors to inform these approaches, priorities and decision making.	Approaches, priorities and decision making is shared by both Local Actors and External Actors. The delegation of who leads on what is generally delegated by the External Actors.	Approaches, priorities, decision making led by Local Actors, with External Actors providing support where requested or invited by the Local Actors.

**Figure 1: Continuum model**

ACFID has also identified [nine organisational domains](#), recognising that organisations might be more progressed in one area, e.g. governance, and less so in another, e.g. people and culture.

These domains are:

- Quality and Effectiveness: Planning and Design
- Quality and Effectiveness: Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Advocacy
- Risk
- Governance
- Resource Management
- People and Culture

While constraints exist and may differ among member organisations, the intention to redefine the role of international NGOs and other actors, and to move consciously toward an evolved model of international development cooperation, is universal. How each organisation tackles this will be different, but will include the development of an overarching document or updating existing documents that set the intention, no matter how long it takes, and provide clarity, guidance, and accountability.

# Purpose and Audience for this Guidance

These guidelines will assist ACFID members in embedding Locally-Led Action within their organisational frameworks, whether through existing policies, new guidance documents, an organisational statement or a dedicated policy (simply policy/ies in these guidelines). The content originates from 'Writeshops' conducted in May-June 2025, which were co-facilitated by ACFID and Eleanor Loudon, a consultant specialising in supporting organisations toward authentic local leadership.

These guidelines are designed to assist staff within ACFID member organisations in drafting their documents. As high-level documents, these are not operational but are required because they set expectations regarding the development and refinement of practices, including the allocation of resources.



Senior Clinical Officer on the Outreach Motorcycle preparing to provide follow up care to a patient in their remote home. (Credit: Love Mercy Australia/River Bennett photography)

# Locally-Led Action and the ACFID Code of Conduct

In 2024, a revised version of the [ACFID Code of Conduct](#) came into effect. The Code now includes a commitment from ACFID members to seek to reduce power imbalances and invest in locally-led development and humanitarian initiatives.

*Commitment 2.1: We seek to reduce power imbalances and invest in locally-led development and humanitarian initiatives.*

Members are expected to demonstrate their compliance by having the following in place:

## **2.1.1 Members demonstrate an organisational commitment to locally-led action.**

Policy, statement, or guidance document that commits the member to locally-led action.

Evidence of naming and addressing power imbalances in organisational relationships relevant to the member's development and humanitarian initiatives.

## **2.1.2: Members contribute to locally-led action in their development and humanitarian initiatives.**

Evidence of the voices and decision-making of local actors is consistently captured in:

Design or planning framework, tools, templates or approaches.

Monitoring and evaluation framework, tools, templates or approaches

The allocation of resources (time, funds and people) throughout the project cycle

The design and evaluation of feedback and complaints mechanisms

## **2.1.3 Members have mechanisms in place to ensure primary stakeholders can contribute their ideas and feedback and influence decision-making about the initiatives that affect them.**

Development and humanitarian initiatives consistently show evidence of the influence of primary stakeholders in planning, decision-making and evaluation.

There are additional requirements and some good practice indicators in the other sections of the Code, which are clearly explained in the [ACFIDs Locally-Led Action Topic Guide](#).



# Role of INGOs

The historical role of the International NGO (INGO) is changing as the sector evolves, and as organisations understand and unpack assumptions and norms. There is an emerging, more nuanced understanding of the role that an INGO can play, from funding and implementation to a more context-informed, adaptive role, supporting local leadership and systems change. There is also a deepening recognition that, ultimately, an organisation is successful when its role is no longer needed to lead or even catalyse change.

INGOs are being redefined as intermediary organisations whose value can include funding and supporting implementation as well as one or all of a range of roles<sup>1</sup>, including:

- Interpreter
- Knowledge Broker
- Trainer/Coach
- Convener
- Connector
- Advocate
- Watchdog
- Critical Friend
- SideKick

Other models for reference, found on the [ACFID Resource Hub](#), include:

[Bridging the Intention to Action Gap: The Future Role of Intermediaries in Supporting Locally-Led Humanitarian Action](#)  
(Humanitarian Advisory Group)

[Evaluating the Results of Intermediary Organisations](#) (Paul Ramsay Foundation)

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<sup>1</sup> [Peace Direct](#), The nine roles that intermediaries can play in international cooperation, January 2023



Women feeds her growing flock of chickens. Village chickens are common in rural areas in Malawi, and Kyeema works with communities to enhance production through community-based vaccination and management programs to improve health and nutrition outcomes. (Photo: Richard Nyoni/Kyeema Foundation).

# Writing your Policy: Process

## FOUNDATION: BEYOND BUSINESS AS USUAL

Creating or refining a Locally-Led Action policy requires a fundamental shift in approach. This is not about rebranding existing practices or making cosmetic changes to current operations. Even organisations that have made significant progress in shifting power to local change-makers should engage in critical reflection with partners and country offices from the outset. This reflection must occur in an environment of psychological safety where honest dialogue can flourish.

The policy development process requires engagement across the entire organisation, ideally with primary stakeholders or the organisations they trust to represent them. Creating a meaningful policy requires participants to speak openly about communication, relationships, power dynamics, and unconscious bias. Without safety, these conversations remain superficial, and the resulting policy lacks authenticity and impact.

For many, it helps to start with a draft based on literature and the organisational vision/mission, and purpose, which serves as a conversation starter and pressure test. This is a significant and deep discussion, and having a starting point helps.

The board and CEO play a crucial role in creating the authorising environment that enables genuine policy implementation. Their engagement from the outset is not merely ceremonial but essential for establishing the safety required for transformative change. Leadership commitment signals to the organisation that this work is prioritised and that staff can engage in honest reflection without fear of retribution.

Colleagues and partners working directly with primary stakeholders and local systems possess invaluable insights that must inform

policy development. Their advice is contextualised, nuanced, and rarely uniform across different settings. The policy document, operating at a high level, captures this expertise in broad strokes, establishing parameters for subsequent practices and processes tailored to specific contexts.

Clear expectations about the organisational architecture that scaffolds from policy to practice are essential. This clarity not only ensures effective implementation but also creates safety by helping staff understand how their work connects to broader organisational commitments.

## RESOURCES FOR REFLECTION

ACFID provides comprehensive resources to support member organisations in this reflective process:

- [ACFID Locally-Led Action Toolkit](#): Practical guidance including a self-assessment tool to benchmark how Locally-Led your organisation's practice currently is in each of the Domains
- [ACFID Locally-Led Action Resource Hub](#): Comprehensive overview of the current landscape, case studies and tools
- [ACFID Locally-Led Action Topic Guide](#): summarises where Locally-Led Action is found in the ACFID code of conduct, both as a standalone quality principle and where it is embedded in other sections.
- Guidance in the Locally Led Action toolkit for [Safe Usage](#). This includes suggestions for creating safer and braver spaces while using the tools.

The [ACFID Resource Hub](#) serves as an excellent starting point, providing an overview of the current landscape, answering questions, prompting deeper reflection and

finding examples of Locally Led Action in practice.

It also contains valuable baseline assessment tools that can be adapted to specific organisational contexts. Importantly, many of these tools originate from the Global Majority, representing authentic voices in the shift toward equitable global cooperation. These tools, for example, all found in the [Resource Hub](#), help organisations understand the specifics of:

- Assessment Locally-Led development: [How colonial is your organisation?](#)
- Decolonising: [How colonial is your organisation?](#)
- Power dynamics: [Power Awareness Tool: A tool for analysing power in partnerships for development](#)

Finally, introducing a comprehensive model of change that addresses all elements of internal and external systems transformation provides a container for shared understanding. The [Water of System Change](#) model, found in the Resource Hub, articulates how transformative, relational, and structural conditions work together to create real and lasting change. This model comes with a practical tool that organisations can use internally to assess the shifts required for authentic, Locally-Led Action.

DFAT has also developed a [Locally Led Development Guidance Note](#) that outlines their understanding of and approach to Locally Led, along with their own Locally Led Development Continuum. There is also guidance related to working with local partners in the [ANCP Manual](#) section on Partnerships.

# Writing your Policy: Content

## GOAL

Policies begin with an introduction that establishes their aim or intention. For Locally-Led Action, this introduction should articulate your organisation's desired future position. It defines the aspirational state your organisation is striving for, and could be linked to the ACFID Continuum.

When considering your intention, aim high, and if that's a long shot, take the time to get it right. It may take 10 years or more. The sector is evolving, and it may require external factors to change to reach your goal, but don't let external factors stand in the way of your intention. When you set the intention, you will try and find ways to shift the conditions holding the status quo in place, often collectively with others. The policy sets this intention.

## DEFINITIONS

There is no universally agreed-upon definition of Locally-Led Action or localisation, and the terms are often used interchangeably. Most important is that your organisation has an agreed-upon definition of these terms and which term/s you use.

In all policies, definitions play a crucial role in establishing shared language and clarity.

ACFID has defined four key terms used in the Code and resources.

- Local Actors: Describes a wide range of individuals, organisations and institutions, who have the knowledge and expertise to understand and respond to the needs of their communities. This can include local and national governments, local and national NGOs, civil society organisations, community-led organisations and communities.
- Locally-Led Action: Locally-Led development and humanitarian action recognises, respects and strengthens the leadership and decision-making of local actors who are best placed to understand and respond to the needs of their communities. By its nature, this will look different in each country context, and even within countries or programs. Successful Locally-Led action recognises how power imbalances influence development and humanitarian initiatives. It is facilitated by strong and equal partnership, quality direct funding, transparency and mutual accountability, and diversity and empowerment in staffing and leadership.
- Partners: Organisations, individuals and other parties we work jointly with, who have defined roles and

responsibilities for achieving common goals.

- **Primary Stakeholders:** The term used in the Code of Conduct to refer to those whom we seek to support, work with and directly benefit through development and humanitarian initiatives. All individuals who are participants in, and are directly affected by, development and humanitarian initiatives. They may also be known as beneficiaries or local people.

While these can be translated directly across to member organisations' policies, one or all of them will likely not be specific enough to guide your organisation. It is therefore essential to critically review these terms and tailor them specifically to your organisation. Working together with other definitions can help bring focus, for example, by clarifying the terms "local actor", "primary stakeholder", and "leadership", which can help clarify *your* definition of locally-led more clearly.

Some terms are included here as a starting point for internal discussion.

- **Power:** The ability to both make a decision and have the relationships and resources to act on it. Can be formal and/or informal, earned or not and not always visible. Resources can be financial, in-kind and/or human resources.
- **Leadership:** Linked to power and likewise can be formal and/or informal. Also linked to reform, or change and trust, especially authentic leadership as decided by primary stakeholders.
- **Local:** Very specific to your organisation. Consider the relationship to primary stakeholders in your discussion.
- **Localisation:** The internal process an organisation undertakes to enable Locally-Led Action, for example: shifting processes, structure, and decision-making.

- **Locally-Led Development and Humanitarian Action:** Very specific to your organisation and informed by the above definitions. Also, necessarily adaptive and informed by the local context.
- **Impact, change, including systems change:**
- **Sustainability:** Linked to an exit strategy, success measures and the role/s your organisation will play.

Resources you could draw on, found in the [ACFID Resource Hub](#), are:

- [Taking British politics and colonialism out of our language: Bond's language guide](#)
- [Inclusive Language Guide](#) (Oxfam)
- [SIDA Inclusive Language Guide](#)

## POLICY COMMITMENT AND IMPLICATIONS

Your policy statement will clearly articulate commitment over a defined period and outline the implications of this commitment. These implications will be unique to each organisation, depending on its structure, intentions, and current position on the continuum of Locally-Led Action.

It is advised to include commitment statements on the transformative and relational conditions for internal change as described in the [Water of Systems Change](#) model, as their absence will make implementation more difficult:

- **Mindset/Culture:** Address unconscious bias, norms, and assumptions.
- **Power Dynamics:** Clarify how power is distributed and utilised.
- **Relationships and Communication:** Define principles for interaction and information exchange, including consideration of 2-way knowledge sharing, and mutual appreciation of expertise.

The [ACFID Toolkit](#) includes nine Domains, representing key areas of an organisation's systems and processes. These Domains provide a framework for organisations to reflect on various levers and areas for advancing their efforts towards Locally-Led action. [Tool 3: Self-Assessment of Current Practice](#) in the Toolkit assists in clarifying your current position and will help in identifying and clarifying your policy focus areas. See [Annex A](#) for an example of using these domains in your policy.

Remember:

- to include any specific focus areas that are essential to achieving your organisation's locally-led action goal.

- all policy statements should remain high-level, as operations are informed by the policy, not embedded within it.
- a commitment to measurement and reporting should also be included.
- consideration of resources and the correlation between resources and power.
- clarification of your commitment to [fundraising messaging](#) (under Communication in the Resource Hub) is essential for many organisations.



Jimmy holds his Unblocked Cash e-Card which he has used to purchase tin roofing for building a veranda on his house. Photo: Arlene Bax/Oxfam

# Measurement

An organisational maturity model helps describe the baseline and potential next steps toward the intended goal and therefore facilitates progress tracking and planning.

A simple maturity model using the ACFID domains are shown here as an example. This is generic and is intended as an example only. To make it a meaningful measurement and planning tool, the details, including relevant domains, existing practices, and future practices, need to be refined for your organisation.

Regardless of whether an organisation measures its progress toward shifting internal processes that enable a shift in power and role, the measurement of Locally-Led action must be conducted in collaboration with primary stakeholders and local actors, and tailored to the specific context. Each country or even within countries, programs can utilise the [Movement for Community-Led Development tool](#), for example, as a baseline and then to measure progress.

Example: Maturity Model, based on ACFID's Locally Led Continuum (see Figure 1, pg 2)

ACFID Domains	A. Externally Led, Local Actors Informed	B. Externally Led, Local Actors Consulted	C. Externally Led, Local Actors Involved	D. Locally Co-led with External Delegation	E. Locally-Led and Externally Supported
Organisational Maturity	<p><b>1. Informal/Reactive</b></p> <p>Discussed but not applied. People don't know what they don't know. At this stage, success depends on the efforts of individuals, or heroes, rather than on processes. Ad hoc. Tribal knowledge. More focused on people than systems.</p>	<p><b>2. Defined / Emerging</b></p> <p>Key processes are defined but not applied by all staff at all times. There is increased shared understanding and therefore less friction. Consistent practices emerge in silos and departments. Teams know what they don't know, and data is starting to be collected for learning. Consider levels two to three to be a starting point for significant improvement.</p>	<p><b>3. Integrated</b></p> <p>Processes and competencies required to deliver LLA are in place and aligned with strategic intent. Teams use processes consistently and predictably across the organisation and manage work through metrics and feedback loops. Cross-functional teams work well. Miscommunications and internal conflicts are rare.</p>	<p><b>4. Strategic</b></p> <p>With the LLA approach embedded in strategy and KPIs, the organisation's capability to support Locally Led Action has been embedded and is being used with consistency.</p>	<p><b>5. Optimising</b></p> <p>There is ongoing critical questioning of the role and value being achieved, with care taken not to replace local actors. Evidence suggests stepping back when not needed. Respect is shown for how each location delivers this differently, with learning from one another and sharing insights with the sector more widely.</p>

ACFID Domains	A. Externally Led, Local Actors Informed	B. Externally Led, Local Actors Consulted	C. Externally Led, Local Actors Involved	D. Locally Co-led with External Delegation	E. Locally-Led and Externally Supported
<p>Quality and Effectiveness Planning and Design Activities such as program design and planning processes of development and humanitarian initiatives</p>	<p>External actors lead planning with ad-hoc processes. Local actors receive basic information. Limited systematic approach to incorporating local perspectives. Some examples of good practice but not systematised.</p>	<p>External actors lead planning with defined consultation processes. Local input collected but not systematically applied. Processes exist but inconsistent implementation across organisation.</p>	<p>External actors lead with well-integrated local consultation processes. Local actors actively contribute to planning. Systematic application of consultation processes with good integration of local perspectives.</p>	<p>Strategic approach to shared planning. Local actors have significant decision-making authority. Processes aligned with strategic intent and consistently applied across organisation.</p>	<p>Local actors lead planning with continuous optimisation. External support provided when requested. Innovative approaches to planning that adapt and evolve based on local needs and learning.</p>
<p>Quality and Effectiveness: Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation The ongoing implementation of development and humanitarian initiatives. It also includes activities which monitor the projects implementation and progress towards the agreed outcomes. It also includes end of the project evaluation and sharing of lessons learnt with stakeholders.</p>	<p>External control without standardised implementation. Local actors receive basic progress updates. Ad-hoc monitoring with limited local involvement. Evaluation done externally without systematic local input.</p>	<p>External control with defined but inconsistent processes. Local actors consulted on implementation challenges. Monitoring systems defined but not fully applied. Evaluation includes local perspectives but externally controlled.</p>	<p>External leadership with integrated local participation. Local actors actively involved in monitoring. Well-integrated systems that incorporate local knowledge and feedback. Collaborative evaluation approaches.</p>	<p>Strategic shared responsibility for implementation. Local actors have significant control over monitoring systems. Strategic alignment of evaluation with local priorities and external requirements.</p>	<p>Local leadership with continuous optimisation of implementation. Local actors control monitoring and evaluation systems. Innovative approaches that continuously adapt based on learning and changing local contexts.</p>

ACFID Domains	A. Externally Led, Local Actors Informed	B. Externally Led, Local Actors Consulted	C. Externally Led, Local Actors Involved	D. Locally Co-led with External Delegation	E. Locally-Led and Externally Supported
<p>Collaboration The relationships our organisation have with other organisations (or parts of organisations) and groups.</p>	<p>Ad-hoc collaboration with limited structure. Local actors informed of partnership decisions. A transactional approach to relationship management. Limited systematic engagement with local partners.</p>	<p>Defined collaboration processes but inconsistent application. Local actors consulted on partnership approaches. Processes exist for engagement but not consistently implemented across all relationships.</p>	<p>Well-integrated collaboration with systematic local involvement. Local actors actively participate in partnership governance. Collaborative processes well-embedded and consistently applied.</p>	<p>Strategic collaboration aligned with locally-led priorities. Local actors have significant influence over partnership decisions. Strategic approach to building and maintaining collaborative relationships.</p>	<p>Local actors lead collaboration with continuous optimisation. Partnership approaches continuously evolve based on local priorities and learning. Innovative collaborative models that adapt to changing contexts.</p>
<p>Communication External communication products, representation to the public and ANGO engagement with their donors</p>	<p>Ad-hoc communication with limited local input. One-way information flow from external to local actors. Unclear complex messaging with limited coordination. Local perspectives minimally included.</p>	<p>Defined communication processes with local consultation. Systematic collection of local input but externally controlled messaging. Processes defined but not consistently applied across all communications.</p>	<p>Well-integrated communication with active local participation. Local actors contribute to messaging and communication strategies. Systematic integration of local perspectives in all communications.</p>	<p>Strategic communication aligned with local priorities. Local actors have significant control over messaging. Strategic approach to communication that balances local and external needs.</p>	<p>Local actors lead communication with continuous optimisation. Communication approaches continuously evolve based on local feedback and changing contexts. Innovative communication methods that prioritise local voices.</p>

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<p>Advocacy Activities undertaken to change the systemic and structural causes of poverty and disadvantage, which may include popular campaigning, lobbying, research, policy positions, alliances, and the use of other media. It may occur both in Australia and globally.</p>	<p>Ad-hoc advocacy with limited local involvement. External actors determine advocacy positions. Unplanned approach to advocacy activities. Local perspectives minimally considered in implementation.</p>	<p>Defined advocacy processes with local consultation. Local priorities considered but external actors lead advocacy activities. Processes exist but inconsistent implementation across advocacy work.</p>	<p>Well-integrated advocacy with active local participation. Local actors actively contribute to advocacy strategies and activities. Systematic integration of local priorities in advocacy work.</p>	<p>Strategic advocacy aligned with local priorities. Local actors have significant influence over advocacy positions and activities. Strategic approach that balances local priorities with broader advocacy goals.</p>	<p>Local actors lead advocacy with continuous optimisation. Advocacy approaches continuously evolve based on local priorities and changing contexts. Innovative advocacy methods that amplify local voices.</p>
<p>Risk Activities such as risk management and contractual compliance.</p>	<p>Heavy risk management with limited local input. External actors control risk assessments. Approach to risk mitigation not contextualised. Local knowledge is minimally incorporated in risk planning.</p>	<p>Defined risk management processes with local consultation. Local knowledge is considered but external actors lead risk management. Processes exist but inconsistent application across risk areas.</p>	<p>Well-integrated risk management with active local participation. Local actors actively contribute to risk assessment and mitigation strategies. Systematic integration of local knowledge in risk management.</p>	<p>Strategic risk management aligned with local priorities. Local actors have significant authority over risk decisions. Strategic approach that balances local risk tolerance with external requirements.</p>	<p>Local actors lead risk management with continuous optimisation. Risk approaches continuously evolve based on local contexts and learning. Innovative risk management that prioritises local knowledge and priorities.</p>

ACFID Domains	A. Externally Led, Local Actors Informed	B. Externally Led, Local Actors Consulted	C. Externally Led, Local Actors Involved	D. Locally Co-led with External Delegation	E. Locally-Led and Externally Supported
<p>Governance NGO senior management and boards, and internal and external organisational commitments.</p>	<p>Limited local representation. External governance structures dominate. Top-down decision-making processes. Local actors have minimal formal governance roles.</p>	<p>Defined governance processes with local consultation. Local representatives included but external actors retain control. Governance processes defined but not consistently applied across all decision-making.</p>	<p>Well-integrated governance with active local participation. Local actors have meaningful roles in governance structures. Systematic integration of local perspectives in governance decisions.</p>	<p>Strategic governance aligned with local priorities. Local actors have significant decision-making authority in governance. Strategic approach to governance that balances local and external requirements.</p>	<p>Authentic local leaders reflecting primary stakeholders are involved in governance with continuous optimisation. Governance structures continuously evolve based on local aspirations strengthening and learning. Innovative governance models that prioritise local leadership and decision-making in place.</p>
<p>Resource Management The management and use of resources, including fundraising and financial management.</p>	<p>Limited resource allocation with back-to-back contracts requiring complicated compliance documentation. External actors control resource decisions. Controller approach to resource management. Local priorities or organisational strengthening minimally considered in allocation decisions.</p>	<p>Defined resource management processes with local consultation. Local input considered but external actors retain control over allocations. Processes exist but inconsistent application across resource decisions.</p>	<p>Well-integrated resource management with active local participation. Local actors actively contribute to resource allocation decisions. Systematic integration of local priorities in resource management.</p>	<p>Strategic resource management aligned with local priorities. Local actors have significant control over resource allocation. Strategic approach that balances local priorities with external requirements.</p>	<p>Local actors lead resource management with continuous optimisation. Resource approaches continuously evolve based on local priorities and changing contexts. Innovative resource management that maximises local control and effectiveness.</p>

ACFID Domains	A. Externally Led, Local Actors Informed	B. Externally Led, Local Actors Consulted	C. Externally Led, Local Actors Involved	D. Locally Co-led with External Delegation	E. Locally-Led and Externally Supported
<p>People and Cultural Recruitment and staffing, identifying and planning for future staff competencies and experience, capacity strengthening, including mentoring and twinning approaches.</p>	<p>Western-centric people management with limited cultural consideration. External actors control staffing decisions. The approach to cultural integration is not well-integrated across the organisation. Local cultural perspectives are minimally considered in people policies.</p>	<p>Defined people management processes with cultural consultation. Local cultural perspectives considered but external actors retain control. Processes exist but inconsistent application across people management.</p>	<p>Well-integrated people management with active local cultural participation. Local actors actively contribute to staffing and cultural decisions. Systematic integration of local cultural values in people management.</p>	<p>Strategic people management aligned with local cultural priorities. Local actors have significant authority over staffing and cultural approaches. Strategic approach that balances local culture with organisational requirements.</p>	<p>Local actors lead people management with continuous cultural optimisation. People approaches continuously evolve based on local cultural values and contexts. Innovative people management that prioritises local cultural leadership.</p>

If you are looking beyond qualitative, behavioural methodologies for measurement, to quantitative output measurements, several frameworks can be used to build an indicator bank for your organisation, including:

- [NEAR Localistion Performance Measurement Framework \(2019\)](#)
- [Accountability & Metrics \(2023\)](#): PALM- Pledge for Change Accountability and learning Mechanism
- [Localisation in Practice, Emerging indicators and Practical recommendations \(2018\)](#)

# Credits

This guidance document was developed with the support of Eleanor Loudon, Fit 4 Purpose.

The guidance draws on contributions from the following ACFID members who participated in the 2025 Locally-Led Action Policy Writeshops: Adara Group, Union Aid Abroad (APHEDA), Assisi Aid Projects, Australian Lutheran World Service, Australian Volunteers International, Burnet Institute, Caritas Australia, Family Planning NSW, FemiliPNG Australia, Fred Hollows Foundation, Good Return, Health Equity Matters, Kokoda Track Foundation, Kyeema Foundation, Leprosy Mission, Love Mercy Australia, Mary McKillop Today, The Nusatenggara Association, Oxfam Australia, Transform Aid, Uniting World, University of Technology Sydney - Institute for Sustainable Futures.

# Annex A: Example Policy Template used in the Writeshops

## LOCALLY-LED ACTION POLICY

Policy number	<<insert number>>	Version	<<insert number>>
Drafted by	<<insert name>>	Approved by the Board on	<<insert date>>
Responsible person	<<insert name>>	Scheduled review date	<<insert date>>

## INTRODUCTION (WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT TO OUR ORGANISATION?)

Xxxx

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide a clear definition of Locally-Led Action and a clear direction for strategic, operational and programmatic decision-making, as we deliberately shift power to local actors.
- establish principles that ensure [xxxx] engages with local systems authentically, while recognising diverse and changing contexts, capabilities, and requirements across populations, countries and regions.

## DEFINITIONS (FOR EXAMPLE)

- Locally-Led Action
- Local
- Localisation
- Power
- Intermediary

## **POLICY (COMMITMENT, TIMEFRAME AND IMPLICATIONS)**

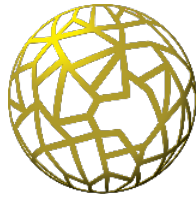
Key policy statement (example): [xxxx] commitments to fundamentally shifting power to xxxx for Locally-Led reform, over the next xxx years.

As a result (for example), we commit to: (implications specific to the organisational context)

- Mindsets and culture: addressing unconscious biases, assumptions, and norms:
- Relationships and communication:
- Power dynamics:
- Quality & Effectiveness: Planning and Design:
- Quality & Effectiveness: Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation:
- Collaboration:
- Communication:
- Advocacy:
- Risk Management:
- Governance:
- Resource Management:
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**COVER PHOTO:** Ganga from Gairidada, Kalikot, carefully prepares rice seeds for planting during the pre-monsoon season. Ganga and her husband received polyhouse support which is helping her family with increased production and thus sustainable livelihood, through INF's Climate Change Adaptation for Sustainable Livelihood project. (Photo: INF Nepal)

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