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RESEARCH CENTRE FOR
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THE SOUTH AS GAME CHANGERS: REWRITING THE RULES AND REDEFINING THE BOUNDARIES

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African Network against Extrajudicial Killings and
Enforced Disappearances (ANEKED)



**AFRICAN NETWORK AGAINST EXTRAJUDICIAL
KILLINGS AND ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES**



About ANEKED

The African Network against Extrajudicial Killings and Enforced Disappearances (ANEKED) is a victim-led civil society organisation campaigning against forced disappearances and summary executions, in addition to advocating for justice for victims. As part of its mission, ANEKED has played an integral role in the Gambia's transitional process through monitoring proceedings, acting as a watchdog on the implementation of the TRRC recommendations, in addition to documenting human rights violations, mapping locations and reporting on perpetrators.

The organisation's body of knowledge on enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings is well regarded and as such, the publications released by ANEKED are being used as evidence in other universal jurisdiction trials in Germany and in Switzerland as well as a case in the USA against alleged perpetrators of the Jammeh regime. ANEKED is also pursuing litigation on behalf of victims, with four cases presently before regional courts.

About the Author

Lesley is a human rights lawyer with experience on enforced disappearances. Since joining ANEKED she has worked on its strategic litigation portfolio. More recently, Lesley has been appointed to head ANEKED's Law and Policy section. She is committed to pursuing justice for victims in addition to performing outreach that furthers the organisation's goals.



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INTRODUCTION

"The South may be seen as an analytical tool for understanding the history, geography, politics, economics and society of much of the world. It is also a field of power."¹

In broad terms, the North/South² divide speaks to a hierarchical, uneven and unequal relationship between the two regions. The relationship is skewed toward the North³, which is portrayed as technologically advanced, socially liberal, and economically stable, with the opposite characteristics ascribed to the South. These dichotomies, albeit at first glance simplistic, have been demonstrated throughout history and manifest themselves in development work, fiscal policies, and a plethora of other areas. Engagement between Northern actors and/or institutions and Southern counterparts are framed within this dichotomy. Institutions, including universities, non-governmental organisations (NGOs)⁴, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs)⁵ and other bodies, also operate within this ecosystem. Therefore, their work is neither impervious nor immune to the imbalance that impacts North/South relations.

The epistemic centrality of the North entrenches unequal power relations through the creation of a normative framework based in the North and an "other" derived from the South.⁶ Findings from a recent study⁷ found that organisations in the global South that collaborate with partners in the Global North experience unequal power relations. Factors that solidified the power imbalance related to unequal roles in budgeting, decision-making (including project planning and implementation), and equal opportunities for input. The result of the power imbalances was that global South partners are marginalised and sidelined, which results in undermining the potency of global scholarship and

¹ Sud, Nikita and Sanchez-Ancochea, Diego. (2022) "Southern Discomfort: Interrogating the Category of the Global South" *Development and Change* 53 (6): 1145. Available at: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/dech.12742> (Accessed on: July 11, 2023).

² We acknowledge the merits of the debate on using terminology such as "North/South" in order to describe global structural inequalities that are linked to, wholly or in part, legacies of colonialism and neo-liberal policies. However, we accept that in this context such a distinction is permissible in the broader contextual analysis that we evaluate.

³ When speaking of the North it can be taken to include "HIC", thereby including countries that are not geographically located in the global North such as Australia and New Zealand. Also, the terms "North" and "global North" are used interchangeably as are "South" and "global South".

⁴ Non-governmental organisations.

⁵ International non-governmental organisations.

⁶ Sud, Nikita and Sanchez-Ancochea, Diego. (2022) "Southern Discomfort: Interrogating the Category of the Global South" *Development and Change* 53 (6): 1132 and 1134. Available at: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/dech.12742> (Accessed on: July 11, 2023).

⁷ The Rights Co Lab created the Re-imagining International Non-Governmental Organisation (RINGO) project in order to "foster a re-examination of the purpose, roles and delivery mechanisms of international NGOs and the impact on the global civil society ecosystem." From August 5 2020 - November 30 2020 a survey was conducted and responses obtained from a total of 609 civil society organisations who operate in Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, South America and Sub-Saharan Africa (92% of whom have collaborated with between 1-10 INGOs). The full report is available at: <https://globalfundcommunityfoundations.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/RINGO-RESEARCH-REPORT-FINAL-V-compressed.pdf> (Accessed on: July 11, 2023).



ideology.⁸ These manifestations of an unequal power imbalance are tangible. There are other subtle nuances that underscore the differences between the Northern actors and Southern actors, as well as how their roles and contributions to a project cycle are viewed.

For example, partners in the Global South have been viewed or made to feel like “data couriers” or “local brokers”.⁹ Additionally, the descriptive language used by Northern actors to describe their work in the South reflects the power imbalance between the North and the South. Terminology¹⁰ such as “quick and dirty” is used to describe short projects that require research. Likewise “sample safaris” are ‘flying’ trips to field sites in the South.¹¹ In a similar vein, remote oversight by those in the Global North is defined as ‘postal research’¹²

While even the most forward-thinking partners can address some, if not most, of the structural inequalities between the North and the South, the language of funding bodies can still be problematic. For example, as part of the UK Department for International Development (DfID, now the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office)’s efforts on tackling global challenges its report¹³, put forward the view that the UK’s wider development strategy would be “underpinned by a very clear guiding principle: that the UK’s development spending will meet our moral obligation to the world’s poorest and also support our *national interest*”¹⁴ (emphasis mine). The reference to the ‘national interest’ does not correlate to an equitable partnership with partners in the Global South.¹⁵ In an era when decolonisation debates are prevalent, insufficiently considered language that potentially taps into colonial discourses can undermine the best attempts at creating equitable relationships.¹⁶

⁸ Aboderin, I., Fuh, D., Gebremariam, E. B. and Segalo, P. (2023) Beyond ‘equitable partnerships’: the imperative of transformative research collaborations with Africa, *Global Social Challenges Journal*, 2: 213

⁹ Flint, A., Howard, G., Baidya, M., Wondim, T., Poudel, M., Nijhawan, A., Mulugeta, Y. and Sharma, S. (2022) “Equity in Global North-South research partnerships: interrogating UK funding models”, *Global Social Challenges Journal*, 1: 86

¹⁰ This terminology is also found in other fields, most notably the mosquito researcher’ term in healthcare ‘used to describe a researcher who flies in to collect blood samples and flies out. (Edejer 1999 in Flint, A., Howard, G., Baidya, M., Wondim, T., Poudel, M., Nijhawan, A., Mulugeta, Y. and Sharma, S. (2022) “Equity in Global North-South research partnerships: interrogating UK funding models”, *Global Social Challenges Journal*, 1: 86).

¹¹ Flint, A., Howard, G., Baidya, M., Wondim, T., Poudel, M., Nijhawan, A., Mulugeta, Y. and Sharma, S. (2022) “Equity in Global North-South research partnerships: interrogating UK funding models”, *Global Social Challenges Journal*, 1: 85

¹² Flint, A., Howard, G., Baidya, M., Wondim, T., Poudel, M., Nijhawan, A., Mulugeta, Y. and Sharma, S. (2022) Equity in Global North-South research partnerships: interrogating UK funding models, *Global Social Challenges Journal*, 1: 86

¹³ Department for International Development (DfID). (November 2015) UK Aid: tackling global challenges in the National Interest, Cm 9163 Available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a81adae40f0b623026989a0/ODA_strategy_final_web_0905.pdf

(Accessed on: October 27, 2023).

¹⁴ Department for International Development (DfID). (November 2015) UK Aid: tackling global challenges in the National Interest, Cm 9163, pp. 9 Available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a81adae40f0b623026989a0/ODA_strategy_final_web_0905.pdf

(Accessed on: October 27, 2023).

¹⁵ Flint, A., Howard, G., Baidya, M., Wondim, T., Poudel, M., Nijhawan, A., Mulugeta, Y. and Sharma, S. (2022) Equity in Global North-South research partnerships: interrogating UK funding models, *Global Social Challenges Journal*, 1: 80

¹⁶The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office’s website outlines its position in plan terms, i.e. that its funded research ‘support[s] the delivery of UK government objectives’, which include enhancing the UK’s ‘global influence’.



In order to change the narrative, partners in the Global South must find ways to identify, acknowledge and challenge the disparities in North/South partnerships, but also in finding and creating sustainable processes to level the playing field.

Levelling the playing field speaks to the need for the actors in the South to become agents of change and chart their way forward, on their terms. One cannot underestimate that levelling the playing field is indeed an ambitious task and can vary based on the context taking into account the discipline, the nature of the partnership (and the specific partners in question), and a range of other variables. However, when one speaks of creating a more equitable balance, it is important to consider that the North/South divide can be problematic.

A problem may arise from the generalisation (and implication) that power is found in the North only thereby promulgating an underlying assumption that Northern-facing practices are to be exemplified. Firstly, it ignores the gradations in power between the North and the South, which in some contexts may not be so stark. Secondly and linked to the first point, it obscures the gradations within the South itself. Both points will be explored in further detail below.

With regard to the first point, when one speaks of levelling the playing field it generally means acknowledging the structural inequalities that plague or contour North/South partnerships. Structural inequalities may arise from the lingering effects of historic and colonial legacies that significantly distort power relations, and/or linked to modern hegemonic systems. Certain nations or regions (North America, United Kingdom, and Western Europe) have become axes of power with the most leverage in terms of funding and long-standing recognised academic and research traditions. This means that the epistemologies, languages, infrastructure, theories and concepts used by and within those axes become the basis on which research is funded, collaborations are forged, and which fields or topics are deemed relevant for inquiry.¹⁷ Stemming from this, within the South, particularly with some middle income countries (MICs), there are nations and regions whose epistemologies, languages¹⁸ and infrastructure are drawn closely to the

(Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). (2020) "Research at FCDO", GOV.UK, <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-development-office/about/research>. in Flint, A., Howard, G., Baidya, M., Wondim, T., Poudel, M., Nijhawan, A., Mulugeta, Y. and Sharma, S. (2022) Equity in Global North-South research partnerships: interrogating UK funding models, *Global Social Challenges Journal*, 1: 79). It appears from looking at the website that the language has been updated to include phrases such as "maximise the UKs' impact internationally".

¹⁷ Aboderin, Isabella. (August 6, 2023) "Africa-UK research partnerships must aspire to more than equity", Wonkhe. Available at: <https://wonkhe.com/blogs/africa-uk-research-partnerships-must-aspire-to-more-than-equity/> (Accessed on: October 25, 2023).

¹⁸ "While publishing in English is the catalyst for many international partnerships, the incentives for researchers in the Global South to seek out partners in the Global North go beyond the challenges of language. Evidence suggests that Global



major axes of power in the Global North and for lack of available resources (including sufficient human resources) and funding, and hence the differences between them are not so stark. It is important to assess the power dynamics of the Northern actors vis-à-vis that of the South as it may change depending on the parties involved. In other words, care must be taken here in viewing the Global South as homogenous. The historical and economic complexity of the Global South, which spans countries with divergent historical narratives, different official languages and economies, and scientific undertakings that reflect different stages of development.¹⁹

Moving on to the second point, South/South partnerships are generally thought of as equitable in nature, at least more so than North/South partnerships. The underlying premise is that these partnerships are “horizontal” and allow for partners to engage in sharing, learning, and exploring their complementary strengths in order to go beyond their traditional role as recipients.²⁰ Furthermore, such partnerships are understood to be based on equity, trust, mutual benefit and long-term relations.²¹ Therefore, in the long run South/South collaborations are expected that to be more inclusive, produce more effective outcomes and strengthen capacities, which in turn are expected to contribute to institutional change and strengthening.²²

Benefits of South/South partnerships can be:

1. A focus on issues, themes and subject matter that are of interest to partners, as opposed to what is dictated by HIC.
2. Challenging the notion of “otherness”, that is, focusing on issues that matter to the people who wish to investigate them.
3. Sharing of expertise and capacities with partners who have recent or similar experience on a given phenomena. It can be a local or regional partner, or from the South more broadly.


South-South partnerships tend to be viewed as more parochial by high-ranked journals and, as a result, the research generated by such partnerships does not tend to feature in them as strongly as that generated by Global North-South partnerships (Ordóñez-Matamoros et al, 2020). This bias effectively discourages Global South-South partnerships, and thus knowledge production, that might, again, be both more multidimensional and also more appropriate to the challenges faced by communities in the Global South.” in Flint, A., Howard, G., Baidya, M., Wondim, T., Poudel, M., Nijhawan, A., Mulugeta, Y. and Sharma, S. (2022) “Equity in Global North-South research partnerships: interrogating UK funding models”, *Global Social Challenges Journal*, 1: 84

¹⁹ Gueye, A., Choi, E., Guzmán-Valenzuela, C., & Gregorutti, G. (2022). Global South Research Collaboration: A Comparative Perspective. *International Journal of African Higher Education*, 9(3), 64. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.6017/ijah.v9i3.16045> (Accessed on: October 15, 2023).

²⁰ The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (July 2011) “Unlocking the Potential of South-South Cooperation: Policy Recommendations from the Task Team” on South-South Cooperation” pp 00 Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/TT-SSC%20Policy%20Recommendations.pdf> (Accessed on: October 25, 2023).

²¹ The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (July 2011) “Unlocking the Potential of South-South Cooperation: Policy Recommendations from the Task Team” on South-South Cooperation”, OECD.ORG, pp 00 and 01. Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/TT-SSC%20Policy%20Recommendations.pdf> (Accessed on: October 25, 2023).

²² *Ibid.*

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4. A more open appreciation of different kinds of knowledge and skills as a resource. Change in jargon from “bottom up”/“top down”. A rejection of the notion of Southern partners as sub-contractors.
 5. Creating hubs outside of the North, which may facilitate better travel opportunities.
 6. Fostering cooperation and exchange and deliberately and/or organically building consortium of knowledge, expertise and solidarity.

Moving from theory to action takes bold steps. The fact that stakeholders from the North and South are grappling with the challenges of promoting partnerships that are non-hierarchical, built on mutual understanding and trust, and that reflect the different partners’ values and priorities, is a good sign and undoubtedly a step in the right direction. Having truly equitable²³ partnerships must therefore go beyond good intentions and it involve recognising structural power differences, unconscious bias and divergent incentive structures.²⁴ Nevertheless, best practices can be difficult to cement given various internal and external factors at play.²⁵


Without disregarding the two points above, one manoeuvre to create a more equitable balance can be to look at South/South partnerships. South/South partnerships have the benefit of flipping some of the narratives that contour North/South partnerships. South-South research is not just a vehicle to erode some of the barriers, hurdles and unsettling practices in the North/South dynamic, it can also drive transformative change that has the ability to chart a different course altogether.

This toolkit focuses on the examination of the ethical considerations and role of HIC research partnerships in strengthening and stimulating South/South research. In order to avoid the same ethical dilemmas that are prevalent in North/South partnerships, it is vital for South/South partners to look inward. That is, they must make an effort not to reinforce the same unequal divides that are prevalent in North/South partnerships. We refer to the process of looking inward as a “self-audit”. The “self-audit” can therefore be defined in its most simple terms as the process by which Southern organisations look for ways in which unequal dichotomies or structures can fuel (or erode) participation and the opportunities given to all. The origins of the term come from the social audits that companies go

²³ Aboderin et. al consider using a “transformative” approach. See Aboderin, I., Fuh, D., Gebremariam, E. B. and Segalo, P. (2023) Beyond ‘equitable partnerships’: the imperative of *transformative* research collaborations with Africa, *Global Social Challenges Journal*, 2: 220

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Izzi, Valeria. (June 2018) “Research with development impact: Lessons from the Ecosystem Services for Poverty Alleviation programme”, Ecosystem Services for Poverty Alleviation (ESPA) Directorate, pp. 24. Available at: https://www.espa.ac.uk/files/espa/Research%20with%20development%20impact_WP_final.pdf (Accessed on: October 25, 2023).



through in order to make sure that they adhere to certain standards. The audit process is common in industrial or manufacturing sectors whose consumers wish to know that products were made in adherence with labour codes and good working conditions. Prior to these audits, companies may “self-audit” as a means to ensure that they meet the requirements on which their performance will be based. Self-auditing in this context refers to the process whereby a partner (be it an organisation, research body, institute, collective, etc.) takes conscious and determined steps in order to ensure that opportunities for participation and recognition are shared *fairly* and *equitably*. The partner can create overarching guidelines or they can do so on a case-by-case basis taking account of the project in question. The aim is to extend a mirror into the organisational/institutional practices that reflect and perpetuate the same inequalities mirrored in partnerships with HIC partners and those in the South.

SELF-AUDIT IN PRACTICE

Social Capital

As mentioned earlier in this paper, power is relational and can be based on one’s physical proximity or familiarity with the epistemologies, languages, infrastructure, theories and concepts of the major axes of power. So to do countries based outside of these axes can measure their power by their closeness to these factors, so too can people. Social capital influences the opportunities for collaboration not only on the macro scale (country to country/region), it is also important at the micro (individual level). Individual characteristics taken separately or in combination such as work experience in the North, academic qualifications from a recognised institution (normally based in the North), and language competencies allow one to have the personal leverage needed to forge connections.²⁶ The likelihood of collaboration increases when scholars occupy the same space, and as foreign students become familiar with the socio-cultural norms defining the academic cultures of their universities and programmes.²⁷

Within the organisation, it is important to make sure that persons with the most social capital²⁸ are not always placed at the forefront. When possible, the benefit of social capital must be shared and multiplied.

²⁶ Gueye, A., Choi, E., Guzmán-Valenzuela, C., & Gregorutti, G. (2022). Global South Research Collaboration: A Comparative Perspective. *International Journal of African Higher Education*, 9(3), 66 and 67. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.6017/ijah.v9i3.16045> (Accessed on: October 15, 2023).

²⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 77

²⁸ In order to share social capital, a “bringing on board” approach is taken. The person with the initial social capital includes (brings on board) who can also benefit from the connection made. That way social capital is shared amongst the team members rather than harnessed in one individual or certain individuals.



In practice, this starts at the recruitment phase. Targeted recruitment takes place with graduates from local universities²⁹. The recruitment stage is buttressed by a view of the candidates' overall skill set. Such a step may seem easy and obvious, but for a small organisation that relies on project funding, it is a key step to eradicate unconscious bias that may undeniably favour certain applicants and exclude other suitably qualified ones. When assessing an application, the candidates' social capital must also be measured along with the organisation's other goals. Since outreach at local and national level, victim support and dealing with sensitive and confidential information are part of the job, it is important that a candidate has a skill set that reflects the overall needs of the job. Therefore, while a high-quality degree may be attractive, it should not be a prerequisite. Other assessment criteria focus on an applicant's ability to demonstrate strong skills (or develop potential) in being proactive, leadership, and communication to name a few. If the job requires specialised skills or qualifications, the applicant's background is considered without prejudice to where their degree was earned or their skills developed.

The aim here is to make sure that unconscious bias does not infiltrate the hiring choices that may lead to a perpetuation of the structural challenges that fuel power imbalances.

Recruitment is relatively easy to manage because it is internal to the organisation. Challenges arise where the demands by funders and/or partners placed externally on the organisation may expressly or implicitly set a preference on an employee whose qualifications and background align more with a North-facing gaze.

Such a situation arises most often in short project cycles (six months or less) where there is not an opportunity for capacity building, as the deadlines are tight. In such cases, it may be more expedient to assign someone with the requisite social capital. In response to this, the organisation calls for funding budgets to include capacity building. Where capacity building cannot be a realistic component as some budgets do not allow for it, it means that the organisation must use its own resources in terms of staff skills' training there is skills exchange in order to ensure that employees have skills that match local realities as well as international ones. Admittedly training and development ought to be an integral part of personnel improvement, it can also be taxing on small organisations who are time-strapped and also prove challenging when combined with high staff turnover for entry-level positions.

²⁹ As much as possible, personnel are taken from local university graduates. Even when working with students and graduates from abroad there is a concerted effort to provide opportunities for persons who have completed tertiary education locally or regionally.



Value for Money

Funders are concerned with value for money and understandably so. As aforementioned, in short project cycles it is necessary to select persons with the best skills and to attract and maintain the best access to funding, skills sets are North-gazing - even in South/South partnerships.

One of the most prevalent ways that “value for money” can be troublesome is when budgets are set. Even with South/South partnerships, in order to gain major exposure, partners prefer to meet in international “hubs”. In the human rights sector, these hubs include cities or countries where international human rights institutions, organisations, universities and/or political spheres of influence are based such as including North America and Europe. Travel is an essential way to network and meet with partners, however, ease of travel is a significant factor in determining equitably who gets to travel. In setting budgets, particularly when funds are limited, travel costs are limited if they exist at all. It has been difficult to convince funders why resources should be spent on travel when visa and administrative costs could be ‘substantial’³⁰. When there are opportunities to travel, spiralling visa and administrative costs³¹ are a huge motive for determining who gets to travel and represent the organisation - and the allocation is not always equitable. The size of the budget determines who gets to travel. What that means in practice is that where budgets do allow for the administrative costs of travel, first preference is given to persons who do not normally have the opportunity to travel frequently. While this is not ideal in practice, it illustrates that it is indeed difficult for a fair balance to be struck.

The methods of overcoming these challenges are two fold. The first in South/South partnerships is to create hubs that are more local and do not have stringent entry requirements for holders of certain travel documents.³² In addition, a strategy that has been used is to create long-term exchange programmes such as work exchanges that allow candidates placements abroad.

³⁰ ‘Substantial’ would amount to 30% of the budget or more. Where this is the case, it can be difficult to justify the direct costs of travel and fringe costs (visas, insurance, etc.) even when the travel is required and beneficial due to opportunities for networking (in turn necessary to accrue social capital). In situations where travel is covered, there is a conscious push to prioritise junior staff members who would not ordinarily have the chance go travel due to budgetary restrictions.

³¹ See: [“Visas for researchers are too expensive - and it's getting worse”](#) and [“My visa denial to enter Belgium”](#).

³² Benin, Kenya, Rwanda, Seychelles, and The Gambia have removed visa restrictions for citizens of all African countries thus facilitating easier intra-continent travel to those countries. It has been useful to use.



GUIDELINES FOR THE SOCIAL AUDIT

What these broad guidelines aim to do is develop a framework whereby we can measure how the same inequalities we confront as displayed within our contexts.

How are positions advertised / how are persons recruited?

- *Is priority given to persons who were formally educated in HIC and/or renowned/affiliated institutions?*

Persons with affiliations to institutions in HIC, particularly those that carry prestige³³, may face a particular advantage in recruitment as their connections may bring access to resources and/or opportunities that those institutions may be able to provide. In order to avoid focusing on graduates of HIC institutions, we encourage partnerships with local (and in some cases regional) institutions. The use of local institutions not only builds an on-hand talent pool, it also provides opportunities for these graduates or students to benefit from skills development and also early opportunities to liaise with international partners. In addition, partnerships with local and regional institutions prioritise knowledge and research interests that allow for inquiry to processes on the ground. [The institutional capacities of universities outside HIC are also expanding. The funding levels may not be on par with HIC institutions, but there has been noticeable improvement. Partnering with the local universities and connecting with students and faculty who have lived experiences or knowledge of the issues we wish to investigate has been a mutually beneficial way to engage future young professionals, which also providing them with opportunities to apply their curriculum.


- *How is ability measured?*

Ability is often subjective when separated from technical expertise or specific knowledge in a given area. However, there must be criteria (variable by task, organisation etc.) where the best candidate can be selected. For this to be effective in practice, if possible there must be a list of desired competencies.

In projects with short timelines, a person can be selected based on their time management skills. Or in circumstances that may require speaking to communities, a person with a particular language competency may be more suitable.

- *Who controls oversight?*

³³ Normally measured in university league tables or other types of standardised rankings.



Decision-makers whether drawn from an organisation's management, a recruitment committee or otherwise, ought to be aware of the qualities necessary for the successful functioning of the organisation's mandate. It is helpful to have a method of assessment that acts as a balance sheet in determining the "points" a candidate brings. A checklist of qualities is useful and candidates can be given a grading scale. Not only does this "quantify" and record an assessment, it is also a springboard for discussion and exploration of an unintentional bias. It must be emphasised as well that the criteria used should follow hiring norms and should not include any protected qualities such as gender, ability, marital status, etc.

How are tasks delegated?

- *Whose skills and capabilities are relied upon most?*
- *What inherent skills are most valued?*

Skills and capabilities may vary depending on the project or task. Overall, the knowledge area of the project is the first "skill" required. However, 'soft' skills such as public speaking, delegation, time management, etc. are valued. Language skills are cultural knowledge are also important. The skills required and the project timeline determine the person(s) best suited for the job.

A rotational system³⁴ and a buddy system³⁵ have been implemented in order to share opportunities more fairly.

How is there value for all persons working in the organisation/or on the project?

- *How are the responsibilities determined? How are they shared?*
- *What are the mutually agreed mechanisms to handle disputes?*

It is important here to assess advantage. For example, someone may have a situational advantage (based in the country in which the project is being undertaken), or a linguistic advantage. Responsibilities shares equitably but depends on the timeline of the project cycle.

³⁴ The rotational system is employed in a multi-year (2-5 year) project cycle where some tasks can be given to different persons throughout the project cycle. In practice, sub-dividing a key project deliverable among three persons, which each one having a chance to contribute, is utilised so that one person does not gain the visibility or reap the advantages of participation.

³⁵ A buddy system refers to partnering two persons with complementary skill sets to assist in a project/task.



Mechanisms for handling disputes must be routine (and the frequency can vary based on convenience). Where necessary, there should be an in-built channel for confidentiality.

In the project cycle is there space for capacity-building and skills management?

- *Is there scope for training within the organisation and/or the project cycle?*
- *How are opportunities for training delegated?*

Training and capacity-building is often thought of as “top-down”. Nevertheless there are opportunities for development across the board. Within the organisation it has been successful to allow the junior staff to lead on projects pertaining to youth and to share the best way to utilise information mediums (Instagram, X, etc.) to capitalise on exposure to younger persons. [The message here is that we understand that everyone in the organisation brings a particular skillset and that we all stand to gain something, therefore opportunities for learning and exchange can take place across the board, rather than in a hierarchical manner.]

Visibility factor

- *How are “foreground” (attending meetings, making presentations and/or publishing, appearing at media events, etc.) and “background” (data collection, fieldwork, writing, researching, drafting, etc.) tasks delegated?*
- *How do you prioritise who is “seen”?*
- *What are the hurdles? How are they managed?*

Using the rotational system mentioned above is one way to ensure that visibility is spread. In order to maximise visibility as well, it is important to know the employee’s goals in their career trajectory. In the interview process and during employment, it is important to tap into what an employee would expect to gain or what skillset they would like to develop. It assists a great deal in placing that employee in a position to benefit from an opportunity where they can gain visibility and credit that would lead to fulfilment of a career goal. For example, where a team member is interested in pursuing a career in journalism, the person could be placed not only in tasks where they could write, but also tasks where they could be given credit for authorship.



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