Welcome to the NIDOS Effectiveness Toolkit

Welcome to the NIDOS Effectiveness Toolkit, a guide to organisational self-assessment on effectiveness. The Effectiveness Toolkit enables an organisation to review its work both against a set of principles of good practice in international development and benchmarks of good operational practice.

Definitions: in the toolkit we have sometimes used phrases and words that might need further clarification – these are given in Annexe 1. These words are in **bold italics** in the text.

The toolkit has two elements:

1. **A FREE organisational MOT** which is available for all organisations.

2. **A Full Assessment tool** is also available but is free only to NIDOS member organisations (to join NIDOS go to [www.nidos.org.uk](http://www.nidos.org.uk) or upon application to NIDOS (contact on 0131 243 2680 or email info@nidos.org.uk).

We recommend your organisation starts with the MOT to check basic good practice and legal compliance and to determine if there are any areas that require urgent attention.

We also recommend that your organisation uses the toolkit as an organisational tool, involving all the key players from different parts of the organisation (e.g. Trustees, staff, volunteers and partners) rather than an individual doing the review. Although you may start the review ‘offline’ in groups we do strongly recommend that the MOT and full assessment results are entered in the online toolkit which will allow your organisation to compare its results with the average results for the sector. Working online will also mean that you can easily discuss and work collaboratively on the review with your partners.

NIDOS member organisations that would like help in getting started or completing the toolkit should contact NIDOS ([effectiveness@nidos.org.uk](mailto:effectiveness@nidos.org.uk)).
About the toolkit – why use it?

What is the purpose of the toolkit?

The purpose of this Effectiveness Toolkit is to provide a way for organisations to answer the question: How well are we doing?

Is the toolkit aimed at particular organisations?

Small to medium-sized voluntary organisations (NGOs) who are working in the field of international development.

How has the toolkit been developed?

This updated version has been developed by NIDOS after consultation with members in Scotland and through an independent external review, following a pilot phase in 2010.

NIDOS also links to the Bond Effectiveness Programme which we collaborate with and which has developed a wider set of related tools and resources. Bond serves a wider range of NGOs working in international development in the UK– see www.bond.org.uk

Why use the NIDOS Effectiveness Toolkit?

The toolkit will enable organisations to compare how they work with best practice in the sector and action plan for strengthening their effectiveness. It provides:

- an opportunity for your trustees, volunteers, staff & others to discuss how effective your organisation is at present
- a focus on what your organisation could do to improve outcomes
- a framework for Action Planning
- greater clarity about your organisation’s strengths & weaknesses
- the ability for your organisation to be better placed to apply for funding
- a chance to carry out a methodical organisational review
- an opportunity to celebrate really good practice
In the toolkit, what do we mean when we refer to ‘Partners’ and ‘Communities’?

Most international development projects have at least a three-way core partnership:

1. The people or communities the project is working with and in support of;

2. The host country partner - usually an NGO in country but may be another agency such as a government department or a religious institution or a business etc. There may be more than one local partner for each project and they may be of different kinds.

3. The international NGO (the 'northern' partner).

In this toolkit this three way relationship is the core set of relationships that we refer to throughout the benchmarks and indicators.

In the language of the toolkit we have deliberately not referred to the people the project is working with as 'beneficiaries' or 'poor people' but rather as communities we are working with or communities we seek to support.

Also, we have deliberately not included funders as partners - though of course they are important stakeholders in projects. We have done this because we understand that for projects or programmes to be genuinely effective they must be based on the expressed needs, priorities and rights of communities and particularly those of marginalised people in these communities. Project priorities must not be funding led if we are to contribute to genuinely sustainable development. To be effective, international NGOs, and also their in-country partners, need to have a clear focus on accountability to communities.
Overview of the toolkit

The two main stages are each sub-divided into various steps as illustrated below.

Stage 1: MOT – meeting minimum levels of good practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th><strong>Mission Statement</strong> - is an exercise that helps your organisation revisit its mission.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td><strong>MOT benchmarks</strong> - checks your organisation’s practice against a set of basic ‘must’ and ‘should’ do benchmarks to meet regulations and minimum good practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3</td>
<td><strong>MOT action planning</strong> - provides a format for organisations to plan action to remedy any gaps in basic practice highlighted in step 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 4</td>
<td><strong>Star diagram effectiveness principles</strong> - enables your organisation to compare its approach against the 10 key principles of effectiveness in international development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stage 2: Full assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 5</th>
<th><strong>Weavers Triangle</strong> - gives your organisation a structured and logical way to check if the activities your organisation carries out fit with the newly clarified mission from step 1.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 6</td>
<td><strong>Full Assessment benchmarks</strong> - checks your organisation’s practice against a fuller set of effectiveness benchmarks across all the principles and operational areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 7</td>
<td><strong>Full Assessment action planning</strong> - provides a format for organisations to plan action meet the full set of benchmarks of good practice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Guidance for doing Stage 1: the MOT

The following gives more detailed guidance for using the toolkit at MOT stage. There is further guidance for the Full Assessment stage once you move to that stage.

Working in groups and across the organisation

Before you start

There may be one main person in the organisation who is keen to use the toolkit – this is a great start and they can encourage others and help get the process moving. To have a sustainable outcome though a wider group of people needs to be involved – the following might help the ‘champion’ to think about who to involve and how to go about it:

- Ideally the board needs to drive the whole process, and ensure that adequate resources are put in place so that it works well. Different board members might wish to take the lead on different aspects or stages of the MOT.
- The organisation should decide who needs to be involved – it is important to have a range of viewpoints and free up time for any staff and volunteers who could usefully help the process. You might want to arrange an away-day in a relaxed setting.
- You might wish to involve other organisations, partners or communities in the assessment if this is possible
- Any participants will need a briefing about the process, its purpose & expectations from your organisation
- Decide who is going to keep a record of discussions and decisions and ensure there’s a clear deadline for resulting actions – the toolkit has an online action planning process to help
- If you decide to work together in a group then some organisations might wish to use a mentor or external facilitator to manage the time, tasks & participation. NIDOS members can contact effectiveness@nidos.org.uk for further details of support on this.
Ideas for using the MOT

Step 1: Mission statement guidance

This exercise revisits your organisation’s mission statement.

Before you start this (group) exercise it would be useful for someone to gather together all the mission statements they see the organisation using – e.g. on the website, or in information leaflets, etc – there may only be one, but useful to check.

In a group you might then ask the following to help your organisation decide whether its mission statement is satisfactory i.e. is it clear, current, relevant and understood by all in the organisation. It would be good, before the exercise is carried out, for everyone to have seen this list of questions:

- What is our organisation’s current mission statement – is there one?
- Is there a single version or are there several - should we agree one overall mission that will be used for everything?
- Is there a clear, shared understanding of what the mission means?
- Is what we actually do in practice (e.g. our projects) relevant to this mission? (Do a topline check on this at MOT- there is a fuller exercise on checking activities against mission at full assessment stage.)
- Do we need to either refocus the mission or the activities, so they fit each other? (Again, only do a topline check on whether it is the mission that needs to stay or whether the change in activities reflects a real and important shift in mission)
- Does our mission fit our legal document? It is important that the mission remains clearly within that of your organisation’s legal document otherwise your organisation is operating outside of its powers.

Once the mission has been clarified, fill it in online.
For you to fill in – mission statement

Fill in your mission statement in the box below:
Step 2: MOT benchmarks

There are 17 MOT benchmarks of basic good practice & legal requirements – a sub-set of the benchmarks in the full assessment.

The Effectiveness Toolkit uses a self-rating system for each *benchmark* that is arranged in 5 levels of effectiveness as outlined below. The first 2 columns (Must have, Should have) are the ones that all organisations should meet to pass the *MOT*.

There are 5 levels of increasing good practice:

1. **Must have** – the legal requirements
2. **Should have** – basic good practice
3. **Good** – what is expected of an effective organisation
4. **Excellent** – organisations that have developed their practices, systems & outcomes to a great extent
5. **Outstanding** – organisations that lead the sector by their innovative activities, their ability to influence the international development agenda & their impressive outcomes

Each of the 5 columns will have a number of *indicators* against which you can assess your organisation for that benchmark.

**How do we choose which level our organisation is at for each benchmark?**

Look at each column, starting with 1 (Must have) and ask yourselves if those indicators or statements are true about your organisation. If they all are your organisation has achieved that level, so move across to the next column and repeat the exercise. As soon as there is a column in which your organisation only meets some or none of the indicators, then your level is the last column in which your organisation met all the indicators.

See the next page for an example
Here’s an example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governance</th>
<th>Must have</th>
<th>Should have</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not yet achieving any indicators</td>
<td>Our mission is still relevant and we have reviewed it recently</td>
<td>We involve our partners when we are reviewing our mission</td>
<td>We review our mission with the communities we seek to help</td>
<td>Our volunteers &amp; staff can clearly explain our mission to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Our mission is known about by our trustees, volunteers &amp; staff</td>
<td>Our board, staff &amp; volunteers strongly identify with our shared mission</td>
<td>Our strategy is built on our mission</td>
<td>Our mission is based on human rights &amp; social justice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We refer to our mission when making larger decisions</td>
<td>Our wider stakeholders are all aware of our mission</td>
<td>Our mission is central when we explore new partnerships</td>
<td>We are confident that our daily work &amp; decisions are always consistent with our mission &amp; values</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The overall benchmark is about the **mission**. Looking at the "must have" column first, decide if your organisation does or doesn’t have a mission statement. If the answer is “yes” then move to the "should have" column. If you are confident that your organisation meets those **indicators**, then move to the "good" column. In the "good" column, suppose that you think that your stakeholders are aware of your mission, you know that your board, staff & volunteers strongly identify with your mission but you don’t involve your partners when you review your mission, then your organisation would score "should have" rather than "good". Even if your organisation meets one or two of the indicators higher up the scale, if it does not meet all the indicators at a lower level you can only score at that level where you meet all the indicators.
So if you think you are at the ‘should have’ level (i.e. you have fulfilled all the indicators in and up to that level) you should select that level as below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governance</th>
<th>1. Our mission is central to our organisation &amp; the way it works</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Must have</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not yet achieving any indicators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Our mission is known about by our trustees, volunteers &amp; staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We refer to our mission when making larger decisions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If your organisation does not meet the indicators in "must have", click on the "not yet achieving any" box.

The MOT Benchmarks are in Annexe 2
Step 3: Action Planning to meet MOT benchmarks at levels 1 and 2

If there are indicators at Levels 1 and 2 that your organisation does not meet yet then this stage will help you take them forward. At MOT do not worry about the higher level indicators, just focus on ensuring your organisation meets the basics.

If your organisation has passed its MOT\(^1\) then skip this step.

**Action Plan**

This is most easily done through the online toolkit – it will provide your organisation with a report on the results of your MOT and automatically populate the indicators your organisation has not yet met for its MOT.

If you want to work offline to start the action planning, before filling it in online, then consider the following:

- Take each benchmark at a time and list the indicators at levels 1 and 2 that your organisation has not yet met
- Fill these into the table below (this is an example which reflects the online toolkit action plan format – you may have your own action planning templates)
- For each indicator, consider what action needs to be taken to meet this indicator – you might usefully think about why this indicator is not happening at the moment. Is it because your organisation has just not considered this before? Or, if it has considered it but has not actioned it yet, what is stopping this being done? There might be several steps that need to happen to fulfil this indicator, list them in logical order – what needs to happen first, etc.
- Decide who is the right person to lead on taking this action forward – they might not do all the work but are responsible for ensuring that this action gets completed.
- Decide when this action needs to be completed by.
- When the action has been completed then the ‘done’ box on the action plan can be ticked

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\(^1\) To pass an MOT an organisation must have reached the *should have* level in every benchmark.
• It is also useful to have one person responsible for reviewing progress against the action plan overall – name this person at the bottom of the action plan and decide a date for the next overall review of progress on the action plan.

See example on next page.
Here is an example filled in to the suggested template action plan which is used in the online toolkit:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmark No.</th>
<th>Indicators not yet met:</th>
<th>Action needed</th>
<th>By Whom</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Done</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Board members are selected because they have the necessary skills for leadership of our organisation</td>
<td>Carry out Board skills audit to identify gaps</td>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>By Dec</td>
<td>Done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Draw up Person specification(s) for Board member(s) to fill this gap/these gaps</td>
<td>Selection panel</td>
<td>By Jan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Advertise the Board vacancies</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>In Jan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Review applications and select Board member</td>
<td>Panel</td>
<td>In Feb</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Induct Board member</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>In Mar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Person responsible for overseeing this Action Plan:**

**Date for review of this Action Plan:**
Step 4: Principles of effectiveness star exercise

This last step enables your organisation to compare its approach against 10 key principles of effectiveness in international development. For further information on a global agreement on key principles of effectiveness (the Istanbul Principles) go to:

http://www.cso-effectiveness.org

This star exercise is not meant to be an in-depth review against these principles – this is done through the full assessment benchmarking. At MOT stage this exercise is a topline check on whether your organisation feels it is working under these important principles or whether there are significant weaknesses in relation to any of them – which will help guide your organisation to choose where it starts its full assessment or where to concentrate your efforts for strengthening good practice.

Again this is ideally done as a group exercise. The following is a suggestion:

- each person individually scores the organisation against these principles
- each person’s scores are put on the star diagram (one big one on a flipchart for example) - this can be done confidentially by submitting scores into a box before being put up by the facilitating person
- any key areas of difference in scoring for any principle is discussed
- this enables the organisation to get an agreed score for each principle which creates the final star diagram scores
- these scores are then entered online – where your organisation gets a visual overview of strengths and weakness in regard to the principles.

The definitions for the 10 Principles in the NIDOS Effectiveness Toolkit are on the next page
The definitions for the 10 Principles in the NIDOS Effectiveness Toolkit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Equivalent Istanbul Principle(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We are accountable and transparent, particularly to the communities we support (Accountability)</td>
<td>We are accountable to the communities we are working with and aim to support.</td>
<td>3 &amp; 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are committed to working for sustainable development (Sustainability)</td>
<td>We are committed to working for sustainable development that ensures long term positive improvements in people’s lives.</td>
<td>4 &amp; 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We learn from our experience to improve our performance (Learning)</td>
<td>We continuously improve performance based on lessons learnt from regular evaluation of our work and feedback from the communities we work with, our partners, and other stakeholders</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We use our resources efficiently and are open about how we use our resources (Governance)</td>
<td>We use our resources efficiently by ensuring sound governance, financial and people management at agency and partner levels.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are committed to partnerships that promote social justice (Partnerships)</td>
<td>We work through genuine partnerships, both with our partners and through them, with the communities we support. While we recognise that North-South partnerships can be inherently unequal we work in solidarity with people to claim their rights and develop respect</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Our work is carried out keeping in mind the needs of both women and men</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion</td>
<td>Our work is carried out keeping in mind the needs of marginalised people, including disabled people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do No Harm (DNH)</td>
<td>Our programmes and projects are run ensuring that they do no harm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Rights</td>
<td>Our work is carried out in a way that upholds the rights of the communities we work with</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience to Climate Change</td>
<td>Our work is carried out in a way that helps communities adapt to and build resilience to climate change</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For you to fill in – star exercise

Fill in the table below with your score from 1 to 5 for each principle, with 1 = weak, 5 = outstanding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td></td>
<td>Inclusion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td>Do No Harm (DNH)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td></td>
<td>Human Rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership</td>
<td></td>
<td>Resilience to Climate Change</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use the toolkit online for a dynamic version of the star diagram below. 

The centre of the star = 0
Does your organisation need any help with its MOT?

Don’t forget that if your organisation is a NIDOS member and wants further advice or support with any of the steps of the MOT, help is available:

You can email us at effectiveness@nidos.org.uk or ring: 0131 243 2680

Or contact the office:

Thorn House
5 Rose Street
Edinburgh
EH2 2PR

Wanting to give some feedback or network with others during the process?

- Are you feeling more confident or are you feeling a bit overwhelmed? Was the toolkit easy to use or do you want to suggest some improvements or changes?
- Would you like to share your experience & ideas with other NIDOS members? NIDOS organises Peer networking activity that lets you meet with other organisations using the toolkit. Please email effectiveness@nidos.org.uk
- Did you get lots of 4s & 5s in the MOT benchmarks? Why not celebrate? Contact NIDOS to tell us, so we can profile your organisation’s good practice.
- You might want to go onto Stage 2: Full Assessment if you have passed your MOT. If you’re not a NIDOS member organisation, you’ll need to contact us if you want to continue
# Annexe One

## Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word or concept used in the toolkit</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accessible documents</strong></td>
<td>It is important that documents are readable by all those in your target group: think about things such as font size, layout, headings &amp; so on. It can’t be assumed that everyone has access to the web, or to a printer or current software. There may be language considerations, literacy issues or disability needs to be taken into account, as well as ways of distributing documents, especially where people are marginalised.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Action plan</strong></td>
<td>A suggested framework for an action plan is shown at the end of the MOT section &amp; again at the end of the full assessment. An action plan sets out clearly what has to be achieved, by whom &amp; by when, preferably identified in SMART targets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advocacy</strong></td>
<td>This is a political process by which an individual, group or organisation chooses to influence policy by activities such as running media campaigns, gathering petitions, public speaking, direct action, carrying out research or lobbying politicians. Advocacy is a strong element in campaigns that try to highlight the difference between the current situation &amp; how it should be in a more socially just society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Benchmark</strong></td>
<td>These identify best practice in order to measure ourselves against other, similar organisations. They also suggest minimum standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Best practice</strong></td>
<td>This is a statement of the methods of doing things that consistently show superior results. It’s not a static picture &amp; can always evolve into something better. Here, we are considering best practice in the context of small to medium sized NGOs working in International Development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Board</strong></td>
<td>When we use the term “Board” we mean the group of directors, committee members, trustees or governors that is required by the constitution or other legal document of the organisation. The Board is responsible for making sure the organisation meets its legal requirements, has a clear strategy that will deliver the mission &amp; ensure financial compliance and security.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Capacity building

Capacity building usually means taking actions to strengthen the skills, competencies and abilities of organisations or communities. In relation to international development the focus is to prevent international aid from creating perpetual dependency and to help communities to get stronger. This is a long-term process that involves all stakeholders, including ministries, NGOs & local authorities to build institutions and skills to ensure that a community can continue to overcome the causes of their suffering & exclusion after funded projects have ended.

For NGOs capacity building often involves strengthening skills in fundraising, training to develop skills, or by using consultants in order to be better able to deliver their mission.

### Civil society

Civil society is where people come together to advance their common interests, outside the family, the state or private businesses. Volunteering is a prime example of this & civil society includes NGOs, charities & other institutions that are independent of the government and represent the wishes of citizens.

### Climate change resilience

Southern communities are disproportionately affected by climate change. When we work with them to design our projects and look at their future needs we need to make sure that we take account of the current and likely future impacts of climate change and design adaptation to climate change into our projects. This will help communities to be safer and more able to cope and thrive when they are affected by climate change impacts like floods or droughts etc. They might also look ahead to ensure that their livelihoods will be sustainable in a future – e.g. that the crops they are growing will thrive etc. We can also help make sure that we bring these changes to the attention of decision makers.

### Communities

We use the term ”communities” to indicate those people we seek to help and work with. NIDOS prefers this to a term like “beneficiaries” which suggests a more unequal relationship.

We recognise that southern communities, while struggling with the effects of poverty & other difficult or dangerous concerns, have their own ideas, resources, organisations & capabilities to develop solutions and international development projects and organisations can add value and resources to help make these happen.

### Confidentiality

This is where information is kept available only to those who need to have access to is and where it is important to protect the privacy or security of a person or group. This might be related to the personal details of people, their medical history, etc.
| **Contingency** | This is a supplementary plan or a fund that is earmarked in project budgets, to be available in case situations change and extra resources or a change of plan are required at short notice. It’s usually considered when doing risk assessment. Contingency funds are usually within projects and are different from Reserves which are funds which an organisation aims to build up over time to ensure that if their overall financial position declines they can continue to operate for a period of time while the difficulties are being dealt with or allows the organisation to close in a planned way. |
| **Data collection** | This covers the gathering and storing of information about project activities or project results, to enable monitoring, evaluation and reporting. The information collected might be quantitative (numbers, percentages, etc) or qualitative (satisfaction levels, changes in policy, changes in behaviour etc) and will tell you whether things are improving. |
| **Diversity** | Diversity has a broad meaning, but here we use it to reflect on the make-up of our own organisation as well as of our partners. This is regarded by some as box-ticking or political correctness, but diversity can strengthen our organisations by bringing more varied understanding, knowledge & skills than we might otherwise have and ensure we are more representative of the community we are trying to work with. |
| **Do No Harm** | All projects have plans for what they are trying to do and the changes they want to try and achieve. However most activities and changes also have some unplanned results. These might also be positive but often they can be negative or unexpected. The Principle of Do No Harm encourages organisations to monitor the unplanned side-effects of what they do and evaluate whether these are harmful or not – and this might be harm in relation to people, the environment etc. The aim is to ensure projects, while doing the positive work they aim to do, also minimise or eliminate harmful effects that arise. |
| **Effectiveness** | This is about achieving the goals of an organisation & focusses on the long-term impact of our work in the future. It has been identified as “doing the right thing” or “Are we travelling in the right direction?” As Effectiveness does not have a focus on the levels of resource needed, then Effectiveness needs to be balanced with Efficiency. |
| **Efficiency** | Doing things in the best possible manner, so that the maximum outputs are gained in exchange for inputs, without |
wasted effort. The focus is on improving the way that things are done at the present time, correcting errors & speeding up processes. Efficiency needs to be balanced with effectiveness to consider long term sustainability.

**Ethical**

Ethics addresses our values by asking questions about how we do things, as well as about what we choose to do. In international development, questions arise around social justice, human rights & basic needs. Our choices inevitably involve discussions about means as well as ends.

**Evaluation**

A systematic process to judge the effectiveness and impact of a project, programme or organisation. There may be some ongoing (or ‘formative’) evaluation of the delivery of the project during a longer-term project to make sure it is progressing well, but there should always be a final (or ‘summative’) evaluation at the end which makes a judgement & records the lessons learnt so that future projects & activities can be better designed & implemented. To ensure objectivity, projects often use external evaluators for the final (or summative) evaluation.

**Feedback**

This is commonly divided into positive & negative feedback returned to the organisation by the user, which provides an opportunity to identify & remedy any gaps in expectation & improve performance as a result. We generally take positive feedback to mean “praise” & negative feedback to mean “criticism”, but it's only when we take action as a result of someone stating their opinion that it becomes feedback. In a “feedback loop” we would let them know what we have done as a result of the feedback they gave. Feedback to individuals on their performance is an important motivation for many. Sometimes the term has come to serve as a euphemism for criticism, as in "the boss gave me feedback on my presentation", but it should be a mechanism that reinforces some good actions & modifies others. Complaints are important as they enable us to understand how others see what needs improving. It’s only when we decide to change something as a result of that insight that it truly becomes feedback.

**Financial authorities**

There are various financial agencies (statutory and guidance agencies) that charities and other civil society organisations should be familiar with and whose requirements you may need to keep you to date with depending on whether or not you employ people, etc as below:

- HMRC [http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/] deals with all taxation issues – collecting tax and NI, for example if you are employing employees.
staff, as well as dealing with VAT. They also administer certain benefits such as child benefit.

FSA [http://www.fsa.gov.uk](http://www.fsa.gov.uk) regulates the financial services sector and may be useful where your organisation is getting financial services and wants to make sure they are safe or following proper procedures.

Fundraising Standards Board [http://www.frsb.org.uk/](http://www.frsb.org.uk/) is a UK body that oversees the self-regulation of the fundraising sector. They produce useful standards and guidance on best practice in fundraising and your organisation can become a member and get a widely recognised ‘badge’ of good practice if it adheres to these – helping to build the public's trust in your organisation.

<p>| Financial strategy | This is the financial element of an organisation’s overall strategy both in the short term and in the longer term. It helps an organisation plan for how it will ensure sufficient income to ensure the achievement of its mission &amp; business plan in the longer run. In most NGOs this would include a strategy for fundraising both for projects and core overhead costs, including trying to diversify its sources of funding. It might also include a strategy for building reserves or a pot of money for a rainy day – e.g. enough to keep the organisation running for 3 – 6 months if its sources of money dry up. |
| Framework | A framework is a structure that supports &amp; contains policies, standards or some sort of methodology so that it can be more easily understood as a whole rather than picked at in a piecemeal manner. |
| Funders | These are diverse organisations, from government departments, like the Scottish Government or DFID, to charitable Trusts or organisations that seek to add value to projects &amp; communities by providing funding. These range from small, one-off payments to extended programme funding, with the aim of making some social impact. The Scottish Funders’ Forum has useful documents putting across their viewpoint on funding applications. Individuals giving money are usually called ‘supporters’ or such like rather than ‘funders’. |
| Funding base | This is an analysis of the different sources of money that any organisation might have. If it receives, for example, a single grant from one source, that is a narrow funding base. If, on the other hand, an organisation gets its income from a variety of grants, sales, service fees &amp; individual donations it would have a wider funding base. If the first organisation has its grant removed it is much more vulnerable than the second. |
| <strong>Gender sensitivity</strong> | This is concerned with raising awareness of our own &amp; other people’s attitudes to gender. It takes care about language that is used [such as “mankind”] &amp; helps to develop empathy to issues such as sexual harassment &amp; violation. We would also include here sensitivity to sexuality &amp; sexual orientation. |
| <strong>Health &amp; safety</strong> | The Health and Safety Executive is the official body overseeing H&amp;S in the UK <a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk">http://www.hse.gov.uk</a>. If you are employing staff or working with volunteers, if you are running events and interacting with the public, etc you will need to ensure your organisation complies with H &amp; S regulations and makes risk assessments to ensure that you are working within the law and you are looking after the safety of people. Good practice would also dictate that you consider H &amp; S issues wherever you work in the world – at least meeting local regulations but also not cutting corners where the local legislation might be weak. |
| <strong>Human Rights</strong> | These are the fundamental rights to which a person is entitled simply by virtue of being human. This international doctrine is embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and forms the cornerstone of public policy around much of the world: <a href="http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml">http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml</a> Needless to say, it is at times the subject of controversial debate. |
| <strong>Inclusivity</strong> | This is the action, sometimes stated in a written policy, of including people in an organisation or in society who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized on the grounds of their gender, race, class, sexuality or disability, etc. This will sometimes require extra efforts or resources to ensure that disadvantaged people can participate alongside others. It could involve, for example, the development of new methods of recruiting to our Board or selecting staff or volunteers, ensuring services are accessible, or enabling excluded groups to give feedback, etc. |
| <strong>Indicators</strong> | This is the word that we have used for the statements describing practice within each benchmark in the Effectiveness toolkit. This allows organisations to consider their practice against, so that they can judge their current level of practice against the benchmarks. |
| <strong>Job Description</strong> | This describes the general tasks &amp; responsibilities of a job, the salary range &amp; who they report to. It is good practice for volunteers to also have a job description. (Job descriptions are often combined with a Person Specification that indicates the required qualifications, experience, skills &amp; knowledge the |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Post holder needs to have to do the job.</strong></th>
<th>These form the basis of any good recruitment and for appraisal of someone’s performance in their duties.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning culture</strong></td>
<td>An organisation with a learning culture sees the value of learning from past experience and from other’s experience. It sees the importance in the development of Individuals, teams and the overall organisation. Creating a learning culture within your organisation will take you one step beyond just acquiring the skills that you need to deliver services. It will empower your people to achieve dramatically improved results compared to more traditional organisations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning sets</strong></td>
<td>These are groups [sometimes facilitated by an expert] where peer participants present problems or challenges to each other and discuss them in some detail in a supportive environment. The aim of a learning set is to help each other identify useful solutions or courses of action to tackle these challenges. Each participant takes it in turn to have their issues discussed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legal documents</strong></td>
<td>Here we refer to an organisation’s own legal documents – its constitution or articles of association, etc – that determine an organisation’s mission/goals, objectives, powers, membership and governance processes and rules. An organisation must operate within the scope of its legal documents or have a formal process (as determined in these legal documents) to change it – and if it is a charity, must check that the new legal documents remain within the requirements of charity law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legally required</strong></td>
<td>A requirement authorized by or based on law/legal documents; statutory; in conformity with or permitted by law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Long-term dependency</strong></td>
<td>International aid often supplies short term fixes in critical situations. If this aid were to replace or undermine the local economy, it would be creating dependency. International development seeks to implement long-term solutions to problems by enabling developing countries and their people to build the capacity needed to develop sustainable solutions to their own problems. A truly sustainable project is one which will be able to carry on indefinitely with no further international aid or support, whether it is financial or otherwise &amp; thus avoids long-term dependency. This is different from useful and long term exchange or trade etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Long-term impact</strong></td>
<td>This is the impact of the project or work well into the future,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
after the end of the project or programme. For example, what were the employment or income levels of someone following their improved education - did they have a better chance of getting a job or making a living? This can only be measured after they have left school and been looking for work or earning an income for a number of years.

**Marginalised**

This word describes the process of becoming or being relegated to the fringe of society & is used in many parts of the world to describe extreme social disadvantage. Marginalised people can be systematically blocked from rights, opportunities & resources that are normally available to members of their society and which are key to social integration.

**MEL**

MEL stands for Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning. This useful acronym reminds us that the purpose of gathering information & making judgments about how well or otherwise things have gone is to learn from our successes & mistakes so that we learn and perform even better next time around.

**Mentor or mentoring**

This is a where an experienced or more knowledgeable person (the mentor) helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person in their personal development or in an organisation’s development. It’s more than just answering occasional questions or providing ad hoc help. It’s seen as an on-going relationship of dialogue, challenge & learning, though usually time bound or until the specific capacity has been built.

**Mission**

This is a statement of the purpose of an organisation, answering the question: Why do we exist? Or What long term change are we trying to achieve? The mission statement should spell out the overall goal & guide the actions & decisions of an organisation. It provides a framework within which we can formulate our strategies.

**Monitoring**

This is the regular and periodic checking that is done to ensure that projects & organisations are meeting the agreed plans and milestones, that budgets are on track & outputs are being achieved efficiently. The aim is to ensure that things can be put right in good time as the project goes along. Information [data] collected by monitoring checks will then also be used in evaluation.

**MOT**

We are using this term in the sense of a basic annual check up of the activities and practice of an organisation (much like an MOT does for the annual check up of the safety,
roadworthiness & environmental impact of a car). We do not issue a certificate for the MOT, but have borrowed the car MOT as an image of stopping to look annually at all the important working parts of an organisation.

| Needs Assessment | This is a process whereby the needs and priorities of individuals or groups in the community are more clearly understood and identified – ensuring the needs of marginalised groups are central in this. This might be done by using participatory approaches to asking them about their priorities, through consultation with representative groups etc, although sometimes this might also be done by assessing or testing. Needs assessment might also include the gathering of statistics and reviewing the wider context of gaps in provision by other agencies. Understanding the genuine needs of communities will be hard to accomplish unless those communities feel able to speak openly & we listen well. Otherwise, they might only tell us what they think we want them to say & we might only hear what we want to hear. |
| NGOs | NGO stands for ‘Non Governmental Organisation’ – i.e. voluntary [but legally constituted] organisations that are not under the control of government and are not-for-profit. NGOs usually have social aims, such as advocacy or offering a service, and many are registered charities but do not have to be. NGOs might have a faith-linked base (i.e. a religious group might set up an NGO) but not all do - but religious groups themselves, like churches or mosques etc, are not NGOs. NGOs are an important part of civil society. |
| Organisational culture | This is the collective behaviour of an organisation, formed & identified by the values, visions, behaviours, working language, systems & symbols that are used. Organisational culture affects the way people & groups interact with each other & with stakeholders. This becomes obvious to us when we join a new organisation & take a little time to “settle in”. |
| OSCR | The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) [http://www.oscr.org.uk](http://www.oscr.org.uk) is a non-ministerial department of the Scottish Government that regulates charities in Scotland & answers directly to the Scottish Parliament. OSCR has developed a regulatory framework so that each Scottish charity is clear about its rights & responsibilities so that the public would have confidence in charities. OSCR is the equivalent of the Charity Commissions for England & Wales & for Northern Ireland. |
| Outputs & | Outputs are the activities or services that are delivered while... |
| **Outcomes** | Outcomes are the improvements and changes in people’s lives or situations that happen as a result of the project. In the example of improving children’s health, our **outputs** would be the meals delivered, numbers of people fed, volunteers involved. Counting the things we do & who we reach. The **outcome** might be the reduced incidence of malnutrition in the children - i.e. the improvement we have made, which take longer to achieve and to measure. |
| **Participatory methods** | This means that when consulting or gathering information from communities or when we work with communities, we devise ways of working that ensure that everyone gets a chance to contribute. This might involve small-group work to get voices heard, or using activities or tools that help people prioritise things or present things visually, through rankings or preferences etc. |
| **Partnership** | A partnership is an arrangement where 2 or more parties agree to cooperate so that they can advance their mutual interests. Although in general partnerships can be between any 2 or more agencies – e.g. across sectors [public/private; charity/business; government/NGO] or between nations in this Effectiveness Toolkit we are particularly referring to partnerships between international NGOs and host country civil society organisations and between them and the communities we are jointly working with. These partners (i.e. the international NGO and the local NGO) need to work together and create an agreement (usually written down) that sets out clearly their joint goals, each partner’s areas of responsibility, timescales, how success will be evaluated and how problems or disagreements will be overcome or dealt with. |
| **Peer learning** | Peer learning [or peer-to-peer learning] is a cooperative activity where learners interact with other learners to attain their goals. It’s at the heart of any good network. It can be formal or informal, being entirely self-organised. In our context, more experienced or better resourced NGOs have worked to guide & support less experienced organisations to reflect on their challenges & opportunities. |
| **Person Specification** | A Person Specification indicates the required qualifications, experience, skills & knowledge that a post holder needs to have to do the job. It is good practice for volunteer posts to also have a person specification. (It is usually combined with a Job Description that outlines the general tasks & responsibilities of a job, the salary range & who they report to.) These form the basis of any good recruitment and for appraisal of someone’s performance in their duties – whether |
| **Policy** | A **policy** is a set of principles or rules to guide decisions or actions that will result in the desired outcomes. A policy (such as an equal opportunities policy) doesn’t normally tell us what is actually done but rather the aims and planned outcomes. A set of procedures or instructions guide what is actually done. Policies are generally adopted by the Board, whereas procedures would be developed & carried out by staff or volunteers, within the guidance of the policy. |
| **Procurement** | This is the process to buy good quality goods or services while keeping costs in consideration, taking into account quality, quantity, time & location. Some organisations have policies that define processes that promote fair & open competition while minimizing exposure to fraud. |
| **Qualitative/quantitative data** | It’s usual to gather both quantitative data [figures, numbers, statistics] as well as qualitative data [opinions, stories, case-studies, videos] so that there is a balanced understanding of the results of our activities. |
| **Quick wins** | This means that, when we seek to make improvements, it’s a good idea to identify some positive changes that can be brought about early on. These raise morale & enable people to begin to imagine the long-term benefits. |
| **Quorate/quorum** | A quorum is the minimum number of members of a board (or other legal group) that is necessary to conduct the business of that group. It’s important that key strategic decisions are made by a quorate board, or they will not have the necessary legal status. The requirements for being quorate will be set out in an organisation’s **legal documents**. It is usually a percentage of the group [e.g. 50%] in order to be quorate. This can be altered by changing the **legal documents**. |
| **Regular** | The term regular can mean normal, obeying rules, customary, usual, normal, orderly, even, well-ordered; methodical, occurring at fixed intervals, periodic. |
| **Resilience** | Resilience is the positive ability of a community or organisation or individual to adapt itself to the consequences of a catastrophic event, such as a natural disaster or a failure in the infrastructure. Building resilience in the communities we seek to help is good practice. |
| **Risk assessment** | Risks always occur in projects – threats that could affect our desired outcomes. In a risk assessment, we ask: What are the risks? How likely are they to occur? How severe might they be? What could we do to lessen the likelihood of it |
happening? It is good practice to have a written risk assessment for any major project or event. There might also be a written risk assessment for when people travel or work abroad.

Once an event that adversely affects our outcomes has happened, it’s called an issue. Issues need to be dealt with quickly & effectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-assessment</th>
<th>A process by which an organisation looks at itself [often against external benchmarks] in order to increase self-knowledge so that an action-plan can be created that will lead to improved processes &amp; better outcomes.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skills audit</td>
<td>This is a process by which the skills of everyone in the organisation or group are identified. When this is followed by identification of future skills needs, then the organisation or group’s skills gap can be identified and dealt with. The decision can then be made whether the solution is to train or upskill current people, to recruit new people or to buy in the necessary skills from someone outside the organisation for a period of time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| SMART targets    | **SMART targets are:**  

  - **Specific** Very clear about what would be different as a result of action & who is responsible.  
  - **Measurable** They are set out in terms of numbers: How much? How many? What there will be more of? What there will be less of? How will we know we’ve achieved it?  
  - **Attainable** How are we going to achieve this? Is it realistic?  
  - **Relevant** This is a check that what we’re aiming for is worthwhile & matches our other efforts.  
  - **Time-bound** This tells us by when we will have completed the actions. |
| Social justice   | **Social justice** exists within a society, between the various social classes. A society is socially just when it is based on principles of equality & solidarity between all people, who each have dignity & value the human rights of others. For example a society might try to create social justice by policies on progressive taxation & the redistribution of income & property. These aim to create greater equality of opportunity & outcome for all members of the society than currently exists. |
| Staff & volunteers | Some organisations have no staff at all, only a voluntary board. Some voluntary boards organise the efforts of other volunteers. Some organisations employ staff to manage the work. Some NGOs use interns to achieve certain tasks. Rather than separate this out too much, we have tended to |
use staff & volunteers together to cover all these possibilities and rely on organisations to interpret this in a way that is relevant to their organisation. If an organisation has no staff, it might wish to ignore some of the benchmarks that seem irrelevant, but it is good practice to manage & support volunteers in a similar way to the legal & good practice expectations of managing & supporting paid staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Stakeholders</strong></th>
<th>Stakeholders are people, groups, organisations, partners, staff or volunteers who affect or can be affected by our organisation's actions and who are important to our work.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stakeholder analysis</strong></td>
<td>A process by which we seek to understand all our stakeholders &amp; what their priorities &amp; needs are. This is sometimes created in the form of a map [say, on flip-chart paper or using software] that enables us to look at the whole picture &amp; decide what &amp; how we should communicate with them or work with them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategy</strong></td>
<td>A strategy is a plan of major areas for action designed to achieve a goal – this might be a plan covering a number of years. There will be a more detailed workplan (say for a period of months or a year) developed to consider how the strategy will be delivered. As there is always an element of uncertainty about the future, strategy is more about a set of options (“strategic choices”) than a fixed action plan &amp; will need to change as the external environment changes. Courses of action are chosen to meet the long-term goals &amp; objectives of an NGO &amp; then resources are allocated to make this happen. The Board’s main function is to determine &amp; guide the strategy and ensure it can be delivered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supporters, affiliates, members</strong></td>
<td>Different NGOs have different ways of identifying the body of people from the community who support their enterprise with cash donations, collections, fundraising activities, publicity &amp; other voluntary services. These supporters are not normally called ‘funders’ – which is a term kept for agencies or Trusts that give grant funding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transparency</strong></td>
<td>This is an organisation’s openness to its partners, volunteers/employees, stakeholders including funders, communities &amp; the general public. The more that an NGO can be transparent about how it does things, where its money comes from and how it spends it, what impact it is making through its projects, its successes as well as what it has learnt from projects that were weak, etc, the more that it can build the trust of others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Value for Money** | This concept brings together Efficiency & Effectiveness in the
Before investing time, resources and energy into an activity or programme, weigh up the costs (what is being put in) and benefits (what is being achieved) of different options or ways of doing things, and make the case for why the chosen approach is the best use of resources and delivers the most value to poor and marginalised people. The chosen approach might not be the cheapest but it will deliver the most benefit for the use of resources.

| Whistleblowing | A whistleblower tells the public or someone in authority about alleged dishonest or illegal activities occurring in a government department or an organisation. It might be about breaking the law, fraud, health & safety, bullying or corruption. Some countries have laws to protect whistleblowers from repercussions, but many do not. |
| Written agreements | Some of these will be legal documents, their contents determined by contract law or suggested by legal advisers. Ignoring or contravening the terms will have legal implications. Others will be more informal and will not have legal status, but should nevertheless set out clearly such things as goals, responsibilities, timeframes, monetary arrangements & so forth, including what will happen if there is a disagreement or if things go wrong. Where an organisation has an agreement with a partner or other organisation which involves the use of grants or funds or relates to significant items of property it is good to make sure these have a legal basis in the country in which it is operating. |
Annexe two

MOT Benchmarks

The MOT benchmarks follow on the next pages, if you’re filling in the self-assessment offline; simply write your level in the textbox provided below each benchmark.

The five levels are listed below:

1. **Must have** – the legal requirements
2. **Should have** – basic good practice
3. **Good** – what is expected of an effective organisation
4. **Excellent** – organisations that have developed their practices, systems & outcomes to a great extent
5. **Outstanding** – organisations that lead the sector by their innovative activities, their ability to influence the international development agenda & their impressive outcomes
### MOT.1 Our mission is central to our organisation & the way it works - GOVERNANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Must have</th>
<th>2. Should have</th>
<th>3. Good</th>
<th>4. Excellent</th>
<th>5. Outstanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• We have a mission statement</td>
<td>• Our mission is still relevant and we have reviewed it recently</td>
<td>• We involve our partners when we are reviewing our mission</td>
<td>• We review our mission with the communities we seek to help</td>
<td>• Our volunteers &amp; staff can clearly explain our mission to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Our mission statement clearly relates to our charitable purposes</td>
<td>• Our mission is known about by our trustees, volunteers &amp; staff</td>
<td>• Our board, staff &amp; volunteers strongly identify with our shared mission</td>
<td>• Our strategy is built on our mission</td>
<td>• Our mission is based on human rights &amp; social justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We refer to our mission when making larger decisions</td>
<td>• Our wider stakeholders are all aware of our mission</td>
<td>• Our mission is central when we explore new partnerships</td>
<td>• Leadership is shared across the board &amp; the organisation</td>
<td>• We are confident that our daily work &amp; decisions are always consistent with our mission &amp; values</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fill in your level for this benchmark here: [ ]

### MOT.2 We have a strong board that leads the organisation - GOVERNANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Must have</th>
<th>2. Should have</th>
<th>3. Good</th>
<th>4. Excellent</th>
<th>5. Outstanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• We have a board that knows our mission &amp; has a strong commitment to it</td>
<td>• Board members are selected because they have the necessary skills for leadership of our organisation</td>
<td>• As a group the board has the full range of skills required for strategic and governance responsibilities</td>
<td>• Board members are proactive in setting strategic direction in line with our mission</td>
<td>• The board is diverse &amp; reflects our stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Our board is made up largely of un-related people</td>
<td>• The board makes the key strategic decisions while staff/volunteers ensure these are carried out</td>
<td>• The board provides oversight on a systematic basis &amp; regularly holds volunteers &amp; staff to account</td>
<td>• The board reviews its own progress and capacity</td>
<td>• The board systematically reviews its own performance as well as that of the organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Where there are staff or volunteers, the board has oversight of their activities</td>
<td>• The board clearly delegates operational issues to staff and volunteers</td>
<td>• Leadership is shared across the board &amp; the organisation</td>
<td>• The board has a plan for updating its own skills &amp; knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fill in your level for this benchmark here: [ ]
### MOT.3 Our board is well-administered & trustees deliver on their legal responsibilities - GOVERNANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Must have</th>
<th>2. Should have</th>
<th>3. Good</th>
<th>4. Excellent</th>
<th>5. Outstanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• We have a board that complies with &amp; has the right numbers according to our legal documents</td>
<td>• Minutes are taken of all board meetings</td>
<td>• Board meetings have clear agendas, are chaired well, complete the business in hand &amp; minutes are kept to record decisions and planned actions</td>
<td>• Agendas &amp; board papers are sent out in advance of meetings</td>
<td>• Board members keep up to date with changes in the legal requirements and good practice environment in relation to their responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The board meets as regularly as is legally required</td>
<td>• Board meeting dates and agendas are planned in advance and all board members are made aware of them</td>
<td>• Actions are followed up in a timely way</td>
<td>• The board calendar includes strategic review meetings &amp; other related events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The board has read and understands the organisation's governing document</td>
<td>• Board meetings are usually quorate</td>
<td>• Urgent matters are always dealt with &amp; extra meetings are scheduled if necessary</td>
<td>• Board members have a role description &amp; receive an induction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• AGMs are held as required by this governing document</td>
<td>• Board members are familiar with OSCR guidance for trustees and aware of their legal responsibilities</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fill in your level for this benchmark here:

### MOT.4 Our partnerships are based on clear agreements that share power & responsibility - PARTNERSHIP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Must have</th>
<th>2. Should have</th>
<th>3. Good</th>
<th>4. Excellent</th>
<th>5. Outstanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• We have written agreements with our partners that outline our respective responsibilities for delivering project activities</td>
<td>• We have a standard checklist for developing agreements with our partners outlining each of our responsibilities in relation to projects and managing money</td>
<td>• We have specific agreements with each partner that clarifies how we will work together more strategically</td>
<td>• We jointly agree how we will evaluate the partnership</td>
<td>• Partnership agreements are balanced in what is required of each side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We take time to clarify expectations in our partnerships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fill in your level for this benchmark here:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Must have</th>
<th>2. Should have</th>
<th>3. Good</th>
<th>4. Excellent</th>
<th>• Outstanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Our partners engage directly with the communities we work with</td>
<td>• Our partners work with communities in a manner that fosters two-way communication &amp; mutual respect</td>
<td>• Our partners understand that they are accountable to the communities we support as well as to us</td>
<td>• Our partners ensure that they involve and are accountable to marginalised people, including those who are disabled</td>
<td>• If differences of approach arise, between our partners &amp; the communities, these are resolved constructively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Our partners carry out a needs assessment with communities before starting projects</td>
<td>• We work with our partners to build their skills and practice of participatory community consultation and working</td>
<td>• Our partners work to uphold the rights of the communities</td>
<td>• Our partners seek to build the capacity &amp; resilience of communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Our partners carry out a needs assessment with communities before starting projects</td>
<td>• Our partners actively review their work so they will do no harm</td>
<td>• Our partners work in a way that helps communities adapt to climate change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Write you level for this benchmark here:
### MOT.6 Projects are planned to make a positive & distinctive difference for communities - ACCOUNTABILITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Must have</th>
<th>2. Should have</th>
<th>3. Good</th>
<th>4. Excellent</th>
<th>5. Outstanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• We accept that long-term &amp; sustainable impact takes time to achieve&lt;br&gt;• We have basic plans of what we will do in our projects&lt;br&gt;• We consult with partners and communities when we plan projects&lt;br&gt;• From this we develop projects plans outlining the changes they want to achieve, the activities that are needed and budgets to deliver these activities.</td>
<td>• We have a detailed discussion with partners, communities and others working in the area to ensure our plans include the short &amp; longer term outcomes that are needed to bring about the change the community wants &amp; the activities needed to make these changes happen&lt;br&gt;• We work closely with partners to jointly develop project aims, workplans and budgets that are realistic</td>
<td>• We identify risks of harm &amp; include plans for minimising them&lt;br&gt;• We consider different models of intervention &amp; decide jointly with partners and communities which ones would deliver best outcomes&lt;br&gt;• Our plans are often informed by our learning from past experience &amp; that of our partners &amp; communities&lt;br&gt;• We initiate joint training events to increase ours and our partners and communities’ planning skills</td>
<td>• We systematically plan for the economical use of inputs, the efficiency of outputs &amp; the effectiveness of outcomes&lt;br&gt;• When we plan we regularly consider the work of others in the field &amp; review our assumptions&lt;br&gt;• Our plans are always based on past learning &amp; we regularly adapt them, responding to new developments&lt;br&gt;• Planning is led by partners and beneficiaries</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Write your level for this benchmark here: ________

See the following page for benchmark MOT 7
### MOT.7 Projects are evaluated with the communities we support - LEARNING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Must have</th>
<th>2. Should have</th>
<th>3. Good</th>
<th>4. Excellent</th>
<th>5. Outstanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- We evaluate our projects when this is required by a donor or supporter</td>
<td>- Projects have evaluation &amp; monitoring plans built in from the outset</td>
<td>- We agree with communities what information they need in order to evaluate projects</td>
<td>- We ensure that people who are marginalised in communities are involved in the evaluation</td>
<td>- We work with partners &amp; communities to understand what evaluation of our work tells us for future work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Evaluation results are reported to donors &amp; funders</td>
<td>- These plans include asking partners and/or communities for feedback</td>
<td>- Those who provide information or feedback are given an overall picture when evaluation is complete</td>
<td>- We use external evaluators</td>
<td>- We measure long-term impact on communities &amp; we ensure that funds for this are earmarked at the start of projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- We look at the results of evaluations and identify areas for improvement</td>
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</table>

Write your level for this benchmark here: 

### MOT.8 We listen carefully to feedback from the communities we work with about our projects - ACCOUNTABILITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Must have</th>
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<th>3. Good</th>
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<th>5. Outstanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- We sometimes gather positive &amp; negative feedback &amp; suggestions from communities</td>
<td>- We show clearly to the communities we work with that we have learnt from feedback &amp; how we will react</td>
<td>- We find the best ways to present the findings from feedback to communities</td>
<td>- We have evidence that feedback from communities has been used to improve our work</td>
<td>- We work with communities to ensure feedback is gathered from marginalised communities in ethical ways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- We take complaints from communities very seriously and act on them within an agreed time</td>
<td>- We regularly make time to listen carefully to communities during projects</td>
<td>- We regularly make time to listen carefully to communities during projects</td>
<td>- We work with communities to create new ways of gathering &amp; giving feedback</td>
<td>- We offer support &amp; training so that communities can develop skills for gathering &amp; using feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- We have a clear policy that sets out how complaints can be made and how they will be dealt with</td>
<td></td>
<td>- The communities we work with are more confident to make complaints</td>
<td>- We regularly review complaints that have come from communities to identify possible deeper problems</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Write your level for this benchmark here:
### MOT.9 We have positive employment policies that are legally compliant - GOVERNANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Must have</th>
<th>Should have</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All staff have legally compliant contracts that are current &amp; state terms &amp; conditions</td>
<td>All volunteers, interns &amp; staff have clearly stated roles and responsibilities</td>
<td>We have clear recruitment processes that are based on job descriptions &amp; person specifications</td>
<td>We have a clear framework for managing volunteer, intern &amp; staff performance</td>
<td>We monitor political &amp; legal changes that might have impact on our employment policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All volunteers, staff &amp; interns have a line manager</td>
<td>All volunteers &amp; staff are told about our employment policies &amp; practice</td>
<td>Staff are familiar with our employment policies that cover all aspects of employment</td>
<td>Volunteers &amp; staff are given regular appraisal</td>
<td>We update our policies regularly to reflect good practice &amp; take account of staff feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have legally compliant recruitment and people management processes</td>
<td>We are committed to diversity &amp; have positive policies to support that</td>
<td>We review our employment policies regularly &amp; seek feedback from volunteers &amp; staff</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Write your level for this benchmark here: [ ]

### MOT.10 We promote safe & healthy working environments - GOVERNANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We have health &amp; safety guidance notes</td>
<td>We provide appropriate insurance for staff, volunteers and the public</td>
<td>We have formal guidelines &amp; processes for health &amp; safety and volunteers &amp; staff are always informed of risks including telling international volunteers before departure</td>
<td>We review our health &amp; safety processes regularly to ensure compliance</td>
<td>The well-being of our volunteers &amp; staff is a priority &amp; we review this regularly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have basic security &amp; evacuation plans &amp; do basic risk assessments</td>
<td>We take note of health &amp; safety regulations in premises we use and in all the countries we work in</td>
<td>We provide regular support &amp; guidance for volunteers &amp; staff both inside and outside the UK</td>
<td>We follow the International Volunteering Code of Practice (IVCOP)</td>
<td>We work with our partners to develop safe &amp; healthy working environments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We meet basic legal Health and Safety requirements</td>
<td>We keep up to date with H &amp; S advice &amp; legislation in areas where we work</td>
<td>We carry out full security &amp; health &amp; safety assessments of areas where we work</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers &amp; staff are given a H &amp; S induction before they start work</td>
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Write your level for this benchmark here: [ ]
### MOT.11 We ensure the necessary funding to achieve our mission - SUSTAINABILITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Must have</th>
<th>2. Should have</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• We raise funds &amp; do financial planning for individual projects</td>
<td>• Our annual budget includes costs for all projects plus costs of running the organisation</td>
<td>• We have an organisational financial strategy that has been developed to ensure longer-term financial stability</td>
<td>• We actively seek out information about the funding environment to identify new opportunities</td>
<td>• We have a diverse funding base with no major funding gaps or financial vulnerabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Our annual budget states income &amp; expenditure on our projects</td>
<td>• We set some financial targets &amp; we identify funding opportunities for the year ahead</td>
<td>• We assess financial risks &amp; have plans for improving our reserves</td>
<td>• We meet most of our fundraising targets</td>
<td>• We are able to reject funds that don't fit with our vision and ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We ensure budgets are sufficient to comply with all legal requirements</td>
<td>• We have some regular supporters &amp; donors</td>
<td>• We are aware of a range of funding opportunities</td>
<td>• We have a satisfactory level of reserves, a range of income sources &amp; adequate funding for planned activities</td>
<td>• We raise funds in line with the best practice as in IOF and FSB guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• We follow required basic 'must do' guidance for fundraising as outlined in Institute of Fundraising (IOF) and Fundraising Standards Board (FSB) guidance</td>
<td>• We keep funders informed of what has been achieved</td>
<td>• We set some financial targets &amp; we identify funding opportunities for the year ahead</td>
<td>• Our strategy reduces the dependence of people we support on external funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• We have an organisational financial strategy that has been developed to ensure longer-term financial stability</td>
<td>• We work with partners to build their resilience to legal &amp; financial risk</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Write your level for this benchmark here:  

See the following page for benchmark MOT 12
## MOT.12  We have good financial management systems & meet our legal financial requirements and minimise fraud and other financial risks - GOVERNANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Must have</th>
<th>2. Should have</th>
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<th>4. Excellent</th>
<th>5. Outstanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• We comply with financial regulations in the UK</td>
<td>• We have financial systems that aim to minimise fraud and involve more than one un-related person in authorising spending &amp; dealing with income</td>
<td>• We have thorough &amp; clear financial control policies &amp; systems to authorise payments &amp; expenses, handle income, track assets &amp; petty cash</td>
<td>• We have a fraud prevention &amp; detection policy &amp; strategy</td>
<td>• We keep up to date with best practice in financial management and fraud prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We meet the requirements of the financial authorities in all the countries we work in</td>
<td>• We make payments to suppliers on time</td>
<td>• We monitor cash-flow regularly</td>
<td>• Our financial systems are periodically reviewed to make sure that they are effective &amp; secure &amp; that controls are being implemented</td>
<td>• We have policies on whistleblowing for staff &amp; communities &amp; other external stakeholders can raise complaints confidentially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We are aware of the legal requirements in relation to prevention of fraud and bribery</td>
<td>• We use grant money for the purposes for which it was given</td>
<td>• We deal with financial issues as soon as they arise</td>
<td>• We ensure that other related organisational policies are reviewed to minimise fraud</td>
<td>• We set aside funds to cover risks such as staff sickness or other statutory entitlements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• We ensure that partners understand &amp; use agreed financial controls where they are jointly managing money with us</td>
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Write your level for this benchmark here: ___

See the following page for benchmark MOT 13
### MOT.13  We record, track, report on & scrutinise our finances carefully - ACCOUNTABILITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Must have</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• We keep basic records of our payments &amp; receipts as we go along</td>
<td>• We record all financial transactions &amp; use accounting codes to analyse transactions</td>
<td>• Financial data is independently reviewed at least annually</td>
<td>• We produce regular financial reports that meet the needs of internal &amp; external stakeholders &amp; effectively support decision making</td>
<td>• We have developed a culture of risk management so that staff, partners &amp; volunteers consider legal &amp; financial risks when planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We comply with all applicable laws and regulations on financial record keeping and reporting</td>
<td>• We check our financial records at the end of each month by comparing the accounting records to the closing bank statement</td>
<td>• We ensure that partners understand &amp; use our financial reporting systems where we are jointly managing money</td>
<td>• Financial information is routinely used in strategic &amp; operational decision making.</td>
<td>• We receive feedback that our financial reports are widely understood across the organisation &amp; used at all levels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our board receives regular financial reports that show income & spending against budgets, including detail of how each restricted funding stream is being spent.

Write your level for this benchmark here: [ ]

See the following page for benchmark MOT 14
MOT.14  We build effective relationships with our funders so that they develop confidence in our organisation

ACCOUNTABILITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Must have</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• We meet the basic reporting requirements of our funders</td>
<td>• We agree monitoring and evaluation systems with our funders</td>
<td>• We inform funders quickly of any problems that have arisen &amp; what we have done to rectify the situation</td>
<td>• We have streamlined our reporting systems for different sources of funding</td>
<td>• We see reporting as a chance to reflect on our work &amp; to communicate our successes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We read funding guidance carefully &amp; ask for advice on critical elements of our proposals</td>
<td>• We meet all the funder’s deadlines for reporting</td>
<td>• We keep them up to date with progress using different formats</td>
<td>• We understand how funders will use our information so that we report in the most helpful manner</td>
<td>• We have evidence that funders trust us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We agree any changes in our use of grant funding in advance, with funders</td>
<td>• We agree monitoring and evaluation systems with our funders</td>
<td>• We work on developing bid-writing skills across the whole organisation</td>
<td>• We ask funders for feedback on our reports</td>
<td>• We encourage face-to-face contact between funders &amp; communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We work on developing bid-writing skills across the whole organisation</td>
<td>• We meet all the funder’s deadlines for reporting</td>
<td>• We work on developing bid-writing skills across the whole organisation</td>
<td>• We share details of our quality systems with funders</td>
<td>• We regularly monitor if our mission is distorted by funders’ priorities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Write your level for this benchmark here:

See the following page for benchmark MOT 15
### MOT.15  We communicate effectively with our supporters, members & affiliates - PARTNERSHIP

1. **Must have**
   - We communicate with members, supporters & affiliates about specific issues from time to time
   - We share information about our activities

2. **Should have**
   - We ensure a regular flow of information between us & our supporters
   - If we do direct marketing we follow the relevant codes of practice

3. **Good**
   - We value diversity & use open dialogue to overcome language & cultural barriers
   - We use a variety of methods to communicate (direct mail, e-mail, blogs, meetings, etc.) & tailor them to suit different needs
   - We use electronic communication & e-newsletters where possible to reduce print costs

4. **Excellent**
   - We use our data to identify interests & responses in order to work better with our supporters
   - We check if the methods of our communications suits supporters & make adjustments accordingly
   - We actively use social media & use viral campaigns to build influence

5. **Outstanding**
   - Our collaboration with supporters, members & affiliates is an exchange that adds value to our enterprises
   - We have carried out a stakeholder analysis to help us think through the key messages we want to get across to various groups & how we will do that

Write your level for this benchmark here:

### MOT.16  We have effective internal communications systems - LEARNING

1. **Must have**
   - Team members are informed of developments and decisions that directly affect them

2. **Should have**
   - We aim to raise the morale of volunteers & staff by the way we communicate with them
   - Key information and learning is shared between staff, the board & volunteers
   - We use a range of communication methods internally

3. **Good**
   - Our team(s) meet regularly to reflect on their activities and receive briefings on the wider work of the organisation
   - Staff & volunteers are a good source of ideas & information so we listen to them & capture what they say

4. **Excellent**
   - We regularly review staff & volunteers’ attitudes to working with us and how they would like us to communicate
   - Volunteers & staff receive good & bad news from us before we tell others

5. **Outstanding**
   - Our volunteers & staff are knowledgeable about our work and can represent us well externally
   - We have earmarked resources to strengthen internal communication
   - We boost motivation with celebrations & thanks

Write your level for this benchmark here:
## MOT.17 We are open & transparent about the way we work - ACCOUNTABILITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Must have</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• We ensure that communities are asked what information they need in order to effectively participate in projects</td>
<td>• Our documents &amp; communications are legally compliant in the jurisdiction we are operating</td>
<td>• We ensure that our documents are accessible in a variety of formats, including websites</td>
<td>• We regularly update our website &amp; upload information about us &amp; our project results</td>
<td>• Our data publication is compliant with internationally recognised standards such as International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We check what our partners would like to know about our organisation &amp; this is made available to them</td>
<td>• We publish a selection of information about our organisation, its activities &amp; its results through our website &amp; other channels</td>
<td>• We take the needs &amp; contexts of communities into account when sharing information, including levels of literacy &amp; numeracy</td>
<td>• We use social media to transmit information &amp; get feedback</td>
<td>• We support our partners in building their capacity to be transparent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Our documents &amp; communications are legally compliant in the jurisdiction we are operating</td>
<td>• We check what our partners would like to know about our organisation &amp; this is made available to them</td>
<td>• We ensure that our documents are accessible in a variety of formats, including websites</td>
<td>• We regularly update our website &amp; upload information about us &amp; our project results</td>
<td>• Our data publication is compliant with internationally recognised standards such as International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We publish a selection of information about our organisation, its activities &amp; its results through our website &amp; other channels</td>
<td>• We ensure that our documents are accessible in a variety of formats, including websites</td>
<td>• We regularly update our website &amp; upload information about us &amp; our project results</td>
<td>• We use social media to transmit information &amp; get feedback</td>
<td>• We support our partners in building their capacity to be transparent</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Write your level for this benchmark here:**


