REFLECTIONS ON TRUST, RISK, AND DUE DILIGENCE

A PANEL DISCUSSION HELD BY THE STEPHEN LEWIS FOUNDATION

Trust

We trust our partners and want to earn their trust.

It’s about:
- Mutual accountability
- Supporting community-led organizations (CLOs) to pursue their own priorities
- Offering flexibility to adapt as needs and circumstances change

Without trust, it’s very difficult to have impact.

CLOs deal with complex issues:
- There are no linear solutions
- They need flexibility and core support
- Funders put organizations in a box, that does not allow them to adapt.
- Funders need to trust community-led organizations.

Risk

Not just financial risk. What about risk to impact?

At AWDF we talk about risk holistically.

Excessive monitoring and reporting = waste of time, funding, energy

Anticolonial funding

Funders are:
- Constantly learning and reflecting
- Partners not bosses
- Putting community voices at the forefront
- Funding communities’ priorities
- Accountable to communities

Due Diligence

Should be:
- Guided by a deep trust for CLOs
- About identifying the types of support that are needed
- Rooted in mutual accountability

Should not be:
- Primarily about eliminating organizations from consideration for funding
- The responsibility of CLOs alone; funders can ease the burden by doing their own homework

Community organizations:
- Are institutions working to change the status quo
- Are strengthened with core funding
- Are not projects that come and go

“WE ARE WORKING FOR COLLECTIVE CHANGE.”
- Gertrude

“THE JOY OF THE WORK IS REALLY TO UNDERSTAND WHAT THE ORGANIZATIONS ARE DOING TO ACHIEVE CHANGE ON THE FIELD.”
- Gertrude

Our monitoring and evaluation includes learning, celebrating wins, and providing support beyond financial.

“THERE IS A REAL RISK TO NOT SHIFTING THE POWER TO THOSE WHO HAVE THE SOLUTIONS.”
- Hum}

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