






Potential obstacles


Suggested solutions





 Different stakeholders within a particular organisation will have conflicting views on how to best implement transparency and accountability. Power dynamics within an organisation, across departments and levels can also cause unwillingness to be transparent and accountable within the organisation, and towards other stakeholders.

 Create coherent, strong and regular feedback loops among stakeholders, to ensure that all views can be taken into account, ideally using an inverted pyramid model where the hierarchy of importance prioritises the needs of your grantees and/or local communities that your organisation serves. Identify and understand stakeholder motivations, including extended spheres of decision-makers, such as finance, legal and risk management teams. Encouraging a feedback culture will require deliberate and intentional personal reflection and organisational cultural change.

 Organisational staff and advisers want to adopt greater transparency practices but are concerned about their vulnerable community stakeholders and possible negative ramifications.

 While public transparency is often encouraged, in certain cases (e.g. human rights funders, environmental activists) full transparency may be detrimental to success or safety. In these cases, individual and community safety should be prioritised, while considering alternative options to maintaining a broader commitment to transparency (e.g. confidentiality, anonymisation).

 Enhancing transparency and accountability may lead to difficult reckonings and enhanced risk aversion within the organisation about programme effectiveness or impact.

 It is crucial for philanthropic organisations to course-correct if their programmes are less effective than they could be. Frame better transparency and accountability measures as an exciting opportunity to ensure the organisation is a valuable asset to its stakeholders (rather than a stressful auditing process). Create the right incentives to support this internal cultural change amongst staff, ideally visibly led by leaders within the organisation.



Resources

Arab Foundations Forum (2011). [Principles of Good Practice](#).

Association of Fundraising Professionals, Association for Healthcare Philanthropy, Council for Advancement and Support of Education, and Giving Institute. [Donor Bill of Rights](#).

Center for Effective Philanthropy (2016). [Sharing What Matters: Foundation Transparency](#).

Centre for Social Innovation (2015). [Transparency and Trust in the Charity Sector](#).

GlassPockets (2022). [Transparency self-assessment](#).

Global Partnership on Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) (2011). [The Four Effectiveness Principles](#).

GrantCraft Guide (2014). [Opening Up: Demystifying Funder Transparency](#).

[International Aid Transparency Initiative](#).

SAANED (2011). [Guide to Analysing Philanthropy Organisations](#).

[Transparency and Accountability Initiative](#).

WINGS (2023). [Moving from Reflection to Action: A Guide on Transparency and Accountability for Philanthropic Organisations](#).