



GLOSSARY

Programmatic language: when we talk about what we do and who and what we support

Accountability

Process of holding actors responsible for their actions. It is the concept that individuals, agencies and organisations (public, private and civil society) are held responsible for executing their powers according to a certain standard (whether set mutually or not).

Alliance/coalition/movement/collective/network: All refer to a shared purpose. What makes them slightly different to one another:

An **alliance** or a **coalition** refers to a relationship among people, groups, organisations, states or factions that have joined together for mutual benefit or to achieve some common purpose. Coalitions tend to be more temporary in their arrangement and an alliance often suggests that an explicit agreement has been worked out among the partners/allies.

The choice of the term coalition, alliance, (or apex body) within civil society and the different structures and ways of working often stem from the relationships, history and political context of their establishment.

A **social movement** is a large, sometimes informal, groupings of individuals or organisations which focus on specific political or social issues. They provide a way of social change from the bottom.

A **collective** is a group of entities that share or are motivated by at least one common issue or interest, or work together to achieve a common objective.

(all the above definitions adapted from Wikipedia)

Networks are a distinct form of organisation, different from hierarchical institutions. They tend to be made up of autonomous organisations, which may or may not be formalised, but can also include other actors such as the media, individuals, trade unions, academics, the private sector. The Foundation is interested in networks that form around issues or a set of values for social change and sustainable development and that have an explicit purpose for policy reform. Networks can include those that call themselves an alliance, coalition, movement or collective.

Change agent

A **change agent** (also called game changer or interlocutor) is a civic voice, or individual or group from government, media or private sector who can be a catalyst for change. They tend to have the following characteristics:

- Invested and embedded in the context of the desired social change
- the drive to make change within their communities
- the potential to bring together various other players to the table to solve collective problems
- the capacity to creatively work within the confines of the project and funding parameters

More on change agents: This publication may be of interest: Fletcher Tembo and Jenny Chapman (2014) *In search of the game changers*. ODI

Civic voices

The term ‘civic voices’ captures the range of citizen engagement arrangements in which citizens participate directly or indirectly to exact accountability and shape development outcomes. Civic voices includes, but is not limited to, civil society organisations (CSOs), informal alliances, social movements, individuals and collectives. The term recognises that CSOs are no longer the only interlocutor with government and that other civic voices can effectively influence public discourse, participate in policy processes and engage with government and governance institutions.

Collective leadership

Leadership of a change process that cultivates trust-based relationships with and between a range of actors (civic voices, government, media etc.); that is able to mediate the various and diverse interests and incentives of the actors involved; and, that can recruit contributions (such as ideas, resources and other kinds of influence) to enhance civic voice engagement and accountability.

Craft development

Enhancing skills in different storytelling art forms. The Foundation, through Commonwealth Writers, provides or facilitates craft development in fiction and non-fiction prose, poetry, editing, filmmaking and translation.

Creative expression

Use of creative media such as prose, film, poetry, photography, music, and theatre to express ideas and tell stories that can help people make sense of events, issues and engage and inspire people to take action for social change.

Formal space, informal space, Commonwealth space

Spaces are opportunities, moments and channels where civic voices can act to potentially affect policies, discourses, decisions and relationships that affect their lives and interests.

A **formal space** is an institutionalised decision-making space; created and controlled by the decision-makers themselves (be they Ministers, experts, bureaucrats etc.). They exist at various levels - local, national, global, and are generally issue specific. Formal spaces may be closed to civic voice participation or they may invite civic voices to participate. Invitation to participate may be regularised or more transient through one-off forms of consultation. Opening up

formal spaces for greater public involvement and accountability is one way in which civic voice act to influence the policies, discourses, and decisions that affect lives.

An **Informal space** is a decision-making space that is not institutionalised. Informal spaces are by nature less visible than formal spaces and can be hidden or invisible, making them less easy for civic voices to engage. They are created by decision-makers with common concerns or identifications and are important spaces of power where decisions are made, outside the formal, more visible space, to influence or potentially pre-determine or circumvent agendas. Informal spaces can function on many levels and can exclude concerns of less heard voices. To affect policies, discourses, decisions and relationships, civic voices also need to investigate and research informal spaces to strategize if and how to act and engage within them.

Traditional systems of decision-making, which have been superseded by Westernized institutional decision-making spaces, are sometimes referred to as informal spaces.

A **Commonwealth space** is an institutionalised decision-making space established by and coordinated by the Commonwealth Secretariat. More commonly the term refers to Ministerial meeting spaces (such as the Commonwealth Health Ministers meeting) but can also include other state officials, government technical staff or Commonwealth Secretarial staff.

See this helpful publication by John Gaventa (2009) *Finding the Spaces for Change: A Power Analysis*. Institute for Development Studies, which provides a typology of spaces and discusses how power is manifest within and between each space.

Gender intersectionality

A feminist narrative should also take gender intersectionality into account. **Gender intersectionality** is the interconnected nature of discrimination or disadvantage such as race, caste, ethnicity, class, heteronormativity and other positions of relative power that further reinforce hierarchies of gender and power. Understanding different intersecting systems of oppression enables us to recognise the different experiences of women, and how gender inequality is shaped by these intersections. The particular experience of intersecting discriminations is unique, not simply the sum of different discriminations.

Gender intersectionality challenges a dominant feminist narrative which has been overly shaped by a white, middle class, heteronormative perspective. It aims to uncover and discuss the multi-layered facets of discrimination that women of all backgrounds experience.

Intersectionality was coined by the American academic, Kimberlé Crenshaw. If you have a bit of time - here she is herself, explaining the term at the Women of the World festival, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-DW4HLgYPIA>

Gender equality

Women and men have equal rights to, and opportunities for, human, social, economic and cultural development. **Gender equity** is the exercise of these rights. Gender equity leads to gender equality and fair and just outcomes for women and men. It may include special measures to redress historic inequalities, access to resources and power imbalances between women and men, as well as groups negatively affected by gender-based discrimination.

Governance institutions

Includes government, policy-makers, public authorities, corporations, donors and other stakeholders that are involved in and influence governance and public policy and practice.

Knowledge mobilisation: refers to moving available knowledge - either from project results and experience, partner expertise or research into active use. Knowledge mobilisation seeks to make connections between project(s), partner(s) and programme expertise with policy, strategy and practice to improve outcomes (i.e. stronger civic voices and governance and accountability outcomes).

Knowledge management: is the systematic management of an organization's knowledge assets for the purpose of creating value and meeting tactical and strategic requirements; it consists of the initiatives, processes, strategies, and systems that sustain and enhance the storage, assessment, sharing, refinement, and creation of knowledge. Knowledge management (KM) therefore implies a strong tie to organisational goals and strategy, and it involves the management of knowledge that creates value for the organisation.

Marginalisation/in the margins: To **marginalise** is to push a group deemed less significant to one side so that they feel isolated and unimportant. **In the margins** refers to being just outside of a larger group or different to the group while simultaneously being part of it.

Narrative, counter narrative and feminist narratives

A **narrative** is a strategy for describing experience and making sense of the wider world. Not just a story, narrative attempts to give order, explain or normalize the way things are. A **dominant narrative** is a story or set of stories that dominate a culture and often reflects the views of the most powerful and influential in society.

A **counter narrative** is a story or set of stories from the perspective of people who are marginalised, about themselves. A counter narrative is used to challenge ideas that have been presented by the dominant narrative.

A **feminist narrative** puts the experiences of women and marginalised groups centre stage to make them visible. It provides an analysis and perspective of how male dominance and female disempowerment have manifested themselves in specific aspects of society. A feminist narrative challenges the dominant narrative, which is overly shaped by men and people of power and privilege.

Open system

Effective capacity development focuses on the organisations and the individuals within a system (see Systems thinking definition below). The Foundation's capacity development framework describes an open system as human, social and political systems which evolve organically over time. These systems are characteristically unpredictable and multi-layered and should always be taken into account when designing, learning and adapting projects. In an open system, stakeholders should also be considered at multiple levels - the individual, organisational and institutional levels.

See the Foundation's capacity development framework:

<https://commonwealthfoundation.com/resource/commonwealth-foundations-capacity-development-framework/>

Platforms for public discourse

A wide variety of platforms that bring stories and issues into the public arena - this includes printed publications such as anthologies and books, as well as films, exhibitions, websites, events, and conferences.

Public discourse:

The exchange of information, ideas and deliberation on issues of public concern in the public sphere. The 'public sphere' includes the space between the state and the private sphere of citizens, households and private corporations. Through a range of communication channels, public discourse can influence public debate and form public or collective will, which has the potential to demand accountability of governance institutions and influence political decision-making.

Systems thinking

An approach to thinking that recognises the complexity of development problems. It offers an opportunity for critical, realistic and participatory programme design, assessment and learning that takes into account the different systems (see open system definition above) and power dynamics that influence and interact. This animation is helpful to further understand this concept:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfyWgp95kgA&feature=youtu.be>

Thought leadership: refers to providing a trusted, informed opinion in a chosen field of expertise that can provide clarity and move and inspire people with innovative ideas. Thought leaders can add value to a debate in four ways:

- As experts - having undertaken research and having a deep knowledge of an issue
- As innovators - creative thinkers who send debates in a new direction
- As explainer - who provide clarity on debates, make complicated issues clear (storyteller)
- As decision-maker - can turn the thinking into action

Acronyms: frequently used in programme discussions and in our reports

CA	Commonwealth Association
CALAG	Caribbean Literature Action Group
CCEM	Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers
CD	Capacity Development
CGPMG	Commonwealth Gender Plan of Action Monitoring Group
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
COL	Commonwealth of Learning
CPF	Commonwealth People's Forum
CSAG	Civil Society Advisory Governors
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DSA	Daily Subsistence Allowance
EPG	Eminent Persons Group
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HR	Human Resources
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IGO	Intergovernmental Organisation
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
KM	Knowledge Management
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RBM	Results-Based Management
WAMM	Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting

Project Management Terms: used in our programme planning and in our Excel project management system

Project	A means of achieving a desired output, through a planned sequence of activities over a defined period using defined resources
Project Management	The application of tools and techniques - common to all projects - that ensures the project is kept on course and achieves its output
Project Management Framework	The "lifecycle" of the project, from proposal through planning, monitoring, closure and review
Project Structure	An overview of who is involved and their responsibilities, at the different "levels" of the project
Project Partner	Organisations or individuals working on the project with the Commonwealth Foundation
Stakeholder	Organisations or individuals who have an interest in the success of the project
Project Manager	Leads the project through every part of the project lifecycle, responsible for day-to-day progress and the achievement of the project output
Project Team	A group assembled for the purpose of achieving the project's output
Project Folder	The "store" of all documentation relating to a specific project
Project Proposal	The "terms of reference" for a project. A project cannot proceed until the proposal has been approved by an authorised manager
Approach	The information that describes how the project will be delivered. ("The How")
Rationale	The information that describes the justification for setting up and continuing a project. ("The Why")
Scope	The "boundary" of the project, as defined by its stated output, describing what is included and what is not included in a project
Output	The deliverables of the project
Assumptions	Assumptions are conditions in the programme environment that you cannot fully control but which you will rely upon for programme success
Constraints	Constraints are things that might restrict, limit, or regulate the project.
Risks	Risks are the opposite of assumptions - they are factors outside the programme's full control that may prevent it from achieving its objectives.
Risk Analysis/Assessment	The means of assessing the likelihood that an uncertain event will occur, and its possible impact if it does
Resources	The total "expenditure" used on the project in terms of staff time (person days), cash and special equipment
Budget	The total cash sum allocated for use on the project

Contract	A legally binding document that sets out responsibilities and payment arrangements for those asked to work on the project with the Foundation
Agreement	A legally binding document that sets out the respective responsibilities and commitments of the partners in a project
Cross Cutting Issues	Generic issues (e.g. gender) identified by the Foundation that need attention in every aspect of its work
Project Schedule	A schedule showing the outputs and activities of the project, over time
Phase	Longer projects (e.g. over more than one year) can be sub-divided to enable better management and control
Activity	Actions taken through which inputs are mobilised to produce outputs
Milestone	Identified points in the project where significant activities need to have been completed. Often linked to the end of a project stage
Dependency	In planning activities the identification that one activity needs to be completed before another activity can begin
Project Budget	The agreed allocation of cash expenditure on a project
Contingency Plan	Plan to overcome or mitigate a risk if it does happen
Project Progress/Monitoring	Regular scrutiny as to whether the project is keeping to plan in terms of its stated output, its activities, timescale and costs
Project Highlight Report	A pre-agreed report to the project sponsor showing progress made and raising any issues for resolution
Variance	The difference, once a project is underway, between the plan and what is actually happening in terms of time taken or resources used
Issue	During the project a concern that needs to be resolved (e.g. conflicting priorities, a perceived need to change the timescale)
Project Closure	The formal end of the project, including an initial evaluation of success against original outputs, costs and time
Project Evaluation	A more detailed assessment of the success of the project in realising its output, undertaken some time after the project has closed.
Lessons Learned	As part of the closure of the project the identification of the learning that can be usefully transferred
Status	This is the project manager's estimate of the project's progress measured against the project plan.