

# Framing Sustainability

# Objectives

By the end of today's session, participants will be able to:

- Describe sustainability in four dimensions (People, Processes, Partnerships, Purpose).
- Identify which dimensions are strongest/weakest in their own organisations.
- Map what sustainability looks like in their specific contexts.
- Identify one practical area your organisation can strengthen next

# Introduction: why we're doing this

- Civil society organisations (CSOs) operate in a complex environment
- Funding is fragile — sustainability goes beyond money
- Strength, viability and resilience depend on more than donations

# What sustainability really means

- Sustainable CSOs are about:
  - Strong people & leadership
  - Reliable processes & systems
  - Meaningful partnerships & community trust
  - Clear purpose and identity
- These are the four lenses we will use to frame sustainability

# The Four Lenses of Sustainability

## The Four Lenses

- People
- Processes
- Partnerships
- Purpose

# People

- Leadership
- Skills & capacity
- Team stability
- Wellbeing & motivation
- Continuity

## LENS 1 People

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### Capacity, continuity, wellbeing, leadership pipeline

Not true at all (1-2)      Somewhat true/inconsi...      Very true/consistently d...

Roles and responsibilitie...

Staff have the skills they...

We have low dependenc...

Staff wellbeing and moti...

We have a basic succes...

For each statement,  
rate your CSO from **1**  
to **5**.

**1 = Not true at all**

**3 = Somewhat true /  
inconsistent**

**5 = Very true /  
consistently  
demonstrated**

# Processes

- Systems & documentation
- MEL & reporting
- Financial controls
- Workflows & SOPs
- Continuity of operations

## LENS 2: Processes

Systems, documentation, workflows, MEL, financial controls

	Not true at all (1-2)	Somewhat true/inconsi...	Very true/consistently d...
Core programme activiti...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Team members know w...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MEL data is collected co...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial processes (ap...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work continues smoothl...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

For each statement,  
rate your CSO from 1  
to 5.

**1 = Not true at all**  
**3 = Somewhat true / inconsistent**  
**5 = Very true / consistently demonstrated**

# Partnerships

- Community relationships
- Networks & collaborations
- Donor relations
- Credibility & trust
- Capacity-enhancing alliances

### LENS 3: Partnerships

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Networks, collaboration, trust, community engagement

Not true at all (1-2)      Somewhat true/inconsi...      Very true/consistently d...

We have active partners...

Our community trusts u...

We collaborate regularly...

We are able to maintain ...

We have at least one pa...

For each statement,  
rate your CSO from **1**  
to **5**.

**1 = Not true at all**

**3 = Somewhat true /  
inconsistent**

**5 = Very true /  
consistently  
demonstrated**

# Purpose

- Mission clarity
- Identity & focus
- Strategic direction
- Avoiding mission drift
- Value proposition

## LENS 4: Purpose

Mission clarity, focus, strategic direction, value proposition

...

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Not true at all (1-2)   Somewhat true/inconsi...   Very true/consistently d...

Our mission is clear and...

Staff can explain the org...

Our programmes strongl...

We can adapt to new op...

We have a strong value ...

For each statement,  
rate your CSO from **1**  
to **5**.

**1 = Not true at all**

**3 = Somewhat true /  
inconsistent**

**5 = Very true /  
consistently  
demonstrated**

# INTERPRETATION GUIDE

21-25

Strong foundation: maintain and refine.

16-20

Moderate — several areas need strengthening.

11-15

Weak — sustainability risks present.

5-10

Very weak — urgent attention needed.

# Sustainability Profile Summary

Lens	Score (out of 25)	Strength Level
People	_____	_____
Processes	_____	_____
Partnerships	_____	_____
Purpose	_____	_____