SGS CONSULTING
DEVELOPMENT & MANAGEMENT

GRASSROOTS GRANTMAKING TOOLKIT

An Afrocentric, ABCD-Informed and Community-Grounded Approach

For Southern African Community Foundations

Developed by the Grassroots Grantmaking Community of Practice
Southern Africa | 2026

ABOUT SGS CONSULTING AND THE YOUNG PEOPLE BEHIND THIS TOOLKIT

SGS Consulting is an African development and management consulting social enterprise working across the continent to strengthen organisations, empower communities and advance locally led change. We are guided by a vision of a more equitable and inclusive society, advanced through social justice, community empowerment, philanthropy, school improvement and organisational development. We translate this vision into action by strengthening local institutions, unlocking community assets and supporting communities to mobilise and direct resources towards the priorities they define.

This toolkit is a product of the Community of Practice convened by SGS Consulting in 2026. It brings together the creativity, innovation and practical experience of young practitioners from Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa and Zambia, with facilitation from Zimbabwe.

These practitioners were not invited simply to participate. They were trusted to lead, question, test and co-create. Drawing on their lived and professional experience, they developed this practical resource grounded in African knowledge, community realities, and the principle that grantmaking should be done in partnership with communities, not for them.

The toolkit demonstrates what becomes possible when young African practitioners convene to shape the future of African philanthropy.

MEET THE CO-CREATORS

NAME	ORGANISATION	COUNTRY	LOGO
Ruth Canesha Chamangwana	Mudzi Connect	Malawi	
David Kapata	Zambian Governance Foundation	Zambia	
Daniela Mabote	Fundação Micaia	Mozambique	
Figórcia Furuma			
Margaret Maans	Initiative for Community Advancement	South Africa	
Nolwazi Charmaine Xhakaza	The Valley Trust	South Africa	
Kgaogelo Mashiloane	SGS Consulting	South Africa	
Ntando Hoza	Centre on African Philanthropy and Social Investment (CAPSI), Wits Business School	South Africa	

FACILITATOR

Shelley Satuku, Zimbabwe

Grassroots Grantmaking Community of Practice
Co-Creation Lab, The Valley Trust, KwaZulu-Natal, 2026

Convened and coordinated by:

SGS CONSULTING
DEVELOPMENT & MANAGEMENT

With support from the:

CHARLES STEWART
MOTT FOUNDATION

Table of Contents

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS.....2

TOOLKIT ROADMAP.....3

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT.....4

INTRODUCTION.....5

SECTION 1: ABCD AND AFROCENTRIC FOUNDATIONS OF GRASSROOTS GRANTMAKING.....6

What is Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD)?... 8

SECTION 2: DESIGN PRINCIPLES.....9

The Five Core Components of This Toolkit.....11

Component 1: Strategy Foundation..... 12

Start with Purpose, People and Place..... 12

Grant Types: Empowerment in Every Form..... 14

Component 2: Legal, Policy and Compliance Framework..... 15

Make the Rules Clear, Fair and Proportionate..... 15

Who Can Apply?..... 16

Component 3: Community Engagement and Pre-Award Support..... 17

Build Relationships Before Funding.....17

The Strengths-Based Application Questions..... 18

Community Co-Investment..... 19

Component 4: Award and Implementation..... 20

Formalise Partnership, Then Support Delivery.....20

Grant Review Criteria.....20

Grant Orientation: No One Signs Before They Understand..... 21

Implementation Support.....22

Component 5: Monitoring, Reporting, Evaluation and Learning..... 23

Measure What Matters, With the Community..... 23

Making M&E Practical..... 24

Flexible Reporting..... 25

Close-Out Reflection: Seven Essential Questions..... 25

SECTION 3: PRACTICAL GUIDANCE NOTES..... 26

3.1 Inclusion..... 27

3.2 Ethics and Accountability..... 28

3.3 Capacity Building.....28

SECTION 4: ANNEXED TEMPLATES - OVERVIEW.....29

Annex 1: Community Listening & Asset Mapping Tool.....31

Annex 2: Community Power, Stakeholder & Inclusion Mapping Tool..... 33

Annex 3: Grant Strategy Worksheet..... 35

Annex 4: Eligibility and Grant Readiness Checklist.....37

Annex 5: Simple Grant Application Form..... 39

Annex 6: Budget Template..... 41

Annex 7: Grant Review and Scoring Guide..... 42

Annex 8: Risk and Support Assessment Tool..... 44

Annex 9: Grant Agreement Orientation Checklist..... 45

Annex 10: Implementation Workplan..... 47

Annex 11: Financial Tracking Template..... 48

Annex 12: Learning-Focused Monitoring Visit Tool..... 49

Annex 13: Community Feedback Form..... 51

Annex 14: Story of Change Template..... 52

Annex 15: Close-Out and Learning Reflection Report..... 53

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

Plain-language definitions of the terms used throughout this toolkit.

ABCD (Asset-Based Community Development)	A methodology that shifts focus from community deficits toward identifying and mobilising existing strengths, capacities, skills, social networks and resources.
Afrocentric Approach	An approach that places African values, histories, cultures, worldviews and indigenous knowledge systems at the centre of design and practice.
Chilimba / Mukando / Stokvel / Xitique	Traditional, community-led savings and credit groups used across various Southern African countries to pool resources and foster local mutual aid.
Community Co-Investment	Local contributions made by community members toward a project, which can include cash, labour, land, local materials, food, meeting spaces, volunteer time or knowledge.
Elite Capture	A phenomenon where resources or decision-making power are monopolised by more affluent, powerful or well-connected individuals within a community, excluding marginalised groups.
Fiscal Hosting	An arrangement in which a registered organisation legally receives, holds and manages funds on behalf of an unregistered or informal group, taking on legal and financial accountability for those funds. Also called fiscal sponsorship or fiscal agency. It allows informal groups to access funding without first becoming a registered legal entity.
Grassroots Grantmaking	A localised funding model designed to support small, informal or community-led initiatives through flexible, accessible and community-grounded procedures.
MREL (Monitoring, Reporting, Evaluation and Learning)	A continuous reflection framework used to track project implementation, gather community feedback, document changes and use lessons learned to adapt practice.
Proportional Compliance	The principle that administrative documentation, risk management and reporting requirements should match the size of the grant, the capacity of the group and the actual level of risk involved.
Safeguarding	Operational policies and actions designed to protect children, vulnerable groups and community members from harm, abuse, exploitation or the unethical use of their stories and images.
Ubuntu	An African philosophical concept emphasising communal interconnectedness, often translated as “I am because we are”, which highlights mutual responsibility, solidarity and relational well-being.

TOOLKIT ROADMAP

This page shows the five stages of the grantmaking cycle, the questions each stage answers, and the annex tools to use at each stage. Use it to move from principle to action.

01 1. Define the Strategy

Clarify the purpose, people, place and priorities of the grantmaking programme before applications open.

Key Questions:

- Why are we making grants?
- What change should they support?
- Who should benefit?
- Where will grants operate?
- What types of grants?
- How will grants build on community assets?

Tools & Annexes:

- **Annex 1:** Community Listening & Asset Mapping Tool
- **Annex 2:** Community Power, Stakeholder & Inclusion Mapping Tool
- **Annex 3:** Grant Strategy Worksheet

02 2. Set Fair and Proportionate Rules

Confirm the legal, policy, eligibility, compliance and safeguarding requirements for the grant.

Key Questions:

- Who can apply?
- What rules must applicants follow?
- What documentation is fair for the size and risk of the grant?
- How are informal or unregistered groups included?
- What safeguards are needed?

Tools & Annexes:

- **Annex 4:** Eligibility and Grant Readiness Checklist
- **Annex 8:** Risk and Support Assessment Tool

03 3. Engage the Community and Support Applications

Build relationships, explain the grant, support applicants and make the process accessible.

Key Questions:

- Have communities been properly listened to?
- Are excluded groups being reached?
- Do applicants understand the purpose and requirements?
- What support do they need?
- Can applications be completed accessibly?

Tools & Annexes:

- **Annex 1:** Community Listening & Asset Mapping Tool
- **Annex 2:** Community Power, Stakeholder & Inclusion Mapping Tool
- **Annex 5:** Simple Grant Application Form
- **Annex 6:** Budget Template

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit is a living resource. It is designed to be adapted, translated and used in context. It is not a rigid compliance checklist, it is a practical guide for grantmakers who believe that communities already hold the solutions, and that their role is to resource, trust and walk alongside them.

This toolkit is for:	How to use it:
Community Foundations in Southern Africa	Read the design principles first. They are the soul of the toolkit.
Intermediary organisations supporting grassroots grantmaking	Use the five-component cycle as your operating framework.
Philanthropic organisations seeking localised approaches	Adapt the templates (Annexes 1–15) to your local language and context.
Grant managers and programme officers	Use the practical guidance notes alongside each component.
Community facilitators and grant support staff	Begin with community entry trust before transactions.

INTRODUCTION

This toolkit offers a practical, Afrocentric and community-grounded approach to grassroots grantmaking. It supports community foundations, community foundation support organisations and grassroots grantmakers to design and manage grants in ways that are simple, fair, inclusive and rooted in community power.

It is based on one central belief: communities are not empty spaces waiting for help. They already hold assets, knowledge, leadership, relationships, culture and solutions. Grantmaking should therefore begin with community strengths, not charity. It should not only move money it should reinforce trust, dignity, partnership, accountability and community power.

An African Proverb

Another similar, highly used idiom is ***"Abali babili na mano yabili"*** *(where there are two people, there is double wisdom). It highlights that cooperation brings better ideas and outcomes than working in isolation. (Bemba, Zambia)* No one succeeds alone. Communities possess resources that are essential to solving local challenges, and communities and funders achieve more together than they do separately a principle that runs through every component of this toolkit.

A strong grassroots grantmaking system must be practical enough to use, but also deep enough to shift power towards communities. This means the process must be easy to understand, accessible to grassroots groups, respectful of local knowledge and flexible enough to work across different African contexts.

The toolkit brings together five core components: strategy, policy and compliance, community engagement, award and implementation, and monitoring, reporting, evaluation and learning. Each component is Afrocentric, ABCD-informed, participatory and replicable.

At its core, this toolkit is about grantmaking with community, not for community. This message should guide every decision, from strategy and policy to implementation, reporting and learning.

An African Proverb

"Mutu umodzi susenza denga" One head cannot carry a roof. (Chichewa, Malawi) Sustainable change is built through collective effort. When grantmakers, intermediaries and communities combine their strengths and work toward a common purpose, they can accomplish what would be impossible for any one of them acting alone.

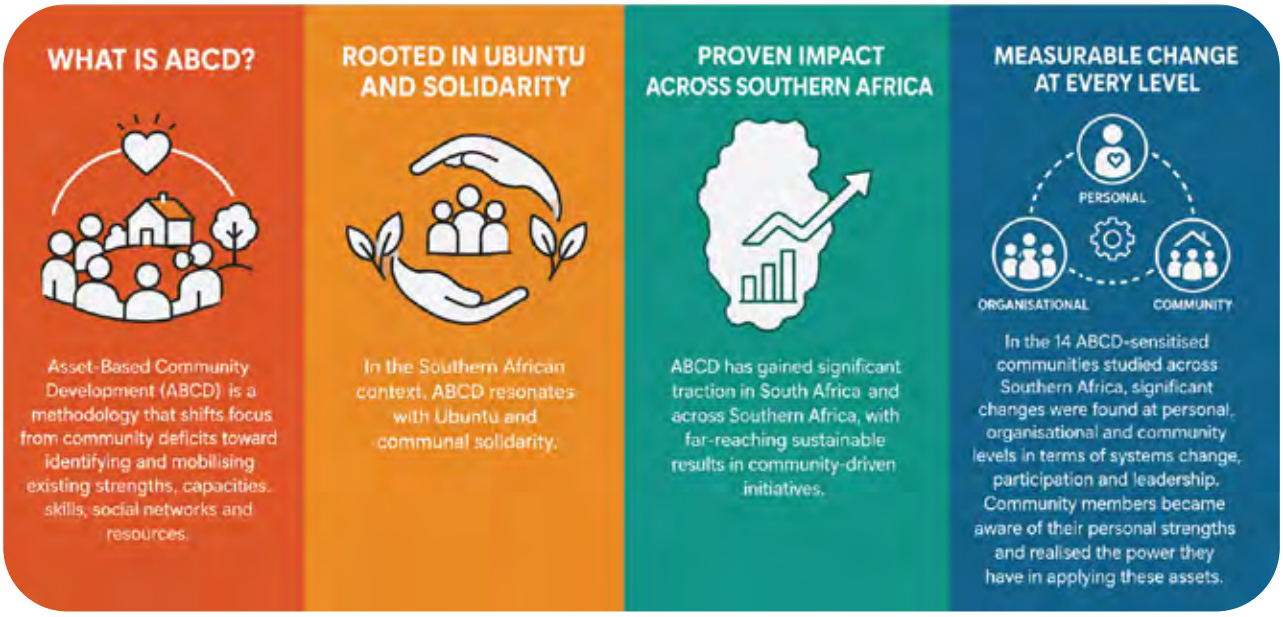
SECTION 1:

ABCD and Afrocentric Foundations of Grassroots Grantmaking

An Afrocentric approach to grantmaking places African values, histories, cultures, worldviews and indigenous knowledge systems at the centre not at the margins. It constructs funding mechanisms that respect and strengthen local social dynamics, traditional systems of legitimacy and community agency.

Ubuntu reminds us that people's well-being is connected. In grantmaking, this means that success should not only be measured by what one organisation delivers, but also by how the work strengthens community well-being, relationships, trust, accountability and local agency. This means:

- A grantee does not succeed alone, its work should contribute to wider community well-being.
- Accountability is not only upward to the funder, it is also outward to the people and communities affected by the work.
- Success is measured not only by outputs, but also by the quality of relationships, trust, solidarity and local agency strengthened through the grant.



An African Proverb

"Kala bodzi nkhabe manga nyumba" A single stick cannot build a house. (Cisena, Mozambique)
Local development requires combining the small resources and efforts of every group member. If an initiative depends only on an isolated individual, it lacks sustainability, collective action and social cohesion are not optional extras, they are the foundation.

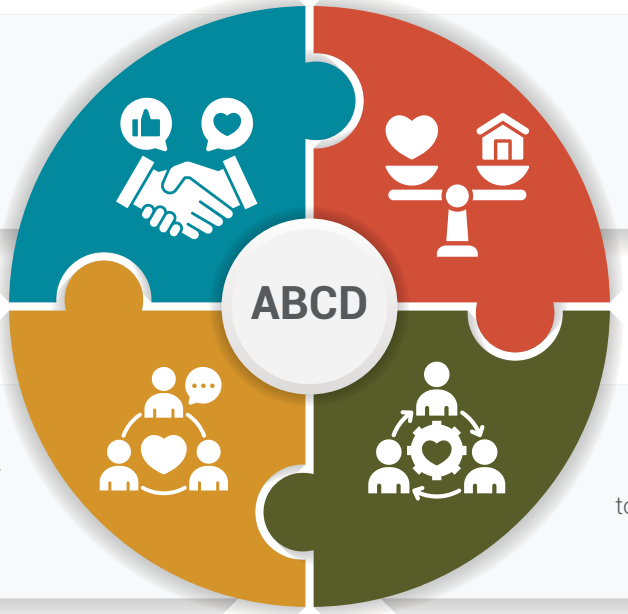
An African Proverb

"Madzi a m'mambone nkhabe dza tsalana na njala", Water that flows near the house does not let anyone die of thirst. (Cisena, Mozambique)
Before looking outward and waiting for support "from far away," communities are guided to first identify and value the capacities, skills and talents that already exist close to home, the starting point for any ABCD-informed asset mapping.

ABCD holds four essential elements:

Assets:
Every community holds gifts, skills, stories, spaces, relationships. These are the starting point, not needs or deficits.

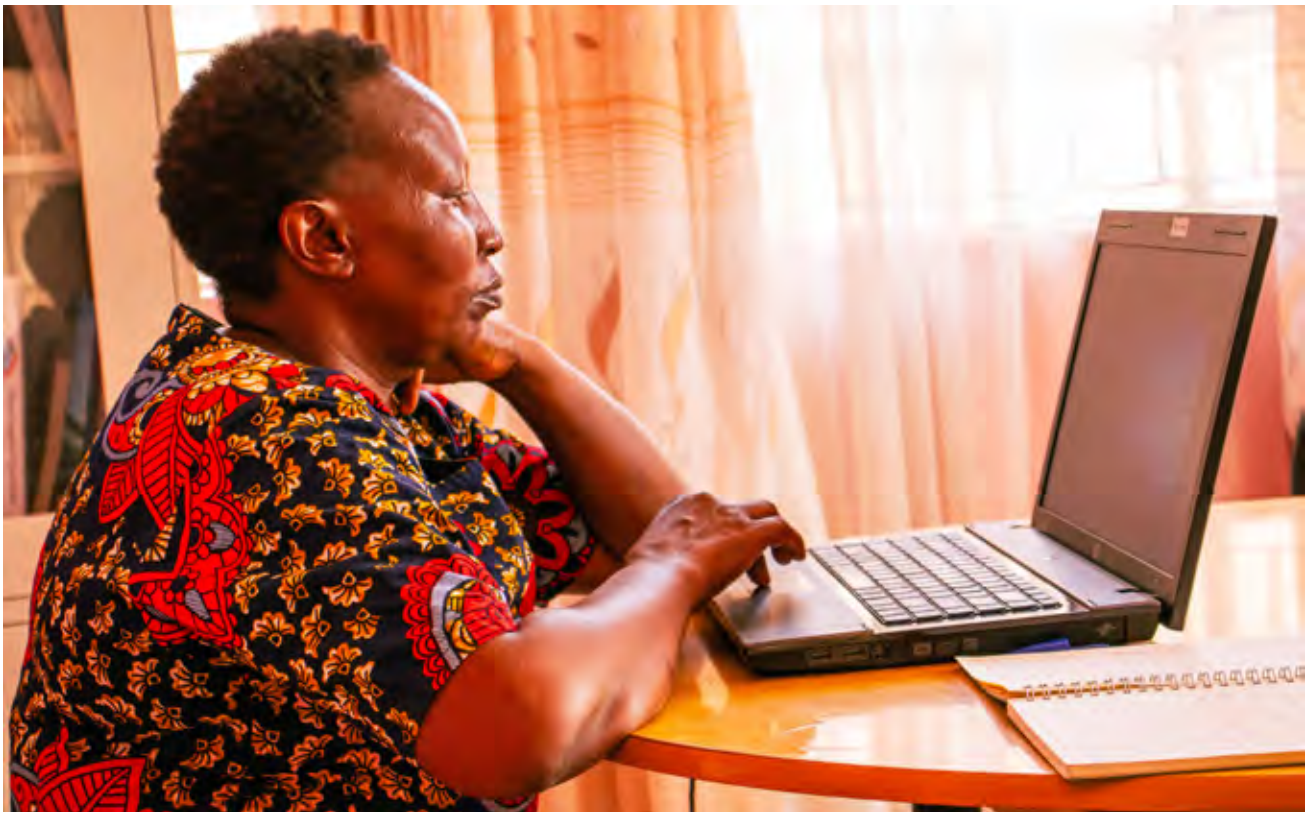
Based:
Grounded in what communities already have and do. Money does not drive community initiatives, appreciation of assets does.



Community-led:
People are the experts of their own lives. They lead. They decide. They own the agenda.

Development:
Building on existing strengths to grow sustainable, inside-out change.

The ABCD Principle
Start with community strengths, not charity. Grants follow community vision not the other way around.



SECTION 2:

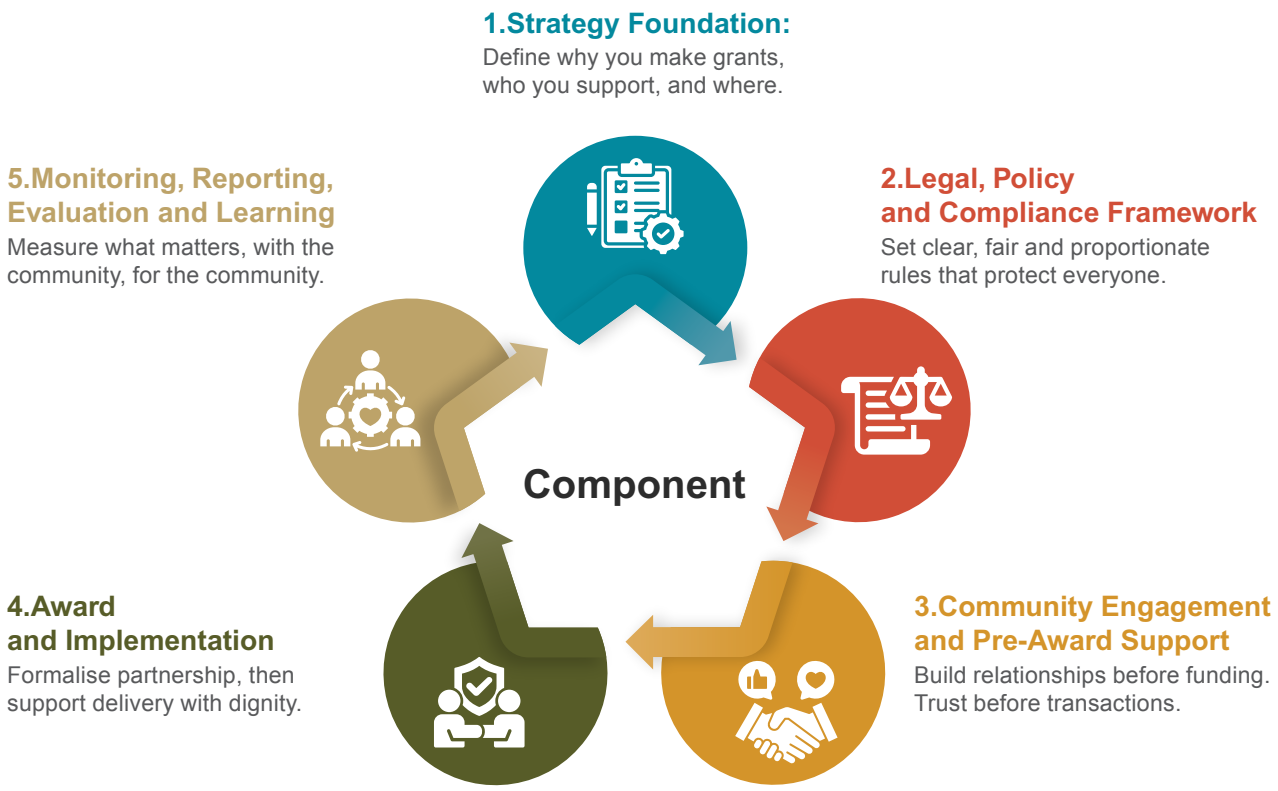
Design Principles

These principles are the foundation of the toolkit. They guide how the grantmaking system should be designed, implemented and reviewed, and they help keep the process grounded in community realities rather than donor bureaucracy. They must shape every decision made throughout the grantmaking cycle, the grant strategy, the application process, the review criteria, the grant agreement, implementation support and reporting requirements, not sit on a poster and gather dust.

Design Principle	What it means in practice	Rooted in ABCD
Communities at the Centre	All design decisions start and end with community needs, priorities and lived realities. Communities are not consulted after decisions have already been made, they shape purpose, process and direction from the beginning.	Communities are the experts of their own lives. They lead. They decide. They own the agenda.
Participatory Approach	Local communities are co-designers, not passive recipients. Community members participate in identifying priorities, shaping solutions and reflecting on what has changed.	Asking questions is more powerful than giving answers. Invite communities to define their own future.
Community Empowerment	The grantmaking process builds lasting local capacity and ownership. It strengthens the ability of communities to lead, manage resources and sustain their own initiatives.	Everyone has gifts. Everyone can and wants to contribute. Build on these gifts, don't replace them.
Shift the Power	Decision-making moves closer to those closest to the ground. Communities have more voice and influence in defining priorities and holding the process accountable.	Transfer capital, decision-making and legitimacy to local communities.
Community Ownership	Communities not only receive grants, they help design, lead, sustain and account for their own initiatives. Ownership grows when communities contribute resources, ideas, knowledge and labour.	Co-investment is not just about money. Labour, land, knowledge, networks and care all count.
Bottom-Up Approach	Solutions rise from lived experience, not top-down mandates. The process must respect the knowledge of people who understand their own context because they live it every day.	Community-led and community-owned. External actors enable; communities lead.
Assets Before Deficits	Begin with what communities already have: skills, stories, spaces, networks, traditions, leadership and relationships. Problems matter, but must not be the only starting point.	ABCD starts with what is present,the capacities of residents and the associational base of the community.

Design Principle	What it means in practice	Rooted in ABCD
Learning, Not Policing	Monitoring supports reflection, improvement and accountability. It must not be used to find fault or punish grantees. Learning helps both grantmaker and the community improve future practice.	Adaptive management: Projects should create space to learn from experience, adapt to changing realities, and report honestly on what is working, what is not working, and why.
Proportional Compliance	Documentation, risk management and reporting should match the size of the grant, the capacity of the group and the level of risk. Small community groups must not be treated like large international NGOs.	Grassroots grantmaking requires simplified procedures and willingness to tolerate administrative risk in favour of social impact.

The FIve Core Components of This Toolkit



The five components connect as a simple grantmaking cycle. This cycle should not be understood as a rigid administrative pipeline, it is a learning cycle. What is learned during implementation and evaluation should feed back into the next strategy, the next grant round and the next set of community partnerships. This is a cycle, not a checklist.

COMPONENT 1: STRATEGY FOUNDATION

Tools to Use at This Stage

- Annex 1: Community Listening & Asset Mapping Tool
- Annex 2: Community Power, Stakeholder & Inclusion Mapping Tool
- Annex 3: Grant Strategy Worksheet

Start with Purpose, People and Place

The strategy foundation defines the purpose and direction of the grantmaking system before any forms, applications or agreements are developed. It answers three fundamental questions: Why are we making grants? Who are we supporting? Where will the grants operate?

A grantmaking system without a clear strategy can become reactive, confusing and difficult to manage. A strong strategy helps keep the process focused, transparent and accountable to communities. The strategy should be shaped by the principle that grants follow community vision, not the other way around. Additionally, the support offered must help the community understand and shape their vision with dignity.

Core Principle

Grants follow community vision - not the other way around.

Strategy Area	What must be clarified	Framing using food insecurity as a framing example
Grantmaking Purpose	Define the change the grants are intended to support. Express in simple language so communities, applicants and partners all understand the purpose.	These grants support community-led responses to household food insecurity. They are intended to help communities build on existing local assets such as land, skills, volunteer groups, local knowledge, stokvels, schools, faith-based groups and small producers to improve access to food and strengthen community well-being.
Target Groups	Clarify who the grants are intended to support: registered CBOs, unregistered community groups, women-led groups, youth groups, informal collectives or other grassroots initiatives.	This may include registered CBOs, women-led food gardens, youth farming groups, informal community kitchens, faith-based food initiatives, stokvel-linked groups and other local collectives responding to household hunger.

Strategy Area	What must be clarified	Framing using food insecurity as a framing example
Geographic Scope	Define the communities, districts, provinces or countries where the grantmaking will operate. This helps manage expectations and ensures that the process is focused.	This grant is open only to groups working in [insert named area]. Your work must directly benefit people in this area. Applications from groups outside this area will not be considered unless they can clearly show that the work is led by, and benefits, communities in the target area.
Grant Priorities	Explain what kinds of community-led work will be supported. These priorities should be shaped by community realities, not only by donor interests.	These grants will support practical community-led responses to household food insecurity, including food gardens, community kitchens, small-scale food production, seed banks, nutrition awareness, support for vulnerable households, and local partnerships that improve access to food.
ABCD Lens	Identify how the grants will build on community assets: local knowledge, relationships, skills, institutions, culture and existing community action, not only respond to needs.	Applicants to show what strengths already exist in the community and how the grant will build on them. For food security work, this may include land, local farming knowledge, existing food gardens, volunteers, women's groups, youth groups, schools, faith-based groups, stokvels, small producers and informal support networks.
Inclusion Focus	Identify which groups need to be actively reached: women, youth, people with disabilities, migrants, refugees, elderly people, linguistically excluded groups and others.	These grants should not only support those who are easiest to reach. Applicants should explain how they will include people most affected by food insecurity, especially women-headed households, youth, elderly people, people with disabilities, migrants, refugees and people who may be excluded because of language, sexual orientation, location or documentation status.
Grant Types	Clarify whether the programme will offer cash grants, equipment grants, seed grants, rapid response grants, learning grants or matched community grants. Different groups need different forms of support.	Choose the grant type that fits your work. Apply for cash if you need money for project costs. Apply for equipment if you need tools, water tanks, fencing or cooking equipment. Apply for rapid response support if the need is urgent. Apply for a matched grant if your community can also contribute labour, land, materials, savings or local donations.

Grant Types: Empowerment in Every Form

Cash Grant (Primary Mode)

Useful when the group has a bank account and basic financial systems. Gives maximum flexibility, promotes ownership and builds financial management capacity.

Equipment Grant

Useful when a group needs materials or assets and is not yet cash-grant ready. Community members should help decide what is needed and participate in procurement.

Seed Grant

Useful when a new idea needs testing before it can grow into a larger initiative. Low risk, high learning value.

Capacity Building Grant

Useful when a group needs to strengthen its systems, governance, leadership or strategy. An investment in long-term community infrastructure.

Rapid Response Grant

Useful when urgent community action is required and the process must move quickly. Minimise documentation without removing accountability.

Matched Community Grant

Useful when a community has already mobilised local resources. Recognises and amplifies what communities already give.

Strategy Test

The strategy must be simple enough for communities to understand. If the grant purpose cannot be explained in plain language, it is not ready.

An African Proverb

"Ithotha sinji inasariha nttatxa" Many drops of water fill the pond (or the well). (Emakhuwa, Mozambique)

No contribution is insignificant. When community members come together to share what they have available – whether a small amount of money, volunteer time, local materials or knowledge – the accumulated effort can create a large impact and reduce reliance on external funding.

COMPONENT 2: LEGAL, POLICY AND COMPLIANCE

Tools to Use at This Stage

- Annex 4: Eligibility and Grant Readiness Checklist
- Annex 8: Risk and Support Assessment Tool

Make the Rules Clear, Fair and Proportionate

This component sets the rules of the grantmaking system. These rules must protect the fund, the grantmaker, the grantee and the community. At the same time, they must not become a wall that blocks grassroots groups from accessing support.

A best-in-class grassroots grantmaking system applies proportional compliance: the level of documentation, risk management and reporting should match the size of the grant, the capacity of the group and the level of risk involved. The question should always be: what level of compliance is fair for the size, risk and capacity of this grant?

Core Principle

Compliance should support accountability, not kill access. A small community group should not be treated like a large international NGO.

Policy Area	What must be clarified
Legal Status	Confirm the legal authority to make grants. Where necessary, also clarify the legal status of grantees. This should not automatically exclude informal groups, community legitimacy and accountability matter alongside formal registration.
Eligibility	Explain who can apply and under what conditions. Make space for both registered organisations and unregistered community groups where there is clear community legitimacy and accountability.
Grants Policy	Set out the principles, rules, criteria, limits and responsibilities of the grant programme. The policy should be written in clear language and must not read like a legal trap.
Grant Procedure	Map the full grants cycle from call for applications to close-out. This gives applicants, grantees and grant managers a clear understanding of steps, timelines and decision points.
Safeguarding	Set out rules to protect children, vulnerable groups and community members from harm, exploitation or misuse of their stories and images. Zero tolerance for harm.

Policy Area	What must be clarified
Conflict of Interest	Prevent favouritism, insider advantage and unfair decisions. Staff, reviewers and decision-makers must declare conflicts and recuse themselves where needed.
Fund-Use Rules	Clearly explain what grant funds may and may not be used for. This protects the grantee and the grantmaker by reducing confusion and misunderstanding.
Ethics and Accountability	Set expectations for honesty, transparency, consent, responsible use of funds, community oversight and consequences where funds are misused.

Who Can Apply?

Applicant Type	Eligibility Criteria
Registered CBOs / NGOs	Formally registered organisations working in any development theme. Has a board and management team. Operating for at least 6 months. Geographically located and serving a defined community. Examples of qualifying registration: Trust, Society, Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), Community-Based Organisation (CBO), Cooperative, or Non-Profit/Section 21 Company – the exact categories and registering authority vary by country, so use whichever local registration type applies.
Unregistered Community Groups	Grassroots groups without formal registration. Clearly rooted in a geographic community. Active leadership structure in place. Minimum 6 months of community work. Can demonstrate community accountability in lieu of formal registration.

Ethics Reminder

Funds are held in trust, and accountability rests with everyone, not only the grantee or funder, but also the community whose future the grant is intended to serve.

Fiscal Hosting for Informal Groups

A community foundation can act as both a grantmaker and a fiscal host at the same time. As a fiscal host (sometimes called a fiscal sponsor or fiscal agent), the foundation legally receives and manages funds on behalf of an unregistered or informal community group, taking on the legal and financial accountability, while the group carries out its own activities. This gives informal groups a legal channel to receive funding, including from donors who require a registered recipient, without needing to register as their own legal entity.

Fiscal hosting is a separate function from grantmaking and should be governed by its own agreement, not folded into a grant agreement. Where a group is both fiscally hosted by the foundation and applying for the foundation's own grants, that application must go through the standard independent review process, with the relationship disclosed to reviewers to avoid any appearance of favouritism.

COMPONENT 3: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PRE-AWARD SUPPORT

Tools to Use at This Stage

- Annex 1: Community Listening & Asset Mapping Tool
- Annex 2: Community Power, Stakeholder & Inclusion Mapping Tool
- Annex 5: Simple Grant Application Form
- Annex 6: Budget Template

Build Relationships Before Funding

This component is where the grantmaking system moves from paper to people. It includes community listening, relationship building, applicant support and grant readiness. Many grassroots groups are excluded not because they lack good ideas, but because the grant process is too formal, too technical or too far removed from community realities.

An African Proverb

"Okhala onokhalikaniwa" Living is helping one another to live. (Emakhuwa, Mozambique)

This proverb reframes the cultural meaning of funding itself: mutual support is not an act of isolated charity, but a natural condition for collective survival. It sets the tone for how community engagement and pre-award relationships should be built.

01

Community Entry

Build trust with local leaders, groups and community actors before the funding process begins. This ensures the grant is rooted in real relationships, not only formal announcements.

02

Stakeholder Mapping

Identify who is active in the community, who has influence, who is excluded and who should be involved. This prevents elite capture and ensures wider participation.

03

Asset Mapping (ABCD)

Identify local skills, spaces, networks, knowledge, leadership, culture and existing initiatives. Start with strengths, not only needs. Describe community assets in the community's own language and on its own terms.

Listening Sessions
Create space for communities to define priorities in their own words. This ensures the grant responds to community-defined change, not imposed assumptions.

Grant Readiness Checks
Assess what support groups need to manage funds responsibly. Readiness is supported, not used to exclude.

Application Support
Help groups develop simple proposals, budgets and workplans. Especially important where groups have strong community legitimacy but limited proposal-writing experience.

Local-Language Support
Reduce exclusion caused by formal English or donor language. Translation, oral explanation, visual tools and community meetings make the process accessible to all.

The Strengths-Based Application Questions

The shift in language matters. A grassroots grantmaking application should ask:

- Who are you, and what community do you serve?
- What change does the community want to lead?
- What do you want to do to bring about this change?
- What strengths already exist within the community?
- Who will participate and benefit, and how will excluded groups be involved?
- What assets and resources will the community contribute?
- What additional resources do you need?
- How will you know whether change is happening?

The ABCD Shift

Do not ask only, "What problem are you trying to solve?" Ask instead, "What strengths are you building on, and what change does the community want to lead?" This shifts both the conversation and the balance of power.

Community Co-Investment

Community contribution should not be reduced to cash. Communities often contribute labour, land, local materials, food, meeting spaces, volunteer time, knowledge, care, networks and mobilisation.

Cash

Examples
Small local fundraising, savings groups (Stokvel, Xitique, Chilimba, Mukando), local business contributions.

Why it matters
Demonstrates local ownership and buy-in.

In-Kind

Examples
Labour, land, local materials, transport, food, tools, meeting spaces, volunteer time.

Why it matters
Reduces project costs and builds community investment.

Knowledge

Examples
Local expertise, cultural knowledge, lived experience, technical skills, community history.

Why it matters
Ensures solutions are contextually grounded.

Social Capital

Examples
Trusted relationships, networks, leadership, organising power, community mobilisation.

Why it matters
Often the most powerful asset of all, invisible to external donors but essential to impact.

Principle
Recognise what communities already give. Co-investment should build ownership and pride. It should never be set at a level that punishes poor communities.

An African Proverb
"Voko rin'we a rhi hambi nchumu" One hand alone does nothing (or, one hand cannot wash itself). (Xichangana, Mozambique)
Real impact comes from partnership and shared responsibility. The success of a community initiative depends on mutual commitment between those who provide resources and those who manage them at grassroots level – the spirit behind every community co-investment mechanism.

COMPONENT 4: AWARD AND IMPLEMENTATION

Tools to Use at This Stage

- Annex 7: Grant Review and Scoring Guide
- Annex 8: Risk and Support Assessment Tool
- Annex 9: Grant Agreement Orientation Checklist
- Annex 10: Implementation Workplan

Formalise Partnership, Then Support Delivery

This component covers decision-making, grant award, orientation, agreement, disbursement and implementation support. It is the point where the grant moves from idea to action. A strong award process must be fair, transparent, well documented and respectful, including towards unsuccessful applicants. A strong implementation process must support grantees to deliver, learn and adapt.

Grant Review Criteria

01

Community Rootedness

Is the group trusted and active in the community? This checks whether the applicant has real legitimacy and not only a well-written proposal.

02

Community Priority

Does the idea respond to what the community says matters? This ensures the project is not donor-driven or imposed from the outside.

03

ABCD Approach

Does the idea build on local assets and strengths? This keeps the grant rooted in community agency rather than charity.

04

Inclusion

Are marginalised groups meaningfully involved? This checks whether excluded voices are shaping the work, not only listed as beneficiaries.

Feasibility
Can the project realistically be implemented? This includes checking timeframes, capacity, roles, costs and context.

Budget Realism
Are the costs fair and grounded in local realities? Budgets should include real costs: transport, data, rural access, coordination and administration.

Risk Management
Are risks known and manageable? Risks should be managed, not used automatically to reject applicants.

Accountability
Can the group explain how funds will be used and reported, both to the grantmaker and to the community?

Grant Orientation: No One Signs Before They Understand

Once a grant is approved, the grantee must receive a clear orientation before signing. Use the local language. Encourage questions. Ensure genuine understanding of:

- The purpose and scope of the grant agreement
- The payment schedule and disbursement process
- Reporting requirements and deadlines
- Budget change request process
- Safeguarding rules and ethics
- Community accountability expectations
- Consequences for misuse of funds

Orientation Principle
No one signs until everyone understands. Orientation is a conversation, not a compliance exercise.

Implementation Support

Support Area	Examples of Support
Project Planning	Support grantees to develop workplans, milestones, timelines and clear roles.
Financial Management	Support budget tracking, receipts, banking, procurement and basic financial records. Mentorship, not policing.
Governance	Support meetings, decision-making, leadership roles and community accountability structures.
Inclusion	Check that excluded groups are not pushed to the side during implementation. Revisit the inclusion plan.
Monitoring & Evaluation	Help grantees track progress, collect evidence and understand what is changing. The community defines what success looks like.
Storytelling	Help groups document stories, photos and testimonies with consent and dignity. Every community has a story worth telling.
Adaptive Management	Allow approved changes when the context shifts or when the original plan no longer fits reality. Flexibility is not failure, it is wisdom.

Implementation Principle

The grant must leave the group stronger. If the money is spent but capacity is not strengthened, the grantmaking has only done half the job.

COMPONENT 5: MONITORING, REPORTING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

Tools to Use at This Stage

- Annex 11: Financial Tracking Template
- Annex 12: Learning-Focused Monitoring Visit Tool
- Annex 13: Community Feedback Form
- Annex 14: Story of Change Template
- Annex 15: Close-Out and Learning Reflection Report

Measure What Matters, With the Community

This component tracks progress, accountability, learning and impact. It combines financial reporting, community feedback, stories of change and practical evidence. Monitoring must not become a fault-finding exercise, it must support learning, honesty, accountability and future improvement. This is especially important in grassroots grantmaking, where rigid reporting systems can exclude groups with limited administrative capacity but strong community impact.

MREL Principle

Monitoring is a conversation for learning and support, not an inspection. The community is a partner in reflection.

01

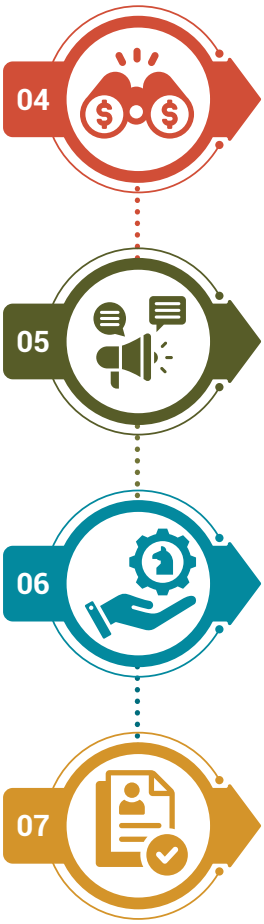
Baseline
Where the group or community started. A simple point of comparison for understanding change.

02

Progress Check
What is working, what is stuck and what support is needed. A learning conversation, not an inspection.

03

Community Feedback
Whether the people closest to the work see value in the project. Confirms accountability to the community, not only to the funder.



Financial Reporting
How funds were used and whether spending followed the agreed budget and rules. Simple, honest and supported by basic records.

Storytelling
Lived experience, voice, dignity and meaning. Stories explain change that numbers alone cannot show.

Endline Reflection
What changed, what was learned, what challenges remained and what should happen next.

Case Studies
Deeper learning and practical examples of impact that can support future advocacy, fundraising and peer learning.

Making M&E Practical

Before designing a report, answer these seven questions to ensure that the grantee, facilitator and grantmaker understand what information will be collected, by whom, how often, and how it will inform decisions.

M&E Element	Simple Clarification Needed
Baseline	What must be captured before the grant starts?
Indicators	What simple signs of change will be tracked?
Data sources	Where will the information come from?
Frequency	When will information be collected, and how often?
Responsibility	Who collects it: the grantee, facilitator, community or grantmaker?
Learning use	How will the information and lessons influence decisions?
Feedback loop	How will findings be shared back with the community?

Flexible Reporting

Reporting should match the capacity of the grantee. Reports may include: written narrative and financial reports; receipts, photos and basic records; voice notes or oral reports with a facilitator; WhatsApp updates, videos or community testimonies; reflection meetings and group learning sessions; community feedback forms in local language.

Close-Out Reflection: Seven Essential Questions

01 What tangible and intangible changes has this grant brought about?

02 What did the community contribute?

03 What did the community learn?

04 What challenges remained unresolved?

05 What should happen next?

06 What can other communities learn from this experience?

07 What unplanned activities or actions have happened as a result of this grant?

Learning Culture

Mistakes acknowledged and lessons shared are more valuable than reports that hide failure. Honest feedback from the community is the most important data point of all.

An African Proverb

"Utsandza hi le kure, swa le kusuhi swi tiva hi vini" What comes from far away is difficult; what is close is known by the owners. (Xichangana, Mozambique)
External support is an accelerator, not the source of wisdom. The true owners of knowledge about real problems, appropriate solutions and the value of local resources are the community members themselves – the ethic that should guide every close-out and learning reflection

SECTION 3:

Practical Guidance Notes

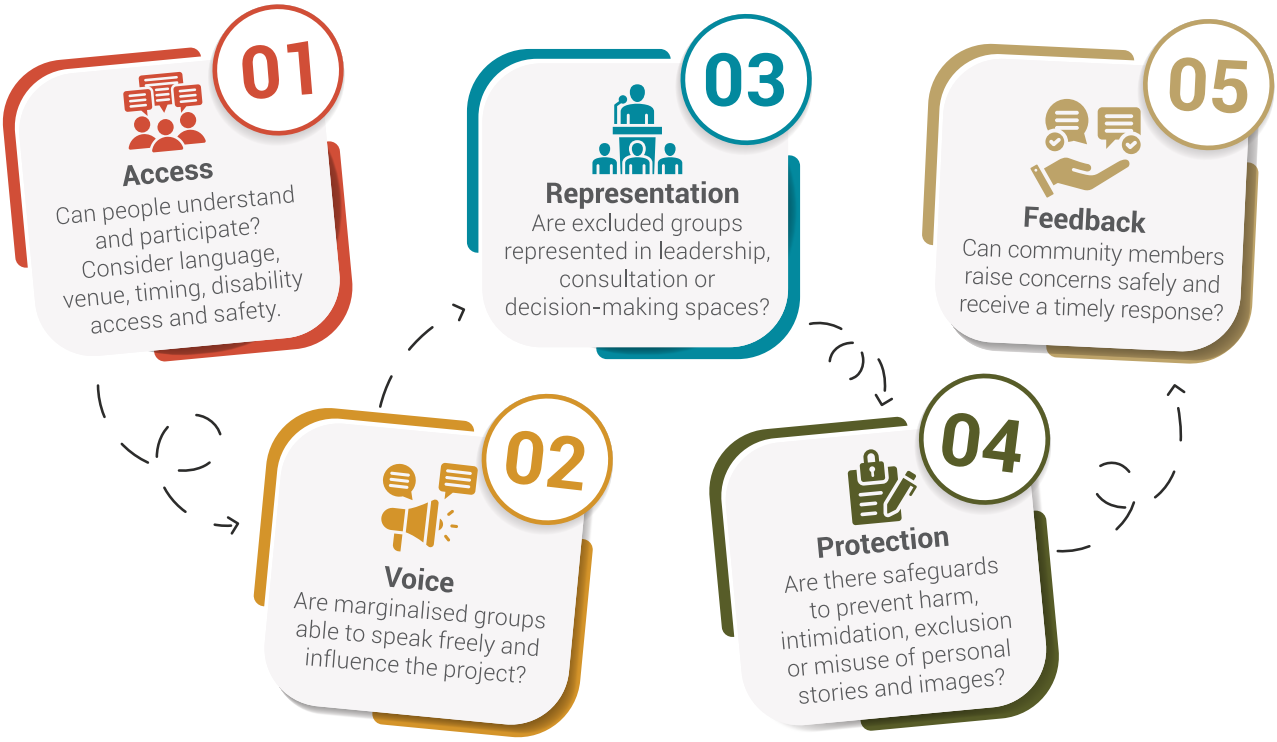
3.1 Inclusion

Inclusion is not simply about inviting marginalised groups into a process after decisions have already been made. It means excluded voices shape priorities, design, implementation and accountability. This includes women, youth, people with disabilities, migrants, refugees, elderly people, linguistically excluded groups, rural communities and others.

Inclusion Test

Inclusion is not presence, it is power.

Practical inclusion means:



3.2 Ethics and Accountability

Ethics is not bureaucracy, it is the foundation of trust. The grantmaking system must establish clear rules for the use of funds, conflicts of interest, safeguarding, whistleblowing, financial record-keeping, accountability to the community, consent for photographs and stories, and the fair handling of suspected misuse. The principle is simple: funds are held in trust, and everyone shares responsibility for their accountable use.

Ethics Area	What this means
Responsible Fund Use	Funds must be used for the agreed purpose and supported by basic records. Transparency with the community, not only with the funder.
Conflict of Interest	Any relationship or interest that may affect fairness must be declared and managed. No insider advantage: staff, reviewers and decision-makers must not share information that gives one applicant an unfair benefit.
No Inappropriate Gifts	Gifts or benefits that may influence decisions should not be accepted by staff, reviewers or decision-makers.
Community Oversight	Communities have a right to know how resources are used in their name. Regular community accountability meetings should be the norm.
Whistleblowing	Community members and grantees should have a safe and confidential way to report suspected misuse or harm.
Consent and Dignity	Photos, videos and stories should only be used with genuine, informed consent and must protect people's dignity and safety.
Fair Corrective Action	Suspected misuse of funds should be investigated fairly, with clear and proportionate consequences.

3.3 Capacity Building

Capacity building should be seen as a core part of the grantmaking relationship, not as a punishment for weak systems. The principle is simple: every grant should leave the group stronger.

Capacity Area	What this may include
Financial Management	Budgeting, bookkeeping, bank account support, receipts, procurement and basic reporting.
Governance and Leadership	Board roles, leadership responsibilities, meetings, decision-making and accountability.
Project Management	Planning, timelines, milestones, resource use, coordination and adaptive management.
M&E and Learning	Collecting data, gathering community feedback, telling stories of change and measuring impact.
Report Writing	Preparing clear, honest narrative and financial reports in accessible language.
Inclusion Practices	Ensuring marginalised voices are heard and genuinely influence the work.
Safeguarding	Protecting children, vulnerable groups and community members from harm.
Community Accountability	Sharing information with the community and creating safe feedback channels.

Capacity building can be delivered through mentorship, peer learning, skills training, workshops, site visits, co-learning circles, templates and practical clinics. Match the method to the group.

SECTION 4:

Annexed Templates-Overview

The following templates are practical tools that can be adapted, translated and used by both grantmakers and grassroots groups. They may be completed in writing, verbally with a facilitator, or via voice recording. Thumbprints are also accepted where signatures are required.

Each template below is introduced with a note on where it fits within the five-component grantmaking cycle described in Section 2, and how it relates to the other annexed templates. Annexes 1–10 are core templates used at each stage of the grantmaking process, from community entry through to grant agreement and implementation. Annexes 11, 13 and 14 are additional supporting information: optional or complementary tools that strengthen monitoring, learning and accountability alongside the core process. Annexes 12 and 15 draw on these supporting tools to structure ongoing monitoring and final close-out.

Annex	Template Title	Purpose
Annex 1	Community Listening & Asset Mapping Tool	Identifies strengths, priorities, existing initiatives and local resources before grants are designed or awarded.
Annex 2	Community Power, Stakeholder & Inclusion Mapping Tool	Identifies who is active, who has influence, who is excluded and how accountability can be strengthened.
Annex 3	Grant Strategy Worksheet	Clarifies purpose, target groups, geography, priorities, grant types and inclusion focus.
Annex 4	Eligibility and Readiness Checklist	Assesses whether a group is ready to receive a grant and what support it needs.
Annex 5	Simple Grant Application Form	Gives grassroots groups an accessible, strengths-based way to apply for a grant.
Annex 6	Budget Template	Helps applicants present realistic costs including transport, data, coordination and local implementation costs.
Annex 7	Grant Review and Scoring Guide	Supports fair and transparent decision-making by giving reviewers clear criteria.
Annex 8	Risk and Support Assessment Tool	Helps identify risks and determine what support is needed to manage them.
Annex 9	Grant Agreement Orientation Checklist	Ensures grantees understand the agreement and key policies before signing.
Annex 10	Implementation Workplan	Helps grantees plan activities, responsibilities, timelines, milestones and resources.
Annex 11	Financial Tracking Template	Helps grantees record spending, receipts, balances and supporting documents.
Annex 12	Learning-Focused Monitoring Visit Tool	Supports practical, learning-oriented monitoring visits during implementation.
Annex 13	Community Feedback Form	Captures whether the community sees value in the project and whether it is accountable to local people.
Annex 14	Story of Change Template	Helps grantees document lived experience, lessons and examples of change.
Annex 15	Close-Out and Learning Reflection Report	Supports final reflection on impact, challenges, community contribution and sustainability.

ANNEX 1

Community Listening & Asset Mapping Tool

Linked to Component 3 (Community Engagement and Pre-Award Support) and Section 1 (ABCD Foundations). Use this tool first, during community entry, to surface assets and priorities that inform the Grant Strategy Worksheet (Annex 3) and Simple Grant Application Form (Annex 5).

PURPOSE

To help communities identify existing strengths, priorities, local resources, existing initiatives and opportunities for community-led action before grants are designed or awarded.

How to use: This tool can be completed in writing, verbally with a facilitator, or using voice recording. Thumbprints may be accepted where signatures are required. Work through the tool as a community conversation, not a questionnaire.

Section 0: Community Entry Notes

Date of first community contact	
Local leaders / gatekeepers engaged	
How was trust built before this session?	
Early inclusion considerations noted	
Existing community initiatives identified	

Section A: Basic Information

Community name	
District / Area	
Date of listening session	
Names of facilitator(s)	
Language(s) spoken in session	
Number of participants	
Who participated?	
Women (headcount)	
Youth (headcount)	
PWDs (headcount)? PWDs	
Were safe spaces / separate focus groups used?	
Did excluded groups influence discussions?	

Section B: Community Priorities

Discussion Questions: What are the biggest issues? Which matters most? Which groups are most affected? What changes would the community like to see? What has already been done? What worked and what did not?

Priority Issue	Why is it important?	Who is most affected?

Section C: Community Assets and Strengths

Ask: "What strengths already exist in the community that can help create change?"

Asset Type	What exists already?
Skills and talents	
Community leaders	
Local groups / networks	
Meeting spaces / buildings	
Traditional knowledge / culture	
Volunteers	
Local businesses	
Existing projects	
Land / natural resources	
Community savings groups (Stokvel, Xitique, Chilimba, Mukando)	

Section D: Community Vision

Ask: What change does the community want to see and lead? This section bridges asset mapping to the grant application (Annex 5).

What strengths are the community building on?	
What change does the community want to see and lead?	
What community co-investment / contributions are possible (time, skills, materials)?	
Who should be involved in leading this change?	

Facilitation Tip

This tool works best as a conversation, not a questionnaire. Let the community guide the pace. Listen for stories, not just answers. What is not said can be as important as what is said.

ANNEX 2

Community Power, Stakeholder & Inclusion Mapping Tool

Linked to Component 3 (Community Engagement and Pre-Award Support) and Section 3.1 (Inclusion). Use alongside Annex 1 to map who participates, who holds influence and who may be excluded, and to strengthen accountability before grants are designed.

PURPOSE

To identify who is active in the community, who has influence, who should be engaged, who is excluded and how participation and accountability can be strengthened.

Section A: Stakeholder Identification

Level of Influence: High (H) | Medium (M) | Low (L)

Stakeholder / Group	Role	Influence (H/M/L)	Supportive?	Involve?
Traditional leaders				
Women's groups				
Youth groups				
Religious leaders				
Local government				
Disabled persons organisations				
Migrants / Refugees				
Elderly people / Elders				
Community volunteers				
Traditional healers				
Savings groups (Stokvel/Xitique/ Chilimba)				
Informal leaders				
Community philanthropists				
Local businesses / Traders				
Youth champions				
Please add in the stakeholder not mentioned above.				

Section B: Inclusion Analysis

Group	Currently Involved?	Meaningfully Involved?	Barriers	What Should Improve?
Women				
Youth				
Persons with disabilities				
Elderly people				
Linguistically excluded groups				
Migrants / Refugees				
Child-headed households				
Remote communities				
Overlooked contributors				

Section C: Power Reflection

Discuss these questions in small groups first, then share with the larger group.

- Who usually makes decisions in the community?
- Who is rarely consulted?
- Who speaks most during meetings?
- Who is missing from leadership spaces?
- What risks of elite capture exist?
- How can accountability to the wider community be strengthened?
- Who are the overlooked contributors whose assets and efforts go unrecognised?

Notes from power reflection	
Key accountability commitments agreed	
Who can hold this project accountable to the wider community?	

ANNEX 3

Grant Strategy Worksheet

Linked to Component 1 (Strategy Foundation). Use this worksheet to translate community priorities identified in Annexes 1 and 2 into a clear grantmaking strategy, including target groups, grant types with an ABCD and inclusion lens.

PURPOSE

To help grantmakers clarify the purpose, focus, target groups and ABCD lens of their grant programme before designing application processes.

Grant programme name	
Organisation	
Geographic scope	*District / Province / Country*
Grant period	*Start date: _____ End date: _____*
Total fund size	
Number of grants planned	
Average grant size	
Maximum individual grant	

Grantmaking Purpose

In one sentence: What changes are these grants intended to support?	
Why are these changes important in this community / region?	
How do the intended changes respond to priorities identified by the community?	

Target Groups

Who are the primary applicants?	*Registered CBOs / Unregistered groups / Both*
Minimum operating period for applicants	
Are individuals eligible?	*Yes / No - explain:*
Which excluded groups will the programme actively target?	

ABCD and Inclusion Lens

How will the programme identify and build on community assets?	
How will community co-investment be recognised and recorded?	
How will the programme prevent elite capture?	
What language or accessibility support will be provided?	

Grant Types Offered

Grant Type	Will this programme offer it? (Yes / No / Conditionally)
Cash grant	
Equipment grant	
Seed grant	
Capacity building grant	
Rapid response grant	
Matched community grant	
Other?	

ANNEX 4

Eligibility and Grant Readiness Checklist

Linked to Component 2 (Legal, Policy and Compliance Framework), particularly the "Who Can Apply?" guidance. Use before or during the application review to assess a group's governance, financial and safeguarding readiness, and to plan capacity support where gaps exist.

PURPOSE

To assess a group's readiness to receive a grant and identify the support it needs. Readiness should be strengthened, not used as a basis for exclusion.

Group name	
Assessment date	
Assessor	
Grant size being considered	

Eligibility

Eligibility Criterion	Status (Met / Partially Met / Not Met / N/A)
Group is geographically located and serving a defined community	
Group has been operating for at least 6 months	
Group has an active leadership structure	
Group is a registered CBO/NGO (e.g., Trust, Society, NGO, Cooperative, or Non-Profit Company) OR can demonstrate clear community accountability (for unregistered groups)	
The applicant is a community group, individual practitioner, artist or social enterprise whose work serves a clear community or public benefit. Grants should not primarily support private profit or personal gain.	
Group's work aligns with the grant programme priorities	

Note: If a group is strong on community rootedness and readiness but does not have legal registration, consider whether the foundation, or another registered partner, could act as its fiscal host rather than excluding the group on eligibility grounds alone.

Governance and Financial Readiness

Readiness Area	Status
Leadership roles are clear and active	Strong / Adequate / Needs Support
Group holds regular meetings	Strong / Adequate / Needs Support
Decision-making is participatory and transparent	Strong / Adequate / Needs Support
Community accountability mechanisms exist	Strong / Adequate / Needs Support
Bank account exists (or is in progress)	Yes / In Progress / No
At least two signatories on the account	Yes / No
Basic financial records are maintained	Strong / Adequate / Needs Support

Capacity Support Plan

What support does this group need before/ during implementation?	
Who will provide this support?	
When will this support be provided?	
Readiness recommendation	Ready Now / Ready with Support / Not Yet Ready (see notes)

ANNEX 5

Simple Grant Application Form

Linked to Component 3 (Community Engagement and Pre-Award Support), particularly the Strengths-Based Application Questions. This is the core application form completed by grassroots groups, drawing on the assets and priorities identified through Annexes 1 and 2.

PURPOSE

To provide an accessible, strengths-based application process for grassroots groups. May be completed in writing, by voice recording, or with a facilitator.

Section A: About Your Group

Name of group	
Community / location	
Year group started	
Is the group registered?	Registered CBO / NGO / Informal group - all may apply
If informal, describe how the group is accountable to its community	
Bank account status	Has bank account / No bank account / In progress
Main contact person	
Phone number	
Number of members	
Who does the group serve?	

Section B: Your Community and Project Idea

What community does your group work with?	
What issues or priorities matter most to the community?	
How did the community identify these priorities?	
How was the community involved in developing this project idea?	
What does the community want to do?	
Why is this important?	
Who specifically will participate?	
Who will benefit?	
How will excluded groups (women, youth, PWDs, elderly) be involved?	
What activities are planned?	
What change do you hope to see?	
What will you do if something does not go as planned?	
What will continue after the grant ends?	

Section C: Community Assets and Contributions

Contribution Type	Description / Examples	How will it support the project?
Volunteer time / Labour		
Skills and knowledge		
Materials / Equipment		
Meeting space		
Local fundraising (Stokvel / Xitique / Chilimba / Mukando)		
Community networks		
Land		
Other		

Section D: Budget and Risk

Total grant amount requested	
Main costs (list up to 5 items) (e.g., stipends, rent, transport, materials, training/venue costs)	*1. 2. 3. 4. 5.*
What risks could affect this project, and how will you manage them?	

Declaration

We confirm that the information above is accurate and that we understand the responsibilities of receiving this grant.

Name | Role | Signature / Thumbprint | Date	

ANNEX 6

Budget Template

Linked to Component 4 (Award and Implementation). Used together with the Simple Grant Application Form (Annex 5) so applicants can present realistic costs, including community co-investment, transport and coordination expenses.

PURPOSE

To help applicants present realistic costs including transport, data, coordination, materials, accessibility and local implementation costs.

Group name	
Project title	
Grant amount requested	
Project period	

#	Budget Line / Activity	Description	Unit Cost	Qty	Grant Total	Community Co-Investment
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
		TOTAL				

Note: Community Co-investment refers to the financial or in-kind contribution provided by the applicant or community towards implementation of the project. This may include cash contributions, volunteer time, donated materials, use of community facilities, transport, or other locally mobilised resources. Applicants should estimate the monetary value where possible.

Budget Guidance

Budgets should reflect real local costs in the local currency: transport, data/airtime, food during community meetings, rural access, coordination time, accessibility support and proportionate administration. A good budget is honest, not optimistic.

ANNEX 7

Grant Review and Scoring Guide

Linked to Component 4 (Award and Implementation), specifically the Grant Review Criteria. Provides reviewers and panels with consistent, transparent scoring criteria for assessing applications submitted via Annex 5.

PURPOSE

To support fair and transparent decision-making by giving reviewers clear, weighted criteria rooted in ABCD and community-centred values.

Score each criterion from 1–5. Justify your score with brief notes. No application should be rejected based on paperwork quality alone. Community rootedness and the ABCD approach carry the highest weight.

Application reference number	
Applicant group name	
Reviewer name	
Review date	

Review Criterion	1	2	3	4	Score	Notes
Community Rootedness - Is the group trusted and active? (HIGHEST WEIGHT)						
Community Priority - Does the idea respond to what the community says matters?						
ABCD Approach - Does the idea build on local assets and strengths?						
Inclusion - Are marginalised groups meaningfully involved?						
Feasibility - Can the project realistically be implemented?						
Budget Realism - Are costs fair and grounded in local realities?						
Risk Management - Are risks identified and manageable?						
Accountability - Can the group explain fund use and reporting?						
TOTAL SCORE						

Overall recommendation	
Support needs identified	
Reviewer signature	

ANNEX 8

Risk and Support Assessment Tool

Linked to Component 4 (Award and Implementation). Use during review and at the start of implementation to identify risks early and determine the level of support, monitoring or proportional compliance required (see Proportional Compliance in the glossary).

PURPOSE

To identify financial, safeguarding, political, operational and contextual risks, and determine what support is needed to manage them proportionally.

Group name	
Grant amount	
Assessment date	
Assessed by	

Risk Area	Risk Identified	Likelihood (H/M/L)	Impact (H/M/L)	Mitigation / Support Needed
Financial risk				
Safeguarding risk				
Governance / leadership risk				
Political / community conflict risk				
Operational / capacity risk				
Contextual / external risk				

Overall risk level	
Key support commitments	
Review date for risk reassessment	

ANNEX 9

Grant Agreement Orientation Checklist

Linked to Component 4 (Award and Implementation), specifically Grant Orientation. Use this checklist when formalising a partnership, to confirm that grantees understand the agreement, policies and expectations before signing.

PURPOSE

To ensure grantees fully understand the grant agreement, responsibilities, timelines, reporting and accountability processes before signing.

Grantee Information

Group name	
Project title	
Grant amount	
Project Start Date	
Project End Date	
Reporting Deadlines	
Orientation date	
Facilitator name	
Language used during orientation	
Translation / interpretation support provided?	Yes / No

Orientation Topics

Topic Discussed	Explained?	Understood?	Questions Raised	Support Needed
Purpose of the grant	Yes / No	Yes / No		
Approved activities	Yes / No	Yes / No		
Grant budget	Yes / No	Yes / No		
Payment schedule	Yes / No	Yes / No		
Reporting requirements	Yes / No	Yes / No		
Financial records and receipts	Yes / No	Yes / No		
Budget / activity change request process	Yes / No	Yes / No		
Safeguarding expectations	Yes / No	Yes / No		
Conflict of interest	Yes / No	Yes / No		
Community accountability,how the community will be kept informed	Yes / No	Yes / No		
Inclusion responsibilities,- how excluded groups will be involved	Yes / No	Yes / No		

Topic Discussed	Explained?	Understood?	Questions Raised	Support Needed
Whistleblowing and safe reporting channels	Yes / No	Yes / No		
External risk management and incident reporting	Yes / No	Yes / No		
How to request technical assistance or mentorship	Yes / No	Yes / No		
Consequences for misuse of funds	Yes / No	Yes / No		
Proportional compliance guidance	Yes / No	Yes / No		

Final Confirmation

Ask the grantee:

- What are the most important responsibilities under this agreement?
- What should you do if your activities or budget need to change?
- Who should you contact if challenges or risks arise?
- How will you keep the community informed about how the grant is being used?
- What questions do you still have?

Grantee representative - Name, Role, Signature / Thumbprint	
Funder / Support Partner representative - Name, Role, Signature	

ANNEX 10

Implementation Workplan

Linked to Component 4 (Award and Implementation), specifically Implementation Support. Grantees use this workplan to set out activities, responsibilities, timelines and resources for delivering the funded work.

PURPOSE

To help grantees plan activities, responsibilities, timelines, milestones and resources across the project period.

Group name	
Project title	
Grant period	
Total grant amount	

	#	Activity	Responsible Person(s)	Community Contribution	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Status / Notes
Ex.	1	Facilitate 3 community food-garden training sessions	Grace Mwansa (Project Coordinator)					
Ex.	2	Purchase and distribute seedlings and tools	Peter Kunda (Procurement)					
Ex.	3	Establish 2 demonstration garden plots	Community Garden Team					
	4							
	5							
	6							
	7							
	8							

Key milestone 1	Target date:
Key milestone 2	Target date:
Key milestone 3	Target date:

Rows 1 to 3 above show a worked example of a completed workplan. Replace these with your own activities, or delete the example text before submitting.

ANNEX 11

Financial Tracking Template

Additional supporting information for Component 5 (Monitoring, Reporting, Evaluation and Learning). Helps grantees maintain clear financial records to support proportional compliance and the Close-Out process (Annex 15).

PURPOSE

To help grantees record spending, receipts, balances and supporting documents in a simple, transparent way.

Group name	
Project title	
Reporting period	
Total approved budget	
Opening balance this period	

	Date	Receipt No.	Description	Budget Line	Amount Spent	Receipt?	Balance	Flag
Eg.	05 March 2026	001	Purchase of seedlings and gardening tools	Materials	ZMW 3,200	Yes	ZMW 21,800	
Eg.	18 March 2026	002	Transport to distribute tools to garden sites	Transport	ZMW 850	Yes	ZMW 20,950	
Eg.	02 April 2026		Facilitator stipend for training session	Stipends	ZMW 1,500	No	ZMW 19,450	Receipt pending
						Yes/No		
						Yes/No		
						Yes/No		
						Yes/No		
						Yes/No		
						Yes/No		
						Yes/No		
			TOTAL					

Certified correct by	Name , Role , Signature / Thumbprint , Date

Rows 1 to 3 above show a worked example of completed financial tracking entries. Replace these with your own transactions, or delete the example text before submitting.

ANNEX 12

Learning-Focused Monitoring Visit Tool

Linked to Component 5 (Monitoring, Reporting, Evaluation and Learning), specifically "Measure What Matters, With the Community." Use for periodic, learning-oriented visits during implementation, complementing the Financial Tracking Template (Annex 11).

PURPOSE

To support learning, accountability, problem-solving and relationship building during project implementation. Monitoring is a conversation, not an inspection.

Basic Information

Organisation / Group Name	
Project Name	
Grant Reference Number	
Monitoring Visit Date	
Location	
Funder / Support Partner Representative(s)	
Community Members / Local Group Present	
Project Representative(s) Present	

1. Project Progress

Done	In Progress	Not Started (and reason)

2. Community Participation

How has the community been involved? (Circle all that apply): Planning, Decision-making, Volunteering, Providing resources, Monitoring progress,Other

Describe examples of community participation	
Community member voice - in their own words, what is this project doing for the community?	

3. Community Assets and Contributions

What community assets supported the project?	Local knowledge / Volunteer time / Meeting space / Leadership / Networks / Land / Materials / Other
What financial and non-financial contributions did the community make?	
How did these contributions strengthen the project and its community ownership?	

4. Inclusion Check

Readiness Area	Status
Women	
Youth	
People with Disabilities	
Elderly People	
Migrants / Refugees	
Other Excluded Groups	

5. Financial Accountability

Has grant funding been used according to the approved budget?	Yes / Mostly / Partially / No
Financial records available?	Receipts / Cashbook / Bank Statements / Procurement Records / Other
Comments	

6. Challenges, Risks and Support Needed

What challenges have emerged?	What support is needed?	Any safeguarding, governance or operational risks?

7. Learning and Reflection

What is working well?	What has surprised the group?	What lessons have been learned?

Agreed follow-up actions	By whom / By when:
Next monitoring visit date	
Visit completed by	Name, Signature, Date

ANNEX 13

Community Feedback Form

Additional supporting information for Component 5 (Monitoring, Reporting, Evaluation and Learning), specifically Flexible Reporting. Used to gather community perspectives on relevance and accountability at any point during or after implementation.

PURPOSE

To capture whether the community sees value in the project and whether the project is accountable to local people, not only to the funder.

Project name	
Community / location	
Date of feedback session	
Facilitator	
Number of community members who gave feedback	

Community Voice Questions

What has this project done in the community?	
Who has benefited most from this project?	
Who has NOT benefited - and why?	
How satisfied are you with how the project is being managed?	
Does the project respond to what the community actually wanted?	
Have you been kept informed about how the grant is being used?	
Have excluded groups (women, youth, PWDs) been meaningfully involved?	
What is one thing you would change about this project?	
What is one thing this project has done well?	
What should happen after the grant ends?	

Facilitation Tip

Hold community feedback sessions separately from project team sessions. Create a safe space where community members can speak freely. Record feedback faithfully, including criticism.

ANNEX 14

Story of Change Template

Additional supporting information for Component 5 (Monitoring, Reporting, Evaluation and Learning). A narrative companion to Annex 12, useful for capturing qualitative change for reports, learning reviews or the Close-Out process (Annex 15).

PURPOSE

To help grantees document lived experience, lessons, unexpected outcomes and examples of change. Stories capture what numbers alone cannot show.

Project name	
Group name	
Date of story documentation	
Name of person telling the story (optional - consent must be obtained)	
Role of person (community member / volunteer / leader / beneficiary)	
Has consent been obtained to use this story?	Yes - signed / Yes - verbal / Not yet

The Story

Before the project - what was the situation?	
What happened because of the project?	
What changed for this person / family / group / community?	
What community asset or strength made this change possible?	
Any unexpected or unplanned outcomes to share?	
What did the group or community learn from this experience?	
What would you say to another community considering a similar project?	
Documented by	Name, Role, Date
Reviewed for consent and dignity?	Yes / No - notes:

Dignity Note

Every story belongs to the person who lived it. Do not alter words to make them more 'donor-friendly.' Use the person's own language. Protect identities where requested. A story told with dignity has more power than a polished case study.

ANNEX 15

Close-Out and Learning Reflection Report

Linked to Component 5 (Monitoring, Reporting, Evaluation and Learning), specifically the Close-Out Reflection. Brings together the Financial Tracking Template (Annex 11), Learning-Focused Monitoring Visit Tool (Annex 12), Community Feedback Form (Annex 13) and Story of Change Template (Annex 14) into a final reflection.

PURPOSE

To capture achievements, lessons, community contributions, sustainability plans and learning for future grantmaking. Can be completed as a group conversation recorded by a facilitator.

Basic Information

Organisation / Group Name	
Project Name	
Grant Amount	
Project Period	
Reflection Date	
Facilitator / Person Completing Form	

1. Looking Back

What was the original purpose of the project?	
Did the project achieve what it set out to do?	Fully / Mostly / Partially / Not Yet - explain:

2. Changes Achieved

For Individuals	For the Community	For the Organisation / Group

What community asset or strength made this change possible?	

3. Community Contributions

Contribution Type	Examples	How did this strengthen the project?
Volunteer Time		
Skills and Knowledge		
Materials		
Meeting Space		
Leadership		
Local Fundraising (Stokvel / Xitique / Chilimba / Mukando)		
Community Giving / Resource Mobilisation		
Other		

4. Inclusion Reflection

Who participated in the project?	Women / Youth / People with Disabilities / Elderly People / Other
Were there any groups that were difficult to reach?	
What would you do differently next time?	

5. Learning and Capacity Building

What did your organisation learn?	
What new skills, systems or practices were developed?	Financial Management / Governance / Project Management / M&E / Community Engagement / Fundraising / Other:

6. Challenges

What challenges were experienced?	How were they addressed?	What challenges remain?

7. Most Significant Change Story

Describe one story that best demonstrates the impact of the project. Ensure consent has been obtained before naming individuals.

8. Sustainability and Next Steps

What activities will continue after the grant?	What local assets / relationships will support continuation?	What support may still be needed?

Final financial balance / reconciliation	
All receipts and records submitted?	Yes / No - notes:
Declaration - certified by	Name, Role, Signature / Thumbprint, Date

Notes:

Convened and coordinated by:

With support from the:

CHARLES STEWART
MOTT FOUNDATION

SGS CONSULTING
DEVELOPMENT & MANAGEMENT

Contact

The Woodlands Office Park
Building 13
20 Woodlands Drive
Woodmead
Johannesburg 2191

Tel : +27 72 076 1910
Email : shaun@sgsconsulting.org
Website : www.sgsconsulting.org