

The Listen First Framework

	Sapling	Maturing	Flowering	Fruit bearing
Providing information publicly	<p>NGO staff provide key informants with basic information about the NGO and its goals and work. Most information is about a programme's specific aims and activities.</p> <p>Most information is provided verbally and/or informally. It is generally provided at the beginning of projects, and may not be updated often.</p>	<p>Information about the NGO and its work is made publicly available to local people and partners. This includes contact details for NGO staff, programme aims and activities, timescales, selection criteria (where appropriate), and some budget information.</p> <p>The methods used for sharing information are chosen by the NGO (e.g. meetings, information sheets, noticeboards, radio, posters, newspapers etc).</p>	<p>Full information about the programme is made publicly available to local people and partners. It includes a budget, showing all direct costs.</p> <p>Information is regularly updated, e.g. with reports of activities carried out, expenditure made and changes to activities or budgets. The methods and languages used are easy for local people to access. Specific efforts are made to provide information to women and the most marginalised people (including people who are illiterate).</p>	<p>Full programme and financial information is published, in ways that are easily accessible for all local people (including women and men).</p> <p>Information is published systematically, including all budget and expenditure information for direct and indirect costs. Updates and progress reports are published regularly. Ways of publishing information are discussed with local people. NGO staff check if information is relevant and understood, particularly by excluded groups.</p>
Involving people in making decisions	<p>Local people and partners are informed about the NGO's plans, throughout the project cycle. Proposals & plans are mostly written by senior/technical NGO staff.</p> <p>Plans are discussed with key informants in the community. NGO staff assume that key informants represent poor and marginalised people. There is limited analysis of who holds authority in the local community and how.</p>	<p>Local people and partners are consulted about the NGO's plans. They provide information which NGO staff use to make key decisions about their work, at all stages of the project cycle (e.g. planning, designing, reviewing & evaluating activities).</p> <p>NGO staff consult women and men separately. They identify the main social groupings in the community, including the most marginalised, and consider their priorities. They identify the local institutions responsible for delivering services, and also discuss plans with them.</p>	<p>Decisions are made jointly by NGO staff and local people and partners. Local people contribute equally to making key decisions about the programme, throughout the project cycle, including planning the budget.</p> <p>NGO staff make sure they work with individuals and organisations which truly represent the interests of different social groups, including the most marginalised people, and women as well as men. They help individuals reflect on their current situations and make sure they feel free to contribute to discussions and decisions.</p>	<p>Local people and partners take a lead in making decisions, drawing on the NGO's expertise as relevant. The work is owned by them; the NGO plays a supporting role.</p> <p>NGO staff check that the work truly reflects the priorities of the poorest and most marginalised people (including women as well as men).</p> <p>Conflicts between different interest groups in the local community are recognised and tackled using mechanisms that local people respect. The work strengthens connections between groups.</p>
Listening (feedback & complaints procedures)	<p>NGO staff encourage feedback from local people and partners. Most feedback is provided verbally and/or informally. Informal opportunities are made during staff's day-to-day activities.</p> <p>There are no formal systems for encouraging feedback, or for recording and monitoring complaints.</p>	<p>Staff make opportunities to hear feedback and complaints from local people and partners.</p> <p>Local people are provided with formal systems for feedback and complaints, e.g. complaints boxes, phone lines, feedback forms, meetings with managers & written reports. All complaints receive a formal response.</p> <p>Staff and managers spend time in local communities, and ask for informal feedback from local people and partners (including women and men).</p>	<p>The NGO actively encourages local people to give feedback and make complaints.</p> <p>Formal systems are provided that are safe, easy & accessible for local people to use (including women and men). They are in local language(s), and are promoted to local people. All feedback, complaints and responses are recorded.</p> <p>The NGO regularly monitors how satisfied local people and partners are with their work (e.g. using feedback forms, focus groups or surveys). Staff carefully create informal opportunities to hear from different people.</p>	<p>Feedback and complaints systems are designed with local people. They encourage the most marginalised people to respond, and cover sensitive areas like sexual abuse. They build on respected local ways of giving feedback.</p> <p>The NGO regularly monitors satisfaction levels. All feedback, complaints & responses are recorded, and they inform project activities.</p> <p>Staff and managers set targets for the time they spend in local communities, and monitor their performance. They may employ staff to liaise with different social groups.</p>
Staff attitudes & behaviours	<p>Staff understand that respect for local people and partners is important. They avoid superior attitudes (even when local people are not present).</p> <p>Some training is provided on participation and facilitation skills from time to time.</p> <p>Staff take time to speak to local people. The information they provide is not formally included in project implementation or review processes.</p>	<p>NGO staff are always polite and patient with local people and partners. They try to understand local social expectations. They mostly speak local language(s).</p> <p>NGO staff go out of their way to make marginalised women and men feel relaxed. They fit into people's daily lives, and respect their time. E.g. meetings are held at times & places convenient for local people.</p> <p>Staff receive systematic training on participation, facilitation skills and associated attitudes and behaviours. Managers check that staff work with these attitudes.</p>	<p>Every part of the NGO's work helps local people and partners build up their self-confidence and self-respect. NGO staff avoid telling local people what to think or do. They approach their work as helping local people to analyse and tackle their own issues in their own ways.</p> <p>Staff receive systematic training in participation, facilitation skills and social exclusion, particularly for working with marginalised people. Key attitudes and behaviours are on job descriptions and personal objectives. Staff have time and space to support local people's ways of working, and to reflect on their attitudes & behaviours.</p>	<p>Staff invest time in building up equal relationships of mutual respect with local people and partners. They actively promote dialogue, and encourage reflection on each other's experience.</p> <p>Working together with local people, they develop new options for action (by local people and themselves). They do not impose their own ideas.</p> <p>NGO managers take a lead in creating an open, listening culture. They provide inspiration, training and support to staff. They manage and monitor performance in this area. Managers Listen First to their staff, and regularly make time to reflect on their own attitudes, beliefs and behaviours.</p>