

**AGENTS FOR CITIZEN-DRIVEN
TRANSFORMATION (ACT)**

**CSO MANAGEMENT AND
LEADERSHIP SKILLS**



Funded by
the European Union



Implemented by
the British Council

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Toolkit is produced as a resource to support the organisational capacity development of the CSOs that are participating in the EU-funded Agents for Citizen-Driven Transformation (ACT) Programme in Nigeria. The content and materials used to develop the booklet were sourced from existing third-party material publicly available, details provided in the Reference Section, which we would like to acknowledge and thank.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership



PURPOSE

There is often confusion within the CSO¹ sector about the roles of the Leader and the Manager. In reality different skills are required for these roles, but this does not always mean that one person can't function well in both roles. It is important, however, to understand the different skills required, and how and when they are most effective.

To establish and lead a CSO requires skills, structures, systems, planning strategies and relationship building – and these require strong management. The life force and energy within a CSO comes from its staff and volunteers, so in addition to specific skills and system development, the CSO requires teamwork, commitment and motivation to achieve its goals, to feel inspired and to gain job satisfaction – and these require strong leadership.

In addition to understanding the systems and processes they are working with, the CSO team must believe in the importance of their work; the degree to which staff/volunteers feel that they 'own' the CSO and contribute to its goal, has a major influence on its effectiveness. Motivation and ownership is much more than the

management of organisational systems – but in the absence of effective organisational systems, the longevity of the organisation would be short-lived.

This ACT Toolkit seeks to highlight what is collectively required from both Leadership and Management to achieve the Vision and Mission of the CSO.

In line with ACT's commitment to Human Rights and Gender and Social Inclusion, it is anticipated that CSOs' projects and plans demonstrate the mainstreaming of Gender and Social Inclusion and the adoption of a Rights-based Approach.

The ACT programme supports CSOs to collaborate through its Peer Learning Programme. This collaboration can build trust, build a culture of shared learning and support, and together CSOs can better meet the resource, system and approach challenges that face them. The ACT Toolkits provide further support with CSOs' organisational capacity development, and can help CSOs in Peer Learning groups to guide and support each other. <https://www.justice-security.ng/resources/toolkits>

CSO MANAGEMENT -V- LEADERSHIP

From both reading and experience, it could be interpreted that management is what is needed and leadership is what is wanted. In support of its CSO partners, this ACT Toolkit considers the differences, with a focus on the two areas.

Managers have subordinates - leaders have followers

Managers create circles of power - while leaders create circles of influence

(HBR)²

For both managers and leaders to understand their roles, the essence of the difference needs to be understood – and also how these differences may overlap. These roles complement each other and are of equal importance in the CSO.

¹ For CSO, please read CSO, CBO, CS Network or NGO

² Harvard Business School (HBR)

Complementary Strengths

Manager	Leader
Does things right	Does the right things
Has subordinates	Has followers
Tells people what to do	Shows people what to do
Exercises power over people	Develops power with people
Processes – gives directions	People – asks questions
Works with facts	Works with feelings
Reacts to change	Creates change
Intellectual	Emotional
Head	Heart
Position = power	Encouragement = motivation
Control	Commitment
Tries to be a hero	Make heroes of those around them
Problem-solving	Possibility thinking
Reactive	Proactive
Rules	Values
Goals	Vision
Written communications	Verbal communications
Finds fault, focuses on the necessity to improve	Praises success, inspires and drives people to take responsibility
Sees a particular set of skills	Encourages people to think beyond what they do, and to be part of something bigger

One important distinction between management and leadership is that things are managed and people are led. Things include administrative and financial systems, human resources, physical resources, governance processes, internal organisational structures and systems. People include staff, volunteers, external partners, constituents, stakeholders, communities. When dealing with things, we talk about a way of doing. When dealing with people, we're talking about a way of being. Leaders are aware of how a functioning team can accomplish much more when working together, rather than a group of individuals who work independently of each other (often known as working in 'silos').

Everyone in a CSO's workplace has an important part to play in its performance, in achieving its organisational objectives and in making the CSO a satisfying place to work. Each CSO's organisational performance is the result of the abilities and commitment of the individuals within it.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Although ‘Leadership’ and ‘Management’ are two different concepts, Senior Managers in CSOs often have to focus on the two different roles – initially, at least, they are responsible for both managing and leading their emerging organisation. As managers, they should be committed to their CSO’s performance, policies, procedures and systems – and should be able to demonstrate that commitment. As leaders, they develop staff’s potential, lead by example, motivate and inspire others, create and lead change.

The main fundamental overlap is that good leadership always includes responsibility for managing. Many managing duties may be delegated to others, but the leader (eg: the Executive Director or CEO) is responsible for ensuring there is appropriate and effective management for the situation. The opposite is NOT the case – it would be incorrect to say that the manager has a responsibility to lead.

Scouller (2011) has a helpful viewpoint on the distinction between leadership and management, stating:

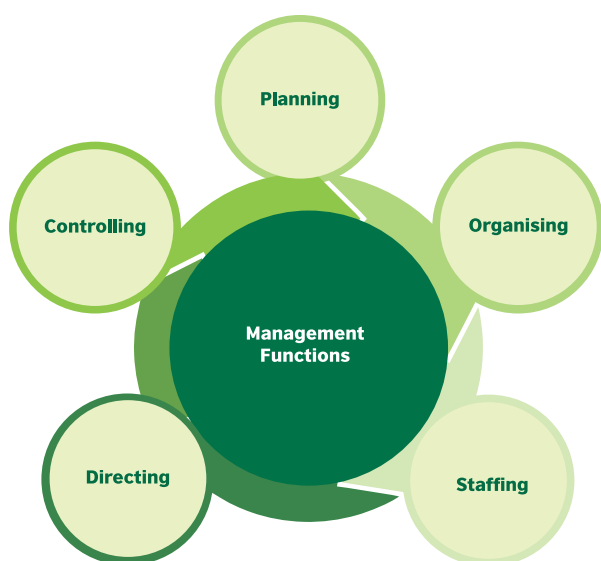
“ Leadership is more about change, inspiration, setting the purpose and direction, and building the enthusiasm, unity and ‘staying-power’ for the journey ahead. Management is less about change, and more about stability and making the best use of resources (and systems) to get things done... But here is the key point: leadership and management are not separate. And they are not necessarily done by different people. It’s **not** a case of: ‘You are either a manager or a leader’. Leadership and management overlap... ”

THE ROLES OF THE MANAGER

Line Managers are responsible for guiding, managing and supporting the performance of employees, both as individuals and as a team. Managers need to set objectives, provide feedback, appraise performance, guide development and ensure employees are rewarded for good performance, both formal and informal. Managers will focus on setting, measuring and achieving goals by controlling situations to reach or exceed their objectives.

The manager is critical to the success of the CSO. Not only to assist staff in understanding their own role within the CSO, but to assist them to develop their roles, to monitor their work to ensure it is satisfactory and is aligned with strategy and approach, and also to create the organisational culture. It is also possible for a manager to motivate her/his staff and it is important for the manager to build a team of people to grow and work together and to achieve shared objectives.

However, it is performance management-related activities that influence how much effort employees put into their work, as well as their attitudes and commitment to a CSO. A good manager produces high-quality, effective staff who are engaged with their work and want to remain with the CSO. Poor management can de-motivate staff, resulting in poor performance, minimal commitment, high levels of staff turnover, and ultimately lack of achievement of the CSO's outputs and outcomes.



Managing performance is part of the on-going communication process between the manager and staff, in order to:

- Clarify expectations
- Set goals
- Provide guidance and feedback
- Develop skills and knowledge
- Advance career development

Management must also take responsibility for:

- Ensuring a person is job fit: Match people to positions (those who are good at and enjoy their work are better performers)
- Maintaining a positive relationship between the staff/volunteers and the CSO: Manage perceptions of the CSO by explaining the CSO's vision and strategy and how this is translated into day to day activities; encourage innovation; ensure employees understand the benefits of working in the CSO
- Ensuring staff understand their 'fit' within the CSO: Create an understanding of how each member of staff's work contributes to the CSO's goals, and help them feel that they are valued
- Encourage a culture of performance: Promote two-way communication with staff/volunteers; be flexible and support staff/volunteers when something doesn't go to plan through no fault of their own, and encourage innovation
- Demonstrate a commitment to staff/volunteer development: Help staff to achieve their future career goals; talk about career plans and help to develop their knowledge and skills in their current position that might be useful for future job opportunities

Performance management activities influence how much effort staff/volunteers put into their work, and also their attitudes and commitment to the CSO. Good managers are associated with high-quality, effective employees who are fulfilled by their work and are committed to long-term engagement with the CSO. One of the key reasons shared with ACT by CSOs as a reason for weak organisational capacity is based on high staff turnover rates - when staff are trained and become more efficient, they appeal to (and are often poached by) other, higher paying CSOs.

Management principles apply to all organisations, large or small, private sector and not-for-profit. Even 'one-person CSOs' need to be concerned about management principles, because without the fundamental understanding of how the CSO should be managed there can be no realistic expectation of their mission or goal. The most common reason that is attributed to small CSO failure is the failure on the part of its management.

THE ROLES OF THE LEADER

Leadership

Leadership is about change.

- It is about helping the CSO to define its vision, to take advantage of opportunities and to avoid threats.
- It is about challenging people to grow and to unleash their potential.
- It is about inspiring people to step into uncharted territory.
- Leaders can get nervous when things are running too smoothly; often they introduce innovative ideas to 'just test people's feelings and opinions'.

Where managers constantly try to adjust to change, leaders are in the business of producing change.

Democratic leadership involves other people making the decisions, eg: subordinates, peers, superiors or the CSO's constituents, but the leader makes the final decision. Rather than being a sign of weakness, participative leadership is a sign of strength because it demonstrates respect for the opinions of others. [Changing Minds](#), provides leaders with a participatory spectrum in the table below.



Not participative			Highly participative	
Autocratic decision by leader	Leader proposes decision, listens to feedback, then decides	Team proposes decision, leader makes the final decision	Joint decision with team as equals	Full delegation of decision to team

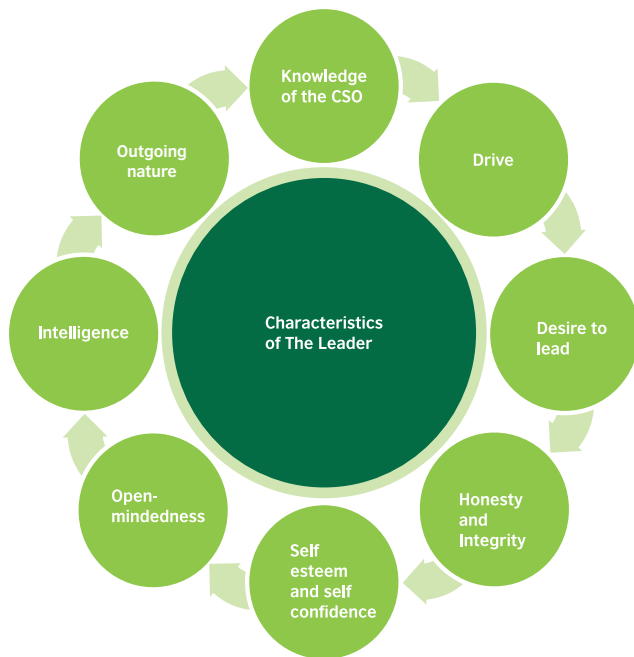
Most employees/volunteers appreciate the participatory leadership style, but it can be problematic if there is a wide range of opinions and no clear path for making an equitable and final decision.

Attitudes towards delegation and development make the distinction clearer. 'Managers' often delegate largely as a way to increase efficiency, whereas 'leaders' usually delegate as a way of empowering others.

HBR published research identifies [six leadership styles](#) in order of their impact on organisational culture, namely:

1. Coercive (Do what I tell you)
2. Pace-setting (Do as I do, now)
3. Coaching (Try this)
4. Democratic (What do you think?)
5. Affiliative (People come first)
6. Authoritative (Come with me)

The research found that the best leaders are adept at four or more styles, especially the authoritative, affiliative, democratic and coaching styles. Leaders who can move seamlessly from one to the other, in response to the situation, produce the most positive organisational cultures, therefore, enjoying the greatest successes.



THE JOINT ROLES OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT

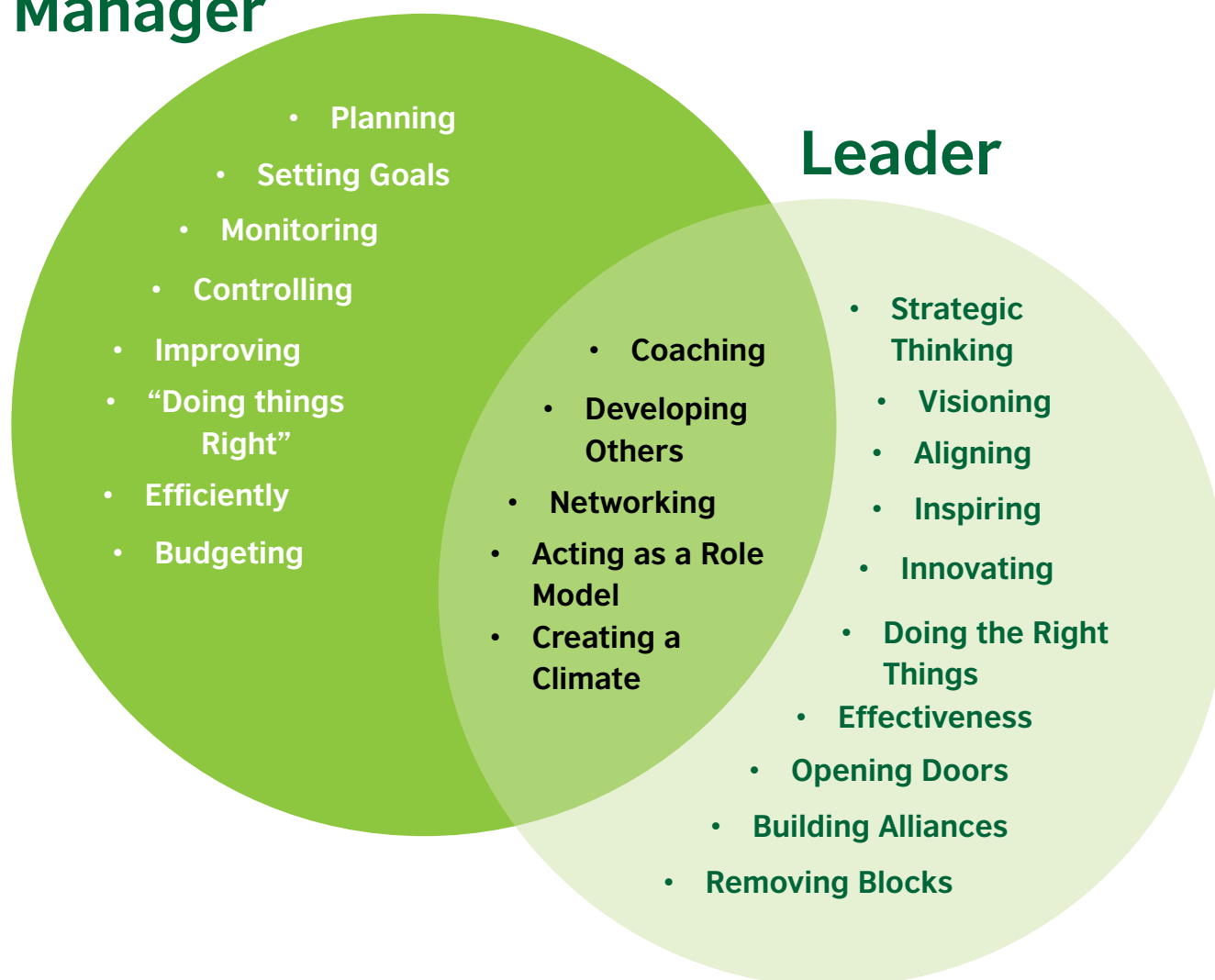
It is clear that we think that managers have a different focus than leaders – and yet this distinction blurs significantly when we look at CSO Executive Directors (ED)/Senior Management ‘in charge’. The majority of the activities are very similar: delegating, learning, motivating, etc. So what is the difference in practice?

It may be that they are different in terms of how they play out in CSOs. Certain behaviours and activities are common to the effective demonstration of both leadership and management. The crucial difference – maybe the only difference – is the focus of the person carrying them out, at a given time. Usually when the ED and Senior Management focus more on people (and their development) they will demonstrate leadership; with a focus more on results (and systems and processes) they will demonstrate management skills.

BREAKING DOWN MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP IN THE CSO

The following diagram helps to categorise the roles of the leader and the manager in the CSO context (with some cross-cutting areas in the centre):

Manager



Finally, for the manager and the leader, actively mainstreaming diversity and equality is very important to the sustainability of a CSO's outcomes. It is easy to recruit and promote in our own 'image' and not always be mindful of diversity and equality. Leadership and management responsibilities should ensure equality and equity through the CSOs' organisational systems and leadership of strong and diverse staff teams. Gender and Social Inclusion mainstreaming offers long-term

advantages and benefits for all CSOs and supports management and leadership to demonstrate fairness, regardless of gender, disability, age, ethnicity, religion, refugee status, etc, demonstrating G&SI inside the CSO and across all its projects and programmes with key stakeholders.

GLOSSARY

Gender and Social Inclusion

Gender and Social Inclusion (G&SI) is a concept that addresses improved equal access for all, including those who are often traditionally excluded from development initiatives, eg: women, girls, youth, poor people, people with disabilities, ethnic minority groups, older people, children, LGBTQI+, etc. In the context of Management and Leadership re CSO staff, G&SI is also relevant for staff/employment as well as development initiatives. G&SI supports inclusive policies and mindsets, and increases voice and influence by all. It is good practice to ensure that the Board of Governors, staffing, and the CSO's constituents represent diversity and equality.

Leadership

Leadership is the ability of an individual to influence and guide others within the CSO. It involves making sound and sometimes difficult decisions, and creating and articulating a clear vision, establishing achievable goals and providing followers with the knowledge and tools necessary to achieve those goals. Leaders are found across society, from community structures and CSOs to business to politics.

Good leadership of the ED is required at Governance level, with day-to-day leadership of staff left to the ED and Senior Management.

Management

Management is the coordination and administration of tasks to achieve the CSO's Goal and Objectives. These include setting the CSO's Strategy and coordinating the efforts of the CSO's staff to accomplish these through the use of available resources. Management can also refer to the seniority of staff members within the CSO.

Good management of the ED is required at Governance level with regard to the oversight of progress against strategy, due-diligence, the CSO's regulatory compliances – the day-to-day management is left to the ED and Senior Management.

Participatory methods

Participatory methods include a range of activities with a common thread – enabling others to play an active role and influential part in the decision-making that affects their work or their lives. This means that participants are not just listened to, but heard, and their voices shape decisions and outcomes. CSO Leaders use participatory methodologies because respect for staff and local people's knowledge and experience is paramount and the result will be interventions that they own.

Human Rights Based Approach

A human rights-based approach (or a rights-based approach) to development means that all forms of discrimination must be prevented. Human Rights instruments and policies signed and ratified by Federal and State Governments, legitimise the demands of CSOs and their constituents across the sectors. It also means that priority should be given to people who are often the most marginalised or excluded from development, and who face the biggest barriers to realising their rights. Managers and Leaders must also be aware that human rights are incorporated into general employment law.

Strategic thinking/planning

Strategic thinking is required to develop a Strategic Plan, which documents where the CSO wants to go and how it is going to get there. A major part of the process is to establish its Vision and Mission and to set a clear Goal with actionable Objectives within these, before determining a set of aligned activities that realistically can be achieved within the strategy's timeframe (usually 3-5 years). The CSO will also consider the possible impact and outcomes as a direct result of their actions, and the potential risks and opportunities that could arise within their context and within the timeframe.

To be an effective manager, a set of skills is required to manage and implement the Strategic Plan, which requires an extensive knowledge of the CSO's goal and objectives and how to direct the staff to achieve them (eg: all components within the CSO's internal systems, project approach and external relations).

Visioning

In order to express a CSO's aspirations for the future, a visioning process takes place to agree what positive change they would like to see in the future. The Vision of a CSO is the ultimate destination; it is a description of what 'success' would look like for the CSO in the future. The CSO's Vision needs to be inspiring to all those who will be implementing it, describing the change they wish to see. CSOs' use the Vision as a statement of their direction, which is used to motivate and guide the staff of the CSO and to explain to external stakeholders their focus.

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Online Pictures

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Management Triangle: This photo by unknown author is licensed under CC BY-SA-NC

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Find out more

Agents for Citizens Driven Transformation (ACT)

ACT@ng.britishcouncil.org

www.justice-security.ng

Key contacts

National Programme Manager: [Damilare Babalola@ng.britishcouncil.org](mailto:Damilare.Babalola@ng.britishcouncil.org)

Operations Manager: [Maxwell Anyaegbu@ng.britishcouncil.org](mailto:Maxwell.Anyaegbu@ng.britishcouncil.org)

The Agents for Citizen-driven Transformation (ACT) programme works with civil society organisations (CSOs) to enable them to be credible and effective drivers of change for sustainable development in Nigeria. The four-year programme (2019-23) is funded by the European Union and implemented by the British Council.

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