

**SOUTH MEETS NORTH IN POWER SHIFT:
A PARTICIPATORY GRANT-MAKING (PGM)
MODEL**

**SOUTH
MEETS
NORTH**

A PRACTICAL RESOURCE

By Norsaac in Ghana and Transform Trade in Kenya

2022-2023





The South Meets North in Power Shift: Participatory Grant-Making (PGM) Model explores the concept of participatory grantmaking and discusses how southern NGOs and northern INGOs can use this model to shift decision-making power of grantmaking to communities they are seeking to impact. This document highlights the key principles, stakeholders, and strengths of participatory grantmaking, provides guidance on its implementation, presents case studies, the challenges associated with participatory grantmaking as well as solutions to the challenges.



Transform Trade

Transform Trade works for trade and climate justice. In Asia and Africa, we partner with farmers, workers and artisans to create conditions that enable them to prosper through more sustainable and equitable trade. Together, we advocate and campaign for changes to business practices and government policy to make trade fairer.

Borne out of the trade justice movement in the UK, Transform Trade was originally the charitable arm of Traidcraft. We act as a resource partner, accompanier, facilitator and advocate, at local, national and international levels, focusing on Fashion, Tea and Small-Scale agriculture. Our vision is of a trade system that values all people and regenerates our fragile earth.

In 2021, we undertook a strategic review, recognising the colonial roots of the UK development sector in which we operate. Alongside our ongoing facilitation and advocacy work, we have been piloting new ways to enable local organisations and communities to be in the driving seat and to cede decision-making power over funding. As part of RINGO, we have been co-creating a participatory grant-making model.

Find out more [here](#)



Norsaac

Established in 2002, Norsaac is a human rights, community engagement and policy influencing organization serving Ghana to promote social transformation and improved living conditions. It has a vision of "A healthy and empowered society where everyone enjoys their rights and lives a life of dignity". The mission of the organization is to work with networks of women, youth, children, excluded groups, and like-minded organizations, to strengthen their agency to claim and exercise their rights.

Norsaac is a prominent Ghanaian NGO with expertise in community engagement, human rights advocacy and policy influencing. We use integration and gender transformative approaches in our work focusing on five interest areas: economic opportunities, improved healthcare delivery, better educational outcomes, social protection and peace and stable communities.

Drawing on insights gained from interactions with a wide range of stakeholders, Norsaac recognized the need for community-driven approaches that resonate with the very communities and individuals our initiatives affect. This realization led to the revision of our strategic document (2021 – 2026). The strategy continues to place women, youth, children, and marginalized groups, along with their respective communities, at the core of our operations.

This shift in perspective resulted in the piloting of a homegrown grantmaking model tailored to the specific needs of Ghana. Consequently, we responded to the RINGO call for participatory grantmaking models to shift power in international development.

Find out more [here](#)



RINGO Project

The Ringo Project is a systems change initiative that seeks to transform global civil society to respond to today's challenges. In partnership with systems change experts Reos, we are convening a unique 'Social Lab' of global innovators who represent 'the system' of INGOs (including southern partners, funders and INGO leaders). We have launched 8 prototypes that can transform INGO institutions and the systems in which they function. These prototypes will have enormous impacts on how INGOs are structured, their funding and accountability models, what this means for organizations locally, and what solidarity means. RINGO is the first globally-coordinated cross-sectoral effort to revolutionize the sector by interrogating the purpose, structures, power, and positioning of INGOs.

Find out more [here](#)



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Participatory Grantmaking (PGM) is a dynamic approach to grant-making that seeks to empower local communities, promote collaboration between the global north and south partners, and prioritize community interests. This PGM model involves various stakeholders, including Southern CSOs, CBOs, interest groups, communities, and INGOs in Ghana and Kenya. PGM is becoming increasingly popular on a global scale. While PGM has several advantages, there are also challenges, such as the need for a mindset change and sustained investment, that must be addressed for successful implementation. This document highlights PGM and its importance, guiding principles, stakeholders, challenges, strategies that can be employed to overcome the challenges as well as presents a case study.



2.0 WHAT DO WE MEAN WHEN WE SAY PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING? INSIGHTS FROM PRACTITIONERS

Box 1: GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Is your organization considering or already implementing participatory grantmaking?
- What is your organizational definition of participatory grantmaking?
- Which of the definitions of participatory grantmaking resonates with you and why?
- How can participatory grantmaking contribute to building more equitable and collaborative partnerships between the global north and global south actors?
- What is power in the context of participatory grant making?

While there is no collectively agreed-upon definition of Participatory Grantmaking (PGM), practitioners involved in the PGM prototyping process in Ghana and Kenya shared the following insightful definitions:

- “PGM is an avenue where partners have the opportunity to co-create solutions that will ultimately lead to significant outcomes.” - Sub-national CSO representative, Ghana.

- PGM is “the creation of spaces for global south actors to participate in the process of determining what, how, where, and when in the development discourse” - National CSO representative, Ghana.
- PGM is a “grant-making strategy that is representative, flexible, accountable, transparent, and driven by contexts” - Sub-national CSO representative, Ghana.
- PGM is “ceding decision-making power about funding — including the strategy and criteria behind those decisions—to the very communities that we aim to serve” - Member, Kenya Support Group.

After considering the definitions provided by the practitioners, we propose an overarching definition of PGM. That is, Participatory Grantmaking (PGM) is a grant-making strategy that creates spaces for global south organisations to co-create solutions with partners in the global north, participate in the development discourse, and cede decision-making power about funding to the communities that they work with. The PGM model is inclusive, flexible, accountable, transparent, and driven by context, ultimately leading to significant outcomes.

3.0 KEY UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES OF AN EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING PRACTICE

Here, we explore the underlying principles that are essential for the success of a participatory grantmaking practice. Understanding these principles is crucial for organizations seeking to implement participatory grantmaking as part of their grantmaking strategy.

Box 2: GUIDING QUESTIONS

- If you are considering or already implementing participatory grantmaking, what principles guide your implementation?
- In what ways can the African identity principle be adapted to other contexts in the global south?
- How can transparency and openness be promoted in partnerships between INGOs and CSOs in participatory grantmaking practices?
- How can co-creation be effectively implemented in participatory grantmaking practices, and what are the potential benefits and challenges of this approach?

1. Trust based

This PGM model emphasizes trust as a principal value for both southern and northern partners, in order to redefine partnerships between international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) in the global south. There is a perceived lack of trust between INGOs and CSOs, which has led to accountability mechanisms that can hinder the work of southern CSOs. Both global south and north partners need to build trust and commit to being truthful, fair, and sincere, and INGOs in particular will have to live up to their stated principles.

2. Indigenous values

It is important to centre the values that embody the context of the communities and cultural setting – for example, in this prototype it was based in the African continent.

3. Transparency and accountability

The PGM model should exhibit the values of openness and transparency. In order to shift

power, this requirement should apply to all actors involved in partnerships, including INGOs and other CSOs. Communication and information sharing should be timely, open and transparent among these actors. Being open and transparent with sharing information will ensure mutual accountability amongst stakeholders which is essential to the success of PGM.

4. Solidarity, inclusion and non-discrimination

The principle of solidarity, inclusion, and non-discrimination requires development stakeholders to commit to leaving no one behind. In the context of this PGM model, it is about INGOs and northern CSOs putting themselves in the shoes of affected communities, recognizing diversities and involving diverse groups, and accepting and working with all kinds of people with respect and dignity.





5. Do no harm and safeguard the communities we serve

The “do no harm and safeguard the communities we serve” principle is to value and protect the rights and interests of target communities. This puts communities at the heart of development. INGOs and southern CSOs should promote interventions that have positive impacts on communities and hold each other accountable for protecting the interests of communities.

6. Co-creation (participation)

The principle of co-creation is central to the PGM model, which encourages INGOs and southern CSOs to create a favorable and inclusive environment for everyone to collectively analyze, ideate and find collective solutions to problems and challenges of target communities. This principle proposes that target communities are setting the development priorities and making grant decisions that fosters collective ownership and sustainable outcomes. Ensuring equal participation among community stakeholders is critical to avoiding local ‘elite’ capture of the development process.

7. Collaboration and Networking

Encourage collaboration and networking among grantees and other stakeholders. Foster a sense of shared purpose and collective action. Working together is indispensable in PGM, thus, INGOs and southern CSOs (national, sub-national and community-based) are encouraged to partner amongst themselves as well as the private sector to maximize impact.

8. Learn and Reflect

PGM is iterative which makes learning and reflecting while in the process very useful. Stakeholders should continuously learn from the grantmaking process and reflect on the process followed and the impact it is making. Use feedback to improve future grantmaking efforts.

9. Telling stories with dignity

The principle of “Telling stories with dignity” calls for northern and southern organizations to respect indigenous stories and their sources, and not modify them to suit their interests. It emphasizes appreciating the stories as presented and recognizing their value. Language is a key element in this value that determines how different situations and actors are addressed/termed in the development discourse.

10. Flexibility and Adaptability

Recognize that community needs and circumstances may change over time. Be flexible in responding to these changes and adapt grantmaking strategies accordingly.

4.0 KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN THE PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING EQUATION?

Box 3: GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Which stakeholders do you currently work with in implementing participatory grantmaking?
- How can the different stakeholders involved in the PGM process collaborate effectively to ensure that the needs and priorities of local communities are met?
- What are some of the challenges that may arise when trying to engage with marginalized communities and how can these be addressed in the PGM process?
- How can the power dynamics between the global north and south partners be addressed in the PGM process to ensure that decision-making is shared equally?

Participatory grantmaking is a collaborative approach to grantmaking that emphasizes the meaningful involvement of various stakeholders in the decision-making process. Here, we examine the key stakeholders involved in the participatory grantmaking equation. Each of these stakeholders plays a critical role in the participatory grantmaking process and understanding their perspectives and needs is crucial to the success of this approach. By exploring the roles of these key stakeholders, we can gain a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics at play in the participatory grantmaking equation.

- **Southern CSOs (Civil Society Organizations):** These are non-profit organizations that operate independently of the government and are usually formed by citizens in the global south to promote social, economic or political change. In the context of the PGM process, the CSOs played a critical role in facilitating community engagement and mobilization, advocating for local needs and priorities, contributing to discourses on power relations, and ensuring that development is inclusive and representative.
- **CBOs (Community-Based Organizations):** CBOs in the global south are organizations that are formed and run by members of a community to address specific social or development issues in the global south. CBOs



are usually smaller and more grassroots-oriented than NGOs, and they play an important role in mobilizing community resources, building trust and social cohesion. In PGM prototyping, the CBOs played a critical role in ensuring that the process is responsive to local needs.

- **Interest groups:** These are groups of people who share a common interest or goal, such as women's rights groups, youth groups, and farmer associations. Interest groups are important stakeholders in PGM because they represent specific constituencies and can advocate for their needs and priorities. They bring unique perspectives to the PGM process.
- **Communities:** These are groups of people who live in a specific geographic area and share social and cultural ties. Communities are the primary stakeholders (actors/players) of PGM initiatives, and their participation and engagement are critical to ensuring that initiatives are effective and sustainable.
- **INGOs, or International Non-Governmental Organizations:** These organizations operate across national borders to address a range of social, political, and economic issues. In the PGM process, INGOs provided technical support and guidance to the prototyping teams in grant-making. Over the years, these INGOs have initiated processes to reshape their relationship with southern CSOs, particularly around issues of power dynamics and decision-making in the area of grantmaking.

5.0 STEPS IN SETTING UP AND IMPLEMENTING A SUSTAINABLE PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING APPROACH

Box 4: GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What are some practical steps that organizations can take to implement participatory grantmaking strategies and ensure that they are effectively meeting the needs of communities?
- What are the benefits of co-creating a PGM initiative with all stakeholders, including community members? How can co-creation lead to more effective and sustainable initiatives?
- What methods can be used to monitor and evaluate the PGM process?
- What challenges might arise in engaging with community members and how can they be overcome?

To establish and execute a sustainable Participatory Grantmaking (PGM) approach, it is necessary to design a grant-making strategy that prioritizes the following steps.

- **Definition of Purpose:** The first step in setting up and implementing a sustainable PGM approach is to clearly define the purpose of adopting this approach. This includes identifying the target community, the specific goals and objectives of the initiative, and the expected outcomes. Decide the mechanisms to follow the values outlined above, together with communities agree on the process and timeline. Defining the purpose will provide a clear direction for the entire process, ensuring that all stakeholders are aligned and working towards a common goal.
- **Formation of Support Group:** To ensure the success of a PGM initiative, it is essential to form a support group. This group should include a diverse range of stakeholders, including representatives from the community, local NGOs, government agencies, and international organizations. The group will provide guidance and support to the main team implementing the initiative throughout the process, helping to ensure that the initiative is inclusive, responsive to community needs, and sustainable.
- **Identification and Selection of Partners:** This involves identifying organizations that share the values and principles of the PGM approach, have a proven track record of working with the target community, and have the necessary skills and resources to support the initiative. Organizations to consider for partnerships include local NGOs, government agencies, and international organizations.
- **Partnering with Community Stakeholders:** A key principle of PGM is to prioritize community interests and cede decision-making power to communities being served. It is essential to engage with community stakeholders throughout the process, including during the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages. This includes involving community members in decision-making, listening to their perspectives, and incorporating their feedback into the initiative.
- **Co-create the Process:** This involves working collaboratively with all stakeholders to design and implement development initiatives. This includes identifying community needs and priorities, developing project plans, and defining roles and responsibilities. Co-creation ensures that initiatives are tailored to the specific needs of the community and that all stakeholders are invested in its success.
- **Pilot/Test the Model:** Once the initiative has been co-created, it is important to pilot/test the model. This involves implementing the initiative on a small scale, in a controlled environment, to assess its effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. The pilot/test phase provides an opportunity to refine the approach and address any challenges or issues that arise.
- **Monitor and Evaluate / Assess, Reflect and Learn:** This includes collecting and analyzing information, reflecting on progress towards goals and objectives, and assessing the impact of the initiative on the community. This provides valuable insights that can be used to improve the initiative and ensure its long-term sustainability.

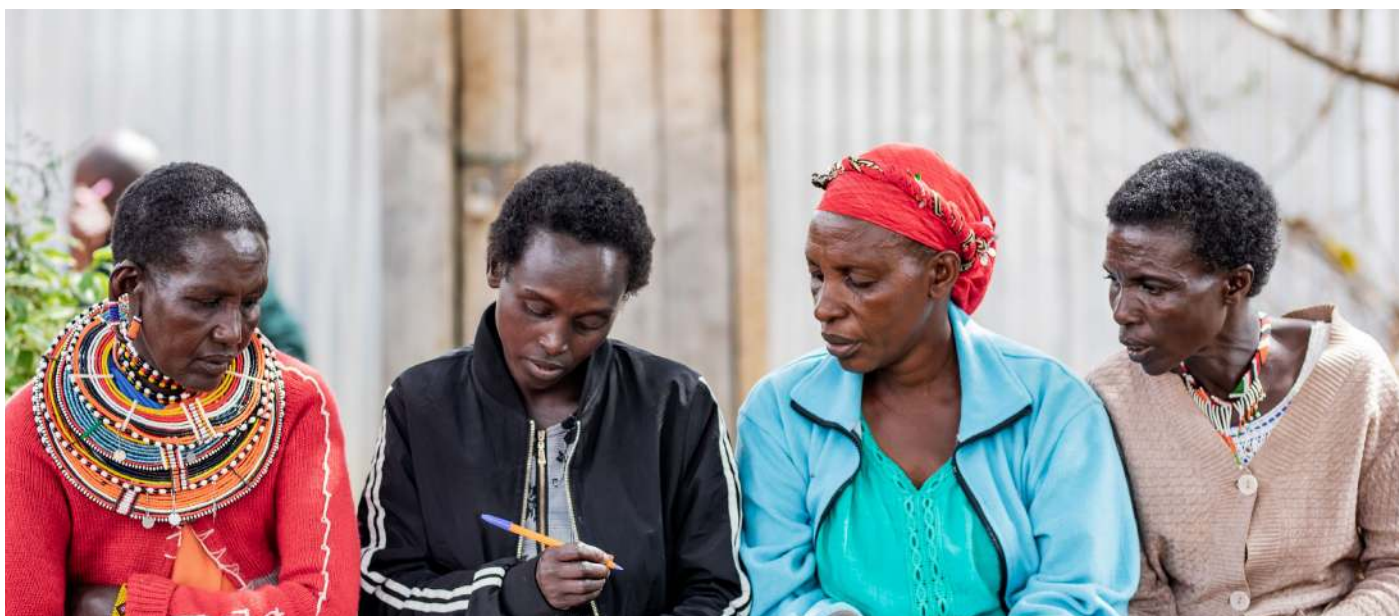
6.0 THE BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING

Participatory grantmaking (PGM) offers a range of benefits for both grant-makers and grantees. By understanding the advantages of participatory grantmaking, NGOs, foundations and others can make informed decisions about incorporating this approach into their grantmaking strategies.

Box 5: GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What are the benefits of participatory grantmaking compared to traditional grantmaking approaches?
 - How can participatory grantmaking promote equity and inclusion in the grantmaking process?
 - How does participatory grantmaking prioritize the needs and priorities of the communities being served?
 - What are some examples of successful participatory grantmaking initiatives and their impact on communities?
- PGM trusts communities to take the lead in decision-making processes, recognizing their expertise and knowledge of their own needs and priorities.
 - PGM puts community-led initiatives and approaches at the centre, recognizing their potential to deliver impactful and sustainable solutions.
 - PGM adopts inclusive and respectful language by unlearning conventional development language and embracing local languages. This helps to change mindsets and foster more meaningful engagement with communities.
 - PGM prioritizes providing technical support to southern CSOs and communities, enabling them to take leadership roles and make decisions on what they want to do.
 - PGM prioritizes co-creation and partnership over stringent project proposal development, allowing for more collaborative and adaptive approaches to grantmaking.
 - PGM acknowledges, appreciates, and utilizes indigenous knowledge and resources, recognizing their value and importance in promoting sustainable development.
 - PGM challenges the view that southern CSOs are merely service providers and not partners with the same financial rights, creating a more equitable and collaborative grantmaking process.
- PGM allows for tailored capacity and support to be provided to communities and partners, recognizing their unique needs and priorities.
 - PGM promotes openness and transparency, fostering trust and accountability between funders and grantees.
 - PGM values and appreciates indigenous knowledge and resources, recognizing their potential to contribute to sustainable development.
 - PGM fosters increased community ownership. When communities are involved in decision-making and have a say in how resources are allocated, they are more invested in the success of the work and are more likely to take ownership of it over the long term. This leads to greater sustainability and effectiveness, as community members can identify and address issues as they arise.





7.0 POSSIBLE CHALLENGES THAT MAY BE ENCOUNTERED WHEN IMPLEMENTING PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING

Box 6: GUIDING QUESTIONS

- **How can capacity development of global south actors prevent failures after power is shifted?**
 - **What are the potential impacts of donor funding cuts on the sustainability of PGM initiatives?**
 - **In what ways can global south actors ensure long-term fundings commitments to participatory grantmaking initiatives?**
- Implementing Participatory Grantmaking (PGM) requires a mindset change, which is a gradual process that may take time to fully integrate into existing grantmaking practices.
 - The PGM process requires a long-term commitment of funds before actionable results can be realized. This may require patience and sustained investment.
 - Donor funding to southern CSOs and governments may be subject to cuts, which could impact the sustainability of PGM initiatives.
 - Some International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) may attempt to subtly maintain control and dominance in the grantmaking landscape, despite the shift in power to communities and local partners under PGM.
 - A lack of thorough prototyping and planning

may lead to catastrophic failures after power is shifted, highlighting the importance of capacity development, careful implementation and monitoring of PGM initiatives.

- Lack of sustainable resources and long-term commitment can be counter-productive. Many communities lack the financial and material resources necessary to implement their own development projects and may not have access to enough external funding or support.
- Application of PGM calls for a change in all spheres – at the INGO, local NGO, CBO and communities as they share power and there is an inherent and organic exchange of knowledge, skills, capacity, leadership and ownership. It is as much as devolving power for INGOS and other NGOs as it is for communities to assume new roles and responsibilities. This is the most critical journey that each actor in the PGM continuum makes to ensure an effective application of the approach.
- Another challenge is the lack of capacity of community members to lead and manage development projects/PGM initiatives.



8.0 STRATEGIES TO MITIGATE THE CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTING PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING

Box 7: GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What are some practical steps that organizations can take to implement participatory grantmaking strategies and ensure that they are effectively meeting the needs of communities?
- What strategies can be used to prevent INGO dominance in participatory grantmaking, and ensure that communities and local partners have equal representation in decision-making processes?

Here are some possible strategies to mitigate the challenges of participatory grantmaking:

- **Mindset change:** Implementing initiatives for funders, CSOs, and communities to help them understand and embrace the values and principles of PGM. Encouraging knowledge sharing and learning from successful PGM experiences can also help to accelerate the mindset change process.
- **Long-term funding commitment:** Creating multi-year funding cycles to allow for sustained investment and support for PGM initiatives. Funding partners can also consider pooling resources to support PGM initiatives, providing a more stable and predictable funding stream.
- **Cuts in donor funding:** Encouraging collaboration and partnership between and among different stakeholders to maximize the impact of available resources. Investing in advocacy and awareness-raising initiatives to demonstrate the value and impact of PGM can also help to secure more sustainable funding.
- **INGO dominance:** Encouraging INGOs to take a more collaborative and supportive approach to PGM initiatives. Also, encouraging the adoption of shared decision-making processes and ensuring that communities and local partners have equal representation in grantmaking committees/teams and processes.

- **Good planning:** Ensuring that adequate resources are allocated to planning and prototyping PGM initiatives. Also, engaging with stakeholders and communities to gather input and feedback to inform the design of PGM initiatives. Additionally, implementing robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks to track progress and identify any issues or challenges early on in the process.
- **Flexibility and Adaptability:** Recognize that community needs and circumstances may change over time. Be flexible in responding to these changes and adapt grantmaking strategies accordingly.
- **Capacity development:** This helps participants to better understand the PGM grantmaking process, develop proposals and strengthen organization capacity. It includes skill development in project development and management, financial planning, proposal writing and communication.





9.0 CONCLUSION

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the adoption of participatory grantmaking across the global south and north. Participatory grantmaking is a powerful grantmaking approach that promotes collaboration and shared decision-making between funders and grantees. The approach emphasizes the importance of community participation and representation in grant decision-making. It can lead to the shifting of grantmaking power resulting in more effective and sustainable development outcomes.

- Some key principles for a successful operationalisation of PGM include building trust, creating a culture of learning, and ensuring equitable power dynamics.
- Key stakeholders involved in participatory grantmaking include funders, grantees, and the broader community.
- Setting up a sustainable participatory grantmaking approach involves several steps, including defining goals, building relationships, and creating a shared decision-making process.
- While participatory grantmaking has several benefits, including greater accountability and impact, it could also encounter challenges, such as power imbalances and resistance to change.

- Strategies to mitigate these challenges include but not limited to investing in capacity development, prioritizing diversity and inclusion, and being transparent about decision-making processes.
- Therefore, we call on all actors from global south and global north to embrace participatory grantmaking as an approach to shift power and promote more equitable, just and sustainable development.





10.0 CASE STUDIES

Case Study for PGM Toolkit

Participatory grant-making by young person with disabilities.

A new pilot in Tanzania is showing just how dynamic and capable young disabled activists can be when they are trusted to make and implement grants.

By Elineca Ndowo and Vanessa Herringshaw, ADD International

Context

In 2022, ADD International and Bournemouth University secured funding to strengthen youth disability rights advocacy in East Africa. This included a budget for small advocacy projects in Tanzania to be run by young person with disabilities.

Though it had not been part of the original design, we agreed to adopt a participatory grant-making approach to selecting and supporting these projects.

ADD International supports disability justice activists and organisations through resourcing, leadership skills and movement strengthening. Organisationally we are transitioning, from traditional models of international development back to approaches that put participatory grant-making and self-determination at their core.

The work of Bournemouth University's Centre for Comparative Politics and Media Research includes a focus on the way disability is portrayed and constructed in the media and supporting the role of disability activists in self-representation and advocacy.

Designing the grant-making process

One of ADD's principles of participatory grant-making is that it is members of the population that will benefit from grants (our constituents) that should drive the design of the fund from the start. For practical/financial reasons, grant-making was focussed on those attending the upcoming Youth Disability Advocacy Festival that was part of the same project. Staff held discussions with disabled youth activists to explore their development priorities and what they needed to maximise participation as both grant-makers and implementors.

We used a 'Closed Collective/Community Board' model of Participatory Grantmaking in which:

- the 'Closed Collective' of young persons with disabilities at the Festival lead on discussing priorities and forming ideas together, then generating proposals in the smaller groups they choose
- the small Board who select grantees and support learning during implementation are elected entirely from within this community (the Youth With Disabilities Grants Team)
- the Collective also provides mutual support and accountability during implementation.

Launching the fund, selecting the grant-makers and developing grant ideas

In April 2023, ADD and Bournemouth University ran the Youth Disability Advocacy Festival in Dar es Salaam focused on strengthening skills and kicking off the Youth Disability Advocacy and Research (YDAR) Network amongst activists with diverse disabilities, academics, and practitioners.

During the festival:

- The grant-making fund was launched. Young participants with disabilities were introduced to the idea of participatory grant-making and offered the chance to nominate themselves as either potential members of the Youth With Disabilities Grant-making Team, or to submit proposals for funding. Guidance for both roles was circulated before presentations to support inclusion and questions answered in ways that responded to different communication needs.

- Sessions were run to support the young activists to discuss together their priorities and how to best achieve them, and to strengthen their advocacy and media skills.
- The young participants with disabilities elected the members of the Youth With Disabilities Grantmaking Team after agreeing their own criteria and listening from presentations from each candidate. It was a key learning just how seriously the participants took and engaged with this process, especially to ensure gender and process fairness.

In my country, it's not very easy for OPDs to get funds. When people with disabilities apply for funds, in most cases they are rejected due to negative attitudes towards them. It is very easy for an organization that's not for people with disabilities to apply and get funds.

Zenna, a member of the Youth With Disabilities Grant-Making Team.

Developing grant proposals

After the festival, participants developed then and submitted their proposals with support from staff. Another ADD participatory grantmaking principle is to make the application process as inclusive and 'user-centred' as possible, so applicants could:

- Apply as individuals, groups or organizations. And these could be informal or formal groups and unregistered or registered organisations.
- Apply in a Language they prefer either English or Swahili language.
- Apply in writing, or through voice or video recordings (building on technical trainings at the Festival).
- Structure their applications as they wanted, though we also provided simple prompt questions to help them:
 1. What change do you want to bring?
 2. What do you want to do to bring this about?
 3. How will you track progress and learn lessons?
 4. What money do you need and how will this be used?
 5. What other (non-funding) support do you require?
- Receive support in making and submitting their applications from ADD staff.
- If selected, go on to change the use of their funds once allocated to respond to learning and shifts in their context. It is worth noting that another of ADD's grant-making principles favours unrestricted support to organisations rather than short-term project support. But with these young grantees making their first applications and implementing their first projects and only 6 months of support being available from this funder, we thought it was important to support plan development.

Initiating the Youth with Disabilities Grant-making Team and Selecting grantees

The team comprised five young persons with disabilities (four young women, one young man) with diverse types of disabilities. The team were brought together for the first meeting face-to-face with some resource people on-line and others in the room. In later meetings, participants could join the meeting in-person in the room or join remotely. The team held:

- Two preparatory meetings – with all the team together. They were first supported to understand their roles, how to select and support grantees. The orientation also enhanced understanding of conflicts of interest and safeguarding. The team then developed their own code of conduct (addressing bias, honesty, accountability, confidentiality, and equality) and their own grantee selection criteria and process.
- Two scoring meetings – with half the Team members in each. Each half-Team reviewed all the proposals and allocated scores using simple templates developed based on their criteria.
- Two selection meetings – with all the Team back together. They compared and discussed the findings of the half-Teams and narrowed down their shortlist. Then they made their final selection.

As part of the grant task team, our main role was to review the different proposals that youth with disabilities had submitted. The entire process was amazing, we were trained beforehand on how to stick to the vetting criteria. I got a chance to read different proposals and understand the kind of change my fellow people with disabilities wanted to bring to society.

Zenna, a member of the Youth With Disabilities Grant-Making Team.

The Youth with Disabilities Grant-making Team chose the following criteria, scoring each on scales of 1-5:

1. The idea is a priority for Youth with Disabilities in Tanzania
2. It plans looks clear, practical and feasible
3. The budget is clear, a good use of funds and well aligned to activities
4. The results are likely to be sustainable
5. The project will make good use of the support from ADD International and Bournemouth University

Though the scores were important in guiding the shortlisting, the Team also considered how the final selection would make a good portfolio. Of the two chosen grantees:

- One is led by a Young women with Visual impairment, without organisational affiliation based on Tanzania Mainland. The project aims to advocate negative attitudes towards People with Disabilities (PWDs) in the society. Placing more emphasis on the myth that disability is a curse, people with disabilities are beggars, they have no right to have family and the perception that they are dependent they cannot participate in income generating activities. Diverse approaches will be used to create awareness these include composing two songs (both audio and video), conducting community awareness raising in a local bus stand, targeting the bus drivers and conductors, utilizing local television and radio stations to create awareness and disseminate the songs to reach large audience.
- A group of Young Person with Disabilities (incorporating three young women with disabilities: albinism, visual impairment and one with multiple disabilities) based in Zanzibar connected to a registered organisation of Women with Disabilities. The group is implementing a Digital Advocacy project targeting youth with disabilities in Tanzania Island. Peer Young persons with disabilities will be trained

on how to utilize digital platforms to advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities. The project aims to reach 10 Young persons with disabilities as Trainer of Trainers (TOT) who will later be expected to cascade the learnings to peer youth with disabilities in their respective organizations of persons with disabilities. After the training, the young people will be supported and mentored to develop and share contents to test the skills learned on various digital platforms.

Again, it should be noted how dedicated and conscientious the members of the Youth with Disabilities Grant-making Team were throughout the process, how well they worked together to make the selection and how much they report they have gained from being supported but ultimately totally trusted to select the grantees from their peers.

Simplifying due diligence and contracting and supportive payment approaches

ADD International led on due diligence and contracting with the successful candidates. To be 'user-centred', we had to seriously simplify both of our usual processes and requirements to respond to their limited histories and systems, and to the unregistered status of one. After exploring different financial transfer approaches, agreements were signed to make pre-activity bank transfers of 50% at the start and half-way through – rather than requiring the grantees to make out of pocket up-front investments and claim them back.

The contracts have recently been signed and the 6-month implementation period has just begun.

Building the movement, providing non-financial support and strengthening mutual accountability

Clearly, to overcome the level of exclusion that youth with disabilities face on a systemic level, they will need to work in collaborative ways that build the strength of their movement. Equally clearly, competition over funds and peer-based decision-making can create threats to this solidarity. And all activists can benefit from learning and getting inputs on their challenges by sharing with other activists, in their own countries and beyond. To address these issues:

- Accountability was discussed during the induction of the Youth with Disabilities Task Team and once selection was complete, an online session was held where they presented their process and decisions to all those who had applied, including giving feedback on areas where proposals could be strengthened to enhance future success.
- Non-financial support needs will be addressed through a series of mentorships and regular sessions of the Youth Disability Advocacy and Research (YDAR) Network of activists, academics, and practitioners regularly held on-line during the whole of the period of grant implementation. Some sessions will be dedicated to the grantees presenting their plans and progress to the wider network at the start, middle and end of implementation. The thinking is that such mutual exchanges will be more effective in encouraging learning, accountability and movement development that is useful for grantees, rather than the usual requirement of detailed written reporting for funders.

Key learnings

- The pilot is showing just how dynamic and capable young disabled activists can be when they are trusted to make and implement grants. Yet they continually tell us how much they are excluded from other grant-making processes, especially young persons with disabilities, especially young women with disabilities, especially persons with intellectual and mental health differences. If at least 15% of populations are disabled, it is obvious that this needs to change.
- Every stage of the grant-making design and process needs to be user-centred. Don't train people to jump through your hoops unless it is absolutely necessary - change the hoops!
- The Grant Team selection process needs to prioritize equality and inclusion to ensure representation of all groups including the marginalized.
- If you change your hoops so that diverse disabled people can be actively and equally involved, it is



When we received the news that we are among winners, we were more than happy. This show us that there are people who trust YP-WDs, they provided us with opportunity not only to show our capabilities but also to manage our work and funding.

One of the Grantees a Group of Young Persons with Disabilities (based in Tanzania Island).

likely you will improve your overall inclusiveness hugely as you address communication variations, physical barriers, financial support, the time people really need to participate etc. It may help grant-makers really face up to and shift deeply held beliefs about who is capable of making decisions and who should hold the power.

- Every stage of grant-making also needs to be highly flexible. Team members may need to change as people leave for new opportunities. Extra meetings are needed as discussions take longer than expected. Build in flexibility and responsiveness everywhere. For example: The Task team groups may come up with different perceptions and scores; more time is needed in discussion and reaching consensus as per the set criteria and other agreed portfolio.
- Focus on supporting the ongoing strength of the overall movement as much as, if not more than, the success of individual grantees and their projects. Invest in convening group discussions and meetings. Foster mutual accountability and trust. Nurture mutual support and collaborations.
- We learnt that youth with disabilities have strong abilities and new insights to choose which projects are most relevant for them. For instance, they chose to fund an individual activist which was new for us, as well as supporting an organisation.
- The Youth Grant Team members learnt and deepened several skills along the process, such as communication, weighting options and presenting their thinking.
- We encourage you to look for creative ways to 'inject' participatory grantmaking into programming. We had not planned to do it in this project, but we found a way. Whenever there are budgets to support groups to do their own activities, resist the urge for your organisation to choose who gets the money. Support your 'constituents' to take the lead and make the decisions for themselves.
- If you are looking to support grantmaking for and by people/women/youth with disabilities, we at ADD International would love to hear from you!!!



Catherine Kinya- Mbaaria CBO chairlady at her onion farm

Exploring shift the power through participatory grantmaking: A case study of Transform Trade's pilot in Kenya

Being on the driver's seat: A story of Mbaaria CBO reimagining their development

Nestled amidst rolling hills caved in the undulating plains overlooking Mt. Kenya, approximately 20 kilometers from Meru Twon, there exists a rural agricultural community. As you wander deeper into the heart of the community, you're met by vibrant spirit of camaraderie and hard work among the members of Mbaaria CBO. Warm smiles and friendly nods are exchanged among the group members, their faces etched with the tales of a close-knit community deeply rooted in challenging the norm. A sense of unity and shared purpose pervades the atmosphere. As the chairlady reckons, *"We have come from far. This project has opened our eyes to new beginnings. We share a common purpose and when came together as different self-help groups, our desire and aspiration was to chart a new course where we would take the mantle in our own developmental agenda. Our people are hopeful and raring to go. We're now drivers of our own change"*.

Mbaaria CBO's efforts have in turn seen the farmers redesign their projects from the initially group "demonstration plots" to individually owned plots with farmers foreseeing an increase in production attributed to the increased land size under onions. *"In our current project, we have farmers producing as individuals but at the end, when we are selling produce, we aggregate and sell as one. I think this is beneficial to us because some time ago, we used to have many intermediaries or brokers who waited for us to plant and harvest our crops then they would come in with their weighing machines had been tampered with and exploited us using them"*. This is a clear demonstration of the potential communities hold in increasing their produce as well as fetching quality prices for their produce further minimizing the trade injustice shocks and challenges. The vice chairperson adds, *"... however, today we have the ability to dictate the selling price that is favorable to us and customers too. So, with this aggregation system, we will no longer have to look for buyers, they will be the ones coming to demand for our produce. Some would even promise to come from your produce and they never come leaving you stranded with your produce until the prices go down"*.



Susan Kathure at attending her onion nurseries (nursery established using PGM fund)

It is evident that members of the CBO are increasingly recognizing the potential that lies within them when they consolidate efforts towards driving their own change agenda. To that effect, there has been a change in perception and attitude towards division of labor, assignment of role and responsibilities as well as a positive attitude towards group activities. One member reckons, *"Before, it was really difficult bringing people together for meetings. Now if we call members for a meeting, they will try to rush here because they do not want to be left out. Like today we met as few members but those who learnt of our meeting through other means have been asking why they were not informed"*. This, they attribute to the series of training and capacity building efforts at the initial stages of the project.

In addition, the group has further reformed its table banking to VSLA to offer members more lending opportunities further giving them an alternative affordable credit and lending facility that is member driven with the proceeds going

back to the group. High levels of accountability have also been witnessed in the process. *"... So we give them as a loan that they have to repay back to the group; we treat it as a loan so that when they are paying back we keep the amount for them as their savings. The money will be for the farmer, not Transform Trade or the group. It is only that we want it back to the group for us to see whether it was used well or not and to have the assurance that it will help the farmer-member in future . . . people are really happy"*, the treasurer exclaims.

All these progresses made haven't been short of challenges though. With little background in proposal development, the communities found it difficult navigating through the proposal development with this role left to a few. Also, some members expressed pessimism due to the long application processes involved as narrated by the chairlady. When asked whether they felt power had shifted, with conviction, the vice chairperson narrates, *"Yes, it has shifted, but because people were used to being governed, they took long to understand and accept that really power had shifted to them, so after the several seminars we have had with them, I can now say that 80% of them have accepted that we have been given the powers and now it is our turn to make decisions and work. No one is responsible for us"*. The group is convinced that with the renewed vigour and member involvement, the future is bright and they will moving forward take a lead role in issues pertaining to their communities. One of the members narrates, *"We're no longer going to be at the mercies of brokers and middlemen. If we stick together, we will determine the course our businesses take"*.



11.0 TRANSFORM TRADE'S PGM PILOT JOURNEY AT A GLANCE

The diagram below shows the journey that Transform Trade has been on. It is important to note that PGM is a process that calls for a shift in the wider organization. It requires a mindset shift as well as shift in policies, practices, and communication.

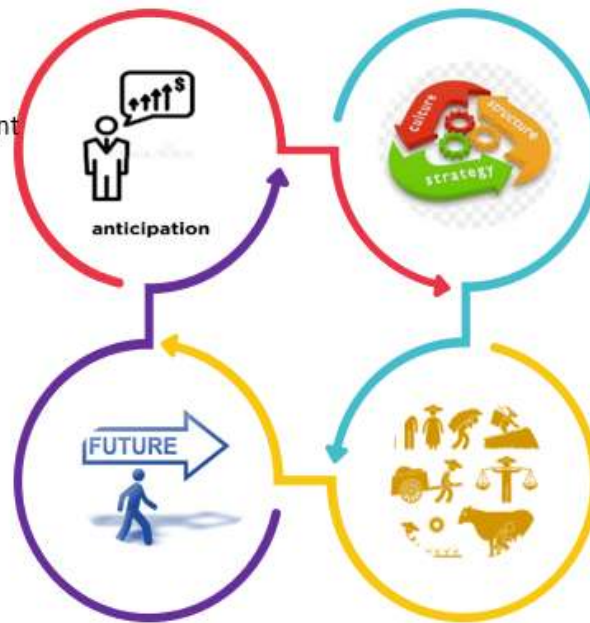
We needed to reflect and understand the change needed to enable us to contribute to transformative change. We therefore engaged both in an internal organizational process as well as in our external grantmaking process.

Anticipation

- Strategic review process
- Consultations with Different stakeholders
- Lesson & knowledge sharing

Future Projections

- Amplification of community's sense of self-worth, belief, and capacities
- Upscale efforts & productivity
- VSLAs & cooperatives formation
- Strategic review



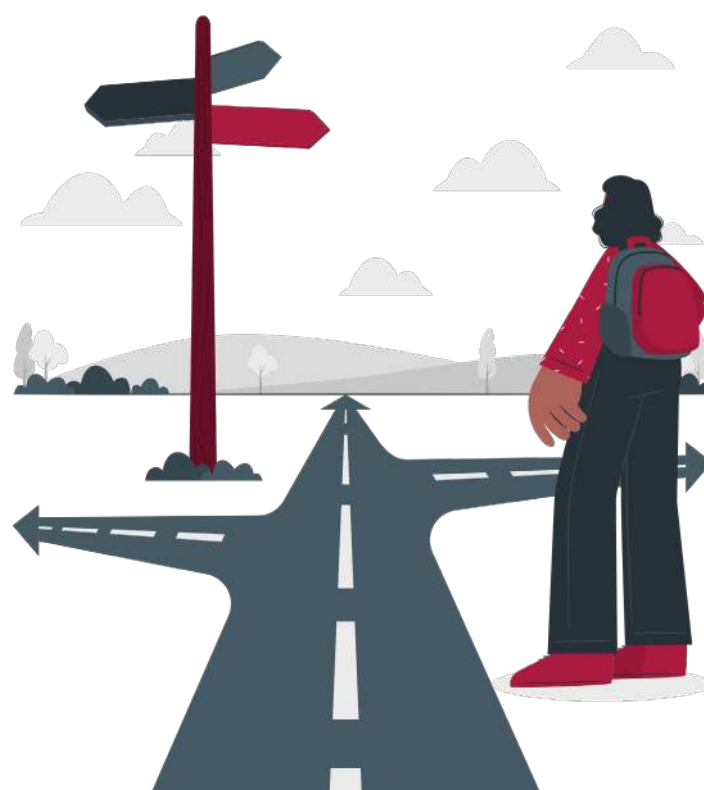
Transition

1. Exploratory phase
2. Institutionalizing the new approach
3. Organization's strategic framework review
4. Stakeholders' engagement
5. Lesson sharing, knowledge management & community dialogues

Implementation

1. Proposals development & grant award
2. Community involvement
3. Technical support
4. Participatory monitoring & follow ups.

If you would like to learn more about Transform Trade's experience with PGM, please contact us at Hello@transform-trade.org



12.0 KEY LEARNING FROM TRANSFORM TRADE'S PGM EVALUATION

From the stakeholder's reflections on the PGM pilot, several lessons can be learnt that should not be viewed as compartmentalized methods or as strictly sequential. They stand for coordinated initiatives that must be rolled out in the ebbs and flows of PGM approach implementation and have been categorized under the following phases:

1. Sensitizing on PGM model/approach and its importance to the mission and values of Transform Trade

- **PGM approach is slow but more sustainable depending on the leader of shifting the power:** To effectively change communities' attitudes and effectiveness in making them drivers of change, it requires a series of community dialogues and continuous orientation for PGM to be fully understood and embraced. However, this is highly dependent on the leader of the process. The process can lead to a concentration of power in specific segments of the partnership, negating the initial objective of the approach. Development output and outcomes will take longer under the PGM approach than under the traditional donor-driven approach. However, the approach is more sustainable with greater ownership and community capacity for self-drive.
- **Resilience building in agricultural trade justice projects need to consider supporting infrastructure:** To effectively create change, communities supporting infrastructure e.g. water and small scale irrigation infrastructure should be integrated in the whole design where applicable. The supporting infrastructure is key in enhancing communities adapt/mitigate against the vagaries of climate change.
- **Effective shifting of power lies in prioritizing the disadvantaged community collectives:** In the process of shifting the power, the evaluation team observed that the shifting of power to the different partners in the journey of PGM was diverse. Power dynamics were evident in the community collectives, with some leaders and community elites amercing power to the detriment of the members. Even within the support group, there was evidence of power play among the individuals. Therefore, there is a need for conscious efforts to monitor the power play to ensure the practical shifting of power in implementing the PGM approach of shifting power. Further, Prioritizing community needs in the target agricultural value chain needs to consider the supporting infrastructure as risk-mitigating measures for improved resilience.

2. Building functional systems (i.e., support group, technical facilitators etc.) of PGM to operationalize principles into practice.

- **Building community trust is essential in the success of the PGM approach:** Efforts to improve transparency in community collectives and the self-confidence in their ability to prioritise collective problem analysis, and co-creation of solutions and interventions improve the approach's effectiveness. Building community trust in themselves through enhancing community accountability is essential for self-regulation, influencing change and overcoming the challenges of collective dynamics.
- **Organizational transition to PGM requires a support group/support partners/support advisors to support the shifting of power:** The support group played an instrumental role in guiding the organisational transition to the PGM approach. The experiences of the diverse support group members supported the transition in shifting power enabling the power to the communities.
- **Shared visioning of shift the power philosophy and capacity of the members is imperative for effectiveness of the support group:** The support groups were drawn from community and formal organizations to provide technical assistance to the process of PGM pilot, who came with different capacities. Therefore, there is need to enhance the capacities of the support group until they have a shared common understanding and confidence in the approach. If not handled meticulously, members from formal organisations may wield power over the community representatives based on among

others educational, formalization of meetings and the confidence in public, which impedes common visioning of purpose of shifting the power.

For sustainability of the PGM approach, there is a need for integration of financial inclusion: For the PGM approach to be effective in building self-reliance and long-term sustainability of the approach, embedding financial inclusion in the approach is critical. The integration of Village Saving and Lending Associations has been instrumental in building capacities of communities to deal with agricultural shocks and build social capital that has been instrumental for the progress made in communities in driving development.

Localized support and mentorship system is vital in facilitating community change: Community support and mentorship in the grant-making process, implementation and building collective institutional capacity requires technical assistance directly or through linkages to relevant institutions. However, the support should be demand driven by the collectives and not prescriptive to facilitate power shifting.

3. Embedding the practice to Transform Trade work with a vision of the practice to become central to the organization's DNA

Scale of support is key in realizing meaningful impact: To effectively empower the collectives, there is need of flexibility in funding based on the needs to support their trade activities and realize the meaningful gains in the short run. Therefore, the scale of support is critical to enhance the members resilience to market and environmental shocks.

Flexibility is needed to make PGM approach effective: The intentional approach of the pilot willing to adapt in the journey of transition to shifting power through consideration of the diversity in community needs and dynamics is essential for effective PGM. The flexibility of the funder is needed to capture the initial needs and emerging of the communities during the implementation of the PGM approach.

Flexible funding limits in PGM approach for impact: Funding models with restrictive funding limits are more appropriate for more established farmer collectives to realize faster results. However, flexible funding models designed to offer a wider range of grant limits would give communities an opportunity to widen their application scope based on the needs upon meeting set criteria.

Continuous mindset orientation towards shift the power philosophy is needed beyond the leadership of the collectives: To effectively shift power, the process should be continuous to ensure mental reorientation to enable the collectives and its members to discover their potential as drivers for change. Conscious efforts are thus required to carry along the membership of the collectives through empowerment activities within the collectives.

Other key learnings

Need for intentional and targeted communities in implementing PGM: Consciously targeting a community and cocreating interventions for vulnerable communities and collectives requires targeting that will enable communities to invest their time and resources appropriately as opposed to the traditional donor approach.

Sustainability of the PGM approach lies in expanding community local partnerships and capacities to mobilise local resources: There lies the potential to expand the communities' collective capabilities to create partnerships, and the ability to mobilize local resources from diverse sources is needed to enhance the shifting of power on the negotiation table.

13.0 ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Websites and organizations

<https://www.participatorygrantmaking.org/>

The participatory grantmaking community is a global collective dedicated to sharing knowledge and best practices around participatory grantmaking, encouraging its use, and shifting power within philanthropy.

<https://globalfundcommunityfoundations.org/>

The Global Fund for Community Foundations focuses on community-driven grantmaking and provides resources, case studies and insights into participatory grantmaking

<https://candid.org/>

Candid (formerly Foundation Center and GuideStar) provides resources and information on participatory grantmaking. Their website offers articles, reports and tools.

<https://www.ncfp.org/people/grantcraft/>

Grantcraft, a project of Candid offers guides, case studies and webinars on participatory grantmaking

Articles and reports

Best practices in participatory grantmaking

<https://www.alliancemagazine.org/blog/7-best-practices-in-participatory-grantmaking/>

Deciding Together: Shifting power and resources through participatory grantmaking

<https://www.ncfp.org/knowledge/deciding-together-shifting-power-and-resources-through-participatory-grantmaking/>

Participatory grantmaking pilot: Supporting women-led businesses use their power

<https://www.transform-trade.org/project-library/blog-post-title-two-ypbnm>

Participatory grantmaking: Has its time come?

https://www.fordfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/participatory_grantmaking-lmv7.pdf

Participatory grantmaking and trust-based philanthropy

<https://www.trustbasedphilanthropy.org/resources-articles/2022-1-25-cei-tbp-learning-evaluation-8lz2r-6x4rp>

Participatory grantmaking in Kenya

<https://www.transform-trade.org/pgm>

Videos

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xOBcUgeukS6JnR58ZEnHDJIYja0ydORe/view?usp=sharing>

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