Transitioning Models of Care Assessment Tool

Written by Rebecca Nhep & Hannah Won, 2020

Contents

Origins of the Tool

This tool evolved from the learning and experience of the authors throughout their work to transition privately-run and funded institutions in various countries and regions. Over time, the authors observed trends and key indicators that enabled them to anticipate how a transition might unfold.

These trends and key indicators often stemmed from dynamics linked to the motivations and characteristics of the director and principal donor of an institution, and the relationship and history between them. These dynamics created the 'starting point', or in other words, the enabling environment. By analyzing the enabling environment, the authors found that they could anticipate the potential path of a transition and use these insights to develop the safest and most effective strategy possible. The documentation of these learnings and trends spanning many years led to the development of this tool.

Acknowledgements

Reference Group

We wish to thank the practitioners and their respective organizations who participated in the reference group and contributed towards the development of the tool. The insights, experiences, learnings, and suggestions shared with us have been critical in ensuring its relevance to a diverse range of contexts.

Reference Group Members:

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Background

Care Reforms: The Big Picture

The detriments of institutional care on children's development and wellbeing are well-documented and well-established. The overwhelming evidence has led to a global call to end the institutionalization of children and has catalyzed child protection and care systems reforms in many regions and countries. Care reforms are complex and entail multi-faceted changes at the systems level. They involve changes made to legislation, regulation, policy, services, resource allocation, and workforce training, as well as the development of new mechanisms for implementation and monitoring. They are government-led and often supported by inter-governmental and non-government agencies.

Image: BCN Practitioner Online Library

In countries where there is an over-reliance on institutional care, a key goal of reform efforts is to reorient the care systems towards family-based solutions, recognizing:

a. the family as the optimal environment for children's development and wellbeing;

b. the right of the child to family-life;

c. the obligations of States to provide support to parents to fulfil their caregiving responsibilities towards children; and

d. the priority given to family-based alternative care in international norms.

This type of reform is referred to as 'deinstitutionalization' and includes efforts to reduce the number of children in institutions through reintegration and scaling back the number of institutions in operation, ideally through transition rather than closure. Transition is therefore a component of care reforms and should, to the extent possible, be linked to broader systems-level reforms, take place with involvement from the mandated authorities, and use established national procedures where they exist.

Transition as the Ideal

Transition, as the name suggests, involves changing an organization's model of care or services from institutional to non-institutional ones. Transition, rather than closure, is ideal as it serves two purposes. Firstly, it contributes to the decrease in the number of institutions. Secondly, it allows new services to be developed that support children to remain in families. This happens when human, financial, and material resources used to sustain the institution are redirected and repurposed. Therefore, transition aims to shift resources away from institutional models but retain investment in child and family welfare systems.

Definition of Transition

The process of changing the model of care or service provided by an organization from an institutional care service to a non-institutional service or model of care. Transition involves change at all levels of the organization and includes, but is not limited to, the safe reintegration of children.

Some organizations transition into programs that are set up to support the children reintegrating out of the transitioning institution. In other cases, new programs are developed to address a gap in the overall system that will continue to result in children being placed in institutions unless addressed. New programs do not have to be limited to alternative care services, such as foster care and kinship care. They can include programs related to education, disability, daycare, child-centered community development, or positive parenting. These programs all contribute to efforts to strengthen systems such as social protection, education, child welfare, or child protection, all of which will impact children's care.

What Does Transition Involve?

Many people view transition of an institution as the same or similar to the reintegration process of children. While reintegration is one of the most important outcomes, transition is a much broader process. It involves change at every tier of the organization running the institution. This includes structural, policy, procedural, programmatic, and resourcing levels. As outlined in the diagram below, there are many stages and steps that need to take place before reintegration begins. Overlooking these critical stages can negatively impact the entire transition process and outcomes for the children.

Transition strategies should be tailored to each organization, taking into account their unique starting point. If they begin by lacking sufficient structure or reporting procedures, strategies may need to address this to manage the change process, mitigate risk, or respond to any incidents that may emerge during transition.

Stages of Transition

Stage 1
Engagement

Advocacy	Awareness & Preliminary Agreement
General awareness raising about the issue	Targeted awareness raising to secure initial agreement to explore transition
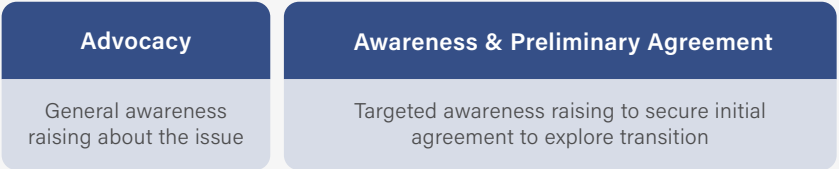
Stage 2
Preparation & On-boarding

Organizational Assessments	Strategy	Buy-in	*Governance Strengthening
Assessments and analysis	Strategic planning	Secure full agreement	Strengthen governamce and accountability systems
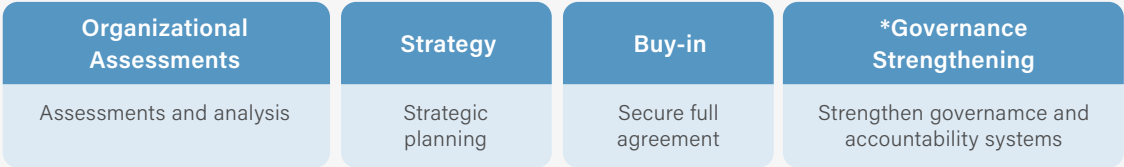
*when required as indicated by assessments

Stage 3
Active Transition Stage

Option 3a
Full Transition

Organizational Level Processes

Stakeholder consultation	Post-transition programming discussions and assessments	Re-design and repurposing	Implementation of new programs

Reintegration

Establish social work team and CMS	Family Tracing	Social work assessments and care planning	Placements and case reviews	Monitoring and ongoing support
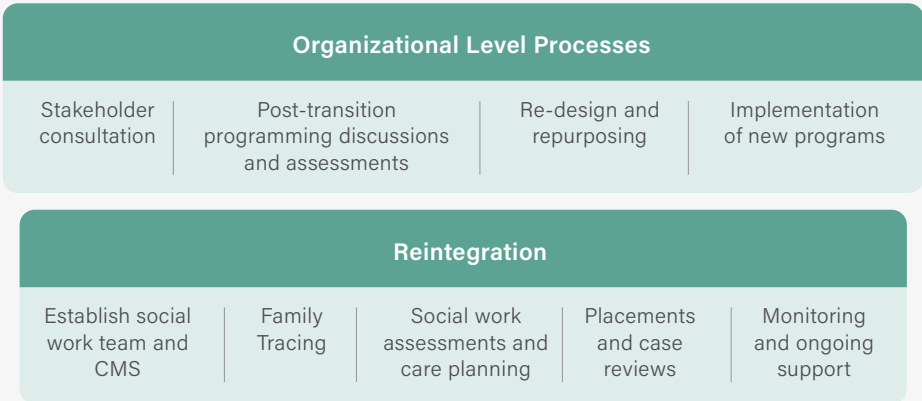
Option 3b
Safe Closure/ Divestment

Organizational Level Processes

Implement closure/divestment as per strategic plan, including removal/relocation of children where necessary	Legal closure of entity (where relevant)

Reintegration

Establish social work team and CMS	Family Tracing	Social work assessments and care planning	Placements and case reviews	Monitoring and ongoing support

Diagram 1: Stages of Transition

Degrees of Success

There are a number of key outcomes associated with transitioning an institution, all of which contribute towards systems level care reform.

Institution Level Outcomes	Systems Level Outcomes
Safe reintegration of children in the institution back into families and communities	Reduction in the overall number of children in institutional care
Divestment of human, financial, and material resources from an individual institution	Reduction in the overall number of institutions in operation
Reinvestment of human, financial, and material resources in family strengthening services or family-based alternative care	Development of non-institutional services as alternatives

In an ideal transition scenario, all three of the institution level outcomes would be fully achieved, resulting in a full repurposing of the former institution, including all of its staff and resources. However, this is not always possible. There are some situations in which full transition is not the appropriate goal and could even place c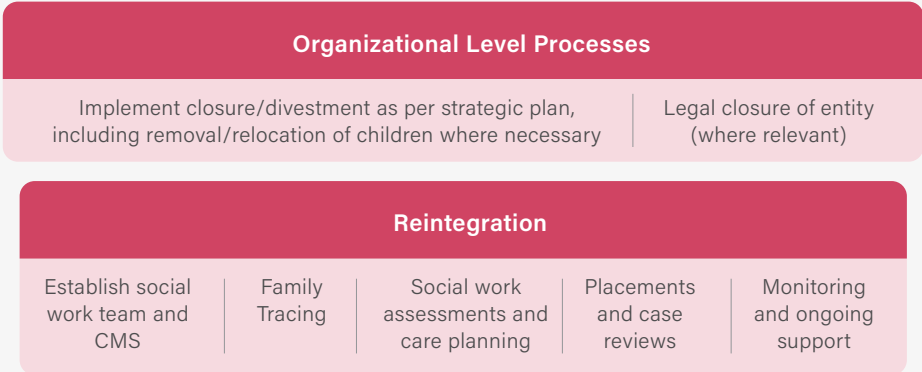hildren at risk of harm. This is particularly the case where there is insufficient commitment to delivering high quality services, serious capacity or child protection related concerns, or mixed motives revealed in the assessment. These types of concerns may call into question the suitability of the directors, staff, or other stakeholders working directly with vulnerable children. In such instances, a more appropriate goal might be safe closure. This can be voluntary or enforced by the relevant authorities in more serious cases or as part of national efforts to scale back institutional care in the country. Depending on the context and nature of concerns, it may be entirely appropriate for directors and staff to transition into non-child welfare related projects.

While safe closure of an institution may not be the ideal or best-case scenario, it is a valid outcome and should not be perceived as failure. This is because safe closures still make important contributions to the systems level reform including the following outcomes:

1. a reduction in the overall number of children in institutional care through safe reintegration; and

2. a reduction in the overall number of institutions in operation through safe closure.

In some cases, a safe closure may also achieve the desired goal of reinvesting financial resources in non-institutional care services in a slightly different way. Donors who supported the institution undergoing closure can be encouraged and supported to reinvest their finances in other organizations running family strengthening services or family-based alternative care. This allows for the scaling up of existing alternatives run by organizations with demonstrated capacity and expertise.

Therefore, it is important to view success in transition work as inclusive of a continuum of outcomes and impacts, which all must be achieved in a manner that is safe and in the best interests of children. A realistic framing of success from the outset will enable practitioners to develop appropriate monitoring and evaluation frameworks. It is also critical to sustaining motivation and dedication in the face of complex and challenging work.

Power and its Impact on the Decision to Transition

In order to effectively outwork the transition of an institution, it is necessary to understand the power dynamics between the key stakeholders and work strategically with this knowledge. Power takes different forms and comes from various sources. When it comes to **decision-making**, including the decision to transition, power is typically held by three key stakeholders:

1. **Government**

2. **Director**

3. **Principal Donor**

Governments in both donor and implementing countries exert different levels of power and influence on a transition. This is based on the strength and effectiveness of existing laws, policies, regulation, inspectorates, and child protection response mechanisms.

This is not only true of governments in countries where the institutions are operating. It is also true of governments in donor countries whose laws and regulations impact charities' operations and fundraising efforts. In some cases, this includes regulations around funding or operating overseas institutions.

Power & Influence over Residential Care
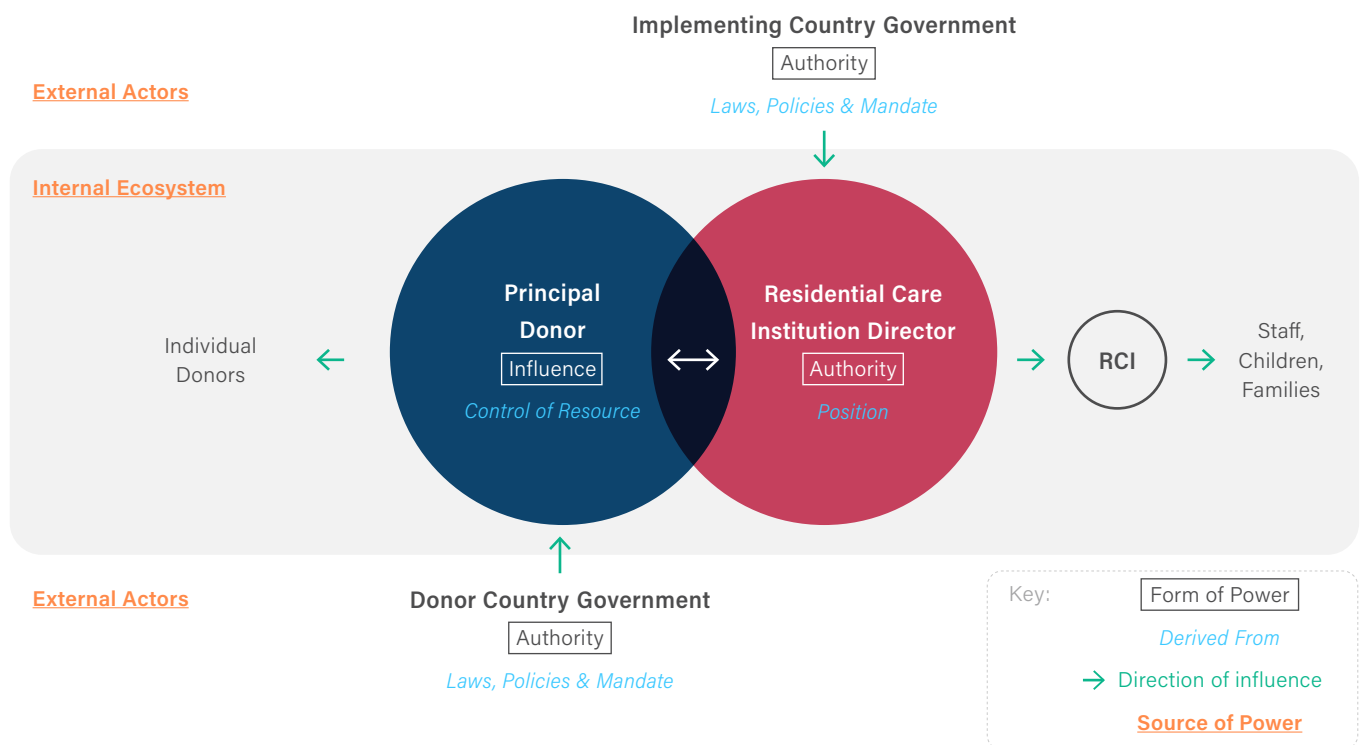
Diagram 2: Power and influence stakeholder diagram

Having well-established and resourced government systems in countries where the institutions are run can certainly make it much easier to implement a transition and provides critical government support should issues arise. It can also result in government-mandated transitions or closures, which lends full government authority to the process. In many contexts where reforms are underway, relevant laws and policies often exist.

However, government resources are limited, and systems are in the early stages of development. This reduces the likelihood of transitions being enforced by government mandates or power. In these situations, it becomes even more critical to tap into the influence and power structures within the internal ecosystem of a given institution, both regarding buy-in and the development of a transition strategy.

Working with Decision Makers in the Internal Ecosystem

The **internal ecosystem** of an institution is comprised of a range of stakeholders including:

- the director of the institution;

- the staff and caregivers of the institution;

- children and families;

- partner charities and organizations supporting the institution;

- individual donors supporting the institution; and

- the original founder of the institution.

  - In some cases, the founder may also be the director or principal donor, or sometimes both.

  - In other cases, the founder may have stepped out of an active role with the institution and has limited or no involvement.

Internal Ecosystem of an Institution
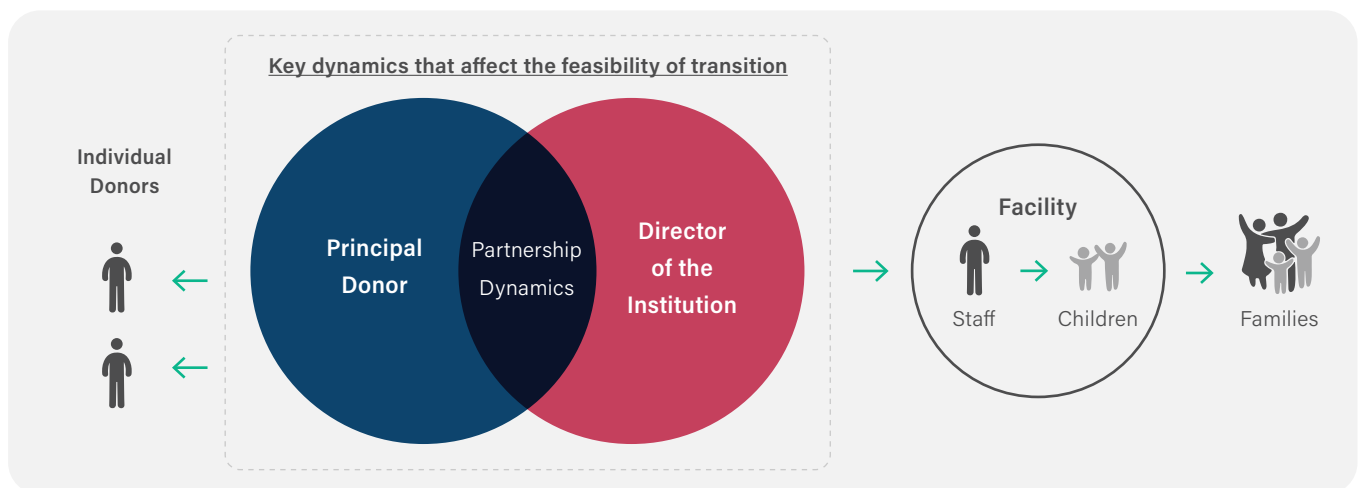
Diagram 3: Internal Ecosystem of Residential Care Institutions

In this ecosystem, all of these stakeholders have an important role and need to be onboarded to ensure an effective transition. However, the two key stakeholders who **exert the most significant influence on organizational decision- making and therefore the process of transition** are:

- **The director**, who has operational control over the institution, including staff and caregivers; and

- **The principal donor**, the person who represents the main or largest donor, or primary fundraiser. The principal donor:

  - can be an individual or entity;

- typically represents a charity, organization, church, family trust, or business that is funding the institution;

- often collects donations from individual donors and is the channel through which individual donations flow to the institution;

- typically manages the communication with individual donors; and

- in rarer cases, financially supports the institution independently.

In some cases, the founder of the institution may have transitioned from the role of director into the role of principal donor.

Note: It is common for institutions to be run by married couples. While there may be one person who seems more prominent and engaged in the discussions, the perspectives of both spouses are likely to have an influence over the decision to transition. It is therefore important to consider this dynamic and the possibility of divergent perspectives or motives between spouses while working through this assessment tool.

Definitions of key terms used throughout the tool

Director	Refers to the director of the residential care institution
Principal Donor	Refers to the person who represents the main donor (primary or largest) or is the primary fundraiser who acts as the conduit of funds raised from smaller individual donors
Stakeholder	Within the assessment section, refers to the Director and Principal Donor
Practitioner	Refers to the person/s providing technical support to the institution for the purpose of transition

Identifying the director and principal donor as the two key stakeholders does not diminish the important role that staff play, nor does it ensure that they have bought into the transition process. Rather, it recognizes that the director has operational control over the institution. This includes operational control over the staff. The director is therefore a gatekeeper to those relationships and is the primary person who will either manage or undermine staff cooperation, implementation, and compliance with operational decisions.

In the same sense, recognizing the principal donor as a key stakeholder does not undermine the presence of, or importance of working with, other donors. It realizes the likelihood of the largest donor having the greatest influence on the decision to transition and its effective implementation.

It is for this reason that the director and principal donor are identified and referred to throughout this tool as the 'primary stakeholders'. Throughout the tool, there are also recommendations that address working with staff and other donors**.**

The director and principal donor act as the two entry points into discussions about the possibility of transition. Practitioners may first engage with the **director** of an institution for the purpose of securing buy-in for transition. Alternatively, they may connect with the **principal donor** in order to exert influence through the funding stream. Both entry points are valid, but both might not be equally effective, due to different partnership dynamics.

In privately-funded institutions, principal donors are quite often better positioned to bring about change than directors, as they control the funds. However, as the power of most principal donors is influential rather than authoritative in nature, donors are rarely able to independently make the decision to transition.

As such, a successful transition is dependent upon engaging both stakeholders in the discussion and decision-making. This includes:

1. Identifying the **power dynamics** between the director and principal donor and adapting the engagement strategy accordingly;

2. Analyzing the **partnership dynamics** between the director and principal donor; and

3. Identifying strengths and risks resulting from both sets of dynamics and factoring **risk management strategies** into the transition plan.

The primary aim of this assessment tool is to guide practitioners through this process.

Overview of the Tool

Purpose of the Tool

This tool aims to assist practitioners to achieve the following objectives when providing technical support to transitioning institutions:

- Determine the feasibility of implementing a successful transition by taking into account the number of positive indicators and/or severity of risk indicators.

- Extract and analyze critical information that informs the approach and allows the practitioner to develop a strategic plan and budget for transition.

The tool recognizes that because the starting point of each institution is different, there is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach. Tailored strategies need to be developed for each individual transition process, taking into account their unique dynamics. The tool has therefore been designed as an assessment framework that assists practitioners to identify and analyze these key starting point dynamics and determine the implications for strategy. In other words**, it is a sense-making tool rather than a ready-made strategy**. The tool can also be used on an evolving basis to help practitioners make sense of new information or indicators that arise throughout the transition process.

Whom the Tool is For

This tool has been written for practitioners who are guiding or providing technical support to third-party organizations operating residential care institutions, to undergo transition**.** Practitioners may be technical staff, child protection staff or social workers of local or international NGOs, or consultants. They may be providing transition support as an individual practitioner or as part of a multidisciplinary team. Practitioners may be providing technical support to transitioning institutions under a number of arrangements including:

- as part of a program or service offered by their agency;

- as part of a partnership formed with the institution or with their donor entity for the specific purpose of providing technical support;

- as part of a contract or consultancy; or

- as part of a national deinstitutionalization plan which utilizes the technical expertise of a civil society partner to support transitioning institutions.

The tool is primarily designed for use in transitions involving institutions that are:

- Privately run;

- Largely overseas funded; and

- Located in countries with emerging or weak regulatory frameworks.

The tool can be used regardless of whether the transition or closure is voluntary or mandated by government.

What the Tool is Not Designed For

It is important to recognize some of the limitations of the tool and situations that it was not designed for or where its use is not recommended. These include:

- **Closure of government-run institutions.** Practitioners supporting the transition of government-run institutions may find some of this tool relevant and useful, particularly regarding stakeholder engagement in the implementation phase. However, it is important to note that the tool was not primarily designed with the transition or closure of government-run institutions in mind. The process of transitioning or closing government-run institutions can be quite different. It can be less complex in terms of the buy-in process and stakeholder management, because it takes place in response to a government directive. Practitioners are also less likely to be involved in the whole process of closure or transition.

- **Self-assessments for organizations directly operating residential care services**. The tool was not designed to be used as a self-assessment tool to support organizations that directly operate residential care services to independently transition. While it may provide some relevant learning and suggestions, it is not a transition training manual designed to walk an organization through each step of a transition process.

- **Usage in interview settings with directors or principal donors of residential care services**. The tool is designed to help practitioners make sense of the information they have collected, formally and informally. It is not a set of questions to directly ask the key stakeholders, or a survey or form to complete with, or in the presence of, stakeholders. Instead, practitioners can provide key stakeholders or partners with an overview of the tool on page 161 in the Annex, if they wish to provide a concise summary of the tools that they will use to develop the transition strategy.

- **Usage by inexperienced or untrained practitioners**. The tool assumes and requires a fair degree of technical knowledge of transition and therefore should be used by practitioners with sufficient training and experience. This reflects the complex nature of transition work that should not be underestimated or minimized.

- **Usage as a reintegration manual.** While reintegration is undoubtedly one of the most important outcomes of a transition process, the tool refers to the broader process of transition entailing multiple stages (refer to Diagram 1: Stages of Transition, page 7). It is not meant to provide guidance on how to outwork a reintegration process. Resources that are designed for this purpose can be found in 'Useful Resources and Tools' in the Annex, page 144.

When the Tool Should be Used

Practitioners will need to have a fair degree of existing knowledge about the director and principal donor to be able to use this tool. Therefore, the assessment component of the tool should ideally be used during **Stage 2** of the overall transition process (refer to Diagram 1: Stages of Transition, page 7), after awareness-raising and organizational assessments have already been conducted. It is at this point that practitioners are likely to have gathered sufficient and relevant information to be able to complete the assessment, both from direct observations of, and interactions with, stakeholders as well as third-party sources of information. However, it is recommended that practitioners read through the tool prior to commencing Stage 1 of a transition as the content is likely to inform the approach to awareness-raising, organizational assessments, and information gathering.

If gaps in knowledge are identified during the process of working through the indicators, it is advisable to seek further information or clarity as far as is possible. This will ensure that practitioners gain the maximum benefit from the tool. Where certain information is not yet known, the questions can be used to guide practitioners to gather further information prior to finalizing the assessment.

Structure of the Tool

The tool is organized into four sections.

Section One: Indicators and Implications

This is the core of the tool. It contains a set of checklists containing a wide range of indicators and implications pertaining to the director and the principal donor as the two key stakeholders, as well as their partnership. This section is organized around **seven key themes,** each broken down into the following three sections:

▪ **About this Theme**

   Each theme starts with a brief overview of the theory it draws upon. The theories have been summarized for practitioners who find the theoretical context useful. Others may find it more useful to skip straight to the more concrete indicators.

▪ **Indicators**

   For each theme, practitioners can select the indicators relevant to, and representative of, the director and the principal donor, and the partnership between them.

   Practitioners are then guided to identify the color category that best fits their situation for that particular theme. Both the indicators and the following implications are categorized using a traffic light risk rating system:

Green light
positive and/or low risk
indicator sets

Orange light
medium risk indicator sets

Red light
high risk indicator sets

▪ **Implications:**

   Following on from the indicators are a set of implications that correspond to each color category. The implications include the following sections:

   ▪ explanation;

   ▪ suggested actions;

   ▪ funding implications; and

   ▪ where relevant, notes and warnings designed to alert practitioners to risks and assumptions that could prove problematic.

   The implications are based on trends observed across numerous transitions and are designed to help practitioners identify more subtle underlying issues. More concrete institution assessment frameworks may not capture these underlying issues, but they are critical to consider as they can significantly impact on transition and, by extension, children.

   The list of implications should not be taken as definitive or exhaustive, and this tool does not remove the need for practitioners to conduct in-depth assessments of the institution and children in care as a part of the transition process. An example of an institution assessment form can be found here.

Case Studies

For the purpose of illustrating how these themes have manifested in actual transition projects, each indicator section begins with a list of indicators from three main case studies woven throughout the entire tool. Each case study broadly represents either the green, orange, or red categories. However, for a particular theme the indicators might result in the case study receiving a different risk rating than the one broadly assigned to it. For example, the Lighthouse Case Study received an orange light category rating for two out of the seven themes but has been assessed as red light category overall.

Most transitions are unlikely to receive the same rating for all seven themes. This tool will help guide practitioners to determine the ratings that most accurately fit for each theme as well as an overall rating.

The case studies have been anonymized to protect confidentiality and selected to demonstrate a wide range of scenarios. However, the details are factual and have not been merged with details of other situations.

The full narrative case studies are found on page 146 in the Annex, and it is recommended that practitioners read them before diving into the tool.

Section Two: Collating and Analyzing Findings

This section guides practitioners to collate their findings from all seven themes.

This gives an overall risk rating and a sense of the following important dynamics:

- the presence of positive indicators that enhance transition;

- the level of complexity ranging from low to high;

- the related risks including risk of interference or sabotage;

- the type and level of technical support required;

- the implications for human and financial resources;

- the stage of transition that should be commenced within the overarching transition timeline; and

- whether a realistic end goal is transition to alternative services or safe closure.

Section Three: A Note on Sabotage

This section unpacks the issue of sabotage, which is referred to throughout the tool. It provides more context and outlines the scope of behaviors that may constitute sabotage, ranging from mild to severe.

Section Four: Concluding Remarks

This section contains a short conclusion and is followed by the annex section where the case studies and a list of other useful resources can be found.

Section 1: Indicators and Implications

This section contains the indicator lists and corresponding implications. It is the assessment component of the tool and is designed to help the user collate and analyze information about the stakeholders and explore possible implications for the transition. The indicators and implications are organized around the seven key themes and broken down under each theme into categories using the traffic light system. The seven key themes are:

Theme 1: Making the case for transition

Theme 2: Loyalty and Commitment

Theme 3: Motivations

Theme 4: Othering

Theme 5: Clientism and social obligation

Theme 6: Psychological ownership

Theme 7: Nature of the partnership

Theme 1
Theme 2
Theme 3
Theme 4
Theme 5
Theme 6
Theme 7

Theme 2

Theme 3

Theme 4

Theme 5

Theme 6

Theme 7

Theme 1:
Making the Case for
Transition

ABOUT THIS THEME

This theme relates primarily to the development of the communication and buy-in strategy. It is about recognizing that transition is catalyzed and sustained by a change in understanding, attitude, and behavior on the part of the key stakeholders. If the key stakeholders are not effectively persuaded of the importance of transition, then buy-in is insecure, and this can lead to instability in the transition process, particularly if challenges arise along the way.

To achieve secure buy-in for transition and the process, it is important to determine how to tailor the communication strategy for each stakeholder. Persuasive communication can take two different forms:

- **Rational appeal**: whereby logic, science, evidence, reports, and facts are used to shift thinking and convince the individual of the merits of transition. This method leans heavily on the credibility of the argument, source material, and the recognized expertise of the communicator. A rational appeal is only likely to be effective if the stakeholder is motivated to process messages delivered in this way. If not, the approach is likely to fail, and buy-in may be achieved only at a superficial level, or not at all.

- **Emotional appeal**: whereby information is presented in a more personal manner and communicated in a way that shows direct relevance either to a specific group of children, families, and/or staff, or to a particular individual, such as a director, who is connected to the institution. An emotional appeal leans heavily on the ability to connect reason to emotion, by providing information in a way that arouses an emotional response and concern in the stakeholder for that specific individual or group. It must convince the stakeholder that transition and family-based care is not only a 'good idea' in general, but that it is feasible and better for the specific individual or group he/she is committed to. Case studies, videos, personal accounts, and testimonies tend to be more effective tools in making the case with a stakeholder who is motivated to process information presented through

an emotional appeal, rather than through a rational appeal. Advocates for transition with lived experience, such as young people who grew up in institutions and former directors of institutions, are considered highly credible sources.

It is often possible to determine which of these two approaches is going to be more effective for each of the two primary stakeholders (director and principal donor) by listening to their testimony and analyzing whether their original decision to found, fund, or run an institution was based on a rational or an emotional appeal. It is also possible to determine which appeal is likely to be more effective by establishing whether the stakeholders have a professional background that requires them to regularly engage with evidence and scientific information. Both of these tend to be accurate indicators of preferences for persuasive communication. It is quite possible that the director and principal donor will have differing communication preferences, in which case persuasive communication strategies may need to be tailored specifically to each stakeholder.

Practitioners providing technical support tend to lean towards the rational appeal as a default. It is for this reason that the green light category reflects indicators that point to using a rational appeal to make the case. The emotional appeal is covered under the orange light category. This is not to suggest that it is inherently higher risk but rather that the risk is introduced when practitioners fail to contextualize and default to the rational appeal.

It is also worth noting that the presence of any underlying motivations that are in conflict with and override the rights and best interests of children are likely to affect a practitioner's ability to successfully make a case for transition, regardless of whether a rational or emotional appeal is used. Such motivations may be present in one stakeholder rather than both. Therefore, focus on making the case with the stakeholder whose motives are uncomplicated and has concern for the welfare of the children in the institution.

Theme 1

Theme 2

Theme 3

Theme 4

Theme 5

Theme 6

Theme 7

CASE STUDY INDICATORS: THEME 1

The table below shows the application of this theme to the three case studies included in the Annex, page 146. It has been included to provide concrete examples of how to identify, extract, categorize, and make sense of indicators that may be evidenced in each prospective transition.

The first row represents the overarching rating of the case study. The second row represents the rating for this theme based on the indicators that have been identified. The third row contains the actual list of indicators deemed relevant to this theme.

BRIDGES CASE STUDY	FIREFLY CASE STUDY	LIGHTHOUSE CASE STUDY
Theme 1 Rating: Green	**Theme 1 Rating: Orange**	**Theme 1 Rating: Orange**
- Involvement in institution was cause-based - Stakeholders are not founders - Director employed to run institution - Stakeholders have relevant professional skills - Sought technical support after reading evidence - Legitimate concern for children's wellbeing - No evidence of motives conflicting with child rights	- Involvement in institution was based on a relationship - Director is founder - Stakeholders have little relevant training - Sought guidance after suspicion of unethical behavior - Positive response to case studies	- Involvement in institution was based on personal experience of institutional care - Director is founder - Stakeholders have no relevant training - Stakeholders lack training to engage with research

Theme 1

Theme 2

Theme 3

Theme 4

Theme 5

Theme 6

Theme 7

Theme 1

Theme 2

Theme 3

Theme 4

Theme 5

Theme 6

Theme 7

INDICATORS: THEME 1

Instructions: Read through the indicators listed in the following color-coded tables. Tick all indicators that relate to the director or the donor using the two columns provided. Tally the number of indicators ticked for the director and the donor under each color category in the Total box.

THEME 1: GREEN LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS   Director   Donor

- The stakeholder's decision to commence involvement in the institution, whether to establish, operate, or fund, was cause-based, i.e., due to an interest in running or supporting programs for orphaned or vulnerable children.

Note: Where the directors are a married couple, select green for the director column only if the indicator is applicable to both spouses.

- The stakeholder is not the founder of the institution.

- The director was employed to run the institution by a founder, either at the time it was founded or afterwards.

- The stakeholder has a tertiary or higher degree and therefore may be more inclined to engage with evidence-based research and critical thinking.

- The stakeholder has relevant professional skills, experience, or qualifications and therefore may be familiar with child development concepts and theories.

- The stakeholder independently sought out technical support or guidance based on coming across research, evidence, or policy changes regarding institutional care.

- The stakeholder demonstrates a legitimate concern for the children's wellbeing and there is no evidence of other motives that are in conflict with and override the rights and best interests of children.

- The stakeholder has already demonstrated a desire to access research or evidence-based materials to inform his/her exploration of engaging in the transition process, either by requesting resources or through his/her own research efforts.

- The stakeholder has put some structure in place to guide his/her role in the institution, such as through a program framework or written funding agreements.

Total

Theme 1

Theme 2

Theme 3

Theme 4

Theme 5

Theme 6

Theme 7

THEME 1: ORANGE LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS   Director   Donor

- The catalyst for the stakeholder's involvement in the institution was relational, i.e., based on a relationship formed between the founder, donor, and/or director.

- The catalyst for the stakeholder's involvement in the institution was relational, i.e., the individual met or responded to the plight of a particular child or group of children.

- The catalyst for the stakeholder's involvement in the institution was a reaction to an emotional appeal, i.e., a response to watching a film, video, story, live performance by children from an institution, or attending a fundraising event or hearing a presentation made by the director.

- The catalyst for the stakeholder's involvement in the institution was personal, i.e., individual has a personal experience of care, including the experience of a spouse or child.

- The catalyst for the stakeholder's involvement in the institution was personal, i.e., to honor the memory of a loved one.

- The stakeholder is the founder of the institution.

- The stakeholder has little or no relevant professional training, qualifications, or previous exposure to child development concepts and theories.

- The stakeholder's professional background and training has not required them to regularly engage with research and evidence.

- The stakeholder independently sought out technical support or guidance based on concerns around unethical practice in the institution or concerns raised by donors.

- The stakeholder has already sought out or responded positively to case studies, the testimony of others, or other media raising the issue of transition and its merits.

Total   _____

_____

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THEME 1: RED LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS	Director	Donor

- There is evidence of motives that are in conflict with and override the rights and best interests of children. Examples include harboring children in institutions for purposes such as labor, profit, orphanage tourism, exploitation, or to meet other objectives, such as church planting.

> Note: As discussed in the implications below, this does not indicate a preference for a rational or emotional appeal. Rather, it points to the likelihood of other motives overriding the stakeholder's receptivity to a case made for transition, regardless of whether a rational or emotional appeal is used.

Total

SCORING: THEME 1

Instructions: Using the following scoring key, select the appropriate color category for the director and the donor. For this theme, it may be necessary to select a different category for each stakeholder based on their individual scores. Once the appropriate color category has been selected, refer to the corresponding color-coded category of implications in the tables below. Read through and consider the explanation, suggested actions, and funding implications.

Category	Instructions	Director	Donor
Red Light Category	Refer to the red light category implications for the director and/or donor if the following was selected: ▪ 1 or more red indicators		
Orange Light Category	Refer to the orange light category implications for the director and/or donor if the following was selected: ▪ No red indicators; and ▪ 3 or more orange indicators		
Green Light Category	Refer to the green light category implications for the director and/or donor if the following was selected: ▪ No red indicators; ▪ 2 or fewer orange indicators; and ▪ 3 or more green indicators		

THEME 1: GREEN LIGHT CATEGORY IMPLICATIONS

Explanation

In these situations, the stakeholders' decision to commence involvement in the institution was based on a rational appeal. It was likely a logical response to information available to them at the time or assumptions they already held about institutions being a good way to help vulnerable children. This is particularly common when the stakeholders come from a context in which the narrative around 'orphanages' is deeply ingrained in their culture, as this results in institutions being perceived as a natural and appropriate solution.

These culturally ingrained assumptions can equally affect directors and donors. In either of these cases, a **rational appeal,** relying on logic and evidence, is more likely to successfully communicate the rationale for transition. If there is an absence of other more concerning indicators under the other themes, buy-in can often be achieved quite quickly. Providing the stakeholders with access to training, relevant articles, and evidence can be effective.

In these situations it is not uncommon to find that there is [cognitive dissonance](#) at play, where the stakeholders have not made the connection between their existing knowledge (of institutional care, child welfare, or other relevant disciplines) and their specific institution and context. If cognitive dissonance is present, persuasion can often be readily achieved when the stakeholders are supported to recognize the gap between knowledge and practice, and make the connections between the two.

This is particularly effective for stakeholders that have relevant professional skills or training. For example, individuals with a child development background may resonate with attachment theories, and quickly make the links to the challenges children in institutional settings face in forming healthy attachments. In the case of foreign donors or directors, ask them to reflect on child protection systems in their own countries and whether children are institutionalized to access education or alleviate poverty. For stakeholders with their own biological children, ask them to consider the types of interventions that would feel logical and proportional if circumstances made it difficult for them to meet the needs of their children.

Suggested Actions

Stage 1: Engagement

- Present the facts and use logic to make the case for transition. This can include effects of institutional care on child development, global and regional statistics of institutionalized children who have families and impacts on life outcomes for care leavers.

- Share information from credible sources that present a clear and well-balanced argument. Avoid sensational articles or information that lacks nuance and oversimplifies the issues, as this can be easily discredited.

- Demonstrate that there are feasible family- and community-based alternatives that can prevent the separation of children from their families and explain how these alternative approaches can help the organization to more effectively serve vulnerable children.

- Utilize the cost-to-impact ratio argument to demonstrate that family- and community-based alternatives are more cost effective than institutional care and result in more sustainable results for a larger group of children.

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- Introduce the legal and policy frameworks by providing information on both [international laws](#) and norms as well as domestic laws and reforms in the country where the institution operates.

- Present evidence and information that is most relevant to their context, whether from a similar country, socio-economic or cultural context, or the nature of the care setting.

- Consider a staggered approach to providing information to allow the stakeholder to process the information in stages. Starting with the big picture and providing increasing detail over time, avoid overwhelming stakeholders with too much information at once, or with information that is too technical.

- Create intentional opportunities for stakeholders to identify, reflect on, and challenge their own assumptions. This is critical to enabling them to move forward with a new and different approach.

Stage 2: Preparation and Onboarding

- Once initial buy-in has been achieved with one or both primary stakeholders, determine whether there is a need to support them through the process of securing buy-in across all of the other relevant stakeholders.

- Consider attending critical meetings to secure buy-in with other stakeholders and high-level decision makers connected to the institution. This can entail delivering presentations and responding to concerns or technical questions which primary stakeholders may not feel adequately equipped to answer. Be mindful of utilizing a rational or emotional appeal where appropriate.

- If a board level decision to transition is made but there remains a minority of board members that do not support the decision and shift in practice, discuss with the primary stakeholders and chairperson whether it is constructive for them to continue to serve on the board.

> **Other stakeholders**: In this section, 'other stakeholders' includes board members, other donors providing significant funding, faith-based actors connected to the institution, and founders with limited involvement in the institution.

Stage 3a: Active Transition - Full Transition
Organizational Processes

- For directors whose decision to become involved with the institution was based on a rational appeal, this often represents a best-case scenario. Therefore, it may be feasible for the director to be provided with training and technical support to manage the transition process and oversee reintegration with some independence.

- Directors in this situation are often early adopters and well-placed to become national or international advocates for care reforms. If this is an area of interest for them and no concerning motives have been identified (refer to Theme 3: Motivation, page 59), provide support for them to achieve this.

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Reintegration Processes

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 3b: Active Transition - Safe Closure

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

> Note: To prevent mixed messaging and raising expectations of reunification that may not be fulfilled, children and families should not be consulted until Stage 3 of the overall transition process (refer to Diagram 1: Stages of Transition, page X), after all relevant stakeholders have been fully onboarded and a formal decision to transition has been made.

Funding Implications

- There may be costs associated with travel for the practitioner to attend critical meetings with board members and other high-level decision makers during the process of securing buy-in.

THEME 1: ORANGE LIGHT CATEGORY IMPLICATIONS

Explanation

In this situation, the stakeholders commenced their involvement in the institution due to an emotional appeal. This may have been the establishment of a relationship, a response to a personal experience, or an emotive message. In cases where the catalyst was relational, personal, experiential, or emotional, an **emotional appeal** is more likely to successfully communicate the rationale for transition. Rather than citing evidence or research as the primary strategy, utilizing case studies, videos, and peer-to-peer exchange is typically more effective in achieving buy-in, casting vision for the transition process, and reassuring stakeholders along the way. Evidence or research can be utilized as supplementary communication tools to demonstrate that the case studies are representative and not isolated examples.

A donor who supports an institution because of the relationship he/she has with the director will likely be concerned about the impact of the transition on the director, and how the director might feel about the prospect of transition. Working with the director first to create a sense of positivity about the transition, from both a personal and professional perspective, may help onboard the donor. Often one of the most critical factors influencing the donor's decision is the way the director communicates with the donor about the idea of transition.

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Stakeholders whose involvement in an institution was catalyzed by connecting with a group of children may be less concerned about the issue in abstract and general terms, and more concerned about the immediate and long-term implications for that specific group of children. One of the most common concerns of stakeholders in this situation is around how to ensure the safety of those children if they are placed in family-based care. Typical concerns center around the safety and cultural relevance of foster care or whether children will thrive once reunified.

It can be helpful to focus the discussion around the terms of support that can be provided to that group of children, taking into account the specific issues that led to their admission into the institution, and how they can be addressed. They are likely to be concerned about returning the children to the situation in which they were found, which they may have perceived as unsafe or detrimental for their future. They may also struggle to believe that alternatives are available, safe, or possible in their context.

It is also common for stakeholders to genuinely agree with the concept of family-based care but believe that the institution they are involved in is the exception to the rule. They may provide justification that the institution operates as a family or that family-based care is ideal but unrealistic in their context. Case studies and examples from other similar contexts can help break down these barriers and may result in an agreement to explore transition.

Stakeholders whose involvement in an institution was catalyzed by their own personal upbringing in an institution are likely to tap into their own memories and experiences to identify with the children and the importance of families. This is a reasonably common scenario, particularly for directors, and an **emotional appeal** is usually more appropriate than a rational appeal. Stakeholders who grew up in institutional care can typically identify that despite the positive aspects, such as access to education, an institution cannot replace a family. Most will readily identify with the trauma associated with separation and this is often a strong catalyst for their decision to transition.

In this situation it is important to be extremely sensitive with the use of any statistics so as not to label stakeholders or make assumptions about their personal lived experience of institutions or separation. Recognize that stakeholders may choose not to share their experience and it may only become evident over time that they may have grown up in an institution. If the initial approach was to utilize a rational appeal citing evidence of the harms of institutional care, it may be necessary to adjust to a more sensitive approach that takes their experience into account.

It is also important to recognize that in some cases the culture of institutionalization may also affect the key stakeholders, particularly directors who live onsite and whose primary relationships are with those also living in the institution. In these cases, practitioners should be sensitive in discussing issues surrounding institutionalization and recognize that this dynamic could create barriers to transition if they are ignored or dealt with inappropriately.

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Suggested Actions

Stage 1: Engagement

Utilizing an Emotional Appeal to Make the Case for Transition

- Make the case for the importance of children growing up in families and participating in community life, without relying on research and statistics as the primary source of evidence.

- Share personal stories of care leavers, as well as advocacy resources developed by care leaver networks, that describe the challenges and outcomes they have experienced. These can give powerful insight into the perspectives of young people who have lived experience with institutional care, and often results in stakeholders emotionally connecting with the need to explore transition.

- Use video case studies from similar contexts to supplement and support evidence and statistics. These can include testimonies of care leavers as well as families who were faced with the difficult decision to place their children in care in order to access basic social welfare services.

- Use positive success stories of transition from similar contexts to help cast vision for what the organization could achieve, if they choose to become involved in non-institutional programming.

- Connect the stakeholder with others who are in similar roles and willing to share their experiences of transition in similar contexts.

- Consider facilitating study tours to other programs, organizations, and countries, where it is relevant and feasible, so that stakeholders can view non-institutional programming in action and connect with other practitioners.

- Identify the concerns of the stakeholders and provide videos and case studies that specifically address those concerns.

- Be patient and willing to discuss a variety of scenarios and potential outcomes of transition. Be honest, realistic, and recognize the challenges and complexity. Oversimplified messages tend to be discredited and can also result in discrediting of the practitioner.

Demonstrating How a Case Management Process Protects Children from Risk

- Provide a clear and simplified overview of the case management process, emphasizing that:

  - no child will be placed into an unsafe situation;

  - decisions will be made on a case by case basis;

  - children and families will be involved in the decision making; and

  - thorough assessments will be conducted to ensure that the needs of children will be met.

- Provide examples of family strengthening and community development initiatives to give stakeholders a concrete understanding of how existing commitments made to the children can be upheld post-placement outside of the institutional care settings.

- Outline concrete and detailed plans for post-placement monitoring as stakeholders are often reassured by the idea that children will continue to have contact with the organization following placement. Provide sample timeframes and frequency of monitoring visits, various methods of monitoring, and processes for interventions designed to respond to concerns emerging from monitoring visits.

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- If the stakeholders remain convinced that their institution is the exception to the rule, consider providing them with [assessment tools](#) that will aid a self-discovery process. Be available to help them interpret their findings after they have conducted the assessments.

- Consider providing information on how countries are changing their laws and policies in response to the global commitment to phase out institutional care. This can help stakeholders realize that there are increasing external pressures and changes coming down the pipeline that will eventually influence their programs.

- Discuss the potential organizational risks associated with continuing to provide long-term institutional care. This can help stakeholders realize that a significant change in their normal operations will likely be required in the near future, regardless of whether they agree with the idea of transition. Reiterate that the role of the practitioner is not to force transition but rather to provide support for them to make the inevitable changes effectively and safely.

- In cases where stakeholders have had a personal experience of growing up in care, avoid using statistics on the harmful effects of institutional care. Instead, speak about the detriments in more nuanced terms, recognizing that some young people may experience challenges as a result of growing up in an institution. This allows practitioners to discuss the issues without labeling or stereotyping the stakeholder.

- In cases where stakeholders have been affected by the culture of institutionalization, by having lived onsite at the institution for many years and having had little interaction with the community at large, speak about the detriments of institutionalization in nuanced terms, as above. Either directly or indirectly, address their concerns and attempt to resolve any ambivalence they may have regarding child institutionalization as a result of their own experience.

Stage 2: Preparation and Onboarding

- Consider supporting stakeholders to secure buy-in with other stakeholders such as board members and other major donors. For further suggestions, refer to Theme 1: Green Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 2, page 24.

Stage 3a: Active Transition - Full Transition

Delayed Interference with Transition

- Recognize the possibility of delayed interference in cases where buy-in has not been fully achieved with one of the stakeholders but a decision to transition has nevertheless been made. In these cases, interference may not occur during the process of transition but often happens after children have been reintegrated and residential programming has ceased. For more information on interference with transition, refer to Section 3: A Note on Sabotage, page 141.

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- To mitigate delayed interference, work with the partner stakeholder or other stakeholders, including board members, to put in place appropriate structure and accountability, and clarify decision-making processes for post-transition programming and roles. This will safeguard against one person holding the power to sabotage post-transition programs or decisions, undermining progress. This should factor in two possible scenarios:

Cases where the stakeholder is emotionally connected to the children

In these cases, the stakeholder may not be interested in remaining a significant part of post-transition programming, especially if it no longer involves the specific group of children to whom he/she is connected. In these cases, the greatest risk of delayed interference is in undermining the children's reintegration, family placements, and post-placement support. This often includes seeking to re-institutionalize children in another facility the stakeholder is connected to. Agreements should factor in appropriate expectations to mitigate against this risk.

Cases where the stakeholder is emotionally tied to the organization or institution itself, as opposed to the children

In these cases, the stakeholder will most likely want to remain heavily involved in any future programming. This is especially true in cases where the institution is tied to a legacy. In such cases, the greatest risk of delayed interference is in post-transition programs and the ongoing support provided to reintegrated children and their families.

Stage 3b: Active Transition - Safe Closure

- See above suggestion in Stage 3a.

Note: It is important to realize that unless the transition or closure is mandated by the relevant authorities, the decision of the stakeholders is voluntary. If they perceive that the communication is attempting to restrict rather than respect their freedom to make a decision, they are likely to react and reject the message. Therefore, it is likely more conducive to use a persuasive approach, rather than a manipulative one.

Funding Implications

- Allocate budget for study tours and other methods of connection with peers, particularly where travel is required.

- There may be costs associated with travel for the practitioner to attend critical meetings with board members and other high-level decision makers during the process of securing buy-in.

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THEME 1: RED LIGHT CATEGORY IMPLICATIONS

Explanation

In cases where stakeholders' motives for involvement in the institution are in conflict with and override the rights and best interests of children, it is unlikely that buy-in will be secured through the argument that children develop best in families, regardless of whether a rational or emotional approach is utilized. This is because stakeholders may choose to protect their personal vested interests, despite recognizing that a family is critical to the healthy development of a child. Therefore, it is still important to use the appropriate appeal in these cases but it may be more effective to broaden the message, by ensuring that it speaks to stakeholders' motives rather than focusing solely on what is best for children. Below are two examples.

Example: Rational Appeal

A director who made a logical decision to establish an institution because it attracts funding from donors may be persuaded to transition using a similar logic. By helping the director understand the global trends of donors and governments shifting away from funding institutional care, as well as changes to laws and regulations in some countries, the argument could be made that it would be increasingly challenging to raise funds for institutions in comparison to community-based programming.

Example: Emotional Appeal

A donor who is operating out of a 'savior complex' or whose identity is linked to the 'rescue' narrative may be persuaded to transition using a similar emotional appeal. By helping them understand that while institutions may pull a small number of children out of situations of poverty or disadvantage, they leave many more children behind in the same situation. It could be argued that, with the donor's assistance, a greater number of those children could be reached through community-based programs in comparison to institutional care services.

Suggested Actions

Stage 1: Engagement

- By working through Theme 3: Motivation, page 59, try to determine whether the stakeholder's motive for commencing involvement in the institution was based on a rational or emotional decision. This can help identify the most effective approach to make the case for transition, or where more appropriate, to close the institution.

- Instead of focusing solely on children's wellbeing and best interests, broaden the message to address the stakeholder's motivations for involvement in the institution. Be mindful of utilizing a rational or emotional appeal where appropriate.

> Note: The red light category implications in Theme 3: Motivation, page 71, cover situations where engaging with the stakeholder's motives may not be wise or safe and a different approach should be taken.

Stage 2: Preparation and Onboarding

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 3a: Active Transition - Full Transition

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 3b: Active Transition - Safe Closure

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Funding Implications

- There are no specific funding implications for this category.

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Theme 2:
Loyalty and Commitment

ABOUT THIS THEME

Director and donor attitudes towards transition can be impacted by their loyalties. Their decisions can be influence by whether they perceive the transition to conflict with the interests of the primary group or person to whom they are loyal or feel a sense of commitment towards. This is because loyalty will limit a person's ability to remain impartial (unbiased) throughout the buy-in, decision-making and implementation processes.

A <u>director or donor's</u> primary loyalty and commitment can be towards the <u>children in care</u>. This is most common when the relationship formed with a child or group of children was the catalyst for establishing the institution or commencing involvement in it. Where this is the case, stakeholders will be partial to making decisions that are in the interests of the children and that will enable them to fulfill commitments previously made to the children. Directors are likely to seek to influence the donor towards this end.

A <u>donor's</u> primary loyalty and commitment can be towards the <u>director</u>. This is most common when the donor's involvement in the institution stemmed from a relationship first formed with the director, particularly in cases where the director is the founder of the institution. In these cases, the donor will be partial to making decisions that protect the interests of the director. The donor may be concerned about the impact of transition on the director's income, employment, identity, and/or status in the community. The donor is likely to support the transition if the director is onboard and as long as any personal impact on the director, such as income or job security, is being thoughtfully managed. If the donor anticipates or experiences resistance from the director, however, the donor may be reluctant to support the transition.

In some cases, the <u>director's</u> primary loyalty and commitment can be towards the <u>donor.</u> This is less common but can be the case where the donor initiated the founding of the institution or it was a decision made jointly with the director. In this case, the director will be partial to making decisions that protect the interests of the donor, including his or her reputation and identity. If the donor is open or indifferent towards the transition, the director will be more likely to engage in discussions and decisions around transition. If the director anticipates or experiences resistance from the donor, however, the director may be reluctant to support the transition.

Understanding loyalties and commitments, and the impact they have on decision-making, is therefore an important consideration in the development of a transition strategy. It can give insight into what some of the barriers might be, what to factor into discussions, and whose buy-in should be secured first. It can also help to develop an approach that avoids creating new barriers that may result from unintentionally creating tension between the director and the donor.

> Note: Allegiance can shift in the course of a relationship in some cases, most typically where trust between the director and donor has been breached. This can be triggered by the discovery of unethical behavior, with the most common early warning signs relating to misappropriation of funds. In this case, the sense of obligation will most likely shift to the children.

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CASE STUDY INDICATORS: THEME 2

BRIDGES CASE STUDY	**FIREFLY** CASE STUDY	**LIGHTHOUSE** CASE STUDY
Theme 2: Green	**Theme 2: Orange**	**Theme 2: Red**
▪ Primary loyalty of both stakeholders is to children	▪ Loyalty to children is slightly stronger than loyalty to partner stakeholder/employer	▪ Primary loyalty of director is to donor out of concern for funding
▪ Genuine belief in residential care as best solution	▪ One stakeholder's primary loyalty is to children	▪ Donor is equally loyal to director and children
▪ Primary motivation is best interests of children	▪ Stakeholders recognize limitations of institutional care	▪ Evidence of intentional donor manipulation
▪ Stakeholders recognize limitations of institutional care	▪ Donor advocating for change with director	▪ Relationship with children cultivated
▪ Older children and care leavers are consulted	▪ Mixed motives not in conflict with best interests of children	▪ Profit-seeking motives that override child rights
		▪ Lack of financial transparency

INDICATORS: THEME 2

Instructions: **This theme has two scenarios to choose from.** *Read through the two scenarios first and select the scenario that best fits the director and the donor. It is possible to select the same or a different scenario for each stakeholder. . Once the appropriate scenario has been selected, work through the corresponding indicators and tick those that are relevant*

Scenario 1: The primary relationship is with the children

- ▪ Director feels a strong sense of loyalty towards the children; or
- ▪ Donor feels a strong sense of loyalty towards the children; or
- ▪ Both director and donor feel a strong sense of loyalty towards the children.

Scenario 2: The primary relationship is with the partner stakeholder

- ▪ Director feels a strong sense of loyalty towards the donor; or
- ▪ Donor feels a strong sense of loyalty towards the director; or
- ▪ Both director and donor feel a strong sense of loyalty towards each other.

Read through the indicators listed in the following color-coded tables underneath the appropriate scenario. Tick all indicators that relate to the director or the donor using the two columns provided. If a given indicator relates to both stakeholders or the partnership between them, tick the box in both columns. Tally the number of indicators ticked for the director and the donor under each color category in the Total box.

Scenario 1: The primary relationship is with the children

THEME 2: GREEN LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS   Director   Donor

The stakeholder's primary loyalty is towards the children and there is evidence of one or more of the following:

- The stakeholder genuinely believed that residential care was the best way to meet the needs of the children in care. This may reflect the stakeholder's current perspective, or the perspective he/she had at the time of commencing involvement.

- The stakeholder's primary motivation is the best interests of the children in care.

- The stakeholder has the ability to reflect on the reality of residential care and recognize and acknowledge its limitations.

- The stakeholder is advocating for change and transition with his/her partner stakeholder.

- The stakeholder has created an environment in which older children in care are able to voice their opinions and speak candidly to the stakeholder about their experiences in the institution.

- The stakeholder remains in contact with care leavers who have aged out of the institution and could therefore contact them to share their care leaving experiences with the stakeholder.

Total   _____

_____

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THEME 2: ORANGE LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS   Director   Donor

The stakeholder's primary loyalty is towards the children. There may be evidence of the indicators in the green light category but there is also evidence of one or more of the following:

- The stakeholder has demonstrated that he/she has a quasi-parent identity with the children. This can be actual, as evidenced by how he/she interacts with the children and vice versa, or it can be perceived, evidenced by how he/she talks about the children.

- The stakeholder displays favoritism towards a select number of children.

- The stakeholder has stated aspirations for the children in addition to providing care for the children, such as providing higher education, turning them into future leaders, breaking the poverty cycle for their own children, converting to a particular religion, or preparing young people to evangelize to unreached communities as care leavers.

- The stakeholder has made such commitments to the children and/or their families, and views ongoing institutional care as a required means of fulfilling those commitments.

- There are mixed motives for the stakeholder's involvement with the institution, some of which are self-focused rather than focused on the children. However, none of the self-focused motives are likely to override the best interests of the children.

Total _____

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THEME 2: RED LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS   Director   Donor

The donor's primary loyalty is towards the children and there is evidence of one or more of the following:

- There is evidence that the director has provided misleading or sensationalized information about the children to the donor, such as false or unverified claims of orphan-hood, abandonment, abuse, exploitation, or trafficking.

- The director has disclosed inappropriate levels of private information about the children in donor communications and fundraising materials, including information that could identify children, details about traumatic experiences, or confidential information that could lead to stigma and/or re-exploitation.

- The director actively cultivates a relationship between the children and the donor, by encouraging the donor to volunteer at the institution, visit regularly, stay overnight on-site at the institution, and/or instructing the children to call the donor 'Mom' or 'Dad'.

- There is evidence that the director's motives are profit-orientated.

- There is evidence that some of the director's motives are in conflict with and override the rights and best interests of children.

- The director is loyal to the children primarily out of concern that the donor will cease funding.

N/A

See red light table below for indicators relating to donors of concern

Total   _____

_____

Scenario 2: The primary relationship is with the partner stakeholder

THEME 2: GREEN LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS	Director	Donor

The stakeholder's primary loyalty is towards his/her partner stakeholder and there is evidence of one or more of the following:

- The stakeholder holds a genuine belief that residential care is the best way to meet the needs of the children in their care.

- The stakeholder demonstrates legitimate concern for the children's wellbeing.

- The stakeholder recognizes and acknowledges the limitations of residential care.

- The stakeholder advocates for change with his/her partner stakeholder.

> Note: Where the directors are a married couple and both spouses have a role in managing the institution, select green for the director column only if the indicator is applicable to both spouses.

	Director	Donor
Total		

THEME 2: ORANGE LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS	Director	Donor

The stakeholder's primary loyalty is towards his/her partner stakeholder and there is evidence of one or more of the following:

- The stakeholder has a personal vested interest in the institution and for it to continue operating. This can be related to income security, job security, identity, status, and/or a sense of purpose or calling. However, these vested interests that do not constitute exploitation or commodification of children.

- The stakeholder shows little interest in the institution and the children. The stakeholder is involved in the institution primarily in support of his/her partner stakeholder, as is more commonly the case with donors.

	Director	Donor
Total		

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THEME 2: RED LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS   Director   Donor

The donor's primary loyalty is towards the director and there is evidence of one or more of the following:

- The director has intentionally manipulated the donor.

- The director has demonstrated a lack of transparency or deception regarding finances and/or operations.

- The director demonstrates profit-seeking motives.

- The director demonstrates concerning motives that are in conflict with and override the rights and best interests of children, including those that result in the commodification or exploitation of children.

OR

The director's primary loyalty is towards the donor and there is evidence of one or more of the following:

- The donor demonstrates profit-seeking motives or behaviors, possibly including unethical communications or promotional materials that are being disseminated to individual donors.

- There are grounds for concern regarding the donor's relationships with the children, such as:

  - frequent or inappropriate contact;

  - displays of favoritism;

  - lavish gift-giving to a select number of children;

  - off-site meetings between the donor and children; or

  - plans for the donor to bring certain children to his/her home country for holidays, educational, or fundraising purposes.

- There are grounds for concern regarding the relationship between the children and other stakeholders who are closely connected to the donor, such as board members, patrons, or family or friends of the donor.

- The donor is or has been subject to serious child protection allegations or convictions.

- The donor is highly controlling, manipulates the director, and is not interested in transition.

- There is evidence of other motives that are in serious conflict with and override the rights and best interests of children.

Total   Director   Donor

SCORING: THEME 2

Instructions: Using the following scoring key, select the appropriate color category for the director and the donor. For this theme, it may be necessary to select a different category for each stakeholder based on their individual scores. Refer to the 'Determining Implications' column to select the color category that best fits the situation. Once the appropriate color category has been selected, refer to the corresponding color-coded category of implications in the tables below. Read through and consider the explanation, suggested actions, and funding implications.

Category	Instructions	Director	Donor	Determining Implications
Red Light	Select the red-light category for Theme 2 for the director and/or donor if the following was selected: ▪ 1 or more red indicators			If **either** stakeholder is in the red category, refer to the **red category implications.**
Orange Light	Select the orange light category for Theme 2 for the director and/or donor if the following was selected: ▪ No red indicators; and ▪ 1 or more orange indicators			If neither stakeholder is in the red category, and **one or both** are in the orange category, refer to the **orange category implications.**
Green Light	Select the green light category for Theme 2 for the director and/or donor if the following was selected: ▪ No red indicators; ▪ No orange indicators; and ▪ 2 or more green indicators			If **both** stakeholders are in the green category, refer to the **green category implications.**

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THEME 2: GREEN LIGHT CATEGORY IMPLICATIONS

Explanation

If one stakeholder (e.g., the director) is loyal to the children and the other stakeholder (the donor) is loyal to his/her partner stakeholder (the director), consider a staged approach of working first with the stakeholder loyal to the children (the director), as the other stakeholder (the donor) will likely come into alignment once it is clear that his/her partner (the director) is onboard, as outlined in the 'Primary Loyalty to Partner' section below.

Primary Loyalty to Children

Stakeholders whose primary loyalty is to the children are usually open to the conversation about what is in the best interests of the children, as long as the messaging is tailored and uses the appropriate approach, i.e., a rational or emotional appeal, as discussed in Theme 1. They may want to have concrete discussions about the feasibility and logistics of providing adequate support to children should they return to or be placed in families, and practitioners will need to be able to speak into the practical solutions to these issues. Speaking only about the harms of remaining in the institution is unlikely to persuade stakeholders that family-based care is a safe and viable alternative for children.

For example, if the primary aim of the institution has been to give children access to education and support them through matriculation/graduation, stakeholders may remain resistant to transition until it is made clear how this can be achieved even if children return to communities and families. They may also have concerns about blanket approaches to placement decisions and are often reassured by an explanation of the case management approach that outlines how all decisions will be made with the appropriate consultations and on a case-by-case basis. They will often agree to progress with child and family assessments if they know that placement in a family is not a pre-determined outcome. Sometimes they may be surprised at the assessment findings and this may help to overcome assumptions and concerns they have about the families of the children.

Children's voices and feelings regarding separation from their families are likely to have a strong influence on stakeholders whose primary loyalty is to the children. Children may begin to express strong and sometimes negative feelings about being in the institution when they reach their teenage years, particularly in environments where they have been encouraged or allowed to participate in decisions about their lives. While this can take stakeholders by surprise, this dynamic can act as a powerful catalyst and motivation for stakeholders to engage in transition. Children's perspectives may also have a significant impact on whether the stakeholders feel reassured or uncertain throughout the transition process. It is important to manage this by setting up effective systems for child participation and preparing stakeholders for this process, as outlined in Stage 2 of the Suggested Actions section below.

Primary Loyalty to Partner

In cases where one stakeholder (e.g., the donor) may feel a strong sense of loyalty towards his/her partner stakeholder (the director), as long as the partner stakeholder's (the director's) primary loyalty is to the children, and neither stakeholder is more interested in protecting other motives or their personal vested interests (e.g., identity or income) over the best interests of the children, it is reasonably safe to pursue transition.

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Buy-in with the stakeholder primarily loyal to the children will likely play out similarly to a situation in which both stakeholders' primary loyalty is to the children. Subsequent buy-in and cooperation is likely to be achieved with the remaining stakeholder once he/she is reassured that his/her partner stakeholder's interests will be duly considered and factored into the transition. Both stakeholders are likely to be willing to play a constructive role throughout the transition and this should be encouraged and built into the transition strategy.

These scenarios are amongst the best-case scenarios, and as such, it may be feasible for the director to manage the transition process reasonably independently, should they wish to do so and given they can be adequately supported with training and technical support. Although these cases are not the norm, directors in these situations often go on to become national or international advocates for care reform. Donors are often very interested in backing the director they support to play an advocacy role and positioning their partner to have an increasing platform and influence.

Suggested Actions

Stage 1: Engagement

- For scenarios where only one of the stakeholders' primary loyalty is to the children, consider working first to achieve buy-in with that stakeholder and support him/her in communicating with the partner stakeholder to work towards securing buy-in.

- For scenarios where both of the stakeholders' primary loyalty is to the children, transition can often be approached through a joint buy-in and implementation strategy.

- As primary loyalty to children often stems from an emotional connection to them, many of the suggestions for addressing stakeholder concerns during the buy-in stage may also be relevant and effective in this situation.

- Consider using video case studies, sharing positive success stories of transition, connecting stakeholders with peers, and emphasizing the case management process to address concerns about the safety of children post-placement. For further suggestions, refer to Theme 1: Orange Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 1, page 25.

Stage 2: Preparation and Onboarding

- In cases where one stakeholder's primary loyalty is to his/her partner stakeholder rather than to the children, maintain frequent communication with both stakeholders, including through joint meetings or calls. This provides ample opportunity for reassurance that his/her partner remains onboard and his/her interests are considered.

- In cases where the donor's primary loyalty is to the children, put in place mechanisms for providing appropriate levels of feedback on children's perspectives and progress throughout the process to the donor, including non-verbal and visual representation methods for children to express their views.

- Provide the donor with appropriate guidelines for handling any concerns that children might raise directly with him/her. Donors can unintentionally undermine the authority of directors and social workers by responding or intervening directly in response to children sharing their concerns with them.

- Consider supporting stakeholders to secure buy-in with other stakeholders such as board members and other major donors. For further suggestions, refer to Theme 1: Green Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 2, page 24.

- Complete an [organizational governance and accountability audit](#), explaining that this is a normal information-gathering step of the onboarding process necessary to informing the transition strategy. Consider contracting an in-country legal firm for the first three sections entailing registrations, governance, and finance.

- Conduct an online search to gather information as part of an organizational assessment, including:

- History of the institution and founding individuals/organizations

- Funding organizations linked to the institution

- Key individuals currently associated with the institution

- Nature of fundraising campaigns

- Shared details of children living in the institution

    - Inquire about the founding history of the institution in order to understand the original roles of all of the stakeholders, instead of considering only their present-day roles.

    - Develop a transition strategy using the results of the organizational assessments conducted above and see below for details.

Components of a Transition Strategy

- Clarify and document the roles and responsibilities of both stakeholders and the practitioner throughout the different stages of the transition.

- Define the delegation of authority and appropriate communication channels.

- Decide on an appropriate timeframe for initiating discussions regarding post-transition programming and roles.

- Develop a communications strategy for introducing the concept of transition to staff, children, families, and care leavers, referring to 'Consultations with Staff, Children, Families, and Care Leavers' on page 44 for more details.

- Develop action plans and budgets with stakeholders through participatory processes or workshops to help them buy into the importance of following due process and implementation.

- Strengthen child protection policies and frameworks, including clear procedures for reporting and ethical communications policies.

- Develop child-safe and child-friendly reporting mechanisms, both internal and external, and deliver age-appropriate training on codes of conduct and how to make a report.

- Make any necessary amendments to policies and frameworks that will ensure child safeguarding and child participation throughout the transition process.

- Conduct a child protection risk assessment for the entire transition process.

- Ensure that proper employment contracts are in place for staff, including clear measures for performance management and disciplinary procedures.

- Develop funding agreements between the donor and the director, explicitly tying the use of funds to the implementation of the action plan.

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- Establish reporting frameworks and requirements, including financial reports and acquittals

- Secure a **partnership agreement** with both stakeholders and the practitioner providing technical support, referring to 'Components of a Partnership Agreement' on page 45 for more details.

- It may be necessary to commence discussions about post-transition programming up front, at least in general terms. It is likely that the director and donor will seek to continue to use the resources to serve the same group of children and to fulfil commitments made, such as to children's education.

- Consider documenting the transition process and developing advocacy resources and tools, such as videos and presentations. This can help position and equip the stakeholders to use their own experience to advocate with others.

Consultations with Staff, Children, Families, and Care Leavers

- Ensure that the communications strategy addresses the following groups of stakeholders:

  - Staff of the institution, outlining the process of and reasons for transition, potential changes to staff roles, and concrete options for job security post-transition, including the provision of training and assistance in securing alternate employment, where possible;

  - Children in the institution, outlining age- and developmentally-appropriate explanations of transition, potential changes they may notice in daily operations and staff roles, and a simplified overview of the case management process, highlighting their right to participate and detailing concrete plans for post-placement monitoring. For further suggestions, refer to '**Demonstrate how the case management process is designed to protect children from risk'** in Theme 1: Orange Light Category Implications, page 25;

  - Families of children in the institution, outlining the process and reasons for transition, a simplified overview of the case management process, and emphasizing their right and duty to participate in case decisions made about their siblings; and

  - Care leavers who have exited the institution, including those with younger siblings still in care, outlining the reasons for transition without labeling them as institutionalized, a simplified overview of the case management process, and providing opportunities for them to input into case decisions made about their siblings.

- Design and develop a range of mechanisms for all of the above-listed stakeholders to express their views, wishes, and any concerns that they may have about the transition process. This should include mechanisms that are child-friendly, inclusive of disability, and caters to staff and families of varying education, literacy, and fluency levels in the dominant language.

- Detail the opportunities and means for ongoing engagement with all of the above-listed stakeholders throughout the active transition stages of the transition process in Stage 3 (refer to Diagram 1: Stages of Transition, page 7).

Developing a Partnership Agreement

- Develop a partnership agreement outlining the key commitments of both stakeholders and the practitioner providing technical support. This should include the goals, expectations, and conditions of the partnership, as well as concrete markers against which to track progress.

- A partnership agreement should include the following components;

  - Statement of guiding principles

  - Goals of partnership

  - Key commitments of all stakeholders

  - Roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders

  - Expectations for engagement throughout the transition process

  - Conditions for ongoing support

  - Tying of funding to progress and implementation of the transition strategy

  - Boundaries around post-transition programming as necessary, particularly regarding any type of alternative care

  - Agreement not to admit new children into care during the process of transition, where that is feasible and appropriate.

  - Clear commitment to reintegrate all children in care under due process as outworked by social workers and with involvement of the authorities where mandated.

  - Reference to adherence to a signed child protection policy.

- Sign all parties into the agreement once full buy-in has been secured with all primary and other stakeholders during Stage 2 of the transition timeline (refer to Diagram 1: Stages of Transition, page 7).

Stage 3a: Active Transition - Full Transition

Organizational Processes

- Implement the strategies and plans developed in Stage 2.

Documenting Stakeholder Concerns

- When outworking the communications strategy for staff, children, families, and care leavers, carefully document all of their concerns, bearing in mind that concerns can come in the form of both verbal and non-verbal reactions as well as explicit statements and questions. It is important to document concerns for the following reasons:

  - Initial discussions regarding transition are likely to be fraught with confusion, fear, and anger. In a heightened emotional state, it can be difficult to stay on-track with planned messaging and practitioners may struggle to later recall all of the concerns that were raised. Documenting and responding to concerns in a systematic way helps avoid overlooking concerns and inadvertently communicating to stakeholders that they do not need to be addressed.

  - Documenting and responding to every concern can help reassure all stakeholders that their concerns and input are valued. This may encourage them to continue to express their concerns in future discussions if they feel that they will be heard. If it is not possible to answer some of the questions or respond to concerns immediately, prioritize discussions that will enable a response and communicate a clear timeframe outlining when stakeholders can expect a response.

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- Reviewing the documented concerns of stakeholders can help identify areas of sensitivity that need to be prioritized and adequately addressed in order to calm fears and help ensure a successful transition process.

- Hold conversations with staff of the institution about the process and stages of transition. It is important to do this immediately after transition is announced to prevent fear, confusion, anger, and potential sabotage by staff.

- Prepare stakeholders for typical reactions of children regarding transition at different stages of the process. Consider that a wide range of factors will have an impact on their reactions, including but not limited to, a child's age, gender, length of time in the institution, family experience, relationship with peers within the institution, whether there is any family relation to the director, and the culture of the institution.

- Provide a big picture context, and general timeline, outlining how and when children typically react to transition, as this can help stakeholders anticipate and be prepared for their reactions. This can reassure stakeholders and prevent them from being surprised and upset by children's reactions to the point of abandoning transition altogether or going back and forth on the decision, undermining the entire process.

- Initiate conversations with the primary stakeholders regarding post-transition services or programs. If stakeholders wish to develop post-transition programming that addresses root causes of separation or is related to child and family welfare, assist them to engage in a process to redesign the project. This should include research, stakeholder consultation, and situational analysis to ensure that the new project is suitable and relevant.

- Consider providing program design and development related training to stakeholders so that they can develop their professional skills and a establish a structured approach to post-transition programming independent of the practitioner, where feasible. This can naturally lead to enabling the organization to engage with a wider range of donors should they seek to expand.

Involving Directors and Staff in Transition and Reintegration Processes

- Provide training and capacity-building opportunities to the director and staff to prepare them to undertake the process of transition.

- If the director wishes to play a key role in the transition, encourage his/her participation as is feasible and appropriate, unless findings under other themes warrant caution and restrictions in the director's involvement.

- Consider the capacity of the director and whether his/her involvement is in line with the transition strategy.

- Determine whether it is feasible and appropriate to train the director and suitable staff in the social work and reintegration processes. If so, ensure that they have proper support and supervision.

- Determine whether it is feasible and appropriate for the director to receive additional training to provide technical support to other transitioning organizations as the focus of their post-transition programming.

- Determine whether it is feasible and appropriate for the donor to engage in peer advocacy with other donors.

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- If external social workers need to be hired, secure a funding agreement from the donor for this purpose.

- Connect the director, staff, and social workers with child rights networks or alternative care working groups, if they exist and can provide relevant peer support and encouragement.

- Develop a monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning (MEAL) framework to capture learning for internal reflection and external sharing.

Reintegration Processes

- Lead discussions with children, care leavers, and families about the process and stages of transition, using the communications strategies developed in Stage 2. For further suggestions, refer to 'Consultations with Staff, Children, Families, and Care Leavers' on page 44.

- Document their concerns and questions to inform the most effective and sensitive approach to further communications regarding transition. It is important to genuinely listen and respond with honesty and transparency, in a way that is age-appropriate, inclusive of disabilities, and caters to varying levels of education, literacy, and language fluency. For further suggestions, refer to 'Document Stakeholder Concerns' on page 45.

  - Establish a case management system outlining social work procedures for reintegration.

  - Engage and train social workers to outwork the reintegration processes.

  - Establish a social work supervision framework and include this in a document outlining the various roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in the transition process. Ensure supervision is provided by an experienced and appropriate person.

- If the children's communities of origin are spread out across the country, conduct service mapping and identify potential referral partners that could work with children in different geographical areas. It is unlikely that the organization's own post-transition services will be able to meet the needs of all children reintegrated across a wide geographical area.

- If the director wishes to play a key role in reintegration, consider engaging an external third-party source to provide the social work supervision. Include this in the document outlining the various roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in the transition process.

Empowering Social Workers

- Ensure that the social workers are empowered and have sufficient authority to carry out their functions to manage any residual bias from the director. Put mechanisms in place to restrict or remove the involvement of the director should issues or concerns arise throughout the reintegration process.

Stage 3b: Active Transition - Safe Closure

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Funding Implications

- Consider securing funds for contracting an in-country legal firm to conduct an independent organizational governance and accountability audit.

- Funding may need to be secured to hire social workers to outwork the reintegration process.

- There may be costs associated with sourcing external training in the areas of social work, project design, and post-transition programming.

- Allocate budget for travel to families of children in care to discuss the transition process.

THEME 2: ORANGE LIGHT CATEGORY IMPLICATIONS

Explanation

This category covers a range of situations that all share one important element: the risk that the best interests of children will not be the only consideration in the transition process. Other motives, personal vested interests, and previous commitments may factor into the decision-making process, potentially affecting the transition in a negative way. In these cases, it is critical to manage all of the mixed motives and vested interests to avoid a compromised transition process. If the mix of issues is sufficiently identified and addressed, it is usually possible to proceed with transition.

While one or both stakeholders' primary sense of loyalty may be towards the children, the nature of their relationships with the children, or the aspirations they might have for the children, may also introduce some dynamics that can negatively impact transition if they are not properly managed.

Quasi-Parent Relationships with Children

A stakeholder who sees him/herself as a quasi-parent to the children in the institution may expect to be the primary decision-maker when it comes to children's placements. They may seek to override the recommendations of social workers, and in some cases, may seek to curtail their decision-making authority or remove them altogether. This can be problematic as there is a strong likelihood that the stakeholder is emotionally attached to the children in this situation, which could cloud their judgement about the suitability of potential placements.

In cases of directors in this situation, their background in running residential care may make them unable to objectively assess the risks of ongoing institutionalization. They may struggle to recognize 'good-enough' parenting or care when it comes to family-based care or reunification, due to their own attachment to the children. This can result in inaccurate and highly-biased risk and protective factors assessments.

Favoritism of specific children may also create challenges, and in some cases, can result in stakeholders attempting to assume the responsibility of caring for those children and hampering efforts to explore biological family reintegration. For example, it may be appropriate for a director to provide foster care to a small number of children who are unable to return to their family; however, this decision should be made based on what is in the child's best interests, not in response to the director's display of favoritism towards those children.

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Other Aspirations for Children

In cases where a stakeholder has specific aspirations for children in the institution, the desire or sense of obligation to fulfill those goals may trump any child development and child protection-related rationales for transition. Failing to properly address these aspirations often leads to a failure to achieve buy-in to the transition process.

Faith-based institutions can sometimes hold concerns about children returning to families of differing faiths or to communities without a place of worship, out of fear that the children will not continue in their faith. This can often be perceived by stakeholders as more detrimental to the child than any child development or child rights-related concerns with ongoing institutionalization.

Concerns around Job Security, Status, and Identity

In these cases, if stakeholders can be redirected to retain their job security, status, and/or identity through alternate means, an agreement to transition can typically be secured with the support of the partner stakeholder. For example, holding concrete discussions with the director at the outset regarding their post-transition role and income can incentivize them to buy into the transition. Doing this in conjunction with the donor would provide reassurance of funding to outwork any commitments made. In cases where the donor's identity and sense of purpose is tied to the institution, holding discussions early on around the post-transition services can serve to redefine the purpose of the organization and the donor's role within it.

While these types of vested interests are common and are not necessarily in conflict with the best interests of children, they can still create strong biases. Therefore, it is not advisable for stakeholders in this situation to play a major role in the social work processes. Clear roles and responsibilities should be established to manage this, and it may be advisable to begin the design and development of post-transition programming or services during the initial stages of the transition. This can give stakeholders clear roles and new objectives to pursue, and it can become the alternate means by which job security, status, and/or identity is maintained.

If this is managed properly, it can often result in the director taking a step back from the social work components of transition, allowing trained social workers to fulfill those functions. In cases where the social workers are employees of the institution, rather than hired independently of the institution for the purpose of transition, it is important to consider the power dynamic between them and their employer. This is relevant in cases where social workers have been hired for the reintegration component and in cases where existing caregivers or other staff members of the institution have been trained and reassigned into new roles. Often this dynamic can impact the ability of the social workers to objectively conduct assessments and therefore it is critical to establish social work supervision frameworks to maintain oversight.

Donors who are primarily loyal to a director with concerns about their job security and income will typically support transition if they can see that the director is onboard and if due respect and consideration is being given to the director's needs and interests. Donors may pull out of the transition if they start to feel that the director is being sidelined or if the director communicates any discontent as the early stages of the transition unfold. The same is true in reverse; if the director's primary loyalty is to the donor, then the donor's interests need to be given due consideration.

In cases where donors have other motives or personal vested interests and do not fully buy-in to the transition, it may still be possible to go ahead with transition. However, there is a risk of donors sabotaging the reintegration process. In some cases, donors have established new institutions and made contact with the children and families, with the aim of re-institutionalizing the children.

Suggested Actions

Stage 1: Engagement

- For suggestions on how to address motivations that relate to personal vested interests, refer to Theme 3: Motivation, page 59.

- For stakeholders holding onto their own aspirations for children in the institution, demonstrate how they can still fulfill their commitments through family- and community-based support rather than through institutional care. For example, stakeholders committed to providing tertiary education can be guided to realize that the impacts of institutionalization could result in poor academic outcomes and decrease the likelihood of obtaining higher education.

- For stakeholders who have formed a quasi-parental relationship with the children in care, recognize that they are unlikely to agree to transition if it is communicated to them that transition will result in a complete termination of the relationship. Discuss ways to keep the relationship intact, outlining boundaries for appropriate contact.

Stage 2: Preparation and Onboarding

- Complete an [organizational governance and accountability audit](#). Consider contracting an in-country legal firm for the first three sections entailing registrations, governance, and finance.

- Gather information on the history of the institution, the individuals and organizations involved, and the fundraising strategies of the institution.

- Use the findings to inform the development of a transition strategy based on the overall transition process. For further suggestions on developing a transition strategy, refer to 'Components of a Transition Strategy' in Theme 2: Green Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 2, page 42.

- Ensure that the child protection policy includes an ethical communications policy outlining appropriate communications and contact with children, as well as guidelines on assessing risk.

- Develop a partnership agreement outlining the key commitments of both stakeholders and the practitioner providing technical support. This should include the goals, expectations, and conditions of the partnership, as well as concrete markers against which to track progress. For further suggestions, refer to 'Developing a Partnership Agreement' in Theme 2: Green Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 2, page 44.

- Sign all parties into the agreement once full buy-in has been secured with all primary and other stakeholders during Stage 2 of the overall transition process (refer to Diagram 1: Stages of Transition, page 7).

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Stage 3a: Active Transition - Full Transition

Organizational Processes

- Initiate conversations with stakeholders around post-transition programming and encourage them to focus their attention on this aspect of the transition. It may be necessary to provide guidance in exploring post-transition programming options by distinguishing between organizational vision and methodology.

- Work with stakeholders to redevelop and cast a new vision for a methodology that is aligned with good practice principles, including child rights if the programs relate to services for children.

- In cases where stakeholders wish to be involved in post-transition programming, consider whether other motivations related to personal vested interests may pose any risks to beneficiaries or programs. If so, put in place appropriate structure and accountability, and clarify decision-making processes for post-transition programming and roles. This should be factored into post-transition programming discussions.

- Work in close collaboration with the stakeholders throughout the transition process to ensure that they are on board with all of the decisions being made. Be mindful of managing this process without undermining the director's authority, particularly if the donor's primary loyalty is towards the director.

Reintegration Processes

- Establish a case management system outlining social work procedures for reintegration and create ample opportunity to introduce and explain this process to stakeholders.

- Consider hiring social workers external to the institution, rather than as employees of the institution, to outwork the reintegration processes. In situations where stakeholders may seek to influence assessments or placement decisions to protect their own vested interests, this can help ensure that social workers can effectively undertake assessments without the complications of navigating hierarchical employer-employee structures.

- Establish a social work supervision framework and include this in a document outlining the various roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in the transition process. Ensure that supervision is provided by an experienced and appropriate person and avoid giving this role and responsibility to the director.

Involving Stakeholders in Social Work Processes

- Create appropriate boundaries around the stakeholders' roles regarding social work, especially for stakeholders with other vested interests. In order to avoid bias and interference, the stakeholder should have limited involvement in case conferencing and decision making regarding children's placements.

- Safeguard against children being sent home without due process by clearly communicating the case management process and securing agreement of both stakeholders to outwork the full process. There can be a tendency to rush reintegration, especially if the focus and interest shifts to the development of post-transition programming.

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▪ In cases where the donor's primary loyalty is to the director, and the director has concerns about retaining status or income, the donor is likely to provide financial support for the director's post-transition programming. Donors may thus be less interested in the details of reintegration or in ensuring that adequate resources are made available to provide sufficient support for reintegrated children, particularly post-placement. Emphasize to the donor that it is critical to fund the entire reintegration process in order to ensure the safety of children.

Stage 3b: Active Transition - Safe Closure

▪ There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Funding Implications

▪ Consider securing funds for contracting an in-country legal firm to conduct an independent organizational governance and accountability audit.

▪ Allocate budget for study tours and other methods of connection with peers, particularly where travel is required.

▪ Funding will likely need to be secured to hire social workers to outwork the reintegration process.

▪ Additional funds may be required to provide sufficient support for reintegrated children or post-transition programming.

THEME 2: RED LIGHT CATEGORY IMPLICATIONS

Explanation

These indicators point to a potentially high-risk situation that may involve the commodification of children and the manipulation of stakeholders. Full transition is rarely a suitable option, unless new management can be put in place or new funding secured. Closure, whether voluntary or enacted by authorities, is a more realistic goal.

There are two possible scenarios, the most common being cases where:

1. The director is feigning loyalty to either the children or the donor yet pursues an agenda that is in conflict with and overrides the rights and best interests of children, putting the children at risk.

2. The donor has concerning motives that are in conflict with and override the rights and best interests of children, indicating a significant risk of harm to children.

While it is more difficult for a donor to exert enough operational control over the institution to outwork nefarious motives, it is possible in cases where the director's primary loyalty is to the donor, and the donor has significant power. This is more common in cases where the donor is the founder of the institution and the donor either lives in proximity to the institution or visits frequently and is therefore able to exert a degree of operational control over the institution. This is exacerbated in cases where the donor is powerful and well-connected to wealthy or influential individuals, including figures of authority in the country of the institution and/or his/her home country, as this is likely to result in political protection and impunity.

The sections below cover potential implications of both of these scenarios.

Donors with Primary Loyalty to Children

In this scenario, the director may have intentionally manipulated the donor and cultivated a sense of responsibility and loyalty to the children for personal or financial gain. This may point to opportunistic commodification, whereby the director is marketing the children in a way that breaches their privacy and exposes them to risk of stigma and other harms but may not be fully aware of the associated risks. Or it may be an early warning sign for other more serious issues, including those that present a significant risk to children.

The likelihood of securing buy-in with the donor is high but the capacity to leverage donor buy-in to enact a transition could be complicated and compromised by the director. If the director has goals that are in conflict with and override the rights and best interests of children, safe closure is a more realistic goal. At minimum, post-transition programs should be steered away from child welfare or child protection-related programs. Depending on the presence of other high-risk indicators under other themes, closure may need to be enacted via reporting, forced closure, and the removal of children into safe temporary alternative care while reintegration takes place.

It is important to recognize that at this point the evidence may merely be early warning signs that do not necessarily give the full picture. Even if there is suspicion that the situation is quite serious, the evidence available at this point may not be sufficient to convince the donor that unethical behavior and child protection risks may be present, especially because of his/her loyalty to the director. The donor may seek to persevere with transition in partnership with the director but this can result in heightened risks to children as the director may act to suppress further evidence or prevent disclosures.

There is also a risk of the donor disengaging with the transition process if evidence of more serious manipulation and/or misappropriation comes to light, as this is likely to erode trust and cause serious disillusionment. This needs to be managed carefully, particularly if the institution and transition are dependent on ongoing financial support from the donor.

Donors with Primary Loyalty to Directors

Donors often explain away the early warning signs as their loyalty towards directors makes it very difficult for them to entertain the possibility of deceit and manipulation in the relationship. It may be necessary to help the donor self-discover the issues, because if they do not come to an independent realization, the donor usually defends the director. In cases where serious allegations are introduced prematurely, the donor may disengage from the technical support in defense of the director.

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This process needs to be carefully managed and centered around uncovering evidence regarding operations that do not involve the children, such as finances. Progressing with the social work aspects of reintegration without appropriate safeguards in place, or as a means of uncovering further evidence, can put children at serious risk as directors or staff may threaten, harm, or remove children from the institution who might have information to disclose.

When donors realize what has transpired in the partnership, there will often be a fracture in the relationship and a deep sense of betrayal. Donors who feel burnt may be at risk of withdrawing funding and many walk away at this point. To avoid this and to be able to continue with transition, redirect the donor's focus and loyalty towards the children and achieving their safe reintegration. It may also be appropriate to refer donors to external therapeutic support with the goal of equipping them to be able to move forward and remain involved in a healthy and productive way. If their complex and mixed feelings resulting from the discovery of deception are left unaddressed, it is possible that their ongoing involvement may destabilize the transition process and inadvertently impact the reintegration of children.

These situations, as with all high-risk situations, warrant in-depth child protection risk assessments and may require reporting and government involvement for closure.

Directors with Primary Loyalty to Donors of Concern

Directors may have some or full awareness of the concerns regarding donors but may not feel empowered to act to protect the children because of their loyalty to the donor and related issues, such as their financial dependence on the donor. It is also possible that directors are aware of the concerns but may not realize the full extent of risk and harm that certain behaviors might pose to children, as is sometimes the case with grooming. This situation is made more challenging if the donor is a person of considerable standing, power, or connections, including ties to government in the country of the institution or his/her home country. This can provide impunity and cause the director to be unwilling to challenge the donor.

There have also been situations where action taken by one government agency, in response to reports made by directors or external actors, have been overridden by the donors' more powerful connections. This can further shield the donor and entrench the risks to children. This is more often the case for donors who founded the institution and either live in proximity to the institution or frequently visit.

Suggested Actions

For scenarios where the director is of concern:

Stage 1: Engagement

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 2: Preparation and Onboarding

- Conduct a child protection risk assessment and develop a risk mitigation plan. Carefully consider the immediate risks to children in the institution based on information that has already been collected, as well as potential risks associated with each future step of the transition process.

- Reviewing the results of the child protection risk assessment, determine which, if any, of the following suggestions are relevant and safe to enact.

- Complete an [organizational governance and accountability audit](#). This can:

  - Uncover evidence of serious issues, particularly if profit is a motive; and

  - Assist in the identification of what should be strengthened in the governance framework to address risks that may emerge as transition proceeds. For further suggestions, refer to Theme 7: Nature of the Partnership, page 116.

- It is highly recommended to contract an in-country legal firm to complete the first three sections of the audit entailing registrations, governance, and finance. Relying on a director of concern to obtain and provide potentially self-incriminating documentation is likely to stall progress or result in the production of falsified or incorrectly translated documents.

- Carefully document all steps and retain copies of anything that could constitute evidence of issues ranging from misappropriation to abuse and exploitation. Be aware that uncovering information may lead to evidence being destroyed.

- Create opportunities for the donor to see the true motivations and practices of the director and seek to bring to the surface the inconsistencies between what the director is communicating to the donor versus the reality. Following are some examples:

  - Provide the donor with a [self-assessment tool](#) which will allow them to discover critical information about the institution and their partnership.

  - Collect and present information that contradicts the donor's understanding of their partnership with the director, including:

    - Government registers that reveal that the institution and/or the board is not legally or officially registered;

    - Evidence of other undisclosed donors; and

    - Participation in and facilitation of voluntourism.

  - Connect the donor with other donors who have undergone transition and saw similar early warning signs, as they are often perceived as non-biased sources of information, more credible and convincing than the practitioner.

- Work with the donor to put in place a robust child protection policy and an ethical communications policy, focusing on providing guidance on appropriate promotional materials that do not violate the children's right to privacy. This is especially important if the donor is responsible for fundraising and collecting donations from individuals and other entities.

- Anticipate sabotage from the director, such as blocking social workers' access to children and families and interference in assessments and mitigate accordingly. For more information on various types of sabotage common to the transition process, refer to Section 3: A Note on Sabotage, page 141.

- Develop a partnership agreement outlining the key commitments of both stakeholders and the practitioner providing technical support. This should include the goals, expectations, and conditions of the partnership as well as concrete markers against which to track progress. Include agreed-upon responses to breaches of the agreement, including sabotage. For further suggestions, refer to 'Developing a Partnership Agreement' in Theme 2: Green Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 2, page 44.

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- Ensure that the policy framework explicitly prohibits profit-seeking or other behaviors that are not in the best interests of children that may have been taking place. Include within the framework provisions to address the possibility of extreme cases, including identification of:

  - Legal mechanisms and responsibilities for reporting to the appropriate authorities; and

  - Governance frameworks for the removal and replacement of a director.

- In the best-case scenarios, these policies and agreements will force an end to these behaviors. In a more typical case, directors are likely to either refuse to sign the agreements, despite having made the donor believe they are committed to transition, or sign with no intention of complying. Both avenues give the donor visibility of contradicting behaviors.

- Consider any risks or threats to the personal safety and security of practitioners and others involved a high risk transition process.

Stage 3a: Active Transition - Full Transition

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 3b: Active Transition - Safe Closure

Organizational Processes

- In these cases, safe closure is typically the most appropriate goal.

- If the risks identified in the child protection risk assessment are high, consider whether it is necessary to report to child protection authorities for legal or administrative action, including for forced closure.

- Consider the responsibility of the practitioner to report or provide information to the relevant authorities.

- Consider developing plans for facilitating the removal and emergency housing of children in conjunction with the appropriate government authorities.

- Identify other alternative care providers that can accept referrals for short-term placements while reintegration is outworked.

- In cases where the donor's loyalty is to the children, and exploitation or donor manipulation by the director has taken place, it is common for the donor to disengage with the project as soon as the children are safely out of the institution and settled into their placements. Work with the donor to cast a vision for post-transition programming so that he/she does not stop funding once the reintegrated children are no longer in need of support.

Engaging Donors throughout Challenges in Transition

- In cases where the donor's loyalty is to the director, and donor manipulation by the director becomes apparent, there is a significant risk that the donor may cease funding partway through the transition process. If the donor remains engaged, he/she is more likely to agree to make funding conditional upon the director's cooperation with transition. Work to keep disillusioned donors engaged to fund the reintegration of children where that is possible, and to fund other family- or community-based organizations to re-invest their current financial support into non-institutional services.

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Reintegration Processes

- If the child protection risk assessment reveals that it is safe to do so, and if the strategies listed in Stage 2 have been implemented and relatively successful, it may be possible to commence the social work process for reintegration towards safe closure.

- Where possible, and only to the extent that it is safe to proceed, debunk any myths about the backgrounds of the children, so that the donor can begin to consider alternative placements for the children.

- If there are insufficient records to ascertain the true histories of the children, and only where it is safe to do so, proceed with the established social work processes. The resulting assessments will either validate the information directors have provided or will uncover the deception. **This should not be attempted in a high-risk situation, as identified in the child protection risk assessment, or if there is no safety plan in place.**

For scenarios where the donor is of concern:

Stage 1: Engagement

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 2: Preparation and Onboarding

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 3a: Active Transition - Full Transition

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 3b: Active Transition - Safe Closure

- In these cases, safe closure is typically the most appropriate goal.

- Conduct a child protection risk assessment and develop a risk mitigation plan. Carefully consider the immediate risks to children in the institution based on information that has already been collected, as well as potential risks associated with each future step of the transition process.

- Reviewing the results of the child protection risk assessment, determine which, if any, of the following suggestions are relevant and safe to enact.

- Using the [organizational governance and accountability audit checklist,](#) evaluate the relationship between the boards of the local entity and of the donor, if one exists.

- If the two boards operate relatively independently of each other, consider seeking assistance from the most appropriate one, including through highlighting to board members the possibility of personal liability associated with inaction in response to concerns lodged with them.

- In cases where the donor represents an entity that is not party to the concerns and has mechanisms in place to enact disciplinary measures, explore the possibility of removing the donor.

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- Explore measures for reporting, including within the donor's country of origin if he/she is a foreigner or runs a foreign donor entity. This could be through charity/NGO complaints mechanisms tied to regulation or codes of conduct, embassies of the donor's country of origin, or criminal law mechanisms if the concerns are of a criminal nature.

- Ensure that the child protection code of conduct is robust and covers all stakeholders including donors. If this is not already in place, prioritize this action and use it to force accountability, including reporting violations or refusal of compliance with the board.

- Consider any risks or threats to the personal safety and security of practitioners and others involved a high risk transition process.

- For further suggestions on how to address motivations that are in conflict with and override the rights and best interests of children, refer to Theme 3: Motivation, page 59.

Funding Implications

- Allocate budget for contracting an in-country legal firm to conduct an independent organizational governance and accountability audit.

- Consider securing funds for the emergency removal and short-term placements of children, should it become necessary based on the level of risk in the institution.

- Funding will likely need to be secured to hire social workers to outwork the reintegration process.

- Additional funding may need to be secured for reintegration in the case of disillusioned donors ceasing funding partway through the transition process.

- Emergency funding and alternative long-term funding may need to be secured if the concerns involve the donor and are serious in nature.

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Theme 3:
Motivation

ABOUT THIS THEME

Understanding of the motives of key stakeholders is a highly critical factor in developing a strategic approach to transition. Motives are the forces that act to drive the behavior and actions of individuals and groups. The motives of directors and donors are what led them to commence involvement in an institution in the first place, and those motives will be equally significant in their decision to pursue and implement transition.

There are a range of theories on motives and various categories of motives:

- **Intrinsic motives:** behavior driven by internal rewards such as self-esteem, satisfaction, and a sense of altruism, i.e., doing good

- **Extrinsic motives:** behavior driven by external rewards such as money, status, or recognition

- **Cognitive motives:** knowledge and experience

- **Social motives:** reaction, approval, disapproval, expectations, and social esteem from others

- **Controlled motivation:** external regulations and fear of consequence

- **Autonomous motivation:** self-determination and self-awareness

- **Promotion-oriented motives:** response to optimism, praise, and opportunities to innovate and advance

- **Prevention-oriented motives:** driven to avoid failure, loss, and negative consequences

The goals associated with motives can be self-focused or focused on others. When they are focused on others, they can be closely connected to loyalties as discussed in Theme 2.

People typically have a range of motives that underpin their behavior and decisions in any given situation but there are dominant motives and dominant orientations. Understanding what they are will help to develop an effective communication strategy, identify and manage risks, and determine whether full transition or closure is the most appropriate goal.

Typically, what has been observed in the field of care reform and transition is an assumption that cognitive motivation is the primary or most powerful driver of the actions and decisions of directors and donors. Cognitive motivation theory asserts that people act, behave, and make decisions on the basis of the information they have available to them, as well as how they process that information based on their previous experiences and capacities. In essence, it assumes that individuals' knowledge drives their action.

In transition work, this assumption often means that a strong emphasis is placed on providing evidence and information about the harms of residential care on children's development. In communicating this to key stakeholders, the assumption is that once directors and donors 'know better', they will act differently and be motivated to transition. This is, and will be, the case for some people whose motivations are in alignment with that approach. These are typically people who are intrinsically motivated, promotion-oriented, others-focused and specifically child-centric in this case, and for whom cognition plays a key role in causality. They are strong candidates for being trained and supported to outwork the transition with a high degree of independence. They are often the 'early adopters' or the first cohort of stakeholders to come forward and agree to transition. However, they are perhaps not the majority.

In most cases, this sole focus on cognitive motivation fails to achieve buy-in for transition because it is based on the assumption that stakeholders are purely child-focused in their motives. This assumption ignores the range of other motives that are often driving the actions and behaviors of directors and donors. Many stakeholders have a mix of motives, with common self-focused motives being concern for their jobs, income, status, identity, and loss of face. These motives are normal and understandable and do not always indicate risk. However, they can indicate where resistance or barriers might stem from, if they are left unaddressed. Resistance, whether subconscious or intentional, can compromise key processes in transition, including reintegration. Therefore it is important to identify the motives at play and explore alternate means of meeting stakeholders' motivational goals as a part of the discussion, framing, and planning of transition.

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Non-child focused motives are of concern in cases where self-interest is in conflict with and overrides the rights and best interests of children. They are also of concern where they are nefarious and result in harm, commodification, and/or exploitation of children in care. These situations make transition highly complex and potentially dangerous for children. Where the motives or actions stemming from the motives are of a serious nature, children may already be in a situation of harm, or at high risk of harm, in the care setting. Immediate intervention to protect children may be required in these cases.

In these situations, the approach should not be to find alternate means of meeting motivational goals but rather to identify appropriate means of curtailing the stakeholders' ability to act on those motives. This may include tightening systems and increasing transparency, or in extreme cases, reporting to the appropriate authorities, relocating children in conjunction with the appropriate government authorities, and removing stakeholders from their roles where their behavior is in violation of codes of conduct, constitutes abuse, and/or is criminal in nature.

The categories below focus on analyzing the impact of the range of motives and focus of motives, particularly in cases where there is a risk of self-interest overriding the best interests of the children. In such cases, this often results in a risk of harm to children. It is advisable to consider the source and orientation of motives that have been evidenced and how those dynamics might alter the strategy. However, the range of approaches are extensive and outside of the scope of this tool to cover in a comprehensive manner.

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Tips for Assessing Motivation

When assessing motivation, consider:

1. **The range of motives**

   - This helps to determine the specific factors and interplay of factors that are driving behavior and decisions.

2. **The source of primary motive: intrinsic or extrinsic**

   - This helps to determine whether to appeal to an individual's sense of self or external rewards.

3. **The orientation of the motives**

   - This helps to determine whether to focus on transition from the perspective of risk-aversion or the opportunity for innovation.

4. **The focus of the motives: self or others**

   - This helps to determine whose interests are considered primary and around whom the narrative needs to be framed, e.g., the director and his/her agency or the child and their best interests.

CASE STUDY INDICATORS: THEME 3

BRIDGES CASE STUDY	FIREFLY CASE STUDY	LIGHTHOUSE CASE STUDY
Theme 3 Rating: Green	**Theme 3 Rating: Orange**	**Theme 3 Rating: Red**
▪ Stakeholders have child-focused motivations ▪ Involvement in institution was logical response ▪ No evidence of vested interests ▪ Stakeholders receptive to transition	▪ Motivation of one stakeholder was child-focused ▪ Mixed motivations and vested interests of other stakeholder but not serious in nature ▪ Lack of transparency regarding other funding sources ▪ Stakeholders receptive to transition	▪ Director grew up in an institution ▪ Profit as primary motivation ▪ Donor manipulation ▪ Financial misappropriation ▪ Lack of transparency regarding other funding sources ▪ Disparate standards of living between director and children ▪ Director and donor records for number of children do not match ▪ Evidence of children recruited for exploitation

INDICATORS: THEME 3

Instructions: Read through the indicators listed in the following color-coded tables. Tick all indicators that relate to the director or the donor using the two columns provided. Tally the number of indicators ticked for the director and the donor under each color category in the Total box.

THEME 3: GREEN LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS   Director   Donor

- The stakeholder's motivation for involvement in institutional care was child-focused and out of a genuine motive to help children.

- The stakeholder's involvement in an institution was a logical response to the information available to him/her and came out of a genuine belief that residential care was a good way of helping children.

- Other personal vested interests of the stakeholder do not override the rights and best interests of children, and therefore will not block transition.

- The stakeholder has been receptive to engagement around transition thus far.

Total   _____

THEME 3: ORANGE LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS   Director   Donor

- There is evidence of other motivations or personal vested interests that either co-exist with genuine concern for children's wellbeing, or potentially conflict with the rights of children, yet are not serious or nefarious in nature, such as in cases where other donors have not been disclosed.

- There is evidence of sensitivities that would likely trigger self-preservation and result in resistance or hesitation to pursue transition despite the rationale presented, such as in cases where:

  - the director grew up in an institution;

  - the director lives onsite at the institution and is accustomed to a culture of institutionalization; or

  - the donor is a public figure and has built an identity or reputation around their support for the institution.

- The stakeholder's involvement in the institution relates to a legacy, for example, in memory of a loved one or carrying on the former work of a loved one, thus seeking to preserve the institution in order to preserve that legacy.

Total   _____

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THEME 3: RED LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS
Director   Donor

There is evidence that the stakeholder's primary motivation for involvement in the institution is profit, and there is evidence of one or more of the following:

- The director has intentionally manipulated the donor by sensationalizing children's stories in promotional materials.

- The director has intentionally manipulated the donor by cultivating perceptions that the donor has ownership of the institution or is the exclusive donor.

- The director has failed to disclose other donors despite an expectation or requirement to do so, indicating an intentional lack of transparency.

- The stakeholder has demonstrated dishonesty or involvement in financial misappropriation.

- There are significantly disparate standards of living between the children in the institution and the stakeholder and his/her family, indicating that the institution is a significant generator of personal wealth.

- The number of children in the institution does not match the number on donor records, sponsorship records, or the institution's register.

- The stakeholder facilitates irregular adoption.

- The stakeholder facilitates orphanage tourism, including having children perform, visit donor countries, and/or recount past trauma as part of fundraising strategies.

There is evidence or reasonable grounds for suspicion of children being recruited or transferred into the institution for the purpose of exploitation, including one or more of the following:

- Children are recruited for the purpose of forced labor or domestic servitude, such as on farms, in the institution, or in the stakeholder's home.

- Children are recruited for the purpose of sexual abuse or grooming.

- Children are recruited for the purpose of facilitating arranged, forced, or child marriages.

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SCORING: THEME 3

Instructions: Using the following scoring key, select the appropriate color category for the director and the donor. For this theme, it may be necessary to select a different category for each stakeholder based on their individual scores. Refer to the 'Determining Implications' column to select the color category that best fits the situation. Once the appropriate color category has been selected, refer to the corresponding color-coded category of implications in the tables below. Read through and consider the explanation, suggested actions, and funding implications.

Category	Instructions	Director	Donor	Determining Implications
Red Light	Select the red light category for the director and/or donor if the following was selected: ▪ 1 or more red indicators			If **either** stakeholder is in the red category, refer to the **red category implications.**
Orange Light	Select the orange light category for the director and/or donor if the following was selected: ▪ No red indicators and; ▪ 1 or more orange indicators			If neither stakeholder is in the red category, and **one or both** are in the orange category, refer to the **orange category implications.**
Green Light	Select the green light category for the director and/or donor if the following was selected: ▪ Only green indicators			If **both** stakeholders are in the green category, refer to the **green category implications.**

IMPLICATIONS: THEME 3

THEME 3: GREEN LIGHT CATEGORY IMPLICATIONS

Explanation

This often represents a best-case scenario where both stakeholders have uncomplicated motivations. Any personal vested interests, such as employment and status, are secondary to their concern for the children in care. Therefore their motivations are unlikely to interfere with transition.

Stakeholders are likely to respond well to a case made for transition based on what is in the best interests of the children and they may bring their actions into alignment with new knowledge once it has been internalized. They are likely to be intrinsically motivated to engage with best practice and receiving external recognition may provide further encouragement. Directors are likely to want to manage the transition process in-house and play a key hands-on role with external support acting in an advisory capacity.

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Engaging stakeholders of this nature in child protection and alternative care working groups, where they exist, can be an effective way of providing further intrinsic motivation, through access to knowledge and expertise, as well as extrinsic motivation, by being recognized and included in an expert peer group. This can be very helpful in sustaining commitment to best practice, particularly if challenges are met along the way.

There is a fair chance that stakeholders in this situation will want to use their experience to encourage and motivate others into action once they are far enough along in the transition process.

Suggested Actions

Stage 1: Engagement

- It is generally possible to frame all conversations, communications, and rationales around child rights and their best interests; however, be mindful of utilizing a rational or emotional appeal where appropriate. For further suggestions, refer to Theme 1: Making the Case for Transition, page 17.

- Achieving buy-in for transition is typically less dependent on holding post-transition programming discussions in advance. As stakeholders in this situation do not have strong vested interests in maintaining their employment or status, it may be more likely that the findings of assessments, service mapping, and other situational analyses will instead inform decisions around potential post-transition programming.

Stage 2: Preparation and Onboarding

- Outline the entire transition process for both stakeholders upfront, noting that if the donor's primary loyalty is to the director, he/she may not be as interested in all of the details regarding reintegration processes. For further suggestions, refer to Theme 2: Loyalty and Commitment, page 32.

- Ensure that both stakeholders agree on the approach to transition and have a sound understanding of the scope of work. This can help prevent stakeholders prematurely informing children or families about the decision to transition before other important preparatory work is completed. If this is not managed well, reintegration may be rushed, and children sent home without full process.

- Complete an [organizational governance and accountability audit](#). Consider contracting an in-country legal firm for the first three sections entailing registrations, governance, and finance.

- Gather information on the history of the institution, the individuals and organizations involved, and the fundraising strategies of the institution.

- Use the findings to inform the development of a transition strategy based on the overall transition process. For further suggestions on developing a transition strategy, refer to 'Components of a Transition Strategy' in Theme 2: Green Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 2, page 43.

Stage 3a: Active Transition - Full Transition

Organizational Processes

- Implement the strategies and plans developed in Stage 2.

- Hold conversations with staff of the institution about the process and stages of transition. For further suggestions on communications regarding transition, refer to Theme 2: Green Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stages 2 and 3a (page 42, 45).

- Prepare stakeholders for typical reactions of children regarding transition.

- Determine whether it is feasible and appropriate for directors and staff to be involved in the reintegration process or post-transition programming and facilitate training and supervision as needed.

- If external social workers need to be hired, secure a funding agreement from the donor for this purpose.

- Connect the director, staff, and social workers with child rights networks or alternative care working groups, if they exist and can provide relevant peer support and encouragement.

- Develop a monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning (MEAL) framework to capture learning for internal reflection and external sharing.

Reintegration Processes

- Establish a case management system and social work supervision framework, outlining roles and responsibilities of social workers and stakeholders involved in the transition process. For further suggestions on the social work component of transition, refer to Theme 2: Green Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 3a, page 45.

- Lead discussions with children, care leavers, and families about the process and stages of transition and document their concerns.

- For further suggestions on communications regarding transition, refer to 'Consultations with Staff, Children, Families, and Care Leavers' in Theme 2: Green Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 2, page 44.

- If the director wishes to play a key role in reintegration, consider engaging an external third-party source to provide the social work supervision. Include this in the document outlining the various roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in the transition process.

- Ensure that the social workers are empowered and have sufficient authority to carry out their functions to manage any residual bias from the director. Put mechanisms in place to restrict or remove the involvement of the director should issues or concerns arise throughout the reintegration process.

Stage 3b: Active Transition - Safe Closure

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

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Funding Implications

- Consider securing funds for contracting an in-country legal firm to conduct an independent organizational governance and accountability audit.

- Funding may need to be secured to hire social workers to outwork the reintegration process.

- Additional funds may be required to provide sufficient support for reintegrated children or post-transition programming.

- There may be costs associated with sourcing external training in the areas of social work, project design, and post-transition programming.

- Allocate budget for travel to families of children in care to discuss the transition process.

THEME 3: ORANGE LIGHT CATEGORY IMPLICATIONS

Explanation

In this scenario there are mixed or multiple motives driving decisions and actions, some of which relate to personal vested interests of the stakeholders rather than the best interests of the children in care. This introduces complexity that must be navigated.

When one or both stakeholders score orange for motives, this indicates that using a cognitive motivational approach alone is unlikely to work. Focusing on the evidence and research on the rights and best interests of children is unlikely to work because it will leave other motives unaddressed. If these motives are left unaddressed, they will likely continue to create obstacles to buy-in and the implementation processes, ultimately disrupting or stalling the transition. It is important to identify what the motivational goals are and find new ways for those goals to be met in a way that is compatible with transition and does not compromise the best interests of the children.

In most cases, full transition is feasible if the motivational goals can be met through alternate means. In cases where that is not feasible or appropriate, or in cases where the incentive to change and pursue transition is insufficient, stakeholders may attempt to block transition. At this point, factors covered in other themes, such as loyalty, power, and social obligations increase in relevance as it may become necessary to explore leveraging these other dynamics to secure an agreement to transition.

In such cases, it is important to re-assess whether full transition remains the most appropriate goal, particularly if a stakeholder has demonstrated an inability or lack of willingness to put the interests of children above his/her own. At minimum, this may affect what is appropriate to pursue in terms of post-transition programming, as it may still be possible to transition into programs that are not child welfare-related. Or it may mean that safe closure is a more appropriate goal.

If only one stakeholder scored orange and the other green, it may be necessary to employ a two-pronged approach to secure buy-in, one targeting the stakeholder who scored green, using the suggestions in the green category above, and the other targeting the stakeholder who scored orange, using the suggestions in the red category below.

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Suggested Actions

Stage 1: Engagement

- Discuss and explore alternative solutions that allow stakeholders motivated by identity, security of employment or income, and status in the community to retain these elements while undergoing the transition process. Focusing solely on what is in the best interests of children and failing to address these other motivations could compromise buy-in and subsequently result in stalling or complications arising during the implementation phase. This often happens despite the stakeholder verbally agreeing to the transition, and in some cases can result in sabotage.

- Some stakeholders outwork personal desires or ambitions through their involvement with the institution, including cases where they are motivated by:

  - giving disadvantaged children access to opportunities they did not have;

  - fulfilling career aspirations of working overseas with children; or

  - becoming a quasi-parent where they were unable to have biological children.

- In the first two cases where the motivation is to support children or work overseas with children, it is possible to discuss and demonstrate alternatives to fulfilling these desires in a way that is more conducive and in the best interests of children.

- In cases where there are sensitivities, such as stakeholders growing up in an institution or establishing the institution in memory of a loved one, it is important to be very respectful and mindful of how deeply personal this issue might be. If this is not managed well, it could result in stakeholders becoming defensive and rejecting the idea of change.

Personal Experiences of Care

- Where stakeholders have had personal experience of living in an institution, approach communication in a way that is highly cognizant of their lived experience and respectful of the expertise that stems from that experience. In cases where they openly discuss their experience, look for areas of agreement or common ground rather than seeking to rebut lived experience with evidence.

- In legacy cases, it is often helpful to frame transition as the need to evolve based on the emergence of new information and legislation surrounding the issues of children in institutional care, rather than referring to a need to correct or undo past mistakes. This allows stakeholders to retain their legacy and even further it as the organization moves onto the next stage of supporting children.

- Consider connecting these stakeholders with others with similar backgrounds who have made the decision to transition and are able to speak into the issue from both shared lived experience and a technical perspective. This may be more effective in terms of achieving buy-in than engagement with practitioners providing technical support for transition.

- Where religion is a motivation, to the extent possible, frame the conversation within the context of religious text, language, and theological concepts. For some religions such as Christianity, there are existing resources to help guide this process (refer to 'Useful Resources and Tools' in the Annex). Failing to address religious motivations where they exist is likely to cause a perceived conflict between their faith and secular concepts of rights and best practice, often resulting in a rejection of the latter.

- In many cases, stakeholders with religious motivations describe a sense of calling that led them to become involved in institutional care. Rather than challenging this sense of calling, it can be more effective to discuss the separation of vision and mission, focusing on how a shift in methodology and transforming their model of care can help them better achieve their vision to care for vulnerable children.

- Religious motivations may also extend to institutional care being used to train and evangelize children. If this is the case, there may be resistance to reintegrating children into families, particularly if those families do not practice the same religion as what is practiced in the institution. Failing to address this in ways that provide constructive alternatives can result in resistance to transition and interference in child and family assessments and placement decisions.

- Where the practitioner and stakeholder in question do not share the same faith perspective, consider engaging the support or services of an organization that is equipped to do so.

Addressing Proselytization

- Where institutional care is being used for proselytization, it is often helpful to point out the flaws in such a strategy. For example, share anecdotal stories illustrating that children who make a conversion decision outside of the context of family may revert to the religion of their family when they leave care. This is particularly the case in collectivist cultures where the family is the basic decision-making unit in society, and individual decisions, especially those of children and young people, may not be considered legitimate.

Stage 2: Preparation and Onboarding

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 3a: Active Transition - Full Transition

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 3b: Active Transition - Safe Closure

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Funding Implications

- Allocate budget for study tours and other methods of connection with peers, particularly where travel is required.

- Additional funding may need to be secured in cases where post-transition programming has been initiated early in the process as a way to provide alternative means for stakeholders to meet their motivations, resulting in parallel services running for a longer period.

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THEME 3: RED LIGHT CATEGORY IMPLICATIONS

Explanation

These indicators typically point to unethical conduct, a lack of transparency, and in the worst cases, unlawful behavior. Children are likely being used for other purposes, most typically commodified for income and profit, or to be exploited. The stakeholders benefiting from the institutionalization of children are unlikely to agree to transition if it results in the loss of personal benefits, unless it becomes apparent that sustaining these benefits is no longer possible, or that the risks of continuing outweigh the benefits. In the latter cases, stakeholders may agree to transition but it is unlikely to be with the best interests of the children in mind.

As such, this is a potentially unsafe situation and the process of transition can heighten child protection risks in cases where stakeholders may take steps to prevent the discovery of unethical conduct and disclosures from children. This could result in the use of threats, violence, and coercion of children and/or their families to protect the stakeholder in question.

These situations need to be approached with extreme caution, with the involvement of child protection authorities where possible, and with the immediate safety needs of the children in mind. A full child protection risk assessment should be conducted to ascertain the severity of the risks and to inform the development of a risk mitigation plan. Sabotage is likely to take place in some form, and if there is information to hide, the closer the process is to implementation, the greater the risk or intensity of sabotage becomes.

Suggested Actions

Stage 1: Engagement

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 2: Preparation and Onboarding

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 3a: Active Transition - Full Transition

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

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Stage 3b: Active Transition - Safe Closure

- In cases where there is evidence of commodification of children and/or exploitation, it is unlikely to be safe or appropriate to pursue full transition. Exceptions to this may be in rare cases where those suspected of exploitation can be removed and new personnel appointed. Safe closure is a more appropriate goal and typically requires the involvement of relevant authorities.

- Where commodification is suspected or evidenced but there is no evidence of exploitation, refer to 'Address Key Gaps in Partnership Framework' in Theme 7: Red Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 2, page 133.

- Where exploitation is present, refer to Themes 5 and 7: Red Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 3b, pages 98 and 134.

- Conduct a full child protection risk assessment, put safety plans in place, and determine whether it is safe or appropriate to outwork the safety plans. This may involve exploring other emergency accommodation options for the children should they need to be removed.

- In cases where only one stakeholder is of concern and was assessed as red light category under this theme, determine where the primary loyalty of the other partner stakeholder and assess the implications. If primary loyalty is to the children and the stakeholder is unaware of what has been taking place, it may be possible to easily secure their support by providing them with the evidence. If the stakeholder's primary loyalty is to the stakeholder of concern, it may be necessary to facilitate a process of self-discovery. For further suggestions, refer to Theme 2: Loyalty and Commitment, page 32.

Funding Implications

- Allocate budget for contracting an in-country legal firm to conduct an independent organizational governance and accountability audit.

- Additional funding may need to be secured for investigations to collate evidence, particularly where stakeholder conduct may constitute unlawful behavior.

- Consider securing funds for the emergency removal and short-term placements of children, should it become necessary based on the level of risk in the institution.

- Funding may be required to address staffing issues, including bringing on new staff and covering the cost of severance packages where staff roles are terminated, in accordance with domestic labor laws.

- Funding will likely need to be secured to hire social workers in cases where the reintegration process can be outworked.

- Additional funding may need to be secured for reintegration in the case of disillusioned donors ceasing funding partway through the transition process.

- Emergency funding and alternative long-term funding may need to be secured if the concerns involve the donor and are serious in nature.

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Theme 4:
Othering

ABOUT THIS THEME

Othering is the categorization of people into 'us' and 'them' groups, based on the differences between them. Othering creates what is known as 'in-groups' (us) and 'out-groups' (them). Othering is less about actual difference and more about perception and value ascribed to difference. Differences can be real or imagined; that is, based on unfounded assumptions. With othering, there can be a tendency to assume that differences make people inferior or of less value, and this can lead to discrimination.

Othering is not a matter of fact; it is a matter of discourse. It is the construction of narratives by dominant groups and applied to minority, dominated, or marginal groups. These narratives, intentionally or otherwise, act to create and sustain uneven power relationships, as within a hierarchy, and result in biases.

Othering is enabled by distance between groups. Distance can be spatial (geographical or due to segregation) or ideological (religious, political, or economic). This distance allows the in-group to perceive the out-group as homogeneous and leads to stereotyping. Othering is therefore best broken down by proximity, through creating opportunities for in-groups and out-groups to come together, interact, find common ground, and develop relationships.

Othering is common along the following lines:

- **Ethnic and cultural:** devaluation and discrimination based on ethnic and cultural differences. This form of othering results in ethnocentricity and colonialism.

- **Spatial/geographic:** divides such as rural and urban, or forms of segregation, including the segregation of refugee and asylum-seeking families. This can result in othering and, in the worst cases, the demonizing of out-groups.

- **Religious:** discrimination or experience or fear of persecution can create othering, and in some cases, result in stereotyping by minority groups.

- **Class:** on the basis of formal caste systems or classifications such as education status or wealth.

Othering is a significant issue in the world of child protection where concepts of 'well-being' and, to some extent, 'risk' are heavily influenced by the perspectives and norms of dominant groups. This can lead to structural discrimination which results in disproportionate numbers of certain groups of minority children coming into contact with child protection services, both government and non-government, and being placed in alternative care.

Othering is therefore highly relevant to transition work, particularly in situations where there are cross-cultural, interethnic, interclass, or interreligious distinctions present between the director and donor, or between the director/donor and the community at large. It can result in suspicion, fear, biases, and stereotypes that affect a director and/or donor's receptivity to transition or the concept and feasibility of family-based care and biological family reunification, even in situations where there is no evidence of significant risk.

Examples of othering that are relevant to alternative care and transition work include:

- Classifying risk on the basis of ethnicity. For example, dominant groups might justify the removal and institutionalization of children on the basis of their ethnicity, gender, and/or age, often due to stereotypes about a certain ethnic group and the associated assumptions of risk. These removals are often referred to as 'rescues'.

- Ethnocentric perceptions or definitions of poverty and ethnocentric indicators of poverty and/or neglect. These often stem from a narrow economic definition of poverty and ethnocentric values regarding material conditions, such as housing conditions, standards of living, and living and sleeping arrangements. These are common factors used to justify or legitimize the removal of children from their families and placement in an institution. The language often used is of 'providing better opportunities'.

- Cultural, ethnic, or class discrimination regarding parenting practices, caregiving practices, and the capacity of families to provide adequate care, such as supervision, discipline, and traditional health care practices. These factors are often divorced from the broader community and social context, misinterpreted, and can be inaccurately defined as risks. Removal is often justified in these cases on the basis of 'neglect'.

- Lack of awareness of structural inequality as a root cause of disadvantage and vulnerability. Failure to recognize and address the structural forces which restrict opportunity for certain groups (structural discrimination) typically results in families, ethnic groups, or classes being personally blamed for the symptoms of disadvantage and the impacts on children's care. This results in narratives around 'unfit parents' and supports removal decisions and the termination of parental rights, whether formal or effective.

- Hesitation to engage with family-based care or reintegration due to religious differences. Directors or donors may be reluctant to place children in the care of families who do not share the same religion as they do.

Where these forms of othering are in existence, strategies to address them must be developed and factored into the overall transition strategy. This is critical to ensuring that full buy-in is achieved, and that assessments and placement decisions are free of bias and discrimination.

CASE STUDY INDICATORS: THEME 4

BRIDGES
CASE STUDY

Theme 4 Rating: Green

- Stakeholder with different background speaks language, has integrated into community life, and has positive interactions with families

- Stakeholder with different background defers to stakeholder with stronger cultural competency

FIREFLY
CASE STUDY

Theme 4 Rating: Green

- Stakeholder with different background defers to stakeholder with stronger cultural competency

- Stakeholder with different background has positive interactions with local families

- No intercultural, interethnic, interclass, or interreligious distinction between director and children/families

LIGHTHOUSE
CASE STUDY

Theme 4 Rating: Orange

- Stakeholder lives on-site and is not integrated into community

- Donor does not speak local language

- Director labels families as unable to properly care for their children

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INDICATORS: THEME 4

Instructions: Read through the indicators listed in the following color-coded tables. Tick all indicators that relate to the director or the donor using the two columns provided. Tally the number of indicators ticked for the director and the donor under each color category in the Total box.

THEME 4: GREEN LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS   Director   Donor

- There is no intercultural, interethnic, interclass, or interreligious distinction present between the director and donor, or between the director/donor and the community at large. Therefore there is no risk of othering.

None of the remaining indicators relate to this circumstance. Go straight to scoring and implications.

OR

There is an intercultural, interethnic, interclass, or interreligious distinction present between the director and donor, or between the director/donor and the community at large. There is also evidence of one or more of the following:

- The stakeholder with a background different to that of the children and families speaks the language of the community.

- The stakeholder with a background different to that of the children and families has integrated into community life.

- The stakeholder with a background different to that of the children and families has friendships or positive interactions with local families that allows him/her to break down stereotypes of the community.

- The stakeholder with a background different to that of the children and families has close contact with the families of children in care.

- The stakeholder with a background different to that of the children and families recognizes the intercultural dynamic and barrier and defers relevant decisions or considerations to the person with stronger local knowledge and cultural competency.

Total   _____

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THEME 4: ORANGE LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS   Director   Donor

There is an intercultural, interethnic, interclass, or interreligious distinction present between the director and donor, or between the director/donor and the community at large. There is also evidence of one or more of the following:

- The stakeholder with a background different to that of the children and families is not well-integrated into the local community.

- The stakeholder with a background different to that of the children and families does not have relationships or friendships with local families or families of a similar background to the children.

- The stakeholder with a background different to that of the children and families does not speak the language of the local community well enough to form close relationships with families and individuals from the local community.

- The stakeholder with a background different to that of the children and families lives on-site in the institution, either permanently or during visits.

- The stakeholder with a background different to that of the children and families demonstrates through language and behavior the divide and discrimination between the dominant ethnic/class group and the minority ethnic/class group of the children and their families.

- The stakeholder with a background different to that of the children and families raises concerns about whole ethnic/class groups regarding:

  - Their ability to provide adequate care for children;

  - Their treatment or abuse of children;

  - Their ability or willingness to care for non-related children;

  - Children living with non-related families being treated as domestic servants; or

  - The supervision provided to children, typically around older children supervising younger children.

- The stakeholder with a background different to that of the children and families is dismissive of communities' capacity to care for children, often pointing to poverty, demonstrating a superficial understanding of poverty, and/or attributing poverty to personal behavior.

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- The stakeholder with a background different to that of the children and families raises concerns about sending children to live with families of a particular religion.

- The stakeholder with a background different to that of the children and families uses language that stereotypes or looks down on parents and their capacity to parent on the basis of a social classification, such as their socio-economic status, ethnicity, or education level.

Total _____

_____

SCORING: THEME 4

Instructions: Using the following scoring key, select the appropriate color category for the director and the donor. For this theme, it may be necessary to select a different category for each stakeholder based on their individual scores. Refer to the 'Determining Implications' column to select the color category that best fits the situation. Once the appropriate color category has been selected, refer to the corresponding color-coded category of implications in the tables below. Read through and consider the explanation, suggested actions, and funding implications.

Category	Instructions	Director	Donor	Determining Implications
Orange Light	Select the orange category implications for the director and/or donor if the following was selected: ▪ 1 or more orange indicators			If **one or both** stakeholders are in the orange category, refer to the **orange category implications.**
Green Light	Select the green category implications for the director and/or donor if: ▪ There is no interethnic/class/intercultural dynamic present Or there is, and the following was selected: ▪ No orange indicators; and ▪ 1 or more green indicators			If **both** stakeholders are in the green category, refer to the **green category implications.**

THEME 4: GREEN LIGHT CATEGORY IMPLICATIONS

Explanation

In this situation, othering is not evidenced as an issue and therefore is unlikely to have an impact on the transition. This may be either because both stakeholders share a similar background with the community at large, or they have demonstrated action that suggests that othering has been countered through their awareness and/or integration into the local community and culture.

In transition cases where there is an intercultural, interethnic, interclass, or interreligious distinction at play, othering is less likely to occur and less likely to be problematic if barriers to interaction with local families and communities, such as language, have been removed. In cases where the stakeholders frequently interact, both personally as well as professionally, with members of the 'out-group', these personal relationships act to break down the categories of 'us' and 'them' that form as a result of othering. This can give the stakeholders a more nuanced context to think about when considering the feasibility and safety of reintegration and family-based care.

It is typically easy to assess 'othering' by listening to the language used to describe or discuss the families and communities of the children and/or in general with respect to the 'out-group'.

In cases where othering is not an issue, the director and donor are likely to be able to recognize difference without prescribing a negative value to it in all instances. As a result, it is unlikely that there will be obstacles based on the presence of biases, and the stakeholders will likely be open to exploring family-based care on a case-by-case basis, as long as they know that there is a robust assessment process to guide decision-making. Rather than holding up stereotypes as immovable barriers, they are more likely to demonstrate a desire to overcome evidenced factors and barriers that affect the specific children and families their programs support. These can include proximity to services, migration of parents or caregivers, or the lack of socialization of foster care in the community.

Suggested Actions

Stage 1: Engagement

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 2: Preparation and Onboarding

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

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Stage 3a: Active Transition - Full Transition

Organizational Processes

- If no concerns have been raised in any of the themes and full transition is feasible and recommended, explore the possibility of piloting family-based care in the context of post-transition programming discussions.

- Where foster care is an under-developed part of the alternative care continuum in the country, it is critical to identify organizations who are well placed and capable of undertaking pilots with government permission and partnership.

- Capture learnings from the transition process as these cases can often become excellent case studies for breaking down the barriers of othering in other transition projects.

- Consider documenting case studies in video format, targeting other organizations in the same country and similar contexts.

Reintegration Processes

- Establish a case management system and social work supervision framework, outlining roles and responsibilities of social workers and stakeholders involved in the transition process. For further suggestions on the social work component of transition, refer to Theme 2: Green Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 3a, page 45.

- Consider the feasibility of the director's involvement in the social work processes. If there are no concerns identified under other themes, it may be appropriate to train the director to take on a role in the social work process.

- If the director wishes to play a key role in reintegration, consider engaging an external third-party source to provide the social work supervision. Include this in the document outlining the various roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in the transition process.

- Ensure the social workers are empowered and have sufficient authority to carry out their functions to manage any residual bias from the director. Put mechanisms in place to restrict or remove the involvement of the director should issues or concerns arise throughout the reintegration process.

Stage 3b: Active Transition - Safe Closure

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Funding Implications

- There may be costs associated with capturing learning, particularly if it involves travel and videography.

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THEME 4: ORANGE LIGHT CATEGORY IMPLICATIONS

Explanation

In transition cases where there is an intercultural, interethnic, interclass, or interreligious distinction at play, othering is more typically present when the stakeholder has not been able to integrate into the local community and culture, or has not developed relationships with members of the 'out-group'. As such, the stakeholder will have little opportunity to break down stereotypes about families and their caregiving capabilities. Biases and barriers that stem from othering are more likely to be present and to have a bearing on the transition, and therefore need to be addressed upfront. If left unaddressed, they can result in a failure to achieve buy-in or cause issues related to placements during the reintegration process. Othering can also be intentionally used by one stakeholder to discourage transition and retain the institutional care model.

It is typically easy to assess 'othering' by listening to the language used to describe or discuss the families and communities of the children, and/or the language used in general regarding the 'out-group'. When concerns are raised through generalized sweeping statements about culture, ethnic groups, class, or religious groups, othering is likely taking place. Common examples are:

- '[Insert ethnic group] won't care for non-related children.'

- 'Children will be abused if they are sent back to families from [insert ethnic group or location].'

- 'All [insert ethnic group or culture] children are at risk of being trafficked.'

- 'We won't send children back to [insert religion] families.'

In this situation, othering is a risk factor with at least one of the stakeholders. The degree of influence that othering will have on the transition depends on how much influence or direct control the stakeholder has over the decision-making. If both stakeholders scored in this category, the impact is likely greater. If it is the donor, it will depend on the loyalties between the donor and director. When the director is loyal to the donor, this is of greater concern as the director may not act to mitigate the othering despite not sharing the same biases (refer to Theme 2: Loyalty and Commitment, page 32). The presence of othering in the director is more difficult to manage and it may have a more far-reaching impact, beyond buy-in and into the assessments and decision-making process regarding children's placements.

To address othering before it has an adverse impact on the transition, it is helpful to create opportunities for stakeholders to raise their concerns, reflect on their assumptions, and challenge them through the use of examples, case studies, and interactions with parents and families. Consider discussing the safeguards built into the social work processes and how these are used, not to uphold stereotypes but rather to assess individual cases and make evidence-based decisions.

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Suggested Actions

Stage 1: Engagement

- Achieving buy-in for transition can be more difficult for stakeholders who are concerned that children cannot be adequately cared for in families. Facilitate opportunities for vicarious or observational learning in order to help debunk myths and stereotypes.

- Videos, case studies, study tours, and connecting stakeholders with other organizations implementing family-based care are all means of achieving this. Use these tools to create opportunities and guide discussions to challenge assumptions.

- Put institutional care in context, highlighting that it is not a traditional or normative practice in any culture. This can help stakeholders reflect on assertions that foster care and domestic adoption will not work in their context. In many cases there is evidence of traditional kinship and non-formal foster arrangements in communities where institutions operate.

- Discuss how institutional care was originally introduced, adopted, and accepted into the country where the institution is operating and demonstrate that there is a precedent for introducing new practices.

- Provide a clear overview of the case management process, emphasizing that:

  - no child will be placed into an unsafe or unsupported situation;

  - decisions will be made on a case by case basis;

  - children will be involved in the decision making; and

  - rigorous and thorough assessments, including identification of family and community strengths and risks, will be conducted to ensure that children will be safe.

- Prepare for the possibility that the assessments may prove their assumptions right in some cases. In such cases, lead follow-up discussions outlining a range of potential interventions, family strengthening and support options, and exploring other family- and community-based alternatives, taking into account confidentiality and privacy considerations.

Stage 2: Preparation and Onboarding

- To break down stereotypes, it may be necessary to develop an awareness with stakeholders regarding the structural causes of marginalization, disadvantage, and poverty.

- Discuss how interventions, including post-transition programming, should recognize and address such structural causes. Interventions can include:

  - assisting families to access existing social protection mechanisms such as cash transfer programs, pensions, health care cards, and school scholarships; and

  - incorporating parent-led advocacy into approaches.

- Facilitate ongoing discussions aiming to break down stereotypes. If they are not addressed adequately, stakeholders may be unwilling to invest in family strengthening interventions that are necessary to facilitate the safe reintegration of children.

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- If stakeholders hold stereotypes regarding the religion of families of the children, consider facilitating child-friendly and appropriate ways in which children can communicate their wishes and concerns to the donors. These might include their views on:

  - placements with their families;

  - the right to participate in decisions regarding their own lives; and

  - the right to practice a religion of their own choosing.

- Identify and involve religious leaders in the reintegration process, where appropriate, so that a child is able to participate in a faith community of their choosing once in family-based care.

Stage 3a: Active Transition - Full Transition

Reintegration Processes

- Ensure that family and community assessment frameworks are strengths-based, and that they can identify protective factors in the community and resulting from cultural practices. This can help address negative stereotypes and ensure that social workers have the evidence to counter stakeholder assumptions about risk that are not based on fact or evidence.

Breaking Down Stereotypes about Families

- Encourage stakeholders to organize and attend family days and participate in community events and life. This gives them the opportunity to develop relationships with families, both of the specific children in the institution as well as within the community generally and can be a catalyst to counter othering.

- If othering has been evidenced with the director, it is not advisable for him/her to be directly involved in the social work assessments or decision-making regarding placements.

- Establish a social work supervision framework and consider engaging an external third-party source to provide the social work supervision. Include this in a document outlining the various roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in the transition process.

- Ensure that the social workers are empowered and have sufficient authority to carry out their functions to manage any residual bias from the director. Put mechanisms in place to restrict or remove the involvement of the director should issues or concerns arise throughout the reintegration process.

- If othering has been evidenced with donors, provide details of the children's histories in a way that protects confidentiality. Donors may have been given only brief or sensationalized information about the situation that led to the separation of the children from their families, and it may have been inaccurately framed as abandonment or rescue. Addressing this can help break down othering.

Stage 3b: Active Transition – Safe Closure

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Funding Implications

- Allocate budget for study tours and other methods of connection with peers, particularly where travel is required.

- Additional funding may be required to cover more oversight and technical support in cases where it takes longer to achieve legitimate buy-in.

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Theme 5: Clientism and Social Obligation

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ABOUT THIS THEME

Clientism is a vertical, or hierarchical, system of two-way social relationships that exist to facilitate reciprocal exchange between patrons (those higher up in the hierarchy) and clients (those lower down in the hierarchy). Patron-client relationships are mutually beneficial despite being unequal. The role of the patron is to provide clients with opportunity, goods, resource, and protection, while clients, in exchange, offer alliance, allegiance, support, and in some cases, money. Patron-client relationships can be one-off (a time- and situationally-bound exchange) but this is uncommon. Typically they are ongoing relationships.

Patron-client relationships can exist at three levels:

- **Interpersonal level:** a relationship between two persons, i.e., a single patron and a single client

- **Group level:** where the patron role extends over a group of people or a network. This is common in contexts where patronage is closely associated with kinship but it can extend beyond kinship networks.

- **State level:** where political systems are defined by clientism and resource flows along patronage lines in exchange for political support, votes, and party allegiance.

Patron-client relationships are built upon trust and create a strong sense of binding social obligations. They are common in many parts of the world, including in many countries where transition work is increasingly taking place. Where present, patron-client relationships often have a strong influence on how residential care institutions function, how the admission and recruitment processes work, the expectations of families whose children are in care, and the behavior of individual stakeholders. The social obligations that stem from patron-client relationships are often unspoken yet need to be understood due to their influence on expectations and receptivity to change, including changes made to current processes and operations.

Tension can arise when the proposed approach to transition will force stakeholders, particular the directors, to act in a counter-cultural way or defy the normal social expectations that result from clientism. Families may also be resistant to reintegration if they perceive it will result in a disconnection from the patronage network they rely on for current or future support. There is a higher likelihood of these tensions arising in transitions that involve a cross-cultural dynamic where the overseas donor or the international practitioner) may not be aware of the presence of clientism and the resulting social obligations.

A common example of the intersection between clientism and institutions is when institutions are set up to benefit children and families from the director's own community and he/she is expected to admit children along patronage lines rather than basing the decision on evidence of need or other criteria or thresholds. These institutions are often a means for rural families to gain access to education in urban centers. Such arrangements may come with an expectation that the director will use his/her relationships with donors and organizations to secure other types of support, including tertiary education or scholarships. It can even have implications for marriage prospects, particularly for girls.

Social obligations can also extend to the relationship between the director and staff of the institution. This can exacerbate the resistance to transition when staff, to whom the director has an obligation to provide for and protect, may anticipate or experience a loss of income or employment.

Common points in the transition process that can clash with social obligations and result in tension include:

- **Establishing gatekeeping policies and mechanisms to prevent or regulate admissions**

    - This can leave directors without a means to fulfil their social obligations by providing resource and opportunity to families and clients in their network, or by admitting children referred to them by a higher-up patron.

- **Commencing reintegration assessments**

    - Pursuing reintegration for children who are relatives of the director, or children who have been admitted into care based on social obligations to families, can create challenges for the director as reintegration may be perceived to be at odds with the commitment that directors have made to the children's families.

- **Developing structured financial systems, including budgets and reporting**

    - Tightening financial processes may mean that funds can no longer be used in a discretionary way, preventing directors from providing resources and responding to needs which fall outside of the scope of the program or beneficiary group.

- **Hiring suitably qualified staff and social workers**

    - Directors may have historically hired staff who are related to or in the director's patronage line. If a requirement to hire staff on the basis of qualifications is introduced, such as trained social workers, it could be met with some resistance. This is exacerbated if existing staff who are relationally connected to the director will be replaced.

Note: Discretionary use of funds in contexts where social obligations are strong and binding can often be conflated with misappropriation. However, it is important to distinguish between normative social obligations of patrons and the fraudulent use of funds. Where such behavior is misinterpreted and accusations are leveled, the resulting irreparable breach of trust and relationship can adversely affect the transition. It is therefore important to carefully consider what is happening by examining the issue in the broader cultural context.

Understanding the relevant social norms and obligations, as well as understanding which behaviors can be directly attributed towards those norms, can help the practitioner avoid creating unnecessary tension or hostility between families and the director, the donor and director, or between technical support staff and the director. It can help factor in alternate ways for stakeholders to meet their social obligations without resorting to the use of institutional care or blocking transition. This will ultimately result in better cooperation and transparency. It can also reduce the likelihood of suspicion and false accusations that can damage relationships and compromise the transition. This happens as each party interprets the behavior of the other through their own cultural lens and draws inaccurate conclusions that erode trust.

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As such, in the context of cross-cultural transitions, the practitioner may need to act as a cultural mediator to pre-empt and avoid tensions and develop culturally sensitive strategies that factor in new ways of helping stakeholders meet their social obligations.

There have been many cases uncovered in the early stages of transition where stakeholders are exploiting the system of social obligations inherent to the culture, in order to control and coerce parents. In these cases, it is important to understand what is taking place and assess for the severity, as it will have an impact on the willingness of parents to engage in reintegration. This can result in directors or donors having significant power to disrupt or sabotage the transition process, even after children have returned to their families. In the worst cases, it can point to activity that may be unlawful or criminal.

> Note: In cultures where clientism is dominant, its effect on the functioning of an institution and on the reintegration process can be mitigated in countries where there are formal gatekeeping mechanisms in place that cannot be bypassed and which rigorously regulate entry into and exit out of alternative care. It is possible that clientism can nevertheless highly influence the reintegration process of children who were admitted into institutional care prior to the development of such gatekeeping mechanisms and are not listed on government databases. This is a dynamic that should be assessed.

CASE STUDY INDICATORS: THEME 5

BRIDGES CASE STUDY	FIREFLY CASE STUDY	LIGHTHOUSE CASE STUDY
Theme 5 Rating: Green	**Theme 5 Rating: Orange**	**Theme 5 Rating: Red**
▪ Patronage is dominant system	▪ Patronage is dominant system ▪ Relatives of director in care were not disclosed to donor ▪ Children retained in care to fulfill social obligations ▪ Significant power dynamic between director and families ▪ Families hesitate to make decisions without approval from director	▪ Patronage is dominant system ▪ Evidence of written contracts involving threats and confiscation of identity cards ▪ Evidence that names of children have been changed and documents falsified ▪ Evidence of deceptive recruitment and suspected trafficking

INDICATORS: THEME 5

Instructions: Read through the indicators listed in the following color-coded tables. **Tick all indicators that relate to the operations of the institution**. *For this theme, it is not relevant to associate the specific indicators with either the director or the donor. Instead, simply indicate whether there is evidence of the indicators in the operations and context of the institution. The reasons for this will be further explained in the implications section below. Tally the number of indicators ticked for the institution under each color category in the Total box.*

THEME 5: GREEN LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS	Evidence
▪ Patronage is not the dominant relational system of the country or culture where the institution operates.	
None of the remaining indicators relate to this circumstance. Go straight to Theme 6.	
OR	
Patronage is the dominant relational system of the country or culture where the institution operates and there is evidence of one or more of the following:	
▪ The primary reason children are sent to the institution is to access education, including tertiary education.	
▪ Some of the children in care are related to the director or founder.	
▪ Some of the children come from the same community or area of origin as the director or founder.	
▪ The children are all or mostly from the same ethnic minority group as the director or founder.	
▪ Recruitment typically happens along relational lines, i.e., families, ethnic minority groups, or church denominational relationships.	
Total	

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THEME 5: ORANGE LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS   Evidence

Patronage is the dominant relational system of the country or culture where the institution operates and there is evidence of one or more of the following:

- Some of the children in care are related to the director and this has not been disclosed to the donor.

- There are verbal or written contracts in place that stipulate limitations for contact between parents and children.

- There are verbal or written contracts that stipulate that the child must remain in care for a set period of time, usually until the child reaches the age of 18 years or after matriculation.

- There is evidence that the stakeholder has used or abused his/her power in an unequal relationship, such as employer-employee, benefactor-beneficiary, patron-client, in order to recruit and retain children in the institution.

- The stakeholder has personal vested interests or motivations that incentivize the long-term institutionalization of children, but these interests or motivations are not of a profit-seeking or exploitative nature.

- Children are retained in institutional care for the purpose of fulfilling social obligations to the families of the children, i.e., to provide education, scholarships, or gain access to opportunities for overseas marriages for girls.

Total   _____

THEME 5: RED LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS   Evidence

Patronage is the dominant relational system of the country or culture where the institution operates and there is evidence of one or more of the following:

- There is evidence of contracts, usually written, that are used to strip parents of their parental rights.

- There is evidence of contracts involving threats or use of control to subordinate parents to the directors, such as financial penalties, threats of legal action, or confiscation of identity cards if parents violate the terms of the contract.

- There is evidence that children's names have been changed, documents such as birth certificates or parents' death certificates have been falsified, and/or deceptive recruitment has occurred, which may indicate trafficking.

Total   _____

SCORING: THEME 5

Instructions: Using the following scoring key, select the appropriate color category for the institution. For this theme, select the color category that best fits the situation. Once the appropriate color category has been selected, refer to the corresponding color-coded category of implications in the tables below. Read through and consider the explanation, suggested actions, and funding implications.

Category	Instructions
Red Light Category	Refer to the red light category implications if the following was selected: ▪ One or more red indicators
Orange Light Category	Refer to the orange light category implications if the following was selected: ▪ No red indicators; and ▪ One or more orange indicators
Green Light Category	Refer to the green light category implications if the following was selected: ▪ No red indicators; ▪ No orange indicators; and ▪ One or more green indicators

IMPLICATIONS: THEME 5

THEME 5: GREEN LIGHT CATEGORY IMPLICATIONS

Explanation

Clientism not present in the context

In this situation, clientism is not a relevant dynamic and therefore has no bearing on the transition process.

Skip the rest of this theme and go straight to Theme 6.

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Clientism present in the context

In this situation, patronage or social obligations is likely playing a strong role in the admission of children, and it will be equally important to consider this dynamic in the transition. The system is most likely being utilized by families and communities to secure the services and opportunities they perceive as beneficial for their children. However, it is likely not being used to serve concerning vested interests of stakeholders, such as profit, power, or access to children for the purpose of exploitation.

Failure to consider the presence of social obligations in the transition process may result in barriers and unspoken resistance from families, from the director, and/or from staff of the institution. It is therefore important to consider strategies that are culturally sensitive, factoring in these obligations and identifying alternative means of fulfilling them. Deeming them 'wrong', 'corrupt' or a 'conflict of interest' is counterproductive and may push related behaviors underground, further eroding transparency.

Stakeholders who operate within a patronage system may feel as strongly bound to their social obligations as individuals feel bound to their legally-recognized and contractual obligations within a non-patronage system. In some cases, these social obligations are overlooked by the donor or practitioner providing technical support because of a lack of awareness of the existence of the patron-client system. In other cases, a lack of cultural sensitivity or cultural bias leads the donor or practitioner to dismiss the weight of these social obligations and label them negatively because of the higher value they place on their own cultural systems.

Resistance stemming from the failure to address these social obligations should therefore be viewed as a flaw in the transition strategy, as opposed to a judgement of character of the director, families, or staff. Ascribing negative value to social norms in another culture can lead to misplaced blame and demonization of individuals acting fully within the bounds of socially acceptable behavior in their own cultural context. This is a critical dynamic to identify and appropriately address in transition work, as failure to do so often compromises the integrity of processes, particularly social work assessments and family reconnection efforts.

Suggested Actions

Stage 1: Engagement

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 2: Preparation and Onboarding

- Work with the director to develop positive messaging to introduce the concept of reintegration to the families of children in the institution. Directors may be reluctant to highlight the harmful effects of institutional care as a rationale for transition because it could result in a loss of face or status. It may also be perceived as a failure in the fulfillment of their social obligations.

Fulfilling Social Obligations

- Identify which aspects of the transition may conflict with the social obligations of the director, families, and staff (refer to Theme 5: About This Theme, page 85 for common examples). In consultation with the director and other relevant stakeholders, develop a range of alternative ways through which directors, families, and staff can simultaneously fulfill their social obligations and work towards transitioning out of institutional care. This may seem superfluous from a technical perspective but is critical to achieving culturally sensitive strategies that can push transition forward.

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- For example, a director can be supported to provide scholarships to children whose parents wish to place them in the institution to access education. This allows the director to fulfill his/her social obligations to provide for children in his/her community without resorting to institutional care.

Stage 3a: Active Transition – Full Transition

Organizational Processes

- Provide clarity to staff around their roles and employment by creating multiple opportunities for them to ask questions and request assistance. A lack of clarity can result in subconscious sabotage of the transition process, impacting assessments and influencing how children view reintegration.

- Explore the possibility of new roles for existing staff in post-transition programming. As far as is possible, ensure that all staff have clarity about their post-transition employment status and options.

- Facilitate training and upskilling of existing staff to transition into new roles. Where new roles for existing staff are not feasible, support them to secure alternate employment and access relevant training.

- Consider options for post-transition programming that allow the director to run family strengthening or community development initiatives in his/her community of origin. This allows the director to fulfill his/her social obligations to provide for children in his/her community without resorting to institutional care.

- If the recruitment of children into institutional care had been taking place along relational lines of the director, it is likely that there will be a cluster of children from his/her community that could be supported to remain in their families through the post-transition programming described above.

- In cases where families are concerned about being disconnected from patronage lines and the associated loss of support, consider providing some form of support to families throughout the duration of post-transition programming. Discussing only the idea of short-term support fails to address the social obligations that would have resulted in long-term support had the child remained in institutional care.

Reintegration Processes

Navigating Reintegration within Patronage Systems

- In cases where directors are in a patron-client relationship with families of children in the institution, support the director to be the primary communicator making the case for reintegration. Social workers are often unsuccessful in this role because they lack the authority with which to address concerns of how reintegration might negatively impact the support families receive. Families are unlikely to discuss or accept proposed changes to the existing terms of support from someone outside of the patron-client relationship and will typically look to the director for confirmation and guidance in how to proceed.

- Early in the process, identify which children may be related to the director or staff. Prior to commencing assessments, use an open and culturally sensitive approach to discuss with the director how reintegration may be outworked for those children.

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- Address any fear or assumption that the presence of clientism will be negatively judged or dismissed by the practitioner and/or donor. This may help to avoid situations where the director or staff are unwilling to disclose information about children related to them due to a fear of negative consequences.

- Develop a plan to manage the following dynamics if they become relevant:

  - The potential for a conflict of interest if the director or related staff are involved in assessments and decision making for placements of children related to them.

  - Whether it is feasible or appropriate to explore the possibility of the director or staff becoming kinship carers for children related to them, in the case that the families of the children may be resistant to reintegration because of social obligations and commitments to the director.

- Consider the potential impacts of clientism on the process of determining family support plans. Enforcing a purely threshold and needs-based criteria for the provision of support may clash with social obligations and cause tension between the families and the director. This can result in families resisting and rejecting reintegration altogether.

- If assessments reveal that families may not meet the criteria for support, consider providing one-off support packages. While this may seem to conflict with social work principles of empowering families, it may be necessary to ensure a culturally sensitive approach and to remove unnecessary barriers to reintegration.

Stage 3b: Active Transition - Safe Closure

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Funding Implications

- Allocate budget to enable directors to provide minimal supports to families in order to fulfill social obligations under a patronage system.

- Additional funds may be required for directors to provide ongoing support for reintegrated children in order to fulfill social obligations.

- There may be costs associated with sourcing external training in the areas of social work, project design, and post-transition programming.

THEME 5: ORANGE LIGHT CATEGORY IMPLICATIONS

Explanation

In this situation, it is possible that hierarchical systems such as clientism and social obligations are utilized to retain children in care and effect a degree of social control over their parents and families. While the responsibility of a patron is to provide protection, access to resource, and opportunity to clients, it is a client's obligation to provide loyalty and support to the patron, and by doing so, serve his/her patron's interests.

It may be in the interests of the director, donor, or institution to retain children in care in order to achieve the organization's goals and to align with the underlying motivation for running the institution. For example, if it is to train the next generation of leaders, or to ensure that disadvantaged children achieve a high level of education, retaining children in the institution throughout adolescence could be perceived as important to that goal. Directors or donors might use social obligations to discourage parents from removing their children out of the institution before that goal can be achieved.

This is often driven by a strong belief that the institution is in the best interests of the children, often for a specific reason rather than in general, and social obligation and patronage is being used to protect this opportunity for children. In some but not all cases, there might be some level of discrimination that assumes that the parents will not act, or will not know how to act, in the best interests of their children, validating these measures being put in place. In these cases, this dynamic can generally be seen in combination with othering, as discussed in Theme 4.

Child sponsorships can also incentivize the use of social obligations to effect social control. Individual donors may desire to see their sponsored child grow up, and quasi-parental relationships are often fostered by child sponsorship programs. A high turnover of children in sponsorship programs can threaten the viability of fundraising, particularly if donors are under the impression that the children do not have parents or families to care for them. Therefore, as a funding approach, child sponsorship can inadvertently encourage the use of social obligations to control the behavior of parents and prevent children from returning home, for the purpose of maintaining the donors' assumptions and support.

It is important to understand this dynamic, if it is present, and factor it into the transition strategy. Parents may otherwise be unwilling to consider reintegration because of their loyalty to their patron. They might have concerns that breaking a social contract that has been established between the two parties would result in the loss of patronage and support from the patron. This can impact the assessment process as parents may be reluctant to disclose information, may appear disinterested in their children, or may seek to overemphasize risks in an attempt to ensure that their children remain in care and the status quo remains in place.

It is also important to refrain from labelling or criticizing parents for the aforementioned behavior. Unless the transition strategy is culturally sensitive to social contracts and obligations, the issues can often lie with the approach and a failure to interpret what is happening, rather than the individual parent.

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Suggested Actions

Read through and consider the suggestions under Theme 5: Green Light Category as many will be relevant to both categories.

Stage 1: Engagement

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 2: Preparation and Onboarding

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 3a: Active Transition - Full Transition

Reintegration Processes

- Identify cases where social obligations may influence the feasibility of reintegration and determine why that may be. This can inform the development of plans through which social obligations can be fulfilled through reintegration.

- For example, where social obligations stipulate that a director is to provide educational support for a child until he/she passes her national matriculation examination, there is a possibility that both the director and the child's family will be resistant to the idea of the child returning home before this has been achieved. This can be addressed by developing a plan to continue providing financial support for the child to continue schooling in her community of origin and attend private tuition classes to prepare him/her for the examination.

- In some cases, children's files contain written agreements stipulating the length of time a child must remain in the institution or limiting contact between children and their families. In other cases, this information can be gathered by asking questions about the admission procedure as well as the relationships between the director/staff/donors and individual children and families.

- Work with directors, and donors if they are involved, to communicate explicitly or implicitly that:

  - the retraction of all such agreements, including written and verbal agreements as well as unspoken social obligations; and

  - these agreements and the limiting of contact between children and families was not mandated by child protection authorities.

- Support the director to be the primary communicator around the messaging above. Families will likely need a sense of permission from the director to reconnect with their children and consider the possibility of reintegration without fear that they are breaking a social contract.

- Work with the director to develop positive messaging to introduce the idea of re-establishing contact between children and families. Seek ways to frame the changes positively to avoid situations where the director risks losing face.

- For example, the director can introduce family reconnection as a newly funded program that the institution is now in a position to offer. Or he/she can invite families to special events and provide financial support to enable them to attend.

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- Develop and implement a family reconnection program, including as appropriate:

  - phone calls between children and families;

  - family visits to the institution; and

  - child visits to the family.

- Work with stakeholders and staff to encourage and facilitate family reconnection.

- Work with the director and caregivers to put in place a positive discipline strategy. Communicate frequently and explicitly that withholding family contact as punishment or threatening to send children home in response to challenging behaviors is not an acceptable form of discipline and is likely to hamper reintegration efforts.

Director Influences on Reintegration

- Recognize that where there is a power disparity between directors and families, and where directors have recruited children into institutions on this basis, the director is likely to have the ability to influence family attitudes towards both reintegration and interactions with social workers.

- In cases where directors are fully bought into the transition process, this influence could become useful in exerting a positive influence on families and making the case for reintegration. However, in cases where directors are not in full agreement or where they feel pressured to cooperate, there is a risk of directors using this influence to undermine transition and safe reintegration.

- Address any attitudes or beliefs the families may have about the merits of the institution that may have been cultivated or reinforced by the director as a way of exerting social control. For example, in some cases, directors, with the aim of ensuring that parents will agree to the long-term institutionalization of their children, tell parents that the only way their children can access certain benefits is to live in the institution. In such cases, communicate to the parents, in conjunction with the director, about how children can access post-placement support for their children.

- Where reintegration is feasible, and in the child's best interest, ensure that there is clarity amongst all relevant stakeholders regarding the minimum levels of support that will be offered to families. Donors and directors should agree upon this during the early stages of the reintegration process.

- Directors should communicate the minimum levels of support to families in clear and concrete terms, ideally during initial family meetings to discuss changes to the institution. If this is not addressed early or adequately, assessments may be sabotaged by families seeking to keep their children in institutions to be able to continue to access support.

- Include other stakeholders, such as village leaders and religious leaders, in the process of transition. This is particularly important in cases where they are in a patron-client relationship with community members and have brokered or been involved in the recruitment of children into institutional care.

- Where it is feasible and appropriate, work towards securing their buy-in through targeted awareness raising seminars and roundtables. Failure to engage these leaders could result in the re-institutionalization of children reintegrated into their communities, and they may continue to broker the transfer of other children into institutions to outwork their patron role.

Stage 3b: Active Transition - Safe Closure

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Funding Implications

- Allocate sufficient budget for family reconnection, including travel costs for children to visit families, families to visit children, and compensation for loss of income for families who are day laborers.

- Allocate budget for community level awareness raising and engagement with other stakeholders as necessary, particularly where travel is required.

- Additional funding may need to be secured for repeated visits to families for the purpose of breaking down social obligations and pursuing the possibility of reintegration with families who are fearful.

> Note: Consider keeping offsite copies of any contracts that parents have been required to sign or agree to. If the situation was to worsen or evidence of exploitation or intent to exploit was to be uncovered throughout the course of the transition, written contracts may be required as evidence.

THEME 5: RED LIGHT CATEGORY IMPLICATIONS

Explanation

These indicators point to a situation where deceptive recruitment and coercion may be taking place, in some cases constituting instances of trafficking and exploitation. This may be associated with significant child protection risks. These risks may increase if transition is pursued, particularly when:

- child protection measures are put in place;
- social workers are brought on-site;
- child files are examined in detail;
- assessments are commenced; and
- contact is made with families.

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Much of the escalation in risk can come from the threat of outsiders uncovering exploitation, fraud, abuse, or trafficking. In some cases, the individual subject to allegations of trafficking or abuse may try to circumvent disclosure or discovery of abuse, trafficking, or exploitation by removing or discrediting children before they have the opportunity to report allegations or present evidence. In other cases, parents may be contacted and threatened.

In this situation, it is not suitable to pursue full transition. Instead, safe closure and/or removal of the children should be the goal. This may be enacted as a forced closure by government or with support from an authorized body or agency. In some cases, it can be possible to remove the stakeholders subject to allegations, instate new management, and proceed with a safe closure under due process. However, unless criminal action is taken against the director, there is a strong likelihood that sabotage will continue via contact with and ongoing coercion of children and families.

There have also been cases where clientism has been used to secure the loyalty of government officials who have regulatory or monitoring responsibilities over institutions, often through corruption and payments. This can result in reported concerns being ignored or buried, and a failure to act in response to allegations, even when there is a formal response process in place within government.

Suggested Actions

Stage 1: Engagement

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 2: Preparation and Onboarding

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 3a: Active Transition - Full Transition

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 3b: Active Transition - Safe Closure

Organizational Processes

Conducting Child Protection Risk Assessments in a High-Risk Transition

- Conduct a full child protection risk assessment as a matter of urgency and use that to determine:

    - The degree of risk to children;

    - Whether a forced closure is warranted or required;

    - Whether the existing evidence is sufficient to pursue a forced closure, taking into account the laws and procedures governing forced closure;

    - Whether the children should be immediately removed and placed in emergency accommodation;

    - Whether the children should be moved to other alternative care settings before assessments commence, to safeguard against the risks associated with assessments;

    - Whether it is safe and feasible to work with the board to either temporarily (while the investigation is underway) or permanently remove the stakeholder subject to reasonable suspicion or allegations;

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- Whether there is any evidence of concerning government involvement, such as the falsification of documents or facilitation of irregular admissions;

- Whether there is a risk associated with reporting to the authorities;

- Whether there is any evidence of concerning government involvement, such as the falsification of documents or facilitation of irregular admissions; and

- Whether there is a risk associated with reporting to the authorities.

- Develop response and contingency plans accordingly.

- Pursue safe closure and reintegration of children.

- Permanent removal of a stakeholder is typically only feasible if the following elements are in place:

  - Robust child protection, staff discipline, and complaints handling policies and procedures enabling suspension or immediate dismissal;

  - The board is not complicit; and

  - The board will not act to protect the stakeholder subject to allegations.

- Using the [organizational governance and accountability audit](#), consider which, if any, governance strengthening needs to take place immediately to provide a framework for addressing concerns or removing personnel.

- Assess the relationships between the director, staff, and any other stakeholders to determine whether staff will act to protect the director and engage in sabotage or act to protect the children, particularly where a removal is being considered.

- If staff are related to the director, expect the same social obligations to extend to the staff and result in sabotage and cover-up. If staff are therefore not safe people for the children, develop an emergency staffing plan if the removal of children may be necessary.

- Ensure that any action to suspend or dismiss staff is in accordance with the law and the reporting procedures outlined in the organizational child protection policy.

- In cases where such procedures are not in place and other laws and regulations are insufficient, include the development of procedures as part of the emergency plan.

- All reasonable suspicions, allegations, disclosures, or evidence of criminal activity, including trafficking and exploitation of children, should be addressed through the appropriate criminal law and child protection mechanisms.

- Practitioners should determine the most appropriate way to report, as mentioned above, taking into account the laws, mandatory reporting obligations, situation of law enforcement in the country, and safety of the children who may still be in the care of the person subject to the allegations.

- In some countries it is safer to contact a non-government child protection investigative organization or unit as a first step. Such organizations should be duly licensed to conduct investigations and able to engage the local authorities in any response, where required. Where corruption within government is common or present, this may increase the accountability and likelihood of response.

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Reintegration Processes

Reintegration Amidst Safety Concerns

- Do not proceed with reintegration until the immediate safety concerns have been addressed and it is reasonable to assume that transition will not put the children at further serious risk. When concerns regarding stakeholders are of a serious nature, child protection responses should be the focus.

- Be aware that although the evidence may not be sufficient to establish serious or immediate risk at this point, establishing frameworks that create opportunities for disclosure could cause an escalation of violence or risks to children. Examples of where normative social work or child protection practices have led to an increase in violence or risk to children in institutions include:

  - installing child friendly suggestion boxes;

  - social workers meeting with children; and

  - implementing a child protection policy.

- If there are concerns for the safety of children but there is insufficient evidence and immediate removal of the stakeholder is not an option, consider engaging new or external staff for the purpose of increasing supervision of the stakeholder. It may be necessary to approach another child protection agency to assist with this.

- In cases where the director is subject to the allegations, provide a written report to the donors and seek their support for enacting any required emergency plans. If there is a child protection policy in place with a reporting mechanism, use this to secure donor agreement to outwork the course of action.

Therapeutic Support for Children and Donors

- Arrange for the provision of counselling and other therapeutic support to children. Children may have experienced a range of harms including coercion, manipulation, abuse, and exploitation.

- Consider the emotional support needs of the donors. The situation is likely to cause a significant amount of stress, and depending on the severity, can lead to trauma, particularly where trafficking is uncovered. In some cases, it may be necessary to refer the donors to counselling or other support.

- Where it is the safest and best course of action available, proceed with closure. Begin by assessing or developing a response framework to enable an appropriate response if the situation escalates or if further evidence is uncovered through the process. This can include ensuring proper staff contracts, child protection codes of conduct, disciplinary/complaints policies, and mechanisms to enable staff discipline and/or dismissal are in place.

- Document all events and evidence and keep copies of important documents off-site from the institution.

- Be prepared for a more complex family tracing process, particularly if children's names have been changed and identity documents have been falsified. Refer to this learning video resource on [Family Tracing for Children Without Adequate Documentation](#) for more ideas.

- Develop relationships with families to secure their trust and allay concerns before assessments commence. If fears related to contracts and social obligations are not addressed, assessments could be compromised.
- Consider holding community awareness raising events in source communities as part of re-establishing the narrative around institutional care.

Protective Factors in Communities

- Secure buy-in and cooperation from community leaders who can protect families and children from ongoing interference from directors.
- During the process of conducting family assessments, establish the relationship between families and the stakeholder subject to allegations. Consider any risks or threats to the personal safety and security of families.
- Secure family support and cooperation with reintegration.

Ensuring the Safety of Care Leavers

- Where possible, locate and make contact with any recent care leavers and determine whether they are safe or have outstanding support needs. Care leavers may have been forced to leave if they were a threat to the director or may have been subject to harm or abuse during their time in the institution.
- In some cases, directors have intentionally sabotaged the relationship between care leavers and their families in an effort to prevent disclosure or action in response to disclosure. As a result, these young people may be in high risk situations outside of the institution and require support.

Funding Implications

- Additional funding may need to be secured for investigations to collate evidence, particularly where stakeholder conduct may constitute unlawful behavior.
- Funding will likely need to be secured to hire social workers in cases where the reintegration process can be outworked.
- Additional funding may need to be secured for reintegration in the case of disillusioned donors ceasing funding partway through the transition process.
- Situations that warrant immediate closure and involve significant child protection risks are likely to require funding to:

  - Contract third-party services to support a forced closure where it exceeds capacity.
  - Secure emergency accommodation for children in cases where they need to be removed.
  - Conduct rapid assessments of families and implement family support plans.
  - Secure or contract legal support for investigation or prosecution.
  - Provide counselling and therapeutic support to children if abuse is uncovered.

- Additional funds may be required to cover high family tracing costs.
- Additional funds may be required to increase social worker visits to families and communities for the purpose of building trust and enhancing community support of families, prior to commencing assessments.

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Theme 6:
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ABOUT THIS THEME

Psychological ownership refers to the sense of ownership someone feels over something, such as an object, project, organization, outcome, mission, or even a physical space. It differs from legal ownership but can co-exist with legal ownership (e.g., the sense of ownership one feels over a house or vehicle one legally owns) or exist where legal ownership is absent (e.g., the sense of ownership one feels over a home one is renting).

Where psychological ownership exists without legal ownership, it is a perception or sense of ownership, often one that is intentionally cultivated through establishing roles. Cultivating psychological ownership is in most cases positive. This is because the flipside of ownership is responsibility, i.e., people feel responsible for what they own. Therefore, cultivating a sense of ownership is key to motivating people and securing good outcomes in terms of job performance, task completion, and sustaining commitment, such as child sponsorship. However, in more limited instances, cultivating psychological ownership can be a part of maintaining a situation that is deceptive or manipulative.

In the context of transition, the sense of ownership a donor or director has over the institution and over outcomes for children has a strong bearing on what role they will play and how much responsibility they will take throughout the transition. It will also influence the degree of involvement or control they would expect to have during different stages of the transition. It will be reflected in the roles and responsibilities they ascribe to themselves, regardless of whether it is the role they actually play or the role that has been formally established. For example, it is very common for donors to see themselves as implementing partners rather than solely donors. The key is therefore to understand each stakeholder's sense of ownership and responsibility, and work with each accordingly. Tensions and unnecessary complications can arise when a practitioner works and interacts with stakeholders, particularly donors, based on the practitioner's perception of their role versus the donor's own perception.

There are generally one of three scenarios at play when it comes to stakeholder ownership in transition work:

1. In some cases, the **roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders may be clearly defined**, and authority is delegated to each stakeholder in accordance with their formalized roles, responsibilities, and agreements. In these cases, both the director and the donor would expect to be engaged, consulted, and permitted to make decisions in accordance with their formalized roles and responsibilities, both during the buy-in stage and throughout the implementation of the transition. The donor will likely feel ownership only over funding decisions despite being interested and passionate about the work as a whole. The donor might agree with the rationale for transition and commit to funding the transition but would not expect to make the final decision as to whether the institution will transition or not.

2. In other cases, **stakeholders may perceive their roles to be more or less than their established donor and director roles**. Donors in particular may not see their role as confined to funding and funding-related decisions. It is common for them to see themselves as implementing partners, and as a result, will feel and assert some sense of ownership over the institution and operational decisions. There are situations where this may be actual, such as when there is a legal relationship between the overseas funding entity and the local implementing entity running the institution, through which power and ownership is granted to the donor entity. Or it can also happen when a donor is represented on the board of an institution giving the donor the dual roles of funding and governance.

There are other situations where it is psychological ownership that extends beyond their formal role. This is common in cases when the donor was the founder of the institution and continues to exert a high degree of power and control over the operations, despite only holding a fundraising role and having a director in place. Directors' powers can be constrained due to the degree of control exerted by the donor, whether he/she was the founder or not. Despite the director having legal authority over the entire implementing organization and its programs, in practice, his/her role may be reduced to managerial roles with all effective decision-making power resting with the donor.

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3. In yet other cases, **perceptions of ownership,** as opposed to legal or actual ownership, **are intentionally cultivated by directors to extend beyond formal roles and responsibilities** as a way to secure a stronger guarantee of funds from donors. This is where it can be borderline deceptive or manipulative. The most extreme examples of this are institutions with multiple names, one for each of their donors, whom have each been led to believe that the institution is their project and that they are the sole donor and often founder. This type of cultivated ownership creates a sense of responsibility in the donor to fully meet all of the needs of the institution and often results in requests for funds to meet exceptional needs that may or may not be related to the children, such as the cost of hospital visits and medical procedures for a family member of the director. In other cases, donors have been led to believe that they are members of the formal board of directors and have a legal governance responsibility when in reality the board has not been formally registered in-country and therefore has no actual authority.

As such, analyzing the ownership dynamics not only helps practitioners understand stakeholder expectations when it comes to decision-making, their ongoing involvement, and how to engage with them. It can also reveal when donor deception or manipulation may be taking place, which can indicate more widespread concerns.

CASE STUDY INDICATORS: THEME 6

BRIDGES CASE STUDY	FIREFLY CASE STUDY	LIGHTHOUSE CASE STUDY
Theme 6 Rating: Green	**Theme 6 Rating: Red**	**Theme 6 Rating: Red**
▪ No evidence of concerning motives for either stakeholder ▪ Clearly delineated roles for stakeholders and operation within boundaries	▪ Blurred distinction between implementing and donor organization ▪ Director as employee of donor without contract ▪ Evidence of other undisclosed donors ▪ Evidence of multiple donors perceiving the institution as their project	▪ Evidence of motives conflicting with child rights ▪ Blurred distinction between implementing and donor organization ▪ Evidence of other undisclosed donors ▪ Evidence of donor manipulation

Instructions: Read through the indicators listed in the following color-coded tables. Tick all indicators that relate to the operations of the institution. For this theme, it is not relevant to associate the specific indicators with either the director or the donor. Tally the number of indicators ticked for the institution under each color category in the Total box.

THEME 6: GREEN LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS   Evidence

There is no evidence of concerning motives, particularly related to profit-seeking, for either stakeholder, as indicated in Theme 3. There is also evidence of one or more of the following:

- The donor and director have clearly delineated roles and operate within the boundaries of the authority or influence ascribed to their respective roles.

- Roles are not clearly established or defined but the donor clearly sees his/her role as providing financial support and does not seek to, nor expect to be, involved in operational decisions.

- The donor entity funds other projects, programs, or implementing organizations.

                                                    Total _____

THEME 6: ORANGE LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS   Evidence

There is no evidence of concerning motives or personal vested interests that would override the rights and best interests of children, as indicated in Theme 3. However, there is evidence of one or more of the following:

- The donor sees him/herself as the founder or founding entity of the institution, despite never having had an operational role in the institution.

- The donor was the founder or founding director of the institution but does not make a present-day distinction between having an implementing role, as he/she did in the past, and his/her current funding role, as evidenced through speech or communication materials that differ from the legal structure or actual operations.

- The donor may refer to the children in care as 'our children.'

- The director is perceived to be or treated as an employee of the donor or donor entity, even in cases where an employer-employee relationship has not been legally established.

- The director has shown a hesitation to make decisions or has deferred to the donor in decision-making, despite the donor having no formal decision-making power.

                                                    Total _____

THEME 6: RED LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS

Evidence

There is evidence that the director has other motives or personal vested interests that are in conflict with and override the rights and best interests of children, as indicated in Theme 3. There is also evidence of one or more of the following:

- The donor has always played a fundraising role but perceives or speaks of having had a founding role in the institution. This is supported or encouraged by the director who is cultivating the donor's perception that the institution is his/hers. There may be photos of the donor on the wall at the institution or the institution might be named after the donor entity despite the implementing organization having a different name.

- The donor does not make a distinction between being an implementing organization and a donor entity, referring to the institution and/or children as 'ours' in speech or communication materials.

- There is evidence of, or reasonable grounds to suspect, that there are other donors involved who have not been disclosed to the principal donor.

- There is evidence to suggest that multiple donors perceive the institution to be 'theirs'.

- Children are encouraged to refer to the principal donor as 'Mom' or 'Dad'.

- Donor communications, such as child profiles, emails, newsletters, or websites, use sensationalism or commodify trauma and disadvantage to elicit donor support.

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SCORING: THEME 6

Instructions: Using the following scoring key, select the appropriate color category that best fits the situation. Once the appropriate color category has been selected, refer to the corresponding color-coded category of implications in the tables below. Read through and consider the explanation, suggested actions, and funding implications.

Category	Instructions
Red Light Category	Refer to the red light category implications if the following was selected: • 1 or more red indicators
Orange Light Category	Refer to the orange light category implications if the following was selected: • No red indicators; and • 1 or more orange indicators
Green Light Category	Refer to the green light category implications if the following was selected: • No red indicators; • No orange indicators; and • One or more green indicators

IMPLICATIONS: THEME 6

THEME 6: GREEN LIGHT CATEGORY IMPLICATIONS

Explanation

In this case, the role of each stakeholder is clearly defined, delineated, and respected by the other stakeholder. The decision to transition and how to approach transition likely lies with the director and board of the institution or the local organization which runs the institution. However, there are two exceptions to this, as outlined below:

1. government mandated closures or transitions where the government's power supercedes the decision-making powers of the entity running the institution and any other associated entities; or

2. situations where the donor represents a governance board with formally-established powers over the local governance board. In these situations the decision-making power rests with the donor governance board and the director is most likely to comply.

In all other cases, the donor and director are likely to view the transition as comprised of two distinct decisions:

1. the donor/donor entity's decision to cease funding (divest) of institutional care; and

2. the director/director's board's decision to transition their service model as the implementing organization.

The planned approach should respect the authority of each stakeholder to make the decision that corresponds to their role, whether as the implementing or funding party. The stakeholders will likely consult each other in the processes but are not likely to overstep the bounds of their roles and responsibilities. Therefore, equal emphasis should be placed on securing a decision from the donor to transition their financial support away from institutional care services (divestment) and a decision from the director to transition the model of care. Failure to appropriately manage this may result in the donor and director making conflicting decisions, which could result in divestment without transition, or transition without the financial support of the donor.

If the donor agrees to cease funding institutional care (divest), he/she is also likely to commit to financially supporting the transition if the director agrees to transition. He/she may understand that his/her decision to divest by offering to financially support the transition could influence the director's decision to transition. However, the donor is unlikely to expect their decision to force the director's hand. This is even more likely to be the case when the donor entity funds other projects and does not exist for the sole purpose of funding this institution. Any efforts to push the donor into using their funding to force the director to transition are unlikely to be successful as the donor may see this as a violation of the bounds of his/her role and responsibility.

Similarly, the director is likely to expect to be able to make an autonomous decision about transition. However, due to the dependence on funding, the donor's decision and/or offer to support the institution through transition is still influential. The director will likely seek the support of the donor but may not base his/her decision on the donor's decision.

Therefore, there are three scenarios that could arise:

1. **Transition + divestment:** Both parties decide in favor of transition and transition can proceed with donor support.

2. **Transition without divestment**: The director agrees to transition but the donor does not agree to transition their funding. Therefore, transition can proceed but new sources of funding need to be identified. The donor may seek another institution to fund.

3. **Divestment without transition:** The donor agrees to divest but the director does not agree to transition. The donor can be supported to withdraw responsibly and fund alternate family-based care or family strengthening programs.

Practitioners should be prepared to provide support to either or both stakeholders to implement the decisions made in all three of these scenarios.

There is also a strong likelihood that in any situation where roles and responsibilities have been clearly defined, some kind of partnership framework will be in place. If this includes written agreements and formal contracts regarding ownership, roles, responsibilities, and power, it is important to understand how they can be utilized to approach discussions and develop strategies with stakeholders regarding transition or divestment.

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Suggested Actions

Stage 1: Engagement

- Work with the stakeholders according to their power or influence over decision making.

- Work towards the goal of persuading the donor to divest, with the option of:

  - Divesting through transition, or

  - Divesting through ceasing the partnership in the event the director does not agree to transition.

- Assist the donor to understand the importance of positively influencing the transition by communicating a commitment to provide support, including financial support, to the director. This can give the director the confidence to make the decision to transition.

- Be mindful of managing the relationship between the stakeholders through this process. Undermining the director's authority or encouraging the donor to do so could cause tension in the partnership and result in a resistance to transition.

- Help donors understand that although they may not be responsible for the institution or have the authority to make decisions about its operations, they do have a responsibility to ensure that they are investing in a way that is in support of the best interests of children. This can help a donor see that they have a responsibility to act on the information they have about the harms of institutional care even if the director refuses to do so. Donors can otherwise feel powerless and obliged to continue supporting the institution in the event the director decides not to transition.

- Some donors may worry that pressuring the director to transition with the threat of divestment equates to donor control. Explain to donors how institutional care has proliferated in many countries due to the availability and ease of securing funding, and that institutional care is already a donor driven phenomenon in many contexts.

Stage 2: Preparation and Onboarding

- Recognize that the authority to make the final decision to transition lies with the director and work with him/her to secure an agreement. For further considerations regarding loyalties and motivations that are likely to impact the decision to transition, refer to Theme 2: Loyalty and Commitment and Theme 3: Motivation, pages 32 and 59.

- Recognize that the director also has the authority to determine how the transition is outworked and ensure that their decision-making authority is respected in planning and implementation. Where relevant, support the director to secure a funding agreement from the board.

- Clarify roles and responsibilities of both stakeholders throughout the different stages of the transition.

- Ensure that the delegation of authority and communication channels are established and documented. This can help to prevent situations where the director's authority is unintentionally undermined, or the director perceives a loss of control.

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- If the transition goes ahead with the support of the donor, develop a partnership agreement outlining the key commitments of both stakeholders and the practitioner providing technical support. This should include the goals, expectations, and conditions of the partnership, as well as concrete markers against which to track progress. For further suggestions, refer to 'Developing a Partnership Agreement' in Theme 2: Green Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 2, page 44.

- Sign all parties into the agreement once full buy-in has been secured with all primary and other stakeholders during Stage 2 of the transition timeline (refer to Diagram 1: Stages of Transition, page 7).

- If progress stalls or challenges arise throughout the transition process, or in the event that stakeholders do not uphold their commitments, refer to the partnership agreement to reiterate the goals of transition and reaffirm that the funding commitment is to transition, not ongoing institutional care.

Stage 3a: Active Transition - Full Transition

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 3b: Active Transition - Safe Closure

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Funding Implications

- New funding sources will need to be secured if the director agrees to transition but the donor does not agree to divest of institutional care.

THEME 6: ORANGE LIGHT CATEGORY IMPLICATIONS

Explanation

In these cases, there is a disparity between the perceived and actual roles, responsibilities, and powers of the stakeholders. It is more typical for the donor to experience a disparity between his/her actual and perceived responsibility and power than it is the director. However, there are two cases where the latter does occur.

Disparity between the perceived ownership and actual power of directors

In some cases, if there is a legal agreement between the boards of both stakeholder's entities that makes the entity running the institution subordinate to the donor entity, the donor may have more power over the director than the director realizes. This is rare and may only become apparent if the two stakeholders fail to come to a mutual decision and the donor asserts authority to override the director. Depending on the previous relationship between the two stakeholders, this may come as a surprise to the director.

In other cases, where the donor is the founder of the institution and the director was hired to fulfill that role, the donor may not have legal ownership but may still assert authority through influence and control of financial resources. This is typically because the donor still has relationships with the staff, children, and families, and in some cases, is better-connected and politically-protected than the director. In these cases where the two stakeholders do not come to a mutual agreement, whether for or against transition, the donor may override the director and seek to have him/her removed and replaced. The donor may use disciplinary measures to achieve this or may rely on less formal means, including through leaning on their contacts or withholding funding for the institution's operations or for the director's salary.

Disparity between the perceived ownership and actual power of donors

A donor who perceives him/herself to be a founder, or instrumental in the founding of, the institution is likely to expect the level of engagement commensurate with the founder profile. In this scenario, the donor will likely feel as though he/she has the right to speak into strategic and programming decisions and will not perceive this as inappropriate or as using funds to influence decisions. In most cases, the director will allow donors to play a significant role in decision-making, as this is likely an established pattern and they may perceive their relationship in patron-client terms, where the director's role as a 'client' is subordinate to the donor's role as 'patron'. Tensions can arise if the donor is not consulted and engaged in decision-making in a way that is commensurate with their perception of their role. In some cases, this can cause significant disruption of the transition or compromise the funding during the implementation phase.

> Warning: In this scenario it is highly unlikely that the director will be able to make an autonomous decision to transition without the donor's agreement. Attempts to work solely with the institution's director are unlikely to be successful. While the director may participate in meetings, trainings, and planning-related discussions, creating a perception of buy-in, the process is likely to stall or disintegrate at the point where tangible action towards reintegration is expected to start.

In some cases, donors have sought to remove, replace, or force the resignation of directors where they felt a transition was initiated without their involvement in decision-making. This is because they perceive that the director has acted without full authority and usurped them. This can be highly disruptive, particularly if the director has a good relationship with the children and families and a lot of knowledge to contribute to the assessment processes. It can also be highly destabilizing for the children and create unnecessary anxiety and uncertainty.

In other cases, donors who perceive that they have a founding role and feel that they have been insufficiently consulted, have withdrawn funding to start a new institution and sought to move the children into their new institution. Sometimes this happens immediately and in other cases it has happened after the children have been placed into families. There are numerous cases of founders whom have taken over or undermined a transition two to three years after it commenced, including shutting down post-transition supports for families and re-institutionalizing successfully reintegrated children.

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Suggested Actions

Stage 1: Engagement

- Involve the donor in the initial discussions during the buy-in phase and in ongoing high-level processes for decision-making. They may hold more power than the director and therefore attempts to achieve buy-in with the director alone may be unsuccessful. Decisions made by the director without the donor's involvement may be challenged by the donor.

- In cases where a donor perceives his/her role to be more operational than funding, ensure that he/she is adequately consulted and kept informed throughout the transition process. Donors who expect to have power over the decision making, as a function of their perceived role, are more likely to fund the transition if they feel consulted.

- Address the motives of donors who are original founders of the institution. They are more likely and better positioned to interfere with a transition that is well underway, especially if unresolved motives have prevented true buy-in or if they feel that they were not properly consulted.

- In cases where a donor is the original founder of the institution and expects to have more power than the donor role allows, be mindful that there is a risk they may terminate funding if buy-in is not fully achieved.

Stage 2: Preparation and Onboarding

- Using the [organizational and governance audit tool](#), clarify any agreements or structural relationship between the local implementing board and the overseas funding board.

- Inquire about the founding history of the institution in order to understand the original roles of all of the stakeholders, instead of considering only their present-day roles. This can help to identify the best way to work with all parties and prevent any issues that could destabilize the transition.

- Clarify roles and responsibilities of both stakeholders throughout the different stages of the transition.

- Ensure that the delegation of authority and communication channels are established and documented.

- As a part of these communication channels, clarify what needs to be communicated to the donor, and how and when. This becomes an important accountability measure to ensure that the transition process is not complicated by unauthorized or inappropriate involvement in processes, decision-making, or communications, particularly with caregivers, families, and children.

Stage 3a: Active Transition - Full Transition

- Ensure timely updates and written reports are provided to the donor so that they feel duly informed and aware of progress. This reinforces the agreed and appropriate means of communication. This could include regularly scheduled calls, which create a natural forum in which to raise concerns without direct interference in the transition.

Stage 3b: Active Transition - Safe Closure

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

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Funding Implications

- New funding sources will need to be secured if the donor terminates funding because buy-in has not been fully achieved and they expect to have more decision-making power than their roles stipulate.

THEME 6: RED LIGHT CATEGORY IMPLICATIONS

Explanation

This situation relates to donors who believe that they have the ownership and corresponding authority to affect a transition; however, this is a cultivated perception and is not actual power.

A donor who identifies as a founder may have greater perceived versus actual influence over the decision-making process, especially in cases where there is evidence that this perception has been cultivated. The actual decision-making power is likely to rest with the director. This may become apparent as the donor's attempts to initiate transition are blocked, despite his/her belief that he/she is in a position to drive such change. This is often exacerbated in cases where there are other donors that the 'principal donor' is not aware of.

In some cases, the director will superficially agree to the transition as initiated by the donor. However, once implementation commences, the director may stall, undermine, or block progress, demonstrating that buy-in was not legitimately achieved. There can be a cultural element to this in contexts where conflict avoidance and implicit communication are strong features. Therefore, stalling or blocking post agreement is not always a sign of something more serious but certainly can be.

In the event that the director has intentionally cultivated a founder identity for the donor, it may indicate that emotional manipulation is taking place. This usually happens because it results in high levels of ownership and associated long-term financial commitments from donors. Where this indicator is present, it is a red flag for other opaque and deceptive practices, such as:

- sensationalizing or falsifying children' stories and backgrounds;
- unnecessarily retaining children in care;
- limiting children's contact with parents;
- enticing children to lie to donors or volunteers; and
- poor financial transparency.

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Suggested Actions

Stage 1: Engagement

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 2: Preparation and Onboarding

- Seek to identify other donors involved in funding the institution and determine whether the institution is facilitating orphanage voluntourism. This information can often be found online, especially on social media platforms.

- Where other donors are identified, encourage the principal donor to engage them through a peer-to-peer advocacy approach promoting non-institutional care. Work to secure buy-in for transition or divestment across all of the donors involved in funding the institution.

- Where a group of donors have been identified and agree to collaborate, sign all donors into the existing partnership agreement, referring to 'Developing a Partnership Agreement' in Theme 2: Green Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 2, page 44. This prevents situations where inconsistent donor communications and behavior can result in the director playing donors off of each other and undermining the transition.

Identifying the Principal Donor

- To the extent possible, determine the amount of funding being provided by any other donors that have been discovered. Confirm whether the donor that has been involved in the transition process is the actual principal donor. This is of critical importance in cases where any newly-discovered donors turn out to be the actual principal donor but are unwilling to collaborate, as transition is likely to be compromised in this situation.

Stage 3a: Active Transition - Full Transition

- Consider creating a donor forum to encourage collaboration, information sharing, and foster relationships between the donors. This is likely to increase the chances of donors staying on the same page and working effectively together throughout the transition process.

- Schedule regular group calls to discuss ongoing progress and any concerns emerging from the transition process. This can create an element of positive peer pressure for donors who may not be fully committed to remain engaged and respond appropriately to concerning behaviors from directors.

Stage 3b: Active Transition - Safe Closure

- If it is discovered that the stakeholder that has been involved in the transition process is not the principal donor, and that the actual principal donor is not onboard, the likelihood of being able to successfully effect a transition or closure is limited. Consider options for divestment and reporting.

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- Once the donor makes ongoing funding conditional upon the director's cooperation with transition, it is possible that the director may attempt to secure new or additional funding in order to limit the decision-making power of the principal donor and resist the transition. Provide guidance to the principal donor on the process of giving notice of terminating funding and their relationship with the institution. For further suggestions on the divestment process, refer to Theme 7: Red Light Category Indicators under Suggested Actions for Stage 3b, page 134.

- In cases where donor manipulation by the director becomes apparent, there is a significant risk that the donor may cease funding partway through the transition process or as soon as the institution is closed. Work to keep disillusioned donors engaged to fund the reintegration of children where that is possible, and to fund other family- or community-based organizations to re-invest their current financial support into non-institutional services.

- In cases where donors experience feelings of betrayal throughout the transition process, offer to link them to adequate support through counseling services and connection to peers who have had similar experiences.

> Note: While these indicators alone are insufficient to draw a conclusion of unlawful activity or serious exploitation of children, they are often present in these instances. Refer to Theme 7: Red Light Category Implications, page 130, where this is covered in more detail.

Funding Implications

- New funding sources will need to be secured if donors divest.

- Additional funding may need to be secured for the cost of support services for donors from external providers.

> Warning: If financial profit was one of the motives for running the institution, it is likely to be unsuitable to involve the director in the social work aspects of reintegration or to pursue post-reintegration programming of a child protection or child welfare nature. While there may be more suitable options that still allow for a full transition, it may be more appropriate to pursue safe closure if red light categories are selected under other themes raising the level of risk.

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Theme 7:
Nature of the Partnership

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ABOUT THIS THEME

Partnerships can be contractual or relational in nature. Contractual partnerships are more formalized and structured and usually supported by policies. They can be formed between individuals or entities and are designed to protect the personal, financial, legal, and reputational risks to both parties. In contractual partnerships, the terms, obligations, responsibilities, and boundaries of the partnership are all documented in written contracts or agreements. Only behavior that breaches the written terms is a breach of the partnership.

A relational partnership is one based on trust, typically between individuals, such as the individual director and the individual donor. They tend to be less formal and less structured. Accountability is to the other partner and agreements may be purely verbal. If written agreements exist, they may be very minimal and scant. This is because they rely on the integrity of the stakeholders and not upon explicitly stipulated terms. A breach in the partnership takes place when one party breaches the trust of the other. The breach may not have any relevance to the project activities but if it compromises the integrity of the person, it will undermine the partnership, as trust and integrity are the foundations.

The nature of the partnership plays an important role in determining the starting point for a transition and the type of system that is present, in order to influence and manage change. In many ways, this one of the most significant themes included in this tool and one which integrates and expands on many of the implications outlined in the other themes.

Analyzing the partnership dynamic allows practitioners to understand how the institution and a potential transition will be affected by the combination of the director and donor characteristics. It helps practitioners understand whether a policy-based approach might be effective or whether it will be necessary to tap into relational influence to make a case and to guide transition. It also provides a lot of insights into the approach that may be required from a risk management perspective. It can provide clues as to whether the transition project is low-risk and highly conducive to success or highly complex and high-risk.

> Note: Under this theme the **nature of the partnership framework** will be assessed; however, this does not equate to an assessment of the **quality of the partnership framework**.

Qualifying Risk

In one sense, relational partnerships are more prone to evidencing higher risk. This is because relational-based partnerships rely on trust and reputation for transparency and accountability, and they may lack external safeguards or checks and balances. This does not imply that all relational-based partnerships lack transparency or involve unethical behavior. This is far from the case. Rather, it is a recognition of the fact that unethical and unlawful behavior can be more readily hidden, disguised, and perpetuated in the absence of structure. As a result, a stakeholder with the intention to exploit or misappropriate funds is more likely to seek relational-based partnerships because of that dynamic. The absence of structure can, in some cases, create an enabling environment in which opportunistic or profit-seeking behavior can emerge over time and be sustained. Therefore, it is a dynamic that warrants attention and reflection.

It is also important to recognize that in some cultural contexts, transparency and accountability are fostered through relational systems such as collectivism or even patronage, which involve well-defined reciprocal social obligations that effect social control. However, this may not carry over to relationships where one stakeholder is outside of the patronage system or the direct hierarchical lines of the partner stakeholder. It is therefore not a judgement of the inherent value of relational versus contractual systems, as this is somewhat culturally informed. This theme has been included as relevant in part to recognize trends that are largely occurring in cross-cultural situations where both cultural and geographical distance make transparency and accountability more difficult to foster.

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CASE STUDY INDICATORS: THEME 7

BRIDGES
CASE STUDY

Theme 7 Rating: Orange

- Legally registered entities and boards on both sides
- Relationship between two entities is formally established
- Functioning boards responsible for oversight of governance
- Funds transferred into bank accounts in entity name
- Periodic visits and reports
- Principal donor represents majority of funding
- Ad hoc funding structure
- Anecdotal reporting
- Photos and stories of children utilized for fundraising
- No evidence of motives conflicting with child rights

FIREFLY
CASE STUDY

Theme 7 Rating: Red

- Institution is not legally registered
- Funds transferred into director's personal bank account
- No Board on institution side
- No due diligence assessments conducted prior to partnership
- Insufficient organizational policies, financial procedures, program frameworks
- Child sponsorship as primary fundraising strategy
- Other concerning indicators under Themes 5 and 6

LIGHTHOUSE
CASE STUDY

Theme 7 Rating: Red

- Institution and board are not properly registered
- No due diligence assessments conducted prior to partnership
- Insufficient organizational policies, financial procedures, program frameworks
- Site visits are focused on relationships with children instead of audits
- Nepotism in staff hiring
- Receipts handwritten and issued by institution
- Other concerning indicators under Themes 5 and 6
- Motives conflicting with child rights

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INDICATORS: THEME 7

Instructions: Read through the indicators listed in the following color-coded tables. Tick all indicators that relate to the operations of the institution. For this theme, it is not relevant to associate the specific indicators with either the director or the donor. Tally the number of indicators ticked for the institution under each color category in the Total box.

THEME 7: GREEN LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS	Evidence

At minimum, the partnership displays the following characteristics:

- The institution is run by an entity legally registered in the country of operation.

- The Institution is appropriately registered with the relevant government agencies to operate residential services for children.

- The institution is up to date with license and registration requirements.

- There is an established legal entity on the donor side used to collect and disburse funds.

- The relationship between the in-country operational entity and the overseas funding entity is formally established, at a governance or board level.

- Both entities representing the institution and the donor are governed by a constitution or other such governing instrument.

- Both entities have a legally-recognized and functioning board of directors responsible for oversight of governance functions.

- Bank accounts are in the names of the entities.

- A basic policy framework is in place and required as a condition of partnership, including signed employment contracts, a child protection policy, and a disciplinary/complaints policy.

- Financial acquittals and reporting regularly takes place, and financial reports are shared with the donor.

- There is no evidence of motives that are in conflict with and override the rights and best interests of children, as indicated in Theme 3.

- There is no evidence that the existing social obligations can weaken or undermine the weight given to contractual agreements, as indicated in Theme 5.

There is also evidence of one or more of the following:

Frameworks

- A pre-partnership due diligence assessment has been conducted, covering:

  - legal status and appropriate registrations of the in-country entity;

  - governance; and

  - financial systems.

- An appraisal of key organizational policies has been conducted, covering:

    - child protection;

    - ethical fundraising and communications;

    - finance and procurement;

    - staff discipline/dismissal;

    - grievance procedures; and

    - reporting mechanisms to address serious breaches of policies.

- A written partnership contract and funding agreements are in place, including clear expectations around the use of funds and reporting requirements.

- A program framework is in place, as well as a corresponding detailed budget that forms the basis of the funding agreement.

Monitoring and Reporting

- Written reports track progress against the frameworks listed above and are submitted to donors on a regular basis.

- The donor conducts periodic site visits to undertake audits and verify the implementation of partnership standards.

- Reports are submitted to the appropriate government agencies as required.

Funding

- Other donors or sources of funding have been disclosed to the principal donor.

- There is confirmation that the principal donor represents the majority of funds.

- Periodic audits of accounts are conducted and audit reports are submitted to both boards.

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THEME 7: ORANGE LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS   Evidence

At minimum, the partnership displays the following characteristics:

- The institution is run by an entity legally registered in the country of operation.

- There is a board of directors or advisors connected to the institution, but its legal status has not been verified.

- Funds are transferred into a bank account in the implementing organization's name.

- There is a loose funding agreement between the donor and the institution, often structured around a specified amount per child in care or an agreed monthly sum, instead of a detailed operational budget breakdown.

- There is no detailed program framework in place and therefore no formal means of monitoring outcomes and impacts.

- There is a child protection policy in place that may or may not be robust or implemented.

- Basic periodic financial reports are submitted to the donor.

- There is some type of reporting to the donor, such as child sponsorship reports or narrative updates. These are likely to be anecdotal rather than evidence-based.

- Reports are anecdotal and could be classified as promotional material instead of progress reports, largely focusing on photos of children and updates on their personal stories.

- Periodic site visits by the donor are focused on relationships with the children and/or the director, instead of focused on undertaking audits and verifying the implementation of partnership standards.

- There is no evidence of concerning motives that are in conflict with and override the rights and best interests of children, as indicated in Theme 3.

- There is no evidence of coercion of families or social obligations that could weaken the weight given to contractual agreements, as indicated in Theme 5.

There is also evidence of one or more of the following:

Frameworks

- There is an absence of, or an insufficient, pre-partnership due diligence assessment.

- There is an absence of, or insufficient, organizational policies and procedures.

- There is an absence of, or insufficient, staff contracts.

Monitoring and Reporting

- The donor arranges regular visits to the institution and brings other supporters or volunteers along with them, sometimes staying on-site at the institution. The focus of visits is interaction with the children rather than monitoring.

- The director allows donors to initiate and maintain relationships with the children through in-person visits or written communications.

Funding

- The funding structure is ad hoc, i.e., funds are not disbursed according to a set schedule, no formal detailed budget governs funding or expenditure, or the institution requests lump sums of funding as needed via emails to the donor.

- Additional sources of funding, from other donor entities, volunteers, or visitors, have not been disclosed to the donor.

- Unethical fundraising strategies are utilized to attract donors, such as:

  - facilitating orphanage voluntourism;

  - sensationalizing or exploiting children's stories; or

  - using a crisis fundraising narrative to generate funds; for example, claiming that the institution does not have enough funding to feed the children in their care.

- Child sponsorship is the primary fundraising strategy.

- The donor requests photos of the children and inappropriate levels of private information about the children for the purpose of sustaining a child sponsorship program or other such fundraising methods.

- The director complies with donor requests to provide inappropriate levels of private information about the children.

- The director has provided unverified or falsified information about the children to the donor, such as details of the children's family histories or reasons for their placement in care.

- Some of the children in care are related to the director but this has not been disclosed to the donor.

- The biological children of the directors or staff are included on child rosters without knowledge of the donor.

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THEME 7: RED LIGHT CATEGORY INDICATORS   Evidence

At minimum, the partnership displays the following characteristics:

- The institution is not properly registered. This could mean that the institution is unlicensed, not registered with the appropriate ministry or government agency, or has a lapsed license that has not been renewed.

- There is no evidence of a board of directors or legal registration of the board of directors.

- No due diligence assessments were conducted prior to or since establishing the partnership.

- Written partnership agreements, including around funding, are absent or too vague to achieve real accountability.

- There is no proper budget in place. Funds may be disbursed at a set amount per child in care or an agreed monthly sum, instead of a detailed operational budget breakdown. The institution requests lump sums of funding as needed via emails to the donor.

- There are no organizational policies in place, or they are too vague or have clearly not been implemented.

- Financial accounting and procedures are poor and there are no real accountability measures in place.

- There are no proper staff contracts in place, or they are not signed.

- Any site visits conducted by the principal donor are largely focused on relationships with the children and/or director and superficial checks that can be easily evaded.

- There is evidence of motives that are in conflict with and override the rights and best interests of children, as indicated in Theme 3.

There is also evidence of one or more of the following:

- Funds are transferred into an individual's bank account or provided in cash.

- There is nepotism in the appointment of board members and/or staff involved with the institution and/or the overseas donor entity.

- Printed vendor receipts are not collected or are handwritten and issued by the organization instead of the vendors.

- There are other concerning indicators, as indicated in Themes 5 and 6.

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SCORING: THEME 7

Instructions: Using the following scoring key, select the appropriate color category that best fits the situation. Once the appropriate color category has been selected, refer to the corresponding color-coded category of implications in the tables below. Read through and consider the explanation, suggested actions, and funding implications.

Category	Instructions
Red Light Category	Refer to the red light category implications if the following was selected: ▪ The minimum partnership red indicator
Orange Light Category	Refer to the orange light category implications if the following was selected: ▪ The minimum partnership orange indicator
Green Light Category	Refer to the green light category implications if the following was selected: ▪ The minimum partnership green indicator

IMPLICATIONS: THEME 7

THEME 7: GREEN LIGHT CATEGORY IMPLICATIONS

Explanation

In this scenario, the presence of sufficient structure and a strong partnership framework has most likely acted to prevent, circumvent, or curtail serious unethical practices. It is more likely that a transparent and accountable relationship has always existed or has been fostered between the director and donor.

There are likely enough checks and balances in place, including government-related monitoring and inspections (in cases where the inspectorate is well-functioning) for any concerns, discrepancies, or poor practices to be caught and addressed early. Therefore, it is unlikely that anything could have escalated to the status of serious risk as long as the contractual framework was being effectively monitored and implemented.

It is also likely that if there are any small concerns, either or both parties may already have visibility of this and may have independently taken steps to address the concerns. It may even be that this has led to them reaching out to seek technical support.

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Partnerships between entities that are well-structured and operating lawfully often seek to adhere to external government compliance requirements. These can include charity-sector regulations or grant-funding requirements on the donor side, and not-for profit registration requirements, standards, or reporting obligations on the director side, or all of the above. This typically increases the degree of professionalism and transparency in the partnership and can create helpful leverage points to secure buy-in and an agreement on due process for transition.

If there are no concerning indicators under other themes, this is an ideal situation and transition is likely to be successful.

Suggested Actions

Stage 1: Engagement

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 2: Preparation and Onboarding

- Complete an [organizational governance and accountability audit](). Consider contracting an in-country legal firm for the first three sections entailing registrations, governance, and finance.

- Gather information on the history of the institution, the individuals and organizations involved, and the fundraising strategies of the institution.

- Use the findings to inform the development of a transition strategy based on the overall transition process. For further suggestions on developing a transition strategy, refer to 'Components of a Transition Strategy' in Theme 2: Green Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 2, page 43.

- Develop a partnership agreement outlining the key commitments of both stakeholders and the practitioner providing technical support. This should include the goals, expectations, and conditions of the partnership, as well as concrete markers against which to track progress. For further suggestions, refer to 'Developing a Partnership Agreement' in Theme 2: Green Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 2, page 44.

- Sign all parties into the agreement once full buy-in has been secured with all primary and other stakeholders during Stage 2 of the transition timeline (refer to Diagram 1: Stages of Transition, page 7).

Stage 3a: Active Transition - Full Transition

Organizational Processes

- Full transition is likely to be an appropriate goal.

- Identify ways to build capacity and provide training to stakeholders and staff as they may be able to directly implement many components of the transition process. When delivering training, invite other organizations, networks, and relevant government authorities to increase the impact and link stakeholders into broader systems reform efforts.

- Utilize program frameworks and project design processes and principles to support stakeholders in the development of post-transition programming. This can be an opportunity to increase their skills and capacity in program design and community consultation, as well as ensuring that the end program has a strong framework to guide implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

- Utilize the contractual framework to develop and outline the transition process and agreement, including the roles and responsibilities of both parties, time frames for key actions, shared messaging and communications strategies, budget implications, and funding agreements.

- Use the contractual framework to hold all stakeholders accountable and track their progress throughout the transition process.

- Remote support is never ideal; however, it may be feasible in this instance. This is because the contractual framework allows for remote monitoring via reporting against agreed frameworks, which is not the case in a relational partnership. Remote support with periodic site visits could be explored only if there is a majority of positive indicators under the other themes and if no significant concerns are evidenced.

Reintegration Processes

- Establish a case management system and social work supervision framework, outlining roles and responsibilities of social workers and stakeholders involved in the transition process. For further suggestions on the social work component of transition, refer to Theme 2: Green Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 3a, page 45.

Stage 3b: Active Transition - Safe Closure

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Note: Because this situation has a high number of positive indicators, it is likely to expect a reasonably normative process for transition and reintegration.

Funding Implications

- There may be costs associated with sourcing external training in the areas of social work, project design, and post-transition programming.

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THEME 7: ORANGE LIGHT CATEGORY IMPLICATIONS

Explanation

In this scenario, there may be a loosely-structured partnership or a relationship-based partnership that is unlikely to be high-risk, as long as there is no evidence of more serious indicators under other themes, including motives that are in conflict with and override the rights and best interests of children. However, there can be ineffective practices and a lack of appropriate channels to address emerging concerns or matters that could impact a transition process.

For example, managing staff who may be resistant to transition is likely to be difficult when there are no employment contracts in place. It is therefore important to introduce in the early stages of transition a basic structure and procedural framework. It is also important to formally document agreement on how the transition will be outworked as this helps establish a common understanding for all stakeholders. This often highlights all of the steps and processes that stakeholders may not initially be aware of, such as a child's right to participation, case management processes, consultation with relevant stakeholders, and realistic timeframes for transition and reintegration.

There may also be further issues that are uncovered over time that have the potential to cause tension or create suspicion between the director or donor. These issues often relate to financial management and can surface when more structure is put in place, particularly around budgets. It is important to note that these issues do not always indicate misappropriation or unethical behavior. They often stem from miscommunication, misunderstandings, different expectations, and even inefficiency resulting from not having a proper financial management system in place. If such issues arise during the course of the transition, it is important to put things into perspective and avoid jumping to conclusions. If this is poorly managed, it can create undue suspicion or erode the trust between the two key stakeholders, compromising the overall transition process.

As transition progresses, practitioners may uncover evidence of more serious issues or motives. They may not reach the threshold of exploitation but may be in conflict with and override the rights and best interests of children. Thus a reconsideration of some aspects of the planned approach might be required, or a re-assessment of the transition under some of the themes included in this tool. This is most typically seen in cases where pride, identity, and status are underlying motivations. Should serious issues be uncovered that do reach the threshold of commodification, exploitation, or other such matters, it may be necessary to refer to the red category and shift approach significantly.

Suggested Actions

Stage 1: Engagement

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

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Stage 2: Preparation and Onboarding

- Transition is likely feasible; however, it is important to have clear and in-depth discussions with both stakeholders about the entire transition process, outlining all of the involved stages, steps, and procedures. This should happen early in the process to establish a common understanding and appropriate expectations of transition.

- Highlight the steps and processes of transition that stakeholders may not initially be aware of, such as a child's right to participation, case management processes, consultation with relevant stakeholders, and realistic timeframes for transition and reintegration.

- Complete an [organizational governance and accountability audit](). Consider contracting an in-country legal firm for the first three sections entailing registrations, governance, and finance.

- It is important to determine whether the board is legally recognized in the country of operation, as this indicates whether the board has the authority to enforce the organizational constitution and hold the director accountable if necessary. The findings of this audit may require reclassification of the situation as red light category under this theme.

- Gather information on the history of the institution, the individuals and organizations involved, and the fundraising strategies of the institution.

- Use the findings to inform the development of a transition strategy based on the overall transition process. For further suggestions on developing a transition strategy, refer to 'Components of a Transition Strategy' in Theme 2: Green Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 2, page 43.

- Develop a partnership agreement outlining the key commitments of both stakeholders and the practitioner providing technical support. This should include the goals, expectations, and conditions of the partnership, as well as concrete markers against which to track progress. For further suggestions, refer to 'Developing a Partnership Agreement' in Theme 2: Green Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 2, page 44.

- Sign all parties into the agreement once full buy-in has been secured with all primary and other stakeholders during Stage 2 of the transition timeline (see Diagram 1, page 7).

- Avoid decreasing budgets by setting quotas and timelines for reductions in the number of children still in care. Ensure that budgets and any increase or decrease in budgets is connected to processes and social work outcomes. This helps avoid the situation where children are sent home without due process as a result of efforts to meet deadlines for budget cuts.

- If the current budget is based on a set amount for each child in care, which is often the case where child sponsorship is the funding model, consider redeveloping the budget by costing out programs and operations expenses. Doing this at the start of a transition process can help avoid a situation where delaying reintegration is unintentionally incentivized by the funding strategy. It also helps to mitigate the risk of funding being prematurely reduced, based on when children leave the institution, rather than when children cease needing support in the community.

- Where child sponsorship models are in place, support the donor to develop a communications strategy to engage with individual donors and enact a shift in the funding model.

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Shifting a Child Sponsorship Model of Fundraising

- Present the shift in approach as positive news of the discovery that children have families that can care for them.

- Explain that sponsors can continue to support children through their journey to be reunited with families.

- Being mindful that many sponsors have an emotional connection to the children they sponsor, consider using an emotional appeal to present a rationale for change, rather than the more confronting message about the harms of institutionalization.

- When communicating a shift in the funding model to child sponsors, structure the process and communications in a way that gives donors the option of 'opting out' rather than 'opting in' to the new fundraising model. The likelihood of losing donors is much higher if they are required to act upon the communication to continue funding.

Stage 3a: Active Transition - Full Transition

Organizational Processes

- Initiate conversations with the stakeholders regarding post-transition services or programs. If stakeholders wish to develop post-transition programming that addresses root causes of separation or is related to child and family welfare, assist them to engage in a process to redesign the project. This should include research, stakeholder consultation, and situational analysis to ensure that the new project is suitable and relevant.

- Consider providing program design and development-related training to stakeholders so that they can develop their professional skills and establish a structured approach to post-transition programming independent of the practitioner, where feasible. This can naturally lead to enabling the organization to engage with a wider range of donors should they seek to expand.

- Provide clarity to staff around their current and post-transition roles as this can serve to allay fears and concerns about security of income and employment status. A lack of clarity can result in subconscious sabotage of the transition process, impacting assessments and influencing how children view reintegration.

Reintegration Processes

- Establish a case management system and social work supervision framework, outlining roles and responsibilities of social workers and stakeholders involved in the transition process. For further suggestions on the social work component of transition, refer to Theme 2: Green Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 3a, page 45.

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Premature Reintegration without Full Process

- Establish and document agreed responses to situations where children are sent home prematurely without assessment or support. This happens for a range of reasons including:

    - directors' enthusiasm and attempts to evidence their commitment;

    - demonstrating signs of compliance in order to appease donors where there is no legitimate intention to fully transition or close;

    - failure to understand the importance of the social work process, particularly where children were admitted outside of formal gatekeeping processes and in the absence of child protection concerns; and

    - attempts to prevent the discovery of a range of issues including financial misappropriation, nepotism, staff misconduct, and falsified information about the children and their families.

- Openly address and discourage the admission of children into the institution while the transition process is underway, as directors often reintegrate children in care while also recruiting new children.

Stage 3b: Active Transition - Safe Closure

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Funding Implications

- Consider securing funds for contracting an in-country legal firm to conduct an independent organizational governance and accountability audit.

- There may be costs associated with sourcing external training in the areas of social work, project design, and post-transition programming.

- Additional funding may need to be secured to account for any loss in funding associated with shifting away from a child sponsorship model of fundraising.

THEME 7: RED LIGHT CATEGORY IMPLICATIONS

Explanation

In this situation, the lack of structure and accountability may have created an environment conducive to unethical conduct and profit-seeking behavior. In some cases, this is opportunistic and might have occurred in response to the lack of accountability and other arising issues, such as pressures, demands, or social obligations. In more serious cases, it may have been the motive from the outset.

The lack of structure means that there are few or no effective mechanisms in place to deal with inappropriate conduct and manage or mitigate risks. Power over operations is solely invested in the director and not in a structural framework that governs and holds individuals accountable, and this must be addressed before commencing any work outside of the preparation and onboarding stage of the transition.

A trained social worker or team of social workers should be contracted to outwork the case management for reintegration. Repositioning existing staff of the institution to fulfil these functions is not advisable but training in other vocational areas can be offered in some cases to support staff to upskill and seek alternate employment.

It is possible that the full extent of the conduct and risks to children are not yet known, as the lack of structure and accountability prohibits disclosure and discovery. Close monitoring is required, and child protection risk assessments and risk mitigation plans should be put in place before the social work process commences.

Potential Scenarios

In less serious cases, concerning behavior may be opportunistic, limited to minor or moderate misuse of funds, and can be dealt with once sufficient structure and accountability is put in place. It is unlikely to be appropriate to pursue full transition if the director's motives are in conflict with and override the rights and best interests of children. However, it may be possible to pursue safe closure with the involvement of the director and existing staff. It is important to note that these situations can be challenging, and staff may be resistant to the new structures put in place. Non-compliance is common and intentional efforts to reset the organizational culture are necessary. Incentivizing cooperation and compliance can aid the process, and this can sometimes be achieved through the offer of support to secure alternate employment or generous severance packages.

There is a moderate to high risk of the discovery of other issues along the way that results from a lack of safeguards and structure. This can include inappropriate conduct and abuse perpetrated by community members or the extended family of the director. The degree of risk and complexity increases as more disclosures or discoveries are made.

There is also a moderate to high risk of directors disengaging or pulling out of the transition partway through the process. Disengagement is common if the director feels a loss of ownership or disinterest and as a result, he/she may seek to shorten the transition timeframe by sending the children home without due process. Pulling out of the transition process is often triggered by the director securing funds from other sources to offset the loss of funds from the principal donor.

In situations where the intentions and conduct are more serious in nature, structure and accountability mechanisms need to be put in place to create redress mechanisms. It is not uncommon in these cases for there to be governance boards in place, but they may be unofficial or not legally recognized, and therefore without actual authority to hold the director accountable to the constitution. Boards are sometimes created to give the donors a false sense of control, authority, and security where it is not legally established. In most cases, board members are unaware that they have no legal authority over the organization.

Governance and financial audits should be conducted to determine the actual governance status of the institution. Structures, including child protection policies, complaints handling procedures, staff contracts, boards, and governing instruments, should be put in place prior to commencing the active transition phase. This creates a framework that may help prevent significant assets, such as land, from being misappropriated. It also enables performance management of staff to address misconduct, termination of staff for misconduct where it is serious, and the removal directors to bring in new management where necessary.

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If it is possible to develop structure and gain control, it may be feasible to proceed with closure and reintegration. However, this is a complex situation and there is a high likelihood of interference from the former director and/or staff. This is exacerbated where the director has power over the children or families and can coerce, threaten, or manipulate them (Theme 5: Clientism and Social Obligation, page 84). It is always advisable to proceed with the involvement of the authorities in high- risk situations, where that is an option. Close cooperation and collaboration with the donor will be necessary to attempt a closure under these circumstances. Remote management of the transition is not advised in these situations.

It is sometimes advisable to remove the children from the physical location, even after the individuals subject to allegations have been removed and replaced. Relocating the children may be necessary for their safety and to prevent the former director and/or staff from having ongoing contact with the children. It may also be necessary to help stabilize the situation prior to reintegration. This is more common where the organizational culture and regime of care in the institution was highly toxic and children were manipulated or coerced and/or child-to-child abuse and violence was prevalent, in some cases incited by the former director and/or staff. When relocation is in the children's best interests, it may be an opportunity to explore whether temporary family-based care might be an option or whether small group care organized around the individual needs of the children can be arranged to aid their transition into family- and community-based care.

In other situations, it may not be possible to put structure in place or regain control. Often this happens if previously undisclosed sources of funding are discovered, if there is insufficient financial leverage to enact change, and/or if government is unable or unwilling to intervene. In these situations, closure may not be possible. Instead, reporting, divestment, and advocacy may be the only course of action that remains available.

Suggested Actions

Read through Theme 7: Green Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 2, page 125, as many of these will be relevant and helpful. In addition, further recommendations include:

Stage 1: Engagement

▪ There are no suggested actions for this stage.

Stage 2: Preparation and Onboarding

▪ Complete an <u>organizational governance and accountability audit</u>. It is highly recommended to contract an in-country legal firm for the first three sections entailing registrations, governance, and finance.

▪ When reviewing the findings of the audit, pay particular attention to the status of registrations and licenses, as well as governance of the institution and board. It is important to determine whether the board is legally recognized in the country of operation, as this indicates whether the board has the authority to enforce the organizational constitution and hold the director accountable if necessary.

Addressing Key Gaps in Partnership Frameworks

- Address key gaps identified through the audit. Prioritize those that will create redress mechanisms and protect the children in care. This could include:

  - Ensuring that the governing instrument and board membership and structure have been submitted and are recognized by the government body with oversight of entity registration and governance;

  - Strengthening the governing instrument, which may require amendments;

  - Clarifying any agreements or structural relationship between the local implementing board and the overseas funding board, covering the use of funding, assets, reporting, and accountability, at minimum;

  - Ensuring both boards, where there are two entities, are unified in their support of the transition;

  - Exploring whether it is constructive for board members who do not support the transition to continue to serve on the board throughout the period of transition;

  - Putting in place all necessary policies, prioritizing the strengthening of child protection policies and codes of conduct; and

  - Amending or putting in place proper staff employment contracts, including terms of discipline and dismissal terms, outlining new roles and responsibilities associated with the transition process that allow staff to be held accountable for misconduct, non-compliance, and sabotage.

- Where possible, ensure that funds are held and transferred into a bank account in the name of the entity rather than an individual. Develop a simple financial policy and procedures if they do not exist and consider contracting an independent accounting firm to conduct a financial audit if moderate to serious misappropriation is suspected.

- If assets, such as land and buildings, are in the name of the director or another individual, explore the possibility of transferring ownership to the entity or developing a contractual agreement preventing the director from taking ownership or selling the asset.

- If the primary motivation is profit, there is a considerable risk that attempts to transfer assets out of the director's name will compromise the whole transition, and therefore it may be best to delay this conversation. Donors should be warned that assets may be lost due to the lack of structure and encouraged to prioritize the safety and best interests of children. Land disputes can often be deferred until the children are reintegrated or relocated. These are notoriously difficult situations and can be costly and difficult to contest.

Stage 3a: Active Transition - Full Transition

- There are no suggested actions for this stage.

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Stage 3b: Active Transition - Safe Closure

Organizational Processes

- Provide a refresher training course for staff and stakeholders regarding newly developed policies, particularly child protection. It is important that new expectations and standards are explicitly and repeatedly communicated if necessary, to prevent the contesting of any subsequent disciplinary action.

- Use the complaints/child protection/disciplinary measures to address any misconduct by stakeholders or staff. This could include termination and removal or suspension and investigation if the threshold is met.

- Ensure that documentation of staff misconduct is thorough and robust. It is important to balance being fair with ensuring that any early sabotage attempts are addressed swiftly to minimize the potential impacts on children and their reintegration.

- Bring in a new management team where the director or key staff have been removed. This is typically a very challenging and stressful situation for everyone involved and can create a lot of insecurity for children. Outgoing directors and staff may incite children to aggression or violence.

- Hold discussions with donors about the planned approach to put necessary structure into place. Structure should be a requirement for ongoing funding and support, and strong donor agreement is critical to achieving this.

- Document and report the situation to child protection authorities or duly licensed civil society organizations where the reporting threshold has been met and serious child protection risks are evident, disclosures have been made, or criminal conduct is evidenced or suspected.

- Where voluntary closure is not feasible or not appropriate, consider working to secure an agreement from the donor to financially support the children's reintegration in the event of a mandated closure. The availability of resources can often make it feasible for governments to intervene where they would otherwise be unable to due to a lack of resource.

- Submit a letter of financial support to the authorities, in cases where appropriate, along with documentation reporting the situation, concerns, and providing evidence where possible. Include possible contingency plans and options where appropriate.

- If there is no ability to proceed with closure or gain control over the situation, and in the event that government intervention cannot be secured, report all child protection concerns to the relevant authorities for further investigation.

- Engage with the donor to outwork a responsible divestment process.

- Inform child protection civil society organizations who may be able to assist with monitoring the situation.

- Sometimes it can be appropriate to explore community awareness raising efforts in source communities which can result in parents seeking to reclaim their children from the institution. There can be many risks associated with this process that require thorough assessment and careful consideration.

- Remote technical support is not advised and is likely to exacerbate risks. It is critical to have strong and trustworthy in-country support and management in place.

- Direct daily oversight can minimize and limit the potential for sabotage or manipulation to occur.

- Direct oversight is also necessary to manage the complexity of the situation, effect a culture shift, and regain control so the social work processes can commence.

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Reintegration Processes

- If assessments have uncovered indicators of abuse/exploitation or serious risks to children, consider whether the situation warrants reporting or informing authorities or duly-licensed civil society organizations for further investigation. For further suggestions on reporting and closures, refer to Theme 5: Red Light Category Implications under Suggested Actions for Stage 3b, page 98.

- In cases where a director has been removed, consider whether it remains necessary and/or in the best interests of children to relocate the children into emergency foster care or small group homes where possible.

- Ensure counseling services are made readily available to children.

- Be prepared to address any disclosures made during counselling sessions and address any further needs for therapeutic or medical interventions.

- When the situation has stabilized, proceed with the social work components of transition. Be aware that the former directors may have access to the families and coercion may be taking place.

Funding Implications

- Allocate budget for contracting an in-country legal firm to conduct an independent organizational governance and accountability audit.

- Additional funding may need to be secured for investigations to collate evidence, particularly where stakeholder conduct may constitute unlawful behavior.

- Funding may be required to address staffing issues, including bringing on new staff and covering the cost of severance packages where staff roles are terminated, in accordance with domestic labor laws.

- Funding will likely need to be secured to hire social workers in cases where the reintegration process can be outworked.

- Additional funding may need to be secured for reintegration in the case of disillusioned donors ceasing funding partway through the transition process.

- Situations that warrant immediate closure and significant child protection risks are likely to require funding to:

  - Contract third-party services to support a forced closure where it exceeds capacity.

  - Secure emergency accommodation for children in cases where they need to be removed.

  - Conduct rapid assessments of families and implement family support plans.

  - Secure or contract legal support for investigation or prosecution.

  - Provide counselling and therapeutic support to children if abuse is uncovered.

Section 2:
Collating and Analyzing Findings

About this Section

This section of the tool has been designed to help practitioners interpret their findings and gain a sense of the overall status and feasibility of a prospective transition project. It is intended to take a step back from the detail of the previous section and allow practitioners to determine the overall degree of risk and complexity in a given transition project.

Practitioners will be directed to determine the overall rating of a prospective transition project by collating the ratings from each of the seven themes into the table provided below. By calculating the total number of green, orange, and red ratings, practitioners can then select the overall category using the same traffic light coding system featured throughout the tool.

Under each of the color categories are summary statements related to the following issues:

- the presence of positive indicators that enhance transition;

- the level of complexity ranging from low to high;

- the related risks including risk of interference or sabotage;

- the type and level of technical support required;

- the implications for human and financial resources;

- the stage of transition that should be commenced within the overarching transition timeline; and

- whether a realistic end goal is transition to alternative services or safe closure.

Collating the Findings

Instructions: Use the following table to collate ratings from each of the seven themes in the section above. After ticking the appropriate color category for each theme, tally the total number for each color at the bottom of the column. Practitioners can refer to this table to locate their transition project in one of the overarching color categories below.

Theme	Theme Title	Green	Orange	Red
1	Making the Case for Transition			
2	Loyalty and Commitment			
3	Motivation			
4	Othering			
5	Clientism and Social Obligation			
6	Psychological Ownership			
7	Nature of the Partnership			
	Total			

<u>Plotting the Findings</u>

Instructions: Referring to the collated findings in the table above and the instructions in the tables below, select the color category that best fits the situation of the prospective transition project.

Overarching Category: Green

Instructions

Select this category if:

- A red light category was not selected for any of the seven themes.
- The green light category was selected for four or more of the themes, including Themes 2 and 5.

Summary

While transition work always involves a degree of complexity, the current assessment categorizes this situation as a relatively low-risk, low-complexity transition, and practitioners should feel confident to proceed.

The assessment indicates that:

- A strong partnership and partnership framework already exist. The transition may benefit from strengthening certain areas to promote best practice, but this is unlikely to be critical to mitigating significant risk.

- The risk of sabotage is low. The primary stakeholders have not displayed any indicators of concerning motives or other constraints that are likely to be in conflict with and override the rights and best interests of children. As with all transitions, there may be mindsets, barriers, and challenges to work through along the way, but there is no indicator that these will stem from or result in significant sabotage.

- The likelihood of being able to outwork a successful transition process is high. Put time and effort into planning, training, and developing robust program frameworks for post-transition programming. The stakeholders involved may be well-positioned to engage in advocacy or supporting institutions to transition, and therefore it is worth investing in capacity-building towards that end.

- It is suitable to develop child-focused post transition programs. No concerns have been raised about suitability or motives so far, and it is worth considering using this opportunity to develop post-transition child welfare or protection services that address current gaps in the system.

- It is possible for the practitioner to provide technical support to the stakeholders to outwork their own transition process instead of taking on the process directly. This may make aspects of remote support feasible.

- A normative amount of human and financial resources is required for transition. The assessment indicates that significant additional funds are not required to address issues. However, consider securing funds to develop the capacity of the stakeholders to a higher level, especially if they are interested in playing a national advocacy role or plan to provide technical support to other transitioning institutions.

- This situation is a strong candidate for full transition, and it is suitable to proceed on that basis. There is always a possibility that new information will come to light during the course of the transition, requiring reassessment, but full transition is an appropriate goal at this stage.

Overarching Category: Orange

Instructions

Select this category if:

- Less than 4 green light categories were selected
- No more than 2 red light categories were selected
- Green or orange were selected for Themes 2 and 5

Summary

This situation represents a typical transition in that there are some dynamics at play which increase the degree of complexity of the transition. However, if practitioners are aware of these dynamics and how they unfold, and manage them appropriately, there is a reasonable chance that the project can be steered towards a positive outcome. It is recommended to strengthen the organizational and policy frameworks in preparation for transition and to reduce overall risk.

The assessment indicates that:

- The level of complexity is moderate and there are likely to be some complications with outworking the planned transition strategy. Be prepared to be flexible, actively monitor the situation, and respond to feedback loops accordingly. The steps of the transition strategy may not always be linear. Be ready to prioritize the most important actions and seek to make the connections with external actors, such as governments and other civil society organizations, whose support may be required if the degree of complexity increases.

- There are areas within the partnership that lack clarity or transparency. These should be addressed and strengthened in the early planning stages of transition.

- There is a medium risk of interference or sabotage. Steps should be taken to minimize this risk and the situation should be closely monitored. Ensure that concrete and specific agreements are in place to address early signs of sabotage. Do not wait for sabotage to occur before developing a strategy to address it.

- There may be additional human and financial resources required to manage the complexities. Remote support may not be wise, and it is likely that practitioners will need to be more active in establishing or outworking the social work processes.

- It is suitable to proceed with the pre-reintegration steps in the transition process as outlined in Stages 1 and 2 of the overall transition process (refer to Diagram 1: Stages of Transition, page X). Where possible, social work steps should not commence until these pre-reintegration steps have been completed. This decreases the likelihood of children being directly impacted by any risks or potential sabotage.

- Safe closure and reintegration of the children under full process is a more realistic goal. It is possible to provide support to the organization to transition into other types of programs. However, unless the highlighted concerns are adequately addressed, it may not be appropriate to work towards programs involving vulnerable children.

Overarching Category: Red

Instructions

Select this category if:

- More than 2 red light categories across all themes
- The red light category was selected for either or both of Themes 2 and 5

Summary

The assessment suggests that there are some significant red flags in this transition that could pose a risk to children's safety. It is critical to assess the need to report and seek intervention from the authorities. If that is not warranted or possible, work towards minimizing the risks, developing frameworks that will safeguard children, and developing strategies to deal with escalations of risk. It is not advisable to proceed with transition, especially the social work components, until the situation can be reclassified as an orange-light category following successful efforts of risk mitigation. Exceptions to this include cases where:

- Closure is mandated by authorities;
- Risks have been or can be eliminated, either through removing stakeholders of serious concern, removing the children and arranging alternative care for the duration of reintegration, or other such measures; or
- Proceeding with transition (closure) is the safest option for children despite the known risks.

There is a likelihood that further risks will be uncovered throughout the transition. Work closely with the authorities where possible and reach out for support from other organizations if that will minimize the risk or enable more effective management of the complexity. The steps of the transition strategy may not always be linear, and if transition proceeds, it is important to have the capacity to very closely monitor and enact contingency plans very quickly should things change or escalate.

Safe closure, forced or voluntary, is the appropriate goal for transition projects involving the types of significant risks identified through the assessment.

The assessment indicates that:

- There are serious concerns and dysfunctions in the partnership that are likely to negatively affect the transition and outcomes for children.
- The risk of sabotage and interference is reasonably high.
- Efforts should be made to reduce risk before commencing the active stage of transition in Stage 3 of the overall transition process (see Diagram 1: Stages of Transition), noting the exceptions above. It is not recommended that transition proceed without taking measures to reduce the level of risk or to safeguard children from people who pose a significant risk to their safety, as this may increase the risks to children.

- It is necessary to commence work at the pre-reintegration stage, focusing on child protection measures and risk mitigation. The goal is to bring the level of risk down and gain adequate control over the situation to enact the closure. A strategy for moving forward will largely be determined by the legal and policy framework of the country as this will determine what the reporting and referral obligations are. It should also clarify the roles that practitioners should and will be able to play.

- A transition in this situation will be highly complex, potentially volatile, and resource-intensive. It may be necessary to have access to contingency and emergency funds to manage complex situations and protect children's safety and best interests throughout. Close management and monitoring will be necessary, as will the ability to be flexible and highly responsive to a potentially dynamic and fluid situation.

- There is a strong likelihood that this transition will require significant human and financial resources. Consider whether this is feasible before proceeding.

- Remote technical support is not likely to be wise or feasible.

- It is unlikely to be suitable or realistic to pursue post-transition programming of any nature, and safe reintegration and closure is the most appropriate goal. This may need to be enacted as a forced closure under a government mandate.

Section 3:
A Note on Sabotage

Sabotage may appear to be an extreme issue to discuss within the context of transitioning institutions; however, it is reasonably common and therefore worth explanation. Sabotage takes place when transition is being pursued but buy-in has not been legitimately achieved with one or more parties. Sabotage can come from directors, donors, staff, or original founders of institutions, and in a more limited sense, from families.

It is most common for sabotage to come from directors and/or staff but there have been a number of cases where donors, or original founders who transitioned into a donor role over time, have sabotaged the transition and reintegration processes. In a few documented cases, sabotage by the principal donor or founder took place 1 to 3 years after transition commenced. Even at such an advanced stage of transition, including when children have been reintegrated, sabotage can still have detrimental consequences for children. Therefore, it is critical to put measures in place to minimize the risk of sabotage.

Stakeholders may seek to sabotage a reintegration process for a range of reasons including:

- a lack of legitimate buy-in, particularly in cases where they did not have the power to prevent the transition yet were not in full support of it;

- cases where they agreed to the transition without any intention to allow it to take place, particularly where refusing to transition would have resulted in unfavorable consequences, such as a loss of donors;

- the presence of personal vested interests or motivations have not been adequately addressed, such as status, identity, income, and employment;

- to prevent the discovery of unethical practices or disclosures of abuse; and

- cases where they have been removed

from their position or their employment terminated due to serious concerns, including substantiated allegations of abuse.

Sabotage ranges in severity. At the mild end of the spectrum, stakeholders may:

- negatively influence children's attitudes towards reintegration or lead them to believe that reintegration is a form of punishment;

- interfere with assessments or family tracing in an effort to keep children in the institution and retain their employment;

- instruct children on what to tell social workers prior to child participation sessions or assessments;

- instruct families to tell social workers that they cannot or will not resume care of their children;

- be reluctant to allow social workers to speak to children alone;

- be reluctant to disclose information about children's histories and family connections;

- be reluctant to allow trained social workers to participate in the reintegration efforts;

- be unwilling to disclose information about donors; and

- repeatedly stall on key processes with the aim of delaying transition.

At the extreme end of the spectrum, stakeholders may:

- prevent social workers' access to the children, children's families, children's files, and/or the premises of the institution;

- threaten or harm children to prevent disclosures of unethical behavior or abuse;

- send children home or out of the institution without due process, to prevent disclosure of abuse to social workers or counselors;

- hide, remove, or destroy documentation to prevent evidence of unethical or criminal behavior;

- incite children to disruption and violence;

- coerce children by making threats or promises contingent upon children's refusal to cooperate with the reintegration process;

- coerce or threaten families of children with the aim of preventing reintegration;

- re-recruit children and re-institutionalize children following placement in families;

- in cases where they have been removed from their positions, sow mistrust of new staff and social workers; and

- in cases of donors, take legal control of the entity and remove directors from their positions to disrupt transition.

Sabotage is very disruptive, and every effort should be made to mitigate it. It is always wise to communicate clearly the expectations for engagement for all stakeholders as well as the consequences of non-compliance. Where possible, include this in a signed partnership agreement. It is also helpful to have a pre-determined and agreed-upon response to sabotage in place before transition commences. This helps practitioners act quickly, prevents procrastination from reluctant stakeholders, and in turn minimizes the negative impact of sabotage.

Section 4: Concluding Remarks

Despite all of the challenges and complexities raised and referred to in this tool, perhaps the most pervasive risk to successful transitions is the risk of oversimplification. Drawing from Dave Snowden's important work on complexity, if a complex system is approached as if it were simple, there is a risk of creating chaos where it did not formerly exist.

It is therefore encouraged that practitioners engage with the complexity of transition, recognizing that it is key to achieving the best possible outcomes for the children they seek to reunite with families. The authors trust that this tool will assist practitioners with this important endeavor.

For further explanation on how to use this tool, practitioners are invited to watch the Transitioning Care Assessment Tool webinar recording.

Annexes

Useful Resources and Tools

For an extensive list of resources visit:

Better Care Network Library & Toolkit

https://bettercarenetwork.org/library/library-of-documents

ALTERNATIVE CARE GUIDELINES

Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children

UN General Assembly

https://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/
Guidelines%20for%20the%20Alternative%20Care%20
of%20Children%20-%20English.pdf

Moving Forward: Implementing the 'Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children'

Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS)

https://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/Moving-
Forward-implementing-the-guidelines-for-web.pdf

REINTEGRATION RESOURCES

A Continuum of Care for Orphans and Vulnerable Children

Faith to Action

https://www.faithtoaction.org/wp-content/
uploads/2015/08/Faith2Action_ContinuumOfCare.pdf

Case Studies and Stories of Transitioning to Family Care

Faith to Action

https://www.faithtoaction.org/family-care-tool-kit/case-
studies/

Exploring Economic Strengthening within Family Reintegration

Retrak

https://bettercarenetwork.org/library/strengthening-
family-care/household-economic-strengthening/exploring-
economic-strengthening-within-family-reintegration

Guidelines on Children's Reintegration

Inter-agency group on children's reintegration -
Emily Delap and Joanna Wedge

https://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/Guidelines
%20on%20Children%27s%20Reintegration%20 DIGITAL%
20.pdf

Reaching for Home: Global learning on family reintegration in low and lower-middle income countries

Joanna Wedge, Abby Krumholz and Lindsay Jones

https://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/
attachments/Reaching%20for%20Home%20-%20
Globaly%20Learning%20on%20Family%20Reintegration.
pdf

Reintegration Guidelines for Trafficked and Displaced Children Living in Institutions

Next Generation Nepal

https://nextgenerationnepal.org/wp-content/
uploads/2017/09/2015_01_28_NGN-THIS-Reintegration-
Guidelines.pdf

Retrak: Standard Operating Procedures - Family Reintegration

Retrak

https://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/
attachments/Retrak%20Family%20Reintegration.pdf

Toolkit for Practitioners

Better Care Network

http://bettercarenetwork.org/toolkit/individual-
assessments-care-planning-and-family-reunification/
assessment-forms-and-guidance

Transitioning to Family Care for Children: A Guidance Manual

Faith to Action

https://www.faithtoaction.org/wp-content/
uploads/2016/12/Transitioning-Care-Guidance-Manual.pdf

CARE LEAVER SUPPORT RESOURCES

The Care Leaver Experience: A Report on Children and Young People's Experiences in and After Leaving Residential Care in Uganda

Ismael Ddumba-Nyanzi, Melissa Fricke, Angie Hong Max, Mai Nambooze, Mark Riley - Uganda Care Leavers Project

https://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/UCL_Report_v06a.pdf

Kenyan Care Leavers Resources

Kenyan Society for Care Leavers (KESCA)

https://www.kesca.org/index.php/resources

Webinar: More Than Our Stories: Strategies for how to meaningfully engage care leavers in care reform Better Care Network

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KF6u7of8dPk

VIDEO RESOURCES

BCN Practitioner Videos

Better Care Network

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCZkO4X7b7a80A16k0p_Yag

Kinnected Myanmar- Hani and Thari Case Study

ACCI Relief

https://vimeo.com/246707112

Kinnected Profile: Interview with Ou

ACCI Relief

https://vimeo.com/42182194

Radical Change for the Love of Children Documentary

Orphan's Tear Ministry

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=16&v=MWAJx4bB1vQ&feature=emb_logo

TOOLS & TEMPLATES

Care Leaver Support Program MoU Template

Kinnected Myanmar

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bbab8cbe666692d8fd5f481/t/5eba02b2363a8e5c32db340e/1589248692970/Care+Leaver+Support+Program+MoU+Template.pdf

Institution Minimum Standards Assessment Tool

ACC International Relief

https://www.kinnected.org.au/minimum-assessment-tool

Organizational Governance and Accountability Audit Checklist

Better Care Network

https://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/OrganizationalGovernanceandAccountabilityChecklistTool.pdf

Partnership Agreement Template

Kinnected Myanmar

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bbab8cbe666692d8fd5f481/t/5eba0291de9ac12fe8c7fc2a/1589248660885/KM+Partnership+Agreement.pdf

Partnership Due Diligence Assessment Tool

Rethink Orphanages

https://rethinkorphanages.org/sites/default/files/2019-09/Rethink-Partnership-due-diligence-final2.pdf

SPANISH RESOURCES

Relaf - Library of resources

https://www.relaf.org/biblioteca/

https://www.relaf.org/que-hacemos/cooperacion-tecnica-por-pais/view/?id=540

Panama Solidario

https://www.mides.gob.pa/autoridades-unen-esfuerzos-sobre-la-desinstitucionalizacion-de-ninos-y-ninas/

Case Studies

The following section contains the three case studies that are referenced throughout the tool. These have been included as concrete examples to make the tool more practical and accessible. Each case study is a summary of a real transition which has been fully anonymized. The case studies have been categorized by their final ratings: green, orange, and red. The table at the end of each case study contains the overall scoring and a summary of the implications, outlining the indicators that led to the scoring as well as the interventions undertaken by practitioners in response. All of the indicators have been extracted from these case studies and listed in the tables under each theme in the body of the tool.

All identifying information, including the names of people, organizations, and locations, have been changed or omitted to maintain anonymity and to respect the privacy of those involved. All names were randomly selected or created, and any similarities to exisiting organizational names or individuals are purely coincidental.

CASE STUDY: BRIDGES SAFEHOUSE

Thomas, an expatriate man living in Asia, founded Bridges Safehouse after coming across a group of street-connected migrant children at a local market. Out of a genuine belief that residential care was the only way to meet the needs of vulnerable children in the absence of family-based care alternatives, Bridges established its first residential facility.

From its inception, Bridges had always prioritized family care for the children who came through their facility and never accepted children for the purpose of providing access to better education. However, the children and families they worked with faced a slew of complex challenges stemming from their migration out of a bordering country to escape armed conflict. They were often denied their basic human rights and struggled with cyclical poverty, incarceration, drug trafficking, and abuse.

Several years later, Bridges had established three more facilities for children and families from these various high-risk target groups, one of which provided temporary shelter to mothers and their children coming out of domestic violence situations. Although they reintegrated nearly 200 children out of their facilities over time, they were constantly taking in new referrals from the government, child protection networks, their crisis hotline, and community members. Some of the key Bridges staff members knew that there had to be better alternatives to continuing to take in more placements but did not know how or where to begin.

Although Thomas had been living in the country for more than ten years, spoke the language, and had friendships with members of the local community, he came to recognize his own limitations as an expatriate founder and pushed for a shift to national leadership. He appointed Bridges' community outreach team leader, Kamal, with oversight of the project and its four facilities, promoting him into the role of director of the organization. At the same time, Thomas also stepped out of his role as principal donor, appointing Nina, an expatriate staff member with a social work background, to the task of overseeing the overseas funding organization as executive director.

Thus two staff members with relevant experience and professional backgrounds were entrusted with the responsibility of making organizational and programmatic decisions. Kamal, as the new director, was given the space to shape the project relying on his professional training in community development, as well as his personal experience as a member of the migrant community he served. Nina, in her new role as principal donor, worked to strengthen their organizational practices and financial transparency.

Armed with a skill set unusual for most principal donors, Nina was also able to utilize her relevant professional qualifications, two years of on-the-ground experience working directly with families, and near-fluency in the migrant community language, in her fundraising responsibilities. She effectively communicated complex messaging to her donor base around the root causes Bridges was seeking to address through their work and developed ethical fundraising strategies without relying on the ubiquitous and problematic 'orphan care' messaging.

Kamal turned his attention to advocacy within government and community groups and ramped up their existing efforts to prevent family separation. While their prevention work with families proved largely successful, their search for family-based care alternatives in the community proved less so. When Kamal eventually came into contact with Child and Family Development Agency, an external organization providing technical support for the transition out of institutional care, he was finally able to access the guidance and tools he needed to make progress towards the development of formal foster care in the community.

Child and Family Development Agency connected Kamal to other practitioners in the region who were already implementing foster care despite their initial doubts that it could be possible. Kamal now credits one of the workshops he attended through these connections as pivotal in his decision to fully transition out of residential care. Although he was already familiar with the evidence on the harmful effects of institutional care, and even provided training to government officials on the subject, there had been a disconnect in how such evidence related to their own residential facilities.

Through nuanced discussions with Child and Family Development Agency that challenged some of the views Kamal did not realize he held, he came to identify behaviors of institutionalized children in some of the children in their care. Kamal was also provided with technical guidance around the implementation of foster care within contexts with weak regulatory frameworks. This included the development of screening, recruitment, and training strategies as well as concrete explorations of how to navigate the complex dynamics of securing government approval for foster care of undocumented children. Through the combination of these various types of support and connection to peer practitioners, Kamal was able to visualize how transitioning out of a residential care model was relevant and tangible for Bridges, and it was only then that transition became a reality they could pursue.

Kamal's final moment of clarity came during a farewell event Bridges organized for some of the children leaving their facilities to return to their parents. As everyone grew emotional at the prospect of the children's permanent departure, Kamal was shocked to hear other children asking him in tears when it would be their turn to go home. Throughout ensuing conversations with the children, Kamal heard directly from them about their desire to live with their families, even in cases where there had been history of severe abuse.

Kamal's initial motivation to work for an organization supporting at-risk children transformed into a personal responsibility to see the children safely back into their families and communities where they longed to be. During future farewell events for other children leaving their facilities, he felt hugely burdened thinking about the impact of those events on the remaining children, as they waited for their turn to go home.

Through a formal partnership signed with Child and Family Development Agency in 2014, Bridges spent the following two years preparing for a full transition out of residential care. They worked through advocacy and partnerships to secure government permission for a foster care pilot and improved their reintegration practices utilizing more technically robust procedures and interventions. Nina continued to lead Bridges through an involved process of implementing changes at the organizational level.

Although Bridges and its governing and funding boards were legally registered, the partnership with the principal donor organization had previously been based primarily on trust. There were few written agreements or frameworks in place outlining clear expectations around the use of funds, reporting requirements, programmatic activities and budgets, and any breaches of policy. Through Nina's work with the overseas funding board and reporting templates provided by Child and Family Development Agency, the formerly loose partnership structure was strengthened into a formal and contractual partnership meeting the necessary due diligence requirements.

Despite what looked to be a smooth transition ahead, Thomas, the founder and former director/ principal donor unexpectedly re-entered the picture partway through the process, imposing an unrealistic deadline of six months for the closure of all four of their facilities. Kamal requested the support of an overseas practitioner with foster care experience who had had some previous involvement with Bridges, and Nina was able to secure funding for an extended in-country placement for the practitioner to work alongside Thomas and the rest of the team. Transition work continued throughout a highly stressful period that ultimately resulted in parting ways with Thomas, and Kamal recognizes now that he could not have survived the turbulent transition process without the ongoing support and guidance from both the practitioner and Nina.

By 2017, Bridges had closed three of their facilities and transformed the fourth one into a long-term small group home for children who could not be placed in families or communities. Nearly half of the children in their care at the start of the transition have now been placed into foster care and roughly the same number have been reintegrated into birth families and kinship care. The remaining young people are living in community-based care in semi-independent living arrangements with intensive support from social workers, and three children live in the small group home as they await foster care placements.

Kamal now delivers awareness raising workshops on family-based care, both within the migrant community as well as in his community of origin to prevent the flow of children from his home country into institutional care. Having experienced a full transition process and witnessed positive changes for many children he thought could never go home, he is more passionate than ever about supporting children to grow up in families and plans to support other institutions through the transition process.

SCORING

Theme	Theme Title	Green	Orange	Red
1	Making the Case for Transition	x		
2	Loyalty and Commitment	x		
3	Motivation	x		
4	Othering	x		
5	Clientism and Social Obligation	x		
6	Psychological Ownership	x		
7	Nature of the Partnership		x	
	Total	**6**	**1**	**0**

RATIONALE FOR SCORING AND TRANSITION STRATEGY

All of the individuals involved in the establishment, funding, and operations of the organization were motivated by a genuine and cause-based concern for children, and there was an absence of other motivations conflicting with the best interests of children. The director and principal donor were not the founders of the organization and instead were both employed and appointed to their positions. Their professional backgrounds contributed to their ability to theoretically understand the harmful effects and limitations of institutional care.

However, full buy-in was not achieved until, through an emotional experience of hearing directly from the children, the director made the connection between his theoretical understanding and how the evidence was apparent within his own facilities. Transition also did not seem feasible to the director until he was provided with technical support outlining concrete pathways to transition.

Intercultural dynamics and potential complications resulting from operation within a patronage system did not significantly impact the transition because the process was largely outworked by a director

operating within his own community. He was hired into his position because of his qualifications and experience, rather than his relational connections to the community where the children originated.

Many of the common risks stemming from a loosely-structured partnership between the director and principal donor were curtailed by putting the appropriate frameworks and formal agreements in place. Any potential damage and interference caused by the founder, who no longer held influence tied to his former roles as director and principal donor, was severely limited by the restriction of his power and authority.

While it is not typical for transition projects to provide family-based alternative care as part of their post-transition programming, a number of factors made it possible for this organization. This included the absence of any concerning motives of either stakeholder, both stakeholders having relevant professional experience, a director who was a member of their target community and a principal donor who was well integrated into it, and a contractual partnership that was established well before the transition commenced.

However, the most significant factor was that they had already been providing similar services around reintegration and support for family-based care prior to transition. Although a handful of children who could not be placed in families or communities remained in their care for several years, the vast majority of children that came through their facilities were only in care between three to six months prior to reintegration. They had never solicited funding through misleading messages around 'orphans' or referred to the children as 'theirs', instead focusing on the importance of reunifying children with their families whenever possible.

Thus from an organizational, programmatic, and funding perspective, the organization did not have to undertake radical changes to continue to outwork family-based alternative care as part of their post-transition programming. This sets them apart from the majority of other transition projects where the provision of alternative care is feasible only under a carefully considered set of circumstances.

CASE STUDY: FIREFLY ORPHANAGE

While visiting overseas for an international conference, a UK-based non-profit organization called Together for Change came into contact with the director of an institution housing children who had reportedly lost their parents. Together for Change made the decision to financially support the institution and soon became its principal donor. The director of the institution went on to broker funding for dozens of other institutions within his extensive network, and over the next decade, Together for Change transferred the equivalent of more than 1 million US dollars into the director's personal bank account. Amidst growing evidence of widespread financial misappropriation at the hands of many of the institution directors they had been supporting, Together for Change gradually came to discover that the director had authorized himself to take a 10% commission of all of the funds they had transferred.

Following the termination of their relationship with the institution director, Together for Change employed another director, Ethan, whom they had long supported and trusted. Ethan had earned overseas university-level qualifications and established Firefly Orphanage upon returning to his home country. As institutional care was the most common form of support for vulnerable children in his community, and many of his extended family members also operated institutions that were funded by Together for Change, it was for these reasons that Ethan came to establish his own institution.

While Ethan had a genuine concern for children and believed that he could improve their lives by providing them with access to higher quality education in the capital city, his decision to become involved in institutional care also stemmed from the knowledge that he could sustain his livelihood from it. Thus while the connection to institutional care was made via a relationship, his decision to become involved in institutional care was a rational one, not an emotional one.

In addition, as he commanded respect from his community from having obtained tertiary education qualifications overseas and having connections to foreign funding through Together for Change, the recruitment of children from his home village into Firefly established his role as patron to the families of those children. The resulting status and identity around his position as patron would later complicate efforts by social workers to reintegrate children out of Firefly and into his home community.

Aside from operating Firefly, Ethan's newly assigned responsibilities included oversight of all of Together for Change's partner institutions and disbursing monthly funds for their operations. Ethan was also tasked with assisting Together for Change in collecting photographs and information on all of the children in their partner institutions. As the child sponsorship model was Together for Change's primary means of fundraising from their individual donors, they requested details about the personal histories of the children and the directors supplied them, both sides unaware of the special rights of protection entitled to children living outside of parental care.

During this period, Together for Change came into contact with an international training organization that delivered workshops raising awareness of the over-reliance on institutional care in lower-income countries. Excited by the prospect of a different solution for the children they had been supporting, Together for Change arranged for the training organization to deliver a mandatory workshop for all of their partner institution directors to learn about the harms of institutional care. Following the workshop, Together for Change strongly encouraged their partner institutions to pursue family-based care and transition their programs into non-institutional models. When the workshop and subsequent directive to transition did not result in any change or action by the institution directors, however, Together for Change sought and secured a partnership with Project Families, an organization providing technical support to those seeking to transition their partner institutions away from residential care.

After a period of strengthening Together for Change's organizational policies and drafting written agreements outlining partnership standards, Project Families launched a series of monthly working groups for the institution directors. The following twelve months entailed frequent and extensive meetings dispelling common misconceptions about reintegration, discussing realistic ways to uphold child rights in a context with weak regulatory systems and few resources, and concretely mapping out a range of programmatic areas in which directors could continue to serve children post-transition.

While the majority chose not to pursue transition and a few were categorized as warranting safe closure, Ethan actively engaged with the process and made the decision for Firefly to move forward with transition. Project Families connected him with respected peers within his own country who had already gone through the transition and provided him with case studies of successful transition from the geographical region. Stories of individuals who remained involved in post-transition programming were highlighted, particularly in cases where they retained their salaries or were able to maintain comparable standards of living through the support of the principal donor.

Significantly, as Ethan had experienced a period of separation from his own family as a young child, he was able to empathize with the children living in institutions and realized that the institutional setting made it impossible for directors to provide the love and attention children needed to thrive. He said, "Being an orphanage director for 12 years, I know my relationship with the children. Even if we are open to them, they cannot be open to us. It is still the teacher-student relationship, not the parent-son relationship. In front of us they do not dare to tell us their feelings." Despite holding a range of mixed motivations for involvement in institutional care and being naturally inclined to a rational approach, Ethan was able to empathize with the children in his care through his personal experience and demonstrated genuine concern for them.

Alongside the monthly working group meetings with the participating directors, Project Families' donor engagement work with Together for Change included identifying other donors that were also financially supporting their partner institutions, and seeking to bring them onboard a transition process. For those who agreed to transition, a peer group was established to bring all of the involved donor organizations together to provide support to each other as well as to ensure consistent messaging to the institution directors regarding the agreed expectations of transition.

All of the participating directors and donors were signed into written agreements outlining concrete markers of progress and standardized responses to any child protection allegations emerging throughout the transition process. Together for Change frequently reiterated their commitment to fund the institutions fully participating in transition, and to phase out of funding those that chose to continue to provide the institutional care model. It was only after this preparation period that full buy-in was secured and the social work process could commence.

During the course of Project Families' donor engagement work, Together for Change learned of another donor organization, Smiling Hearts Foundation, that had also been a long-time supporter of Firefly. Photos of Ethan with the children in his care were discovered on Smiling Heart's website; however, the name of his institution was not listed as Firefly but instead identified as Smiling Hearts Children's Home, named after the donor organization. Neither Smiling Hearts nor Together for Change was aware of the existence of the other donor as Ethan had not disclosed this information. Together for Change contacted Smiling Hearts, and with some effort managed to secure their support for the transition. From that point forward, both donors worked together to cross-check and verify past and future requests for financial support.

For children whose families were in a patron-client relationship with Ethan, concerns were raised around his possible interference with some of the family assessments, presumably to prevent children from returning home before he could fulfill his social obligations to provide long-term support for their education. Social workers responded by discreetly reporting their concerns to Project Families, and plans for his post-transition role were moved forward to justify his removal from social work and reintegration programming in a way that allowed him to save face. Where possible, community development initiatives aiming to prevent family separation were directed towards Ethan's home community so that he could fulfill his social obligations as a patron and maintain his status in the community in alternative ways that did not rely on the institutionalization of children.

The partnership between Ethan and Together for Change was a highly relational and unstructured one, with absolute trust placed in Ethan and a profound lack of accountability for finances. Firefly was neither registered to operate as an institution, nor was it operated by an organization or any other entity. Ethan was treated as an employee of Together for Change for years before an employment contract was put into place.

Despite Ethan's repeated requests for Together for Change to conduct a financial audit of the meticulous records he had kept of his own accord, they dismissed the need and continued to transfer large amounts of funds into his personal bank account. At times Ethan would have the equivalent of USD$200,000 of transferred funds in his bank account and he would often be asked to withdraw and store tens of thousands of dollars at his home until he could distribute the cash to other institutions supported by Together for Change.

Together for Change also relied on a child sponsorship model as their primary method of fundraising and private information about children was shared publicly and widely, without an awareness that this violated the rights of children to privacy. Visitors from overseas interacted with children at Firefly during annual visits, distributing gifts and requesting private details about the children's histories.

As part of the onboarding and preparation work required in advance of commencing the social work process, Project Families worked in collaboration with both stakeholders to develop and implement a transition strategy. Key gaps were identified through the organizational assessment and plans were put in place to mitigate the numerous risks inherent in the relational partnership. This included the development and strengthening of organizational, governance, financial, and child protection policies and frameworks.

In later conversations, Ethan shared his reflections on the initial awareness-raising workshop delivered by the international training organization, as well as subsequent training sessions they delivered on social work processes. Two particular messaging tactics did not contribute whatsoever to his decision to transition away from institutional care: the child rights framework and the introduction of foster care. As these concepts were abstract and largely unfamiliar to most of the institution directors, he found them to be irrelevant to his situation until multiple in-depth conversations with Project Families guided him through breaking down such theoretical arguments into practical applications.

Notably, Ethan cited one specific message from awareness-raising workshops as particularly impactful on his decision to transition Firefly. Evidence of care reforms already taking place in other countries in the region led him to the realization that regardless of whether directors came on board with the idea of family-based care, institutional care would eventually be phased out in his country. Although Ethan became involved in institutional care through mixed motivations, his disposition towards a rational approach meant that a logical explanation of why it would no longer be feasible to remain in the business of institutional care, as well as hearing examples of others who were able to successfully retain their position post-transition, were effective in achieving buy-in for transition.

Together for Change now employs Ethan in a new role through which he delivers awareness-raising workshops on the importance of family care. He travels extensively to villages within his home province and speaks to parents and community leaders from his perspective as a former institution director. He is also involved in community development initiatives to improve local government schools so that parents can care for their children at home instead of sending them to institutions in the hopes of accessing better education for them. All but two of the children at Firefly have now been reintegrated with birth families or placed into kinship care. The remaining two children are working together with a Project Families social worker to prepare to leave care and transition into independent living.

SCORING

Theme	Theme Title	Green	Orange	Red
1	Making the Case for Transition		x	
2	Loyalty and Commitment		x	
3	Motivation		x	
4	Othering	x		
5	Clientism and Social Obligation		x	
6	Psychological Ownership			x
7	Nature of the Partnership			x
	Total	1	4	2

RATIONALE FOR SCORING AND TRANSITION STRATEGY

The combination of several potential risk factors led to a moderately complex but unexpectedly successful transition process. The mixed motivations and personal vested interests of the director could have posed a significant challenge to transition, particularly around retaining his status and livelihood as well as fulfilling social obligations to his clients.

However, as his decision to establish an institution was primarily a rational one instead of an emotional one, a rational approach to addressing his motivations and concerns around maintaining his status and livelihood post-transition proved effective in achieving buy-in for transition. While this message had to be delivered indirectly and sensitively so as to avoid accusing him of harboring personal vested interests, it was possible to openly connect him with others who had undergone transition to help him visualize how he could continue in a new role post-transition.

Although the director did not have relevant professional qualifications or experience, his tertiary education provided him with the capacity to quickly absorb new theories and processes around safe reintegration and community development. As such, he was involved in some of the case work for children in his care and, relying on his knowledge of the children's histories and their time in care, he was able to make valuable contributions to the child assessments that social workers were undertaking. These contributions are typically missing from other transition projects where directors are either unable to grasp the importance of the assessment process or refuse to cooperate in providing information, resulting in gaps that can easily lead to inappropriate placement decisions and potential harm to children.

Overall the highest risk to the transition process was the lack of formality and structure to the partnership between the director and principal donor. As part of establishing organizational-level processes designed to work towards a contractual partnership, new structures were put into place around financial reporting and accountability systems. Direct dialogue was also facilitated between the director and principal donor about the need to change past practices and clarifying the conditions and expectations for the director's future involvement in post-transition programming.

The director and principal donor's inadvertent engagement in unethical fundraising was addressed by putting in place a robust child protection policy outlining ethical communications, as well as reforming the child sponsorship model to a family support model of fundraising that no longer distributed individual photos or disclosed private details regarding the children in the institution.

While the principal donor and director were quick to genuinely buy into the concept of family-based care, the process of risk mitigation was critical to ensuring a safe transition process. Culturally sensitive approaches and creative solutions were required to address the director's mixed motivations and to resolve some of the issues emerging from the director operating within his role of patron to the families of children in his care.

Despite the presence of several orange- and a handful of red-light indicators, transition was feasible through the careful navigation of all of these aspects. The outcomes of the transition have been largely positive and the director has emerged as a strong candidate for a national care reform advocate.

CASE STUDY: LIGHTHOUSE CHILDREN'S VILLAGE

In 2004 a Norwegian woman named Kim traveled overseas with a friend and was introduced to an expatriate couple involved in charity work with communities living near a rubbish dump. When the expatriate couple met a young national woman named Maya who had grown up in an institution and wanted to establish her own, they co-founded Lighthouse Children's Village together. Maya took on the role of co-director and the primary caregiving role, while the expatriate couple filled the dual role of principal donor/co-director by taking on both the primary fundraising responsibility in addition to management of the day-to-day operations of Lighthouse. Through her deepening relationship with the expatriate couple, Kim became increasingly involved with Lighthouse and brought teams over on an annual basis to volunteer and interact with the children living there.

After a period of supporting the expatriate couple through worsening medical, mental health, and personal issues that ultimately prevented them from continuing in their roles with Lighthouse, Kim took over the role of principal donor. The expatriate couple were removed from their positions and a Norwegian entity was established to raise and disburse funds to Lighthouse. As the new principal donor, Kim took steps to put measures in place for organizational and financial accountability of Lighthouse, and she also undertook a comprehensive update of the child sponsorship program.

Kim soon realized that the number of children that she had been raising funds to support was different from the number of children that actually lived in the institution. She was unable to reconcile some of the photos of children with previous ones, as unbeknownst to her, new children were replacing those who had previously lived at Lighthouse. Extensive questioning of various people led her to discover that many of the children did indeed have parents and that some of them went in and out of care. Children who were supposedly orphans had families to return to during public and school holidays and were visited by parents who passed them food through the gates because they were not allowed inside Lighthouse.

During this time, the national co-founder and director, Maya, had often come into conflict with the expatriate couple but had primarily remained in the background and had not had much contact with Kim. As the expatriate couple's return to Norway became imminent, Maya invested heavily in her relationship with Kim, presumably to retain access to funding. Maya's husband, Liam, also a national, was hired as the new acting manager of Lighthouse and he effectively became the director, taking charge of the daily operations and becoming the primary liaison to Kim. At this point, Kim was seeking another organization to permanently take over the management of Lighthouse, partially due to the stress incurred around the management changes and partially due to an increasing difficulty of raising funds for the institution.

When Kim approached Transform Care Foundation, an organization advocating for family-based care, she requested that they take over management of Lighthouse. Encouraging her to work towards transition instead, Transform Care supported Kim to begin the process of gathering information to develop a transition strategy. Based on Transform Care's familiarity with the cost of living in the country where Lighthouse was operating, one of the first areas identified as a red flag was the inflated budgets Maya and Liam were sending through to Kim on a monthly basis.

Kim had inherited from the expatriate couple the financial responsibility of covering rent for a lavish building that Maya and Liam used to house themselves and several of their extended family members, monthly salaries for both directors that were well above what they should have been in comparison to similar positions in other organizations, and private school tuition for their three biological children. While this was a clear warning sign to Transform Care, raising concerns about the possibility of financial misappropriation at this stage would have been premature, given the close relationship and loyalty that had formed between Kim and Maya and Liam. Every call they had regarding Lighthouse operations and funding ended in declarations of their love and respect for each other, and Kim was convinced that despite their inefficiency in financial management, they genuinely cared about the children.

After a period of in-depth discussions with Transform Care exploring the possibility of transition, Kim and board members of the Norwegian funding entity made the decision to move forward. While they believed in the benefits of family care, they had no reason to doubt that Maya and Liam were providing good care for the children at Lighthouse. As a result, the overriding factor in their decision to pursue transition was more about decreasing the responsibility of management and financial burden on themselves and their supporters than it was about an urgency to reintegrate children out of a harmful situation.

When Kim presented the idea of transition to Maya and Liam, they agreed to participate relatively quickly and signed a partnership agreement together with Transform Care and the Norwegian entity, outlining terms for phasing out of institutional care and exploring post-transition programming. It would later become apparent that they had agreed to transition with no intention to do so, and their efforts to undermine the process resulted in mixed messaging to children and families as well as compromising the reintegration process itself.

Following a period of assessing and strengthening organizational systems and policies for both the Norwegian entity and Lighthouse, an external social worker was hired to outwork the reintegration process with the children at Lighthouse. Through her work there, she came to suspect widespread abuse and was subject to harassment and threats by the directors in response to her reporting of allegations in accordance with Lighthouse's new child protection policy. Her efforts to conduct child assessments were hampered by Maya and Liam as they instructed children not to speak with her and threatened them if they did. They called families ahead of her visits and instructed them to inform her that they could not care for their children and did not want them to leave Lighthouse. They also intentionally misinformed families and children that Transform Care would pay the social worker a commission for every child she reintegrated.

Over the course of six months, Transform Care carefully presented to Kim evidence of Maya and Liam's interference with the reintegration process, intentionally revealing small pieces of information at a time. Because the relationship between Kim and Maya and Liam had been cultivated for nearly ten years and Kim's loyalty to them was based on a deep sense of trust, premature accusations of unethical behavior could have resulted in Kim's inability to objectively see Maya and Liam's actions. Kim could have easily come to their defense if she felt that they were being unfairly accused by an organization that barely knew them, and she might have rescinded on her decision to transition. Despite suspicions that not everything was above board in the operations of Lighthouse, Kim excused their behavior with the justification that they were good people who cared about the children.

When the social worker resigned after four months of employment and Maya and Liam's sabotage became increasingly apparent and inexcusable, Transform Care advised Kim to pay an in-person visit to Lighthouse to collect documents that might reveal evidence of the suspected financial misappropriation. While the allegations of abuse and the directors' interference with efforts to reintegrate the children were the most concerning of issues, Transform Care instead chose to pursue evidence of their financial misappropriation as grounds for termination of their employment. Rather than involve children in a potentially unsafe situation whereby Maya and Liam could pressure or threaten them to retract their disclosures, the goal was to remove the directors from Lighthouse so that the children would no longer be in their care.

In response to Kim's visit and request for financial records, Liam realized that he was cornered, and acting out of desperation, he physically assaulted Kim and blocked her from leaving the office until Maya finally intervened, pleading with her husband to let Kim go. As Maya and Liam had been forced to show their true colors to Kim, plans were made to terminate their employment following staff disciplinary procedures. Kim's allegiance shifted immediately and fully to the children and all efforts were focused on ensuring their safety.

It was then that Lighthouse's governance documentation revealed that the overseas board members were not legally registered as a governance board with the appropriate government department, despite falsified documentation and assurances from Liam that they had been. Although staff contracts had been put in place as part of the preparation work prior to commencing reintegration, a review of the paperwork revealed that they had not been signed by the directors or other employees. Without any organizational structure or legal authority to remove them from their positions, Kim agreed not to press charges for the assault in exchange for Maya and Liam's voluntary resignation and a generous severance package.

Once a transitional board and management team were put into place, counselors and psychologists were sent in to work with the children and staff who were all reeling from the unexpected departure of the former directors. Many of the children remained in close contact with Maya and Liam and carried out their instructions to vandalize the property, physically threaten the new social workers with shards of glass, and report to Kim false claims of abuse by the new manager. Older children who had spent up to ten years at Lighthouse felt lost at having their caretakers sent away without explanation, as Kim could not explain to them that Maya and Liam had been exploiting them for their personal profit. Although a comprehensive review of financial records would later reveal that the directors had taken the equivalent of USD$50,000 for themselves out of donations and funding for Lighthouse, Kim had signed a non-disclosure agreement that prohibited her from speaking of the reasons for the directors' resignation.

As the new management team tracked down care leavers that had left Lighthouse and listened to their accounts of what they had witnessed during their time in care, details emerged of cases involving sexual abuse perpetrated by a female caregiver staff member who also happened to be Maya's sister. Older children were instructed by Liam to use physical violence against younger children to cause chaos within Lighthouse. Young people had been sent away from Lighthouse after learning to speak English well enough to be able to communicate to Kim evidence of the financial misappropriation and abuse they had discovered.

In the latter cases, Maya and Liam falsely accused the young people of stealing money or engaging in prostitution to publicly discredit them and cast doubt on any allegations they might make. This involved shaming the young people in front of their families and communities in order to take away their existing support networks, ultimately leading to the incarceration of one young person and, for another, involvement in sex work leading to irreparable damage to her relationship with her mother.

In one of the most severe cases of neglect and abuse, Maya and Liam went to great lengths to cover up their failure to provide medical treatment for a young child who was left unsupervised and sustained a brain injury in an accident. They found his resulting cognitive and physical impairments too difficult to cope with, and as the child's condition deteriorated, the directors sent him away to a rural province to be cared for by a childless couple until his death, eight months after the accident.

As social workers began to track down most of the families of the children in care, stories surfaced of how parents of children who had been recruited into care were unaware of their children's whereabouts and had searched for them for years. Written contracts preventing parents from visiting or contacting their children were discovered within the children's files, threatening the confiscation of the parents' national identification cards if they breached the contract terms. Most of the information given by Maya and Liam regarding the situations of the families turned out to be false, and there were credible suspicions that some children had been trafficked into care from across the country by Liam's colleague.

When the individual suspected of trafficking attempted to remove those children from Lighthouse during the transition process, displaying falsified birth certificates and claiming that they were his adopted children, the situation was reported to local police and authorities, as well as the national government child welfare department responsible for overseeing residential care services for children. After months of several meetings with the senior government official representing the child welfare department resulted in no action, it came to light that he had a long-standing friendship with Liam and he ultimately chose not to exercise his duty of care to the children.

As it became clear that Maya and Liam were continuing to work behind the scenes to sabotage the new management team and the reintegration process, the decision was made to move the children into two small group homes in a different area of the city, firstly to remove them from the physical environment where many had endured years of abuse and the resulting culture of violence, and secondly to increase the geographical distance from Maya and Liam. Children and families were consulted, sibling groups kept together, younger children separated from older ones who were physically abusive, experienced caregivers hired, typical houses indistinct from others in the community rented out, and children enrolled into new schools.

As the counselors and social workers continued their work, the children began to thrive almost immediately. Levels of violence drastically reduced, high-risk behaviors decreased, school progress soared, and within 18 months, all of the children had been reintegrated into family or community-based care settings. A program for care leavers was established to support them to safely transition into life outside of Lighthouse, and some of the young people slated for independent living even decided to return to their families. While monitoring of most of the cases is ongoing and social workers are still faced with numerous challenges and risk of placement breakdown, none of the children have been reinstitutionalized and most are faring reasonably well, considering the years of abuse and trauma they all endured.

During the four years that followed Kim's decision to transition, she endured unfathomable levels of stress and internal conflict as she struggled to cope with the overwhelming sense of betrayal from the actions of Maya and Liam. As more details were uncovered regarding the abusive and criminal behaviors of multiple individuals associated with Lighthouse, Kim witnessed firsthand the vicious backlash for having exposed all of it. Kim simultaneously faced multiple emergencies and health issues within her own family, and refinanced her house and sold personal assets to be able to continue funding the transition process. She remains engaged in legal battles with Maya and Liam to this day.

> In a rare display of unwavering commitment to children, Kim stayed engaged with the transition process even when she was emotionally and financially drained and felt she could not continue. Although similar situations have been known to fail spectacularly with untold damage done to children, the combination of circumstances and interventions resulted in an unlikely story of a group of people who chose not to walk away and the children whose lives were changed because of it.

SCORING

Theme	Theme Title	Green	Orange	Red
1	Making the Case for Transition		x	
2	Loyalty and Commitment			x
3	Motivation			x
4	Othering		x	
5	Clientism and Social Obligation			x
6	Psychological Ownership			x
7	Nature of the Partnership			x
	Total	**0**	**2**	**5**

RATIONALE FOR SCORING AND TRANSITION STRATEGY

While the principal donor demonstrated genuine concern for the children's well-being alongside a deep sense of loyalty to the directors for their work in caring for children, the directors' motivations for involvement in institutional care were overwhelmingly dominated by the pursuit of financial profit. The initial motivations of the national founding director for establishing an institution were never made clear but she reaped the benefits of the profit-seeking actions of her husband.

As he had effectively replaced her in her role as director by the time the transition commenced, she initially appeared to have been merely complicit in the deception without instigating it. However, as further allegations surfaced throughout the course of transition, it became clear that she had gone to extreme lengths to put children and young people at harm in an effort to protect herself and the institution, and to ensure that funding would continue to flow from the principal donor.

The presence of these motivations that superseded the best interests of children, combined with a highly relational and trust-based partnership, set within a country with weak regulatory frameworks, created a volatile situation that resulted in an institutional culture of abuse of power over staff as well as children and their families. Although key gaps in organizational processes were identified, it was in the interest of the directors to prevent efforts to address them.

Having agreed to transition without ever having had any intention to change their model of care, the directors went through the motions of appearing to cooperate while undermining and sabotaging any possibility of real change. They contacted other donors in an effort to secure funding from other

sources, including attempts to establish a new institution and coerce children into following them. Until the resignation of the directors was negotiated and the children physically moved away from their proximity, it was nearly impossible to effect any positive influence and commence the social work process.

When the principal donor initially agreed to transitioning away from supporting institutional care, the overriding reason for the decision was not necessarily a realization that children should be in families. Believing that the children were well cared for, they could see phasing out of institutional care as a solution to the challenges they faced in funding a long-term and ongoing commitment, and that it could also resolve their concerns that the directors were not managing the institution in a cost-effective way.

However, when suspicions of more serious unethical and criminal behavior arose and were later confirmed, the principal donor's motivation for pushing forward with the transition transformed into focusing completely on the safety and well-being of the children. Amidst an enormous sense of betrayal from uncovering years of deception, financial profit, abuse, and exploitation at the hands of people she had fully trusted and vouched for, it was the responsibility she felt towards protecting those children that kept her involved in a transition process that most others would have abandoned.

It bears noting that many of the interventions employed throughout this transition were only feasible in this situation because of the technical support-providing practitioners' direct experience of living and working for many years within the country where the institution was operating. It is unlikely that these interventions could have been carried out by international practitioners unfamiliar with the context and unable to rely on extensive networks and existing relationships with individuals, organizations, and local authorities for assistance. Thus it is recommended that any use of the interventions described here should be carefully considered within the context of other transitions.

Transitioning Care Assessment Tool Overview

Introduction

Transitioning residential care centers is an important part of care reforms. As organizations running residential care services go through the process of transition, they redirect efforts and investment into critical family- and community-based supports that make it possible for children to grow up in a family and as part of a wider community.

Transitioning a residential care center is a broad process that involves changes at every level of the organization. It is complex and there are many different stages and steps in a transition process, as outlined in the diagram below:

A tailored approach to transition

While most transitions progress through these overarching stages, there is no one-size-fits-all approach. This is because no two residential care centers are the same. Each has a unique starting point that is a combination of the country and cultural context in which it exists, and the dynamics that are unique to the organizations, partners, and individuals involved. As such, each one requires a tailored strategy to support transition in a way that is safe and effective.

The Transitioning Care Assessment Tool was developed to assist practitioners providing technical support to organizations undergoing transition develop such a tailored strategy. It focuses on the perspectives and concerns of the key stakeholders, and particularly the partnership between those running the residential care center and their key supporters. It is a sense-making tool that guides practitioners through the process of analyzing the dynamics involved. The dynamics are organized around seven key themes and the tool suggests relevant tips and actions that practitioners can factor into their strategic plan. It is designed to supplement, rather than replace, other assessment tools such as child and family assessments and organizational assessments.

What is Required?

Before using the Transitioning Care Assessment Tool, practitioners providing technical support should first possess a comprehensive understanding of the regulatory frameworks, policies, and legislation of the country within which the institution is operating. This includes a working knowledge of:

- National child protection frameworks
- Social welfare support services
- Alternative care policies

Next, a number of organizational assessments should be conducted and relevant information gathered from the key stakeholders, i.e., the director and the principal donor. This information may relate to the following areas:

- Governance
- Organizational structure and status
- Partnership
- Founding history
- Perspectives of the stakeholders

Once this information has been gathered, it will then be possible to work through the Transitioning Care Assessment Tool to analyze the practitioner's individual situation and develop an appropriate transition strategy.

What else is included?

The Transitioning Care Assessment Tool contains links to other useful resources that practitioners may want to use or adapt to outwork the transition. It also includes some brief overviews of sociological theories and perspectives, such as relevant cultural paradigms, that relate to transition.