

CONCORD's Pledge to Shift Power

At CONCORD, we are committed to **shifting power in international partnerships** and to ensuring that **our actions, narratives, and advocacy** reflect and support locally led change. This pledge reaffirms our dedication to **equitable partnerships, authentic and safe storytelling, and influencing policy and practice** in a way that genuinely centres local voices and leadership.

We will reflect on our power, position, and role, strive for coherence and avoid being instrumentalised to legitimise political processes/decisions, and be careful about the risk of prioritising short-term gains at the policy level to the detriment of our long-term vision of systemic change.

Our commitment is structured around three core pillars:

1. Promoting Equitable Partnerships

True transformation requires partnerships rooted in **trust, respect, and shared leadership**. We pledge to:

- **Strengthen shared leadership**—Create spaces for partners, particularly those from the Global South, to **co-lead** in shaping CONCORD's policy and advocacy processes.
- **Support direct funding to local organisations** – Pushing for reallocating resources towards local initiatives.
- **Actively engage in the discussion to redefine the roles of European CSOs**—on how to move from an implementing role to a **facilitator and ally** role that prioritises **local leadership and ownership**.
- **Expanding the presence and influence** of partners in **CONCORD's strategy-setting processes**.
- **Tracking and reporting our progress**—We will regularly assess and report on how we implement this **Pledge**, ensuring that we hold ourselves accountable.

2. Changing our Narratives work

The way we tell stories shapes perceptions and power dynamics. Too often, international narratives reinforce a white gaze that centres Europe as the main actor, reproduces

“saviour” dynamics, reinforces harmful stereotypes and erases the agency of local actors. We commit to reshaping our narratives by:

- **Contribute to ending the white gaze and white saviourism:** We will actively challenge narratives to place European or international actors at the centre of change, and instead ensure that stories reflect the perspectives, priorities, and agency of local communities. By consciously shifting the lens, we seek to dismantle saviour dynamics, decolonise our mindsets, and foster narratives grounded in solidarity and equality. We will create a culture of anti-racism, reflection, and learning, inviting feedback from colleagues and local organisations to ensure that language and imagery remain respectful and up-to-date
- **Highlighting leadership, giving credit where it’s due:** We will highlight local communities’ leadership in everyday change and progress actions, and commit to ensuring that local organisations and individuals are recognised for their contribution.
- **Committing to authentic and safe storytelling,** Stories will be grounded in informed consent and accurate representation, amplifying the voices of those who choose to tell their own stories rather than speak on their behalf.
- **Co-producing stories with local communities** – Wherever possible, we will continue **collaborating with local storytellers, photographers, and videographers,** ensuring that people are at the centre of their stories.
- **Preserving authenticity through every step of the editorial process**—from gathering words and images to editing and publication, we commit to maintaining the integrity of people’s stories.
- **Eliminating jargon and making language accessible** — We will communicate in clear, inclusive language that diverse audiences can easily translate and understand. While this may be less critical when addressing EU institutions in our advocacy work, it becomes essential when engaging with partners or organising information sessions, where clarity and accessibility directly support meaningful participation.

3. Driving Systemic Change Beyond Ourselves

Shifting power within our partnerships and storytelling is not enough—we must also **drive systemic change within EU international cooperation and beyond.** We commit to:

- **Advocating for systemic reform** – We will confront policies and practices perpetuating inequality and maintaining imbalanced power dynamics. We will continue to advocate for more just, inclusive, and equitable approaches across the international cooperation sector and create spaces where Global South leaders can drive the conversation.

- **Encouraging other organisations to follow** – By sharing what we have learnt and demonstrating how we are shifting power, we hope to **inspire broader change across the sector.**

Moving Forward

During CONCORD LEF 2024, the confederation recognised the need to formalise the shift the power work better. This pledge is one more step in this ongoing process, which requires **continuous learning, adaptation, and accountability.** This pledge is our **commitment to action**, and we invite all partners and colleagues to **hold us accountable, challenge us when we fall short, and co-create solutions with us.**

Together, we can **redefine partnerships, transform narratives, and push for a more just and equitable future.**

#ShiftThePower #EquitablePartnerships #AuthenticStorytelling #TransformingAid

Accountability

We need to identify specific processes and assess them with partners. One idea is to use and adapt the [PARTOS Power Awareness tool](#), reflecting the commitments of our pledge.

NATIONAL PLATFORMS	 Global Responsibility Austrian Platform for Development and Humanitarian Aid	 BELGISCH PLATFORM PLATE-FORME BELGE CONCORD CNCD-11.11.11 ACODEV ngo-federatie	 BPID Bulgarian Platform for International Development	 Platforma za mednarodno gradnisko solidarnost Hrvatska Croatian Platform for International Citizen Solidarity CROSOL	 FORS	 GLOBAL FOCUS
		 fingo	 COORDINATION SUD	 VENRO ASSOCIATION OF GERMAN DEVELOPMENT AND HUMANITARIAN AID NGOs	 Hellenic Platform for Development	 HAND
 Network della ONG in Europa per lo sviluppo e l'emergenza CONCORD ITALIA	 LAPAS Lusitan Platform for Development Cooperation	 vbp Vystopnaja kooperatsionnaja platforma	 Cercle de coopération des ONGO DU LUXEMBOURG	 SKOP Solidarjetät u Koperazjoni	 PARTOS	 ZAGRANICA
 ONGD PLATAFORMA PORTUGUESA	 FOND Federalni Organizaci za Neprofitna delovanja in Razvoj	 Ambrella Platform for Development Organisations	 SLOGA Slovenian Global Action	 LA COORDINADORA DE ORGANIZACIONES PARA EL DESARROLLO	 CONCORD AGENDE	 bond
NETWORKS	 actalliance eu Formerly APRODEV	 act:onaid	 ADRA	 Alliance 2015 SHAPED BY ASSOCIATION OF CHARITIES	 care	 caritas europa
 ChildFund Alliance	 CIDSE Together for global justice	 eucord European Union of Development and Cooperation	 GNDR	 Habitat for Humanity	 handicap international humanity & inclusion	 IPPF International Planned Parenthood Federation European Network
 LIGHT FOR THE WORLD	 OXFAM International	 PLAN INTERNATIONAL Until we are all equal	 Save the Children	 solidar	 SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES INTERNATIONAL	 Terre des Hommes International Federation
 wecf	 Wetlands International	 World Vision	 WWF	ASSOCIATE MEMBERS	 alda European Association for Local Democracy	 CARDET
 DRC DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL	 European Partnership for Democracy	 EUROPEAN DISABILITY FORUM	 INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE	 NRC NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL		