



Change Ready ^{The} CivSource Way



When we started our leadership strengthening work at CivSource Africa, one of the areas of support that we identified was that of succession and transition. Through the team's combined experience working with civil society, we had observed that if not managed well, succession and transition moments tend to cause dire setbacks for organizations.

As a start, we conducted a study of organizations in Uganda that had undergone succession and transition. We attempted to glean lessons about what works and what doesn't, and what CivSource Africa could do to support better succession and transition management.

What we've learned in the last 2 or so years of doing this work is that there is no one size fits all. Organizations and their teams come in all sorts of shapes and forms. Each transition is as unique as the organization is. Thus, when we support an organization, we literally have a keen awareness that they have their own path and are trying to figure out their journey.

The other learning for us has been how to enable organizations to be ready to be ready for change. An analogy we use is how, when a woman decides she wants to carry a child, she starts preparing her body for this journey. She may reorganize her schedule, change her diet, fortify her mineral intake, all to prepare her body for the coming change.

When we extrapolate this to organizations, we need to think about how organizations can start to prepare themselves to receive the change.

One way we are experimenting with this at CivSource Africa is through a process called Rotational CEO. It is a process by which I select one of the team members to be our CEO for an extended period (for now that's 4 months). During this time, I step away and let a team member lead.

Prior to this stepping away, I will have formally asked the team member to take on this responsibility and I offer them enough lead time to think through this request to be our Rotational CEO. The lead time is to enable them ponder their readiness, reorganize their calendar but also contemplate the responsibility they are being asked to carry.

I hold several briefing meetings so that the incoming rotational leader understands what they will oversee during their tenure. I then make a formal announcement to the whole team and to our key partners. And this is not just any regular announcement. We actually have a ritual to install the Rotational CEO. I give them a stole with the words: 'Leadership is Stewardship' as a way to remind them that they are stepping up to serve, not to be served. I also give the Rotational CEO a candle as a symbol that they are the light (lead) and that they should continue to light themselves so that they can light the team.



During the time that I step away, I still do work for the organization and report to the Rotational CEO as my leader. I also remain on hand to offer any guidance that the Rotational CEO may need, but I truly let them lead, so that they gain the experience. It also allows the team to fall in line and support their new leader.

This is the CivSource Africa way of starting to prepare ourselves for the inevitable time when I will no longer be the CEO.

We first experimented with this model in 2021, when Ms Lillian Tamale was our first Rotational CEO from October 1st to January 31st of the next year (2022).

This year it gives me great pleasure to introduce our next Rotational CEO, Mr. Malcolm Mpamizo. He will lead the CivSource Africa team from July 1st to October 31st, 2023.

Malcolm Twino Mpamizo, a social justice lawyer and advocate, has over 10 years' experience in governance, human rights, policy research and advocacy and grant making. Malcolm is a proficient, versatile and results driven professional who has progressively developed expertise in international human rights law, with particular interest in international children's law, business and human rights and civil society law.

In his 5-year tenure at CivSource Africa, Malcolm has contributed to the shaping and development of the programs at CivSource from budding ideas into fully functional departments that are critical to the work of refining the footprint and practice of philanthropy in Africa.

When Malcolm's term is over, we will sit as a team to reflect, learn and tweak the model as need be, as we continuously prepare ourselves to be Change Ready.

I know you will give Malcolm the requisite support to enable him lead us through these coming months.

And for that, I thank you.

Jacqueline Asimwe





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