

tips for CSOs
seeking to boost
their fundraising
capabilities

5 TIPS TO KICKSTART YOUR FUNDRAISING STRATEGY

[AEI](#) and [EPIC-Africa](#) are two like minded organizations intent on catalyzing African experts and organizations. AEI and EPIC-Africa are embarking on a shared-value strategy to develop bespoke and tailored solutions to support the growth of the African CSO sector. As we begin to engage with African CSOs specifically around fundraising, a few tips come to mind:



KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Donors fund organizations that help them meet their own goals and objectives. Many bi-lateral and multi-lateral organizations have to report back and justify investments to the governments that fund them. As African CSOs are not often at the table or part of the conversation when it comes to donor priorities, you should seek out allies to help you navigate the world of donor expectations. Ensure that you understand and fit into your target donor's justification and funding priorities.



BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

Many funding opportunities come after years of relationship building. Donors want to know the leadership personally, and often co-create a shared vision of what the donor will invest in. If your contact at a particular donor organization is leaving, make sure they introduce you to someone else in the organization, to keep the relationship going.



PREPARE YOUR PITCH

Knowing how to explain the Who, What, Where, and Why of your organization in a minute or less is a key skill. Making sure you are transparent about organizational and administrative structure – for example, if you are hosted through another organization – is also critical to establish and clarify during initial contact.



TELL STORIES

Africa maintains its oral traditions. You should too. As much as you'll need brochures and case studies, you also need compelling stories. Tap into storytelling and use tools such as video, photos and infographics to share a captivating and moving story about what you do and why. Sometimes telling your personal story, and how it relates to the organization, is the most compelling of all.



CAPTURE YOUR VALUE

It's been a fad for a decade or so for CSOs to have a proposal bank: a pile of proposals sitting on a shelf no one ever funds. Don't waste your time on writing proposals for an unidentified funder and a non-existent opportunity. Instead, capture your value proposition. What makes you different, special or unique? What has been your impact? What value do you bring to the donor – which gets us back to tip #1!