

Agency Plan 2023-2030

Our Power Shifting Approach



**RESTLESS
DEVELOPMENT**

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**Welcome
to our**

AGENCY PLAN

Restless Development released its new Global Strategy in March 2022, pushing against the boundaries and challenging how development is done. Its bold ambition is to support the collective power of young leaders to create a better world. To achieve this, the agency endeavours to contest traditional power structures and shift power.

This strategic ambition does not only guide our programmes and the work we do but also how we operate as an agency. We should not only advocate for power shifting but should also walk the talk and apply it to ourselves. This is what this agency plan sets out to do.

The product of an extensive consultation process with staff and young people, this document therefore explains how as an agency we shall operate in order to deliver our strategy to the fullest – while at the same time, model new ways of operating in order to shift power internally.




**What do we
mean by**

**POWER
SHIFTING**

Our strategy spells out how we commit to being intentional in our efforts to shift power; enabling young people and communities who have previously been marginalised to lead change. We see the growing inequalities and injustices in our world and want to be a force to counteract oppression and traditional power structures.

We are feminist, inclusive, gender transformative and anti-racist in our approach. We are grounded in communities and work in partnership to ensure young people lead in everything we do. We recognise historic power inequalities and aim to decolonise development.



We recognise the barriers that women, girls, non-binary people, people living with disabilities, and young people with different ethnicities, religion and sexual preferences face in the communities in which we work. We want to proactively shift power and ensure every young person is able to lead and create a just and sustainable world and access their rights. To do so, we believe we need to address systematic inequalities in everything we do.

How we do our work is therefore as important as what we do. We take a power shifting approach in our operations as much as in our programmes and interventions. As spelled out in this plan, power shifting in our operations means:

- Creating a new, inclusive and representative structure that challenges the usual “supremacy” of a headquarter established in the global North.
- Establishing an annual cycle based on mutual accountability.
- Setting ambitions for a high performing agency where governance, management, resource mobilisation, people and performance, communication, climate action, strategy delivery and finance are done differently.
- Clarifying what change we want to see (and be able to measure) by 2030 in terms of internal power shifting.



SHIFTING YOUTH POWER



OUR VALUES

Restless Development has always lived by its values. Developed by staff in 2016, and updated in 2023, they continue to guide our work and make us who we are. On our new journey towards Power Shifting, they remain as relevant as ever, driving us, inspiring us, challenging us and uniting us. More than just posters on the wall, they are alive at the heart of how we work, from the way we challenge ourselves and each other to the way we have courage to speak up and take a stand in favour of Youth Power and Power Shifting.

Our values have guided and shaped this agency plan and we shall live by our values to deliver it. Our values will underpin the ultimate success of this plan – challenging us to be brave and take risks, demanding quality in what we do, and bringing more voices into the way we lead and learn through this plan.

HEART



HEAD



HANDS



VOICE



OUR AGENCY MODEL

This agency plan is only a part of our wider agency model, recognising the intersection between our structure, ways of working, ambitions for change (this plan), governance model, and how we finance and allocate resources amongst ourselves. At the time of writing, both the financial model and the governance structure are under development and shall be finalised during 2023/24. They are additional elements to our Power Shifting approach, showing how governance structures can be altered to decolonise development and financial models can be developed around collective responsibility and solidarity.





OUR STRUCTURE

Restless Development is a non profit global agency. We are made up of several entities all working together to pave the way on youth-led change and to demonstrate how shifting power results in greater impact.

Within the global agency are seven Hubs in India, Nepal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe which are all independently locally registered. They are governed by and accountable to their own Boards. Our ambition is that 50% of all Board members will be under 35 years old (by 2030). Hubs are managed by their Leadership Teams – with the same ambition for youth leadership. Hubs make their own decisions to lead their work. They have signed up to the global strategy but have full autonomy of the work done nationally.

The global agency also has some Satellites offices. These offer a service function to the global agency (fundraising, administration, etc). They have various registration identities and are not led by Leadership Teams – instead, they are under the guidance of the Global Leadership Group.

The Global Leadership Group (GLG) is a representative group of leaders from across all Hubs and Satellites with the responsibility for the sustainable health and impact of the global agency. It collectively leads the direction of the global agency and makes decisions on behalf of the global agency.

Finally, the Pod is a team distributed across the various global agency entities who play a coordination, consolidation and support function for the global agency. It also raises resources, provides quality assurance and delivers global programmes. It is accountable to the GLG.

Hubs, Satellites, the Pod, the Global Leadership Group

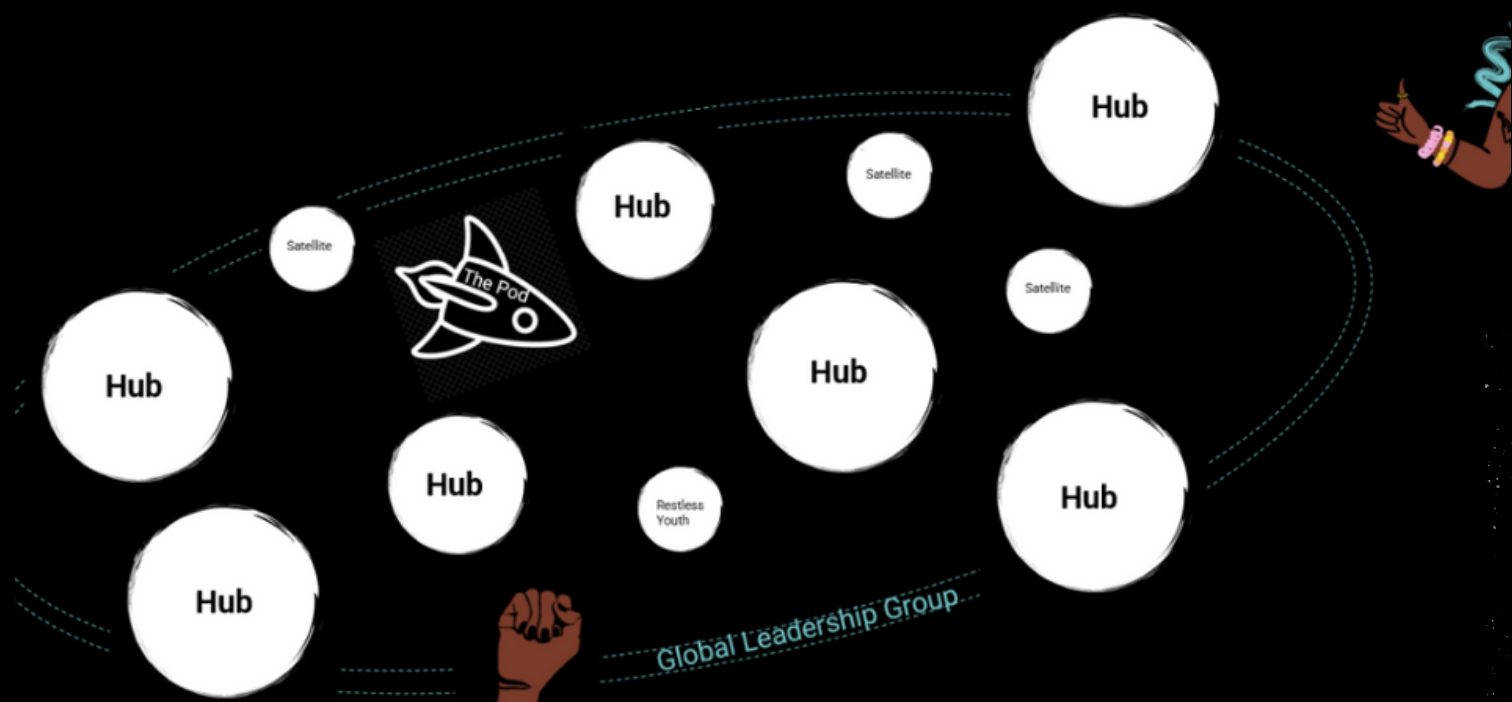
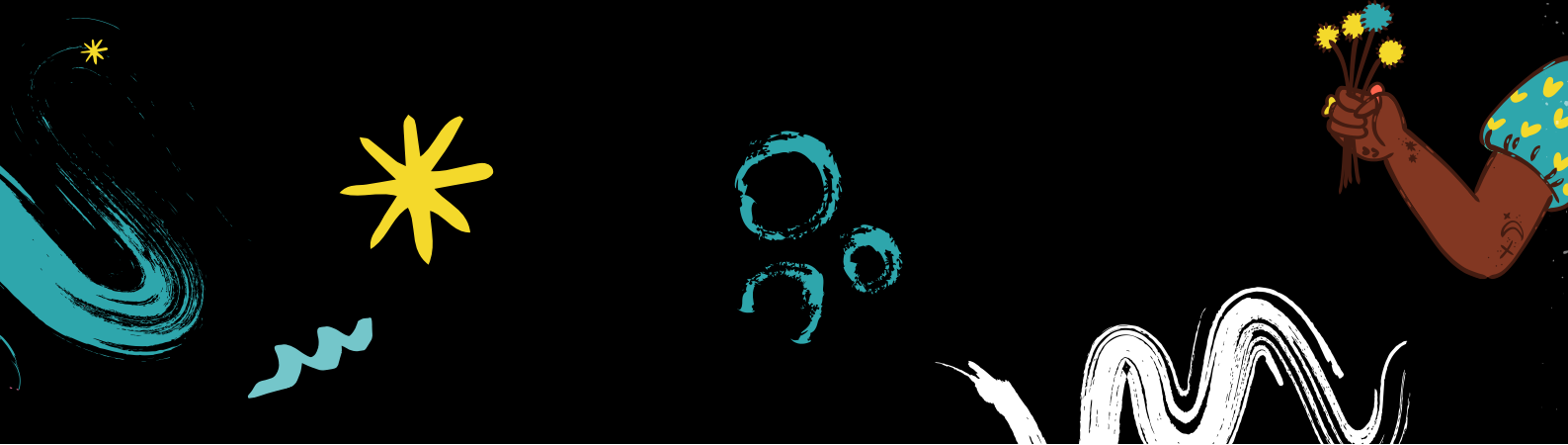


Figure 1: Depiction of the global agency as a galaxy

As can be seen above, our global agency has rejected the pyramidal hierarchy that condone traditional power structures. Instead, we envisage a flat organisation where a few based in the global North will not dictate to, or influence, others in the majority world on what should be done. In addition to including more voices to the existing structure, we questioned it and altered it to follow the principles of feminist leadership and boldly shift power.

Structure however is not enough: how we behave, work together and make decisions is also key to shifting power within our agency. Our approach is explained in the Annual Cycle section below.



OUR ANNUAL CYCLE

The way we work together is based on collaboration and mutual accountability. We agree to coordinate and follow a global calendar so that the information generated by all the entities can be consolidated into a global picture. This is essential so that the Global Leadership Group has line of sight over the entire agency, its strengths and weaknesses, so that the best decisions can be taken.

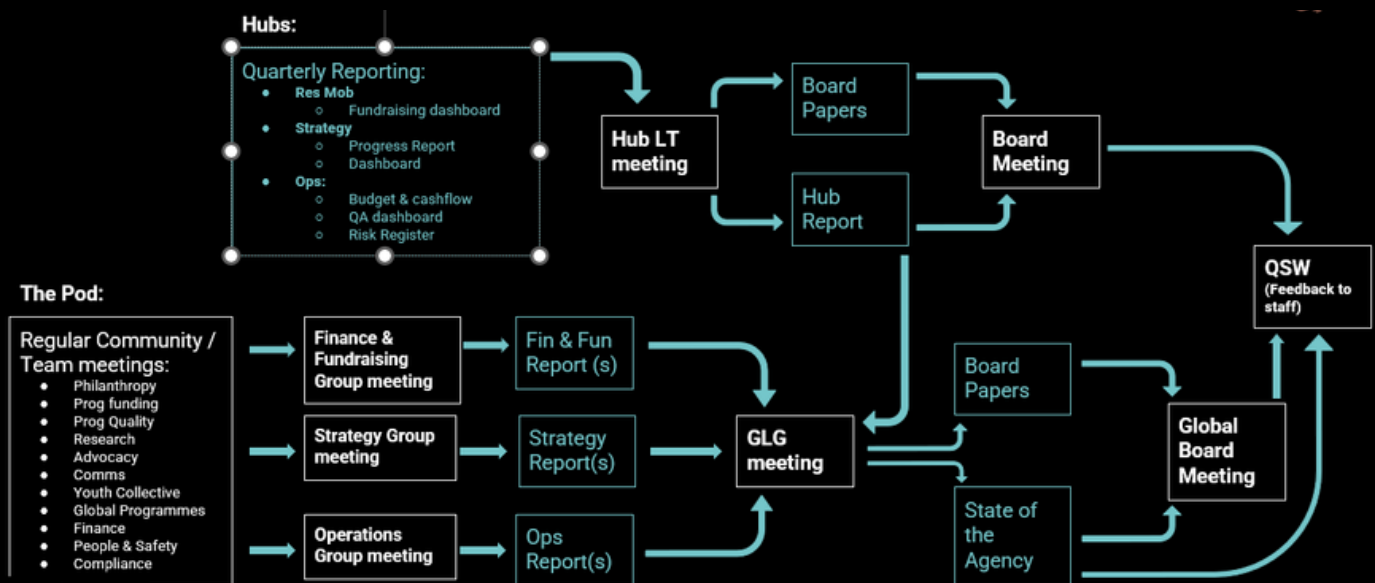


Figure 2: the Quarterly Accountability Cycle

As seen in the picture above, what happens locally in Hubs and what happens globally at the GLG mirror each other: the three lines of work (strategy, operations and resource mobilisation) all report into their collective management structure which in turn reports into its Board. Ultimately, all decisions are fed back to staff.



In order to simultaneously perform at our best across our agency whilst driving change to achieve an agency where power is more equitably distributed, we have set out our ambition in a new standard framework. It articulates our targets in two areas: our high-performance criteria and our power shifting criteria. Together, they form our new operating model for change against which we will measure our success.

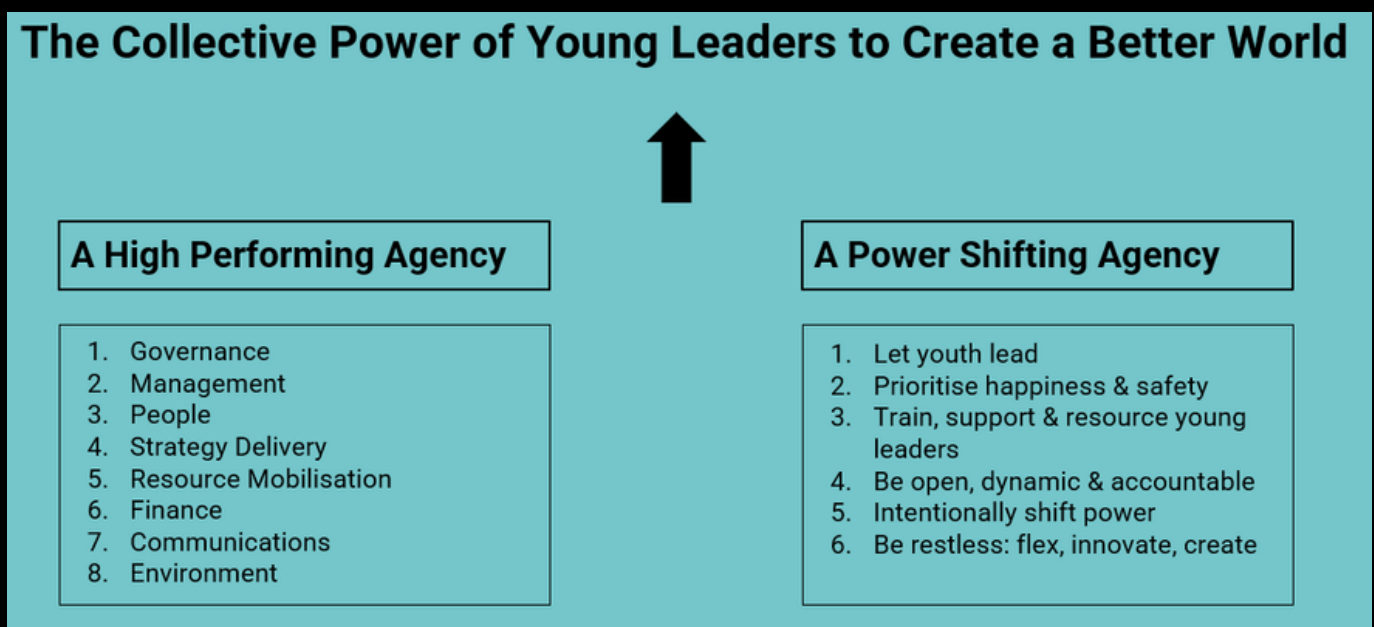


Figure 3: the two pillars of our plan

Collectively developing and committing to this framework drives all entities of the global agency's compliance function while at the same time, making us accountable to each other and our communities for our actions.

High Performance

The following 8 quality areas will drive our performance and be the basis for holding ourselves accountable.

1. Governance

Why does it matter how we govern our agency?

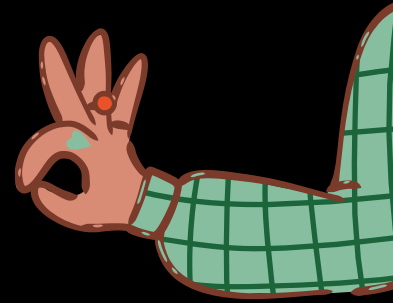
Good governance is important for any agency as it seeks to maintain strong, responsible and diligent leadership from which the legality of its work is derived. In Restless Development, for our actions to be legitimate, our global agency should not only respect the laws that regulate each and every one of our entities but also be governed by entities that reflect who we are, our values and the communities we work with. The legality of our entities' registration is paramount to ensure the sustainability of our presence and impact, and the representation within our Boards also drives our vision for an agency that shifts who holds power to lead.

Our ambition.

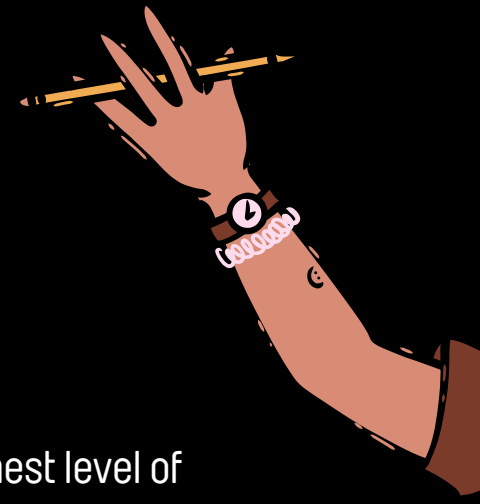
Globally, a collective governance structure that will integrate or represent our national boards will guide the agency to succeed in our strategy. Each of our individual entities will be governed autonomously according to their national laws by a diverse and representative bodies who will oversee our work.

Global Agency priorities:

- ✦ The entity governing the global agency will represent/integrate National Boards
- ✦ All entities of the global agency will mutually agree reciprocal expectations
- ✦ All governance structures will meet legal national requirements
- ✦ Global and national boards will all adopt targets for the representations of young people, women as well as other under-represented populations



2. Management



Why does our management approach matter?

Every agency's management should strive to reach the highest level of performance to deliver successfully on its strategy. In order to “walk the talk” at Restless Development, our commitment towards power shifting will be reflected internally in the way we work and manage our agency. Our management approach should showcase how to put youth leadership at the heart of how we operate and shift power to the hands of the communities we work with. To continuously improve, systems should be in place for feedback to be received by our leaders and they should be made accountable to all stakeholders for their decisions.

Our ambition.

To deliver on our strategy while complying with the highest standards of operations, we will adopt a collective management that reflects our commitment to youth leadership, feminism, inclusion, power shifting and accountability.

Global Agency priorities:

- * The global agency will be managed by a global leadership group that is diverse and representative
- * Management structures across the global agency will feature youth leadership
- * Management structures across the global agency will be accountable to stakeholders
- * Management structures across the global agency will monitor our compliance with performance standards
- * Management structures across the global agency will actively protect the agency from all risks and lead to growth in future.

3. People



Why do we invest in, support and challenge our People?

Every agency wants to hire good staff and at Restless Development, our people reflect who we are in all our diversity, who we work with (especially young people) and our values. Our recruitment and people practices should be driven by our global commitment to shift power and create change.

We believe our people are our greatest asset. For them to deliver at their best, the agency needs to support their safety, well-being and invest in their growth and development. At the same time, our people need to be held to the highest standards of behaviour.

Our ambition.

Our agency's people will all be leaders supporting others to grow as leaders within a diverse environment that values their well-being and expects greatness in equal measure.

Global Agency priorities:

- * The global agency will manage people in a unified manner with systematic goals development and performance review
- * The global agency will continue efforts to enforce the highest standards on safeguarding
- * The global agency will support staff wellbeing
- * The global agency's people will live by its values
- * The global agency will hire young professionals and support their professional growth



4. Strategy delivery

Why should we monitor the systems and processes that ensure our strategy delivery?

Our whole purpose, like any other agency, is to have a positive impact in the world. At Restless Development, we are trying to create change and challenge existing power structures. This requires not just a different way of working, especially with young people; but also, a different way of designing and setting up our work. We need to showcase that what we do has the potential to be transformational, mobilising others to follow in our footsteps.

Our ambition.

We will test new approaches to solving the world's problems while shifting traditional power structures and mobilising other to do the same. We will prove our approach has a long-term impact in the lives of young people and communities we work with.

Global Agency priorities:

- * We will develop and implement innovative power-shifting work that delivers our strategy.
- * We will evaluate the impact of our work, generate knowledge, learn and adapt.
- * We will influence duty bearers to support youth power.
- * We will be accountable to the communities we work with.
- * We will mobilise and support youth civil society organisations.



5. Resource Mobilisation

Why do we continuously need to mobilise resources?

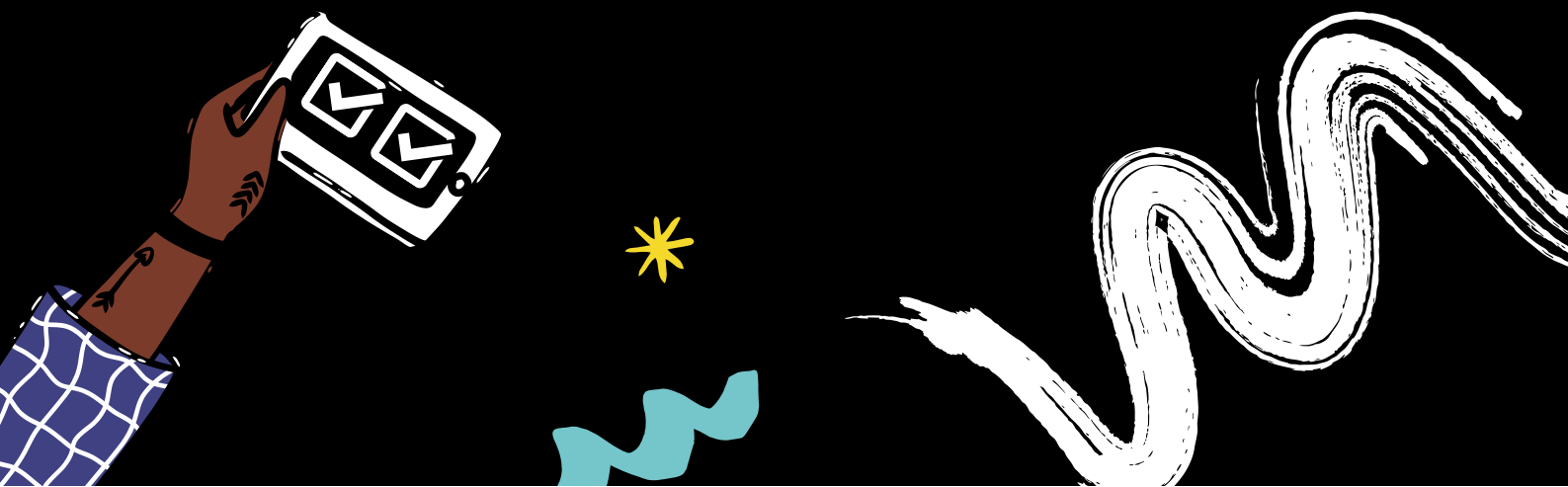
Every agency needs to raise funds to finance its work. At Restless Development, we want to sustainably resource the agency in order to achieve the objectives of our new global strategy to shift power and create change. This means we need to mobilise resources differently and that, we need to finance not only our work but also our contribution to the Youth Collective.

Our ambition.

We seek to increase our resources in a power-shifting, strategic and collaborative manner across the agency to not only resource our own operations but to also fund Youth Collective members who fight for Youth Power.

Global Agency priorities:

- * We will work to realise the objective of our power shifting resource mobilisation strategy.
- * We will invest in growing our unrestricted philanthropy.
- * We will work and/or partner with youth civil society organisations and networks to redistribute funds.



6. Finance

Why is how we manage our finances important?

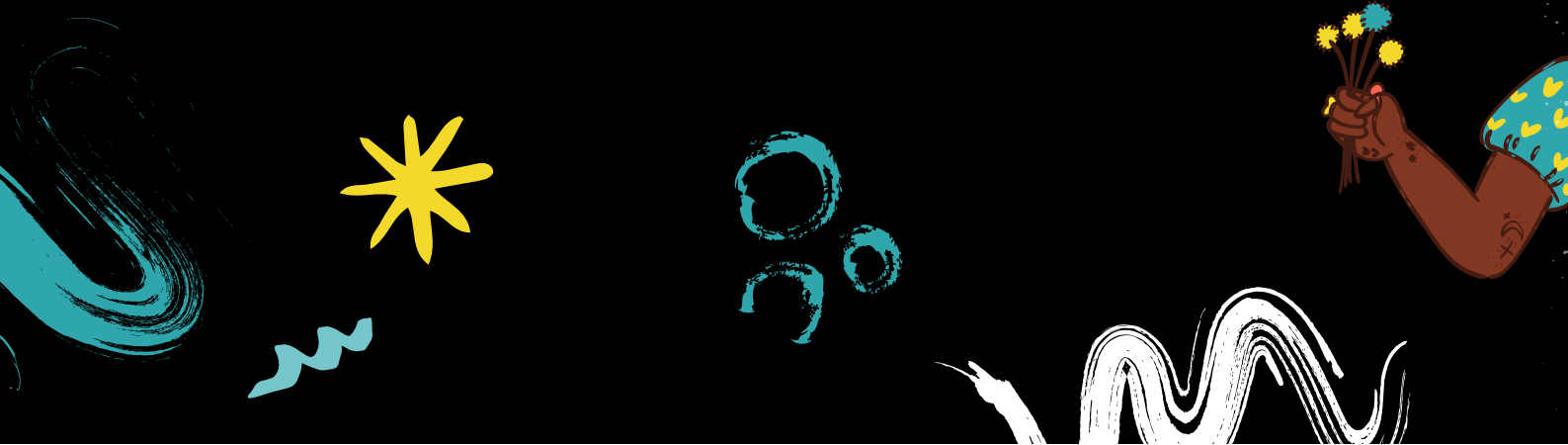
Every agency needs to manage their finances efficiently to maximise outputs: to be cost efficient, protected from financial risks, sustainable, transparent and able to invest and innovate. At Restless Development, we also want our finances to support our collective model of a decentralised global agency where power is shifted.

Our ambition:

Our financial model will ensure sustainability, allow us to invest in innovation and remain a nimble and responsive agency. We will design our cost and resource allocation practices to finance our vision of a global agency where power is shifted, emphasising equity, transparency and accountability, ensuring we act collectively as responsible stewards of our assets and funds.

Global Agency priorities:

- * Financial risk will be mitigated across the global agency.
- * Each entity will contribute to the global agency finances.
- * We will mobilise the resources to be able to innovate.
- * We will manage our finances in a transparent manner.
- * Our global agency's financial sustainability will be guaranteed.



7. Communications

Why is communication central to our success?

Effective communication is always important to raise awareness about the work we do. For Restless Development, Youth Power is our driving force for change: how we communicate should reflect our commitment to shift power, and have young people lead.

Our ambition:

Powerful, highly targeted communication will spotlight our achievements and our progress as an agency, while influencing across our sector to be a thought-leader in Youth Power. We will create content with young people and share content directly from young people to ensure their voices are front and centre.

Global Agency priorities:

- * Our communications will amplify the voice of young people.
- * Our communications will showcase the impact of our work with young people.
- * Our communications will support the implementation of our global strategy and the growth of the Youth Collective.



8. Climate Protection

Why will we focus on climate protection?

Climate change is one of the defining issues of our time and every agency should be concerned about how its operations impact our world. At Restless Development, we want to be part of the solution and contribute to fighting against and actively mitigating the negative consequences of climate change. Furthermore, we want to be intentional in preventing further environmental damage from our actions. Young people, those who have contributed the least to climate change, will face the biggest impacts of climate change. Hence, we feel that it is essential to take steps to reduce our impact on the planet and our communities.

Our ambition:

We will be a carbon neutral agency which will protect the natural environment and ensure its ability to support life for future generations, through our agency, operations, programmes and Youth Collective.

Global Agency priorities:

- * We will reduce the environmental impact in the way that we work.
- * We will take into consideration the fight against climate change in everything we do.
- * We will raise awareness of climate change and advocate for climate solutions both internally and externally.



Power Shifting



Recognizing that how we work is just as important as what we do, we have committed to Shifting Power to the young people and the communities that we work with.

We are committed to Shifting Power and living this principal internally in the way we run our operations.

We have developed a Power Shifting Checklist in our strategy that will guide how we operate as a global non-profit agency and will be the basis for holding ourselves accountable for Shifting Power in how we work.



1. Prioritise Youth Leadership

Why is prioritising youth leadership in our operations important?

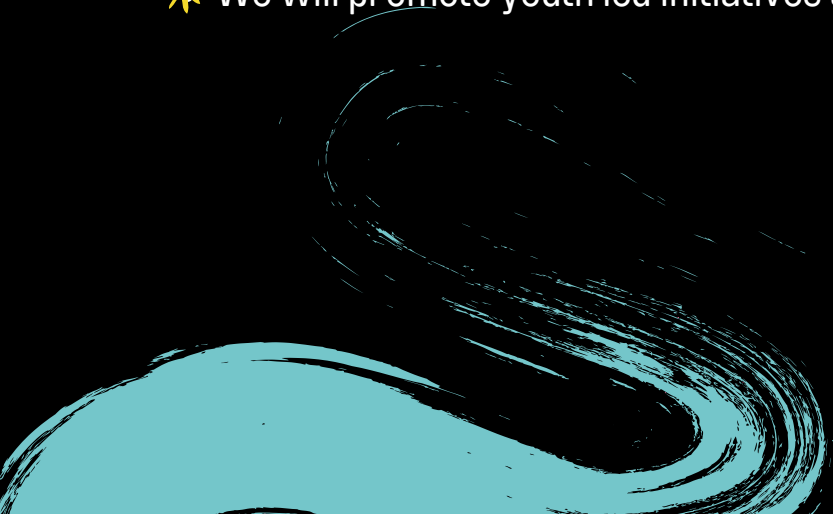
Youth Leadership is at the core of what we do. By prioritising Youth Leadership we ensure that our Agency is proudly young. At Restless Development, we believe that our agency shall be led by young people that we work with across the world. We derive our strength from being clear that young people lead our work. Youth leadership does not mean young people leading alone, rather young people having an equal voice in intergenerational leadership spaces.

Ambition:

The global agency will prioritise youth leadership in our people, structures, processes and culture.

Global Agency priorities:

- * We will ensure that young people are prioritised in our recruitment process and recruit young leaders on potential.
- * We will have young people in management and leadership structures.
- * We will promote youth led initiatives and ideas across the agency.



2. Prioritise Safety and Happiness

Why is prioritising Safety and Happiness important?

The safety and happiness of our people is integral to our agency. For high performance and the delivery of our strategy, we need to ensure that our people are protected from any harm that may come about as a result of our work. As Restless Development, we believe the high performance of the agency will not be at the expense of our people's wellbeing and safety.

Ambition:

Our people are safe and are protected from harm across the agency and are happy in the work that they do.

Global Agency priorities:

- ✦ We will do our utmost to keep all our people safe.
- ✦ We will create systems to assess people's wellbeing and to respond to issues raised.
- ✦ We will encourage people to be in charge of their own work-life balance.



3. Train, Support and Resource Young Leaders

Why is training and resourcing young leaders important?

In order for Restless Development to prioritise youth leadership across our agency, we need to actively invest in young leaders. The experts of youth-led change are the young people leading the change. As an agency, we need to equip our people with the necessary training, resources and fair compensation to facilitate this change.

Ambition:

Our young people, staff and networks will have the opportunity (time, resources, processes) and support to grow and become leaders.

Global Agency priorities:

- ✦ We will promote and support the progression of young people to leadership roles.
- ✦ We will ensure that every young person has access to training and mentorship programs to build their skills and expertise in their area of leadership.
- ✦ We will ensure that young people are compensated fairly for their work.



4. Be Open, Dynamic and Accountable

Why is being open, dynamic and accountable important?

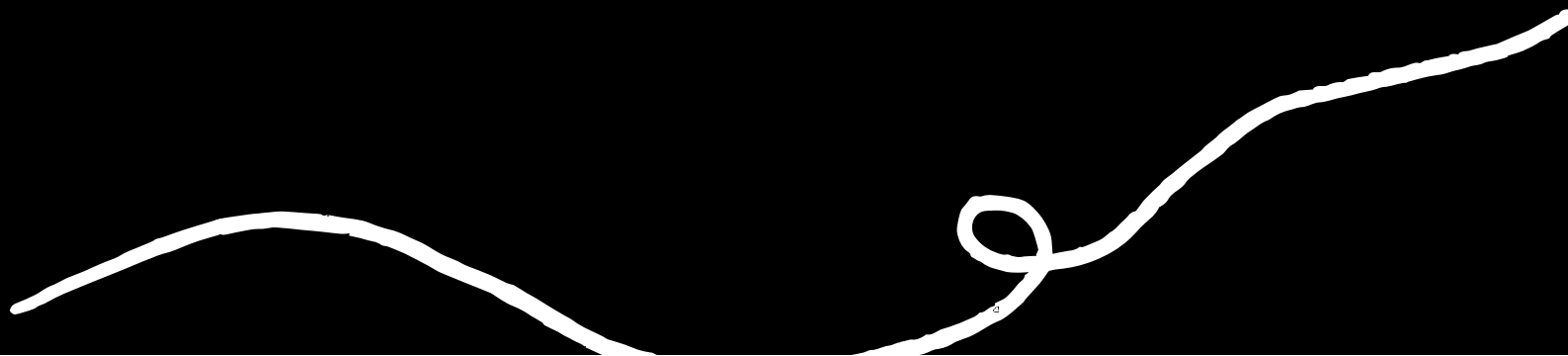
At Restless Development, dynamic accountability is key to how we operate, allowing us to work transparently together with, and learning from, young people and partners. By being accountable to young people and the communities we work with and acknowledging their expertise, we believe this will lead to an even greater impact for the young people, communities, partners and governments we work with. It will increase the trust that others have in our agency and work, reinforcing the relationships and collaboration that drives our collective success.

Ambition:

Driven by the Global Leadership Group, young leaders and our communities, the agency will thrive on a culture of learning, transparency and dynamic accountability.

Global Agency priorities:

- * We will prioritise listening to young people and communities.
- * We will ensure that our policies are available to all.
- * We will build a culture of learning from the input and feedback we receive from young people and the communities we work with.



5. Intentionally Shift Power

Why is it important to intentionally Shift Power?

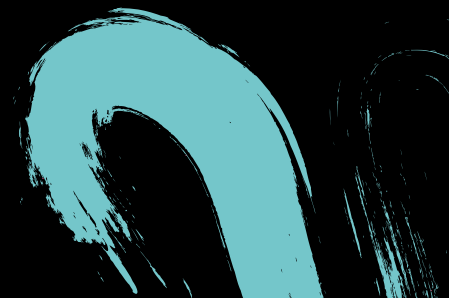
In order to actively dismantle the historical barriers that have resulted in the disadvantage of marginalised communities, Restless Development must intentionally put in the structures and develop a culture as an agency that will facilitate this shift. We must recognise intersectionality, acknowledge that everyone has a unique experience of discrimination – and be intentional about removing barriers for every young person. This shift requires asking ourselves the right questions, being bold in confronting our biases and learning.

Ambition:

Our agency (people, structures, culture and processes) will work towards actively dismantling systems of bias and discrimination associated with historical power inequalities.

Global Agency priorities:

- * We will work to have our people's demographics representative of young people and the communities with which we work.
- * We will listen to our people on how we are shifting power and respond to the issues raised.
- * We will promote a culture that is anti-racist, non-discriminatory, inclusive and feminist.



6. Restless: Flex, Innovate and Create

Why is being Restless, flexing, innovating and creating important?

Youth Power and youth leadership is not bound by existing systems or the status quo. In order to shift power as an agency, we need to provide the space for young people to flex, innovate and create new ways to have impact.

Ambition:

Our agency will challenge harmful conventions. We will demonstrate that change can be done differently when decisions are owned by communities and young people.

Global Agency priorities:

- * We will multiply the spaces for young people to create, innovate and lead.



How will we measure success?

The purpose of this plan is to strengthen systems and processes to ensure quality in everything we do and to be intentional in shifting power. As a result, monitoring our ambition and measuring our success is key.

Building on the agency's experience of the last five years, the eight quality areas of a high performing agency will be monitored through a set of indicators (both essential standards and key performance indicators) that will form our quality assurance framework (QAF). The QAF will allow each Hub/Team to monitor their own performance while allowing all members of the global agency to follow the performance of any other part of the agency. Indicators will be reported against on a quarterly basis and will be part of the report analysed by the leadership teams so that corrective actions can be taken. The QAF indicators can be reviewed and revised in a few years if need be, to always ensure their usefulness and relevance in driving us toward achieving our ambition of being a high performance agency.

Once a year, the agency's high performance will be audited through a process of internal audit whereby people across the global agency are dispatched to audit other entities to corroborate what has been self-reported in the Quality Assurance Framework. The internal audit leads to a report stating findings and making recommendations for improvement. Finally, Hub visits can also be organised for more in-depth support.

Our ambition to be a Power Shifting agency is new. The six areas of change also need to be monitored to ensure we create the change we have set out to see. A set of indicators will therefore be developed to be able to measure our success. In the first year of this plan, all entities will conduct a self-assessment that will act as a baseline against which we will be able to track progress. Reported thereafter annually, the data will form the basis for a report on Power Shifting that shall demonstrate to the sector how an agency can internally create change and shift power.

Dynamic Accountability

Dynamic Accountability is our approach to being an accountable agency and to transparently working with and learning from young people and partners in order to increase our impact. Based on mutual expectations, it means everyone in the agency is accountable to others and at the same time, is responsible for checking and questioning what others are doing.

Dynamic accountability is key for our new agency model to work. It allows our flat agency structure to operate properly and guide our annual cycle requirements. It will guide our upcoming governance structure and needs to be the basis for our new financial model. The way we plan to measure our performance and ensure our compliance to being both a high performing agency and a power shifting agency is built on dynamic accountability principles.

Committing to dynamic accountability is a moral stand for the global agency – but it is also a way to constantly be learning and improving ourselves. It allows us to question and challenge each other so as to improve our operations and organisation.

**Dynamic accountability is essentially
how we shift power.**

**RESTLESS
DEVELOPMENT**