

POWER FOOTPRINT

LEARNING REPORT



Power Footprint Learning Report

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Authors:

Camber Collective: Madeleine Webb, Brent McCann, Benjamin Jenson

WeRobotics: Sonja Betschart, Mfon Victor Udechukwu, Michelle Korir

Disrupt Development: Disrupt Development's network of activist advisors including Eme Iniekung, Eshban Kwesiga, and Melodi Tamarzianz

Design & Layout: Amos Ochieng

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01.

INTRODUCTION

Defining Power: An Introduction to the Power Footprint Initiative

Even before advocating for the ‘Power of Local’, one must confront a critical question. What is power? Necessarily defined by where it is located and how it is wielded, power is known by its impact; a thing emerges as powerful (or not) based on how it affects what is separate from it. Power, in many ways, lies also in the eye of the beholder, and as a result, those who seem to possess it may themselves perceive its absence. With a concept so malleable, changing form depending on the viewer, any discourse on power can hope to be meaningful only if it acknowledges not just its shape-shifting qualities but the breadth and depth of our diverse and deeply human ways of responding to it.

In the realm of international development, power and where it is situated, has long been felt, discussed, and wrestled with. The issue lies not in the existence of power but in that it is often concentrated and rooted in a singular worldview (i.e., that of Global North organizations). Amidst extensive discourse about localization, decolonization, and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), a question persists. If what gets measured gets managed, how does one measure – and thereafter equitably distribute to local actors – the power wielded by Global North actors (e.g., foundations, multi-laterals, bilaterals, international non-governmental organizations (INGOs)?

Enter the Power Footprint.

Similar to the well-established understanding of a carbon footprint, the Power Footprint is a concept that seeks to address the authority, control, and influence wielded by international development organizations (e.g., funders, multi-laterals, bi-laterals, NGOs), emphasizing the need to measure and reduce this aspect of their impact. At the core of this initiative

is the belief that through continuous self-assessment and public sharing of their power footprints, international organizations can rewrite the script, becoming true agents of change, shifting power dynamics, and building a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive international development ecosystem.

As stewards of this vision, WeRobotics and Camber Collective have nurtured the Power Footprint initiative to its current stage of development. This report synthesizes the insights and reflections gathered from various stakeholders, offering an analysis of the learnings gained and consequent forward-looking recommendations. Now, as it is released into the public domain, it is the intention of this group that this report serves as a foundational document for the next organization to assume leadership and propel the Power Footprint to new horizons. The next stage of the Power Footprint requires an organization or organizations to take it from its current seed stage to implementation and scale.

What is the goal of the Power Footprint?

The Power Footprint is a practical initiative designed to measure and ultimately shift power dynamics toward a more equitable distribution of power, one favoring locally-led practices. The initiative is grounded in the need for self-assessment, transparency, learning, and adaptation, with a focus on generating evidence-based and collaborative approaches. Through self-assessment, regular monitoring, and public sharing of power footprints, international organizations can actively contribute to building more diverse, equitable, and inclusive social good industries while addressing the inherent power imbalances within the sector.

The Power Footprint initiative emerged from a crucial realization within WeRobotics: localization initiatives and discussions have

a distinct need to confront the unchecked influence of Global North-led international organizations. To address this need, WeRobotics initiated open discussions with global entities, donors, and Global South organizations in late 2021. The shared motivation was clear: to create a transparent, evidence-based foundation for localization initiatives, aiming for genuine shifts in power dynamics. WeRobotics, inspired by how a measurement tool such as the carbon footprint allows for collective action, transparency, and alignment around joint measurement criteria, began soliciting input from an array of actors, initiating development of a concept based on this feedback, and partnering with a set of organizations, including Camber Collective and Disrupt Development. The Power Footprint initiative began not as an academic endeavor but as a practical, collective effort to measure and ultimately shift the power footprints of international organizations.

Voices of change

Part of the early process included outreach to local organizations based in the Global South. These organizations were asked what types of changes they wanted to see in their sector. These were some responses:

"More accountability among the powerful international actors, who keep making commitments but scantily deliver on them. The powerless local actors are unable to hold them to account in absence of an accountability framework as well as a safe space to articulate their concerns freely."

"To see the Global South speak for itself and the voices of our communities be heard from the international community."

"More decentralized funding opportunities, which allows local organizations to co-create solutions rather than just implement to the needs of the funders."

"To build a caliber of leaders that are committed to defining and steering the local footprints, learn, unlearn and relearn new organic and relevant ways to design local solutions to local problems and build strong and progressive partnerships with Global North partners."

02.

Founding Motivations: Partners' Perspectives on Joining the Power Footprint Initiative



WeRobotics facilitates a global network of local technology experts known as the Flying Labs Network, whose key focus is the “power of local” and which, with over 300 members, is currently active in 40+ countries in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Asia-Pacific. With this unique set-up, the organization wanted to learn how global networks, especially ones that involve technical professionals from very different cultural, economic and social backgrounds can tackle power imbalances between various stakeholders who influence decision-making.

Organizations, including itself, may be unaware of the influence of their power footprint in international development. This lack of awareness can impede development efforts, suppress locally-led solutions, and limit system innovation. As WeRobotics explored this discussion further with donors, stakeholders and INGOs, they realized that one way of solving this growing challenge was to have open and honest conversations around measuring an organization’s power footprint to help organizations assess their level of authority and influence within a system, and how they could leverage insights from this assessment to increase effectiveness, accountability, relevance, and promote inclusivity and diversity in the development space.



When Rozella Kennedy, Director of Impact and Equity at Camber Collective, first crossed paths with Sonja Betschart, co-founder of WeRobotics, it was more than just a chance encounter. Their meeting sparked an organic exchange of ideas, each sharing their passion for fostering collaboration and amplifying the voices of underresourced communities. Together, they began to shape a shared vision, weaving together their insights and aspirations for the Power Footprint. As they delved deeper into the conversation, it became evident that both shared a deep commitment to authentic values of equity and self-governance. This shared perspective laid the foundation for a creative synergy that would ultimately define the project. This newfound alignment resonated deeply with Camber Collective’s evolving [Equitable Project Design](#) thesis, setting the stage for a transformative journey ahead.

Acknowledging the critical role of addressing power imbalances both internally and externally, Camber has been on a continuous journey of integrating equity principles into its organizational structure and client engagements. Through active participation in the Power Footprint, Camber not only leveraged its expertise to drive meaningful change but also gained invaluable insights that inform its ongoing endeavors.



Disrupt Development (DD) seeks to call out the elephant in the room. In international development work, power is the elephant in the room. Power dynamics within the development sector are often a sensitive topic, leading to self-censorship and avoidance. There is a critical need to normalize these discussions, making them more public and less abstract. The introduction of the Power Footprint concept is an important first step, aiming to quantify and analyze power use and misuse within organizations. This initiative sought to make conversations on power less abstract, and that was an opportunity the DD team could not pass up.



The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation emerged as an early supporter of the Power Footprint initiative, propelled by a resonance with innovation and a commitment to challenging traditional power structures. The initiative's emphasis on inverting established paradigms aligned seamlessly with the Foundation's ethos, sparking their interest and involvement. Particularly noteworthy was WeRobotics delegating decision-making power to Flying Labs, a direct manifestation of shedding and distributing power. Witnessing these transformations underscored the potential for systemic change within the realms of international organizations and how they interact with the Global South. The Foundation recognized the Power Footprint initiative as a catalyst for movement building in the Global South, amplifying its appeal as a force driving positive change and fostering a more equitable distribution of power.



Amidst the backdrop of power imbalance and increased discussions on decolonization of aid, World Vision Switzerland seeks new ways of thinking about international development. Motivated by this, as well as a belief in communities' inherent capabilities, World Vision Switzerland became the inaugural supporter among INGOs of the Power Footprint initiative.



The Ashoka organization, as an early supporter of the Power Footprint initiative, is driven by a deep-seated concern for justice and accountability within international organizations. Recognizing the initiative's potential to bring about transformative change, Ashoka was drawn to the core principles of the Power Footprint, envisioning a more equitable distribution of power and decision-making. The organization saw this initiative as a crucial step towards fostering transparency and accountability, aligning with their mission to drive systemic change and promote a just and inclusive global landscape. Ashoka's commitment to social innovation and impact converged with the Power Footprint's objectives, making them an enthusiastic partner in the pursuit of justice within the international development sector. Lorena García Durán shares:

"As an organization that supports proximate leaders who are creating systemic solutions to the world's most challenging social and environmental issues, collaborating with the Power Footprint initiative made perfect sense. We believe the potential of this initiative will help us all dramatically improve our impact in local communities across the global south, making this effort imperative."

03.

Building the Tool: Progress and Debates

Initial progress has been achieved in the development of the Power Footprint initiative. The concept has been debated and a comprehensive set of phases has been outlined, delineating the necessary steps to advance the Power Footprint from conceptualization to full implementation. These phases serve as a roadmap, guiding future efforts towards bringing the initiative to fruition and maximizing its potential for meaningful change.

PHASE 1

75%

Preparation and planning (75% complete)

- Outreach to 100+ INGOs, donors/funders, Global South organizations for preliminary discussions and interest
- Onboard potential partners to co-lead the initiative
- Sharing of the idea in forums, conferences, working and discussion groups, etc.
- Recruit cohorts (e.g., Global South organizations, Global North organizations including funders)

PHASE 2

25%

Concept Development (25% complete)

- Define concept phases, co-creation approach and assessment methods
- Define power: Workshops, surveys, key informant interviews
- Develop indicators
- Develop tool for assessment

PHASE 3

Proof of Concept

- Test assessment within organizations

PHASE 4

Scaling

- Build community of practice
- Publish results

Timeline Overview

Late 2021	April 2022	May 2022	July 2022	Winter 2023	Spring 2023
WeRobotics reaches out to INGOs, Global South organization, and donors	WeRobotics introduces the Power Footprint initiative at the Skoll World Forum	First Proof of Concept proposal launched and shared with 20+ INGOs and funders. 3 partners sign (Hewlett Foundation, World Vision Switzerland, Ashoka)	Camber Collective joins initiative as co-lead for strategic advisory and coalition-building support	Updated Proof of Concept Proposal based on INGO & funder feedback/PF website launch & sign-up from GS stakeholders	Outreach campaign & informational webinar for funders

The co-leads of the initiative engaged with INGOs, donors, funders and Global South organizations to build a tool that could be used for assessing the power footprint. The objective was to co-create, with three distinct coalitions, the first version of a transparent, practical, and evidence-based measurement mechanism (or tool).

As part of the initial preparation and planning phase, preliminary questions were developed for illustrative purposes and as discussion starters with interested parties. These illustrative questions included ideas around independence, agency and local leadership of country offices (or equivalent), the option for them to “exit” at any time, questions around INGOs ceding market share to local offices as well as exit strategies and endgames for INGOs. In terms of metrics, first ideas included scores, ranging from a very strict scoring system of “0 for no” and “1 for yes” to “0 for no”, “1 for Somewhat or In the Works” and “2 for Yes”.

Self vs. third-party assessment

The co-leads debated whether the tool should be one of self-assessment, or an analysis conducted by a third party. Both of these approaches have their merits. Utilizing a third-party assessment for the Power Footprint offers distinct advantages. Drawing inspiration from models like the [Democracy Index](#), where impartial evaluators analyze and rank countries based on predetermined indicators, a third-party assessment ensures objectivity and credibility. By entrusting the evaluation process to independent experts or organizations, biases and conflicts of interest can be minimized, enhancing the reliability and trustworthiness of the assessment results. Moreover, entrusting the evaluation to a third-party can establish specialized knowledge and experience, enabling a comprehensive analysis that considers diverse perspectives and factors. This depth of insight can uncover nuances and systemic issues that might be overlooked in a self-assessment scenario, providing a more holistic understanding of an entity's power footprint.

The challenges of using a third party assessment are primarily centered around the establishment and funding of a dedicated organization for this purpose. Unlike self-assessment, which can be conducted internally with existing resources, implementing a third-party assessment requires the creation or engagement of an independent entity tasked with the evaluation process. Establishing such an organization entails significant initial setup costs, including staffing, infrastructure, and operational expenses. Securing ongoing funding to sustain the organization's activities poses another hurdle, as it may rely on external sources such as grants, donations, or subscriptions, which can be unpredictable and subject to fluctuation.

Self-assessment for the Power Footprint presents several advantages, primarily centered around autonomy and accessibility. One of the key benefits is that it empowers organizations to directly engage with the assessment process, fostering a sense of ownership and accountability. Unlike third-party assessments, which involve external evaluators, self-assessment allows entities to benchmark themselves against established metrics independently. This process can promote self-improvement as organizations strive to meet standards and track their progress over time. Implementing this process would be more flexible and cost-effective, as they eliminate the need for external consultants or third-party evaluators.

While the debate surrounding the method of assessment for the Power Footprint has highlighted the merits and challenges of both self-assessment and third-party evaluation, a definitive decision has yet to be made. That said, self-assessment may be more palatable to participating organizations, fostering greater buy-in and engagement throughout the evaluation process. As this initiative progresses, it will ultimately be up to the next organization(s) to navigate these debates and determine the most suitable approach for realizing the goals of the Power Footprint assessment.

04.

How Do Power Imbalances Manifest?

It is important to shed light on the very real impact of power imbalances in the international development ecosystem, lest it seem too theoretical. Concentrating power in a way that prioritizes one worldview has detrimental impacts on local communities, antithetical to the mandates of most international organizations. By calling out and shifting power, these are the impacts the Power Footprint hopes to address.

Definition of “success”:

It is common that indicators of success for projects run by local organizations are determined by international funders. This has important consequences:

- Funders from the Global North may prioritize outcomes and indicators that align with their own perspectives and interests, which may not reflect the priorities or needs of communities. This can result in a disconnect between what is deemed successful by funders and what is truly impactful or relevant for local populations.
- Projects in the Global South may become overly reliant on meeting the indicators set by Global North funders to secure continued funding and support. This can perpetuate a cycle of dependency on external validation rather than fostering local ownership, sustainability, and self-determination.
- Funders from the Global North may prioritize short-term, quantifiable outcomes over long-term sustainability and capacity-building efforts in the Global South. This can result in projects that are successful according to predetermined indicators but fail to create lasting positive change or address underlying systemic issues.
- Rigid adherence to predefined indicators of success may stifle innovation and adaptation in response to changing circumstances or emerging challenges faced by communities in the Global South. This can hinder the effectiveness of projects and interventions in addressing evolving needs and opportunities.

Research legitimacy:

Knowledge and research generated in the Global South tends not to be as accepted as that generated in the Global North. This has dire consequences for the international development community:

- Development agendas rely on research deemed legitimate by Global North funders, and more often than not comes from their own backyard. This narrow focus on research generated in the Global North hinders the development of innovative solutions that are contextually relevant and effective in diverse settings, and results in policies and interventions that are ill-suited to local contexts, leading to ineffective or even harmful outcomes.
- The dismissal of research from the Global South perpetuates disparities in knowledge production and dissemination between the Global North and South. This reinforces a hierarchical system where knowledge generated in the Global North is often privileged over that from the Global South, contributing to the marginalization of Southern scholars and perpetuating colonial legacies.

“Capacity-building”:

A lot of what is considered capacity by INGOs is usually the ability for Southern organizations to fit into Northern compliance standards and it has no bearing on local realities and community organizing. As a result, capacity training has been crafted as something that only flows one way from the North to the South. How capacity is understood and talked about is a reflection of where the power rests. INGO staff have never required capacity training to work in the South but Southern NGOs require capacity to work in their own communities. Not only does this reinforce existing power imbalances, but has further consequences as well:

- a. Capacity-building efforts that prioritize Global North standards over local realities and community organizing can undermine the empowerment and agency of communities in the Global South. Instead of strengthening the capacity of Southern organizations to mobilize and empower their communities, these efforts may perpetuate dependency on external expertise and resources.
- b. By imposing Global North compliance standards on Global South organizations, international development interventions can overlook innovative approaches and locally-driven solutions that are better suited to addressing complex challenges in the Global South



Tanzania Flying Labs leading drone pilot certification training for African Flying Labs members

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05.

Navigating the Risks and Resistance to Challenging the Status Quo: Insights from Participants

Discussions of power within the development sector are a taboo that can lead to discomfort. Containing unique challenges, measuring power from an evidence-based perspective has been likened to the meticulous accounting of carbon emissions but fraught with complexities unique to the socio-political domain.

Many powerful organizations have been insulated from having to interrogate how their power has been used or abused because the conversation remains abstract. The Power Footprint seeks to make it less abstract.

A key consideration lies in the fact that while the Power Footprint was created as a tool to be used by international development actors, implicit in that purpose is the assumption that the Power Footprint would require their approval. An irony emerges, that even in designing innovations such as the Power Footprint to disrupt the status quo, it must be done with the approval of those that often benefit from that status quo – a further manifestation of the Global North power that compels actors to innovate within its rules.

Actors involved in its co-creation underscored the initiative's potential to catalyze change within organizations in both the Global North and the Global South. By delegating decision-making power and embracing a more distributed model of governance, entities like WeRobotics are pioneering efforts to demystify and democratize power. Such endeavors not only challenge the status quo but also highlight the critical need for a nuanced understanding of power

that encompasses access to data, decision-making capabilities and influence.

Concerns were raised about the sufficiency of resources involved in a long-term (multi-year) co-creation journey. The initiative's success had hinged on securing the endorsement and participation of influential INGOs, donors/funders as well as Global South organizations, a task complicated by potential resistance to the concept of external assessment and the perceived risks of public scrutiny.

Inevitably, this work also ventured into the theoretical underpinnings of the Power Footprint, debating the merits and pitfalls of self-assessment versus external evaluation. The consensus leaned towards a model that fosters self-reflection and constructive engagement, avoiding the pitfalls of accusatory practices. This approach, it is argued, could encourage organizations to embrace the tool voluntarily, using it as a mirror to reflect on their power dynamics and initiate meaningful change.

Metrics and definitions emerged as crucial topics, with participants advocating for a clear and comprehensive framework to assess power dynamics. Such a framework would encompass decision-making authority, financial influence, and the geographical distribution of power, among other factors. This meticulous approach to measurement is deemed essential for the tool's efficacy and for ensuring that it captures the complex reality of power within and across organizations.

The discussions also delved into the broader implications of the Power Footprint for the sector, particularly its potential to address systemic issues such as white saviorism and the imbalance of power between the Global North and Global South. The initiative is seen as a critical step towards more accountable and equitable practices in international aid and philanthropy, challenging organizations to confront and rectify their contributions to systemic inequities.

The Power Footprint represents both a challenge and an opportunity for the international development sector. Its proponents envision a future where power is not only transparently measured and understood but also equitably distributed, fostering a more just and effective system of international aid. However, the path forward is complex, requiring not only innovative thinking and robust methodologies but also a collective will to reimagine the dynamics of power and influence in the service of global development goals.

Its success is contingent not only on the willingness of individual organizations to engage in self-reflection but also on the sector's collective readiness to redefine and realign power dynamics for more effective and equitable outcomes – a delicate balance.

As the development community contemplates the Power Footprint, it faces an opportunity to reflect on its internal structures and the broader impact of its work. This initiative offers a chance to not only measure and understand power within organizations but also to fundamentally transform how that power is wielded in pursuit of global development goals.

Whether the Power Footprint will catalyze such transformation or serve as a reminder of the challenges in addressing power imbalances remains an open question, inviting ongoing reflection and dialogue within the sector.

Many powerful organizations have been insulated from having to interrogate how their power has been used or abused because the conversation remains abstract. The Power Footprint seeks to make it less abstract.

06.

Key Takeaways: Lessons and Insights from the Journey



Establish clear baselines to enhance stakeholder engagement:

Initiating projects with a blank slate creates uncertainty and hinders engagement, particularly for INGOs and potential funders. The Power Footprint initiative encountered challenges in garnering support as organizations were hesitant to commit to a project lacking a predefined framework. Future developments of this initiative could establish an initial framework for evaluation and self-reporting as a discussion base, which will enable potential donors and participants to assess their engagement.



Recognize diverse forms of power across organizations:

Establishing common ground on the fundamental essence of power poses a formidable challenge. There is an inherent difficulty in attempting to develop universally applicable metrics for assessing power dynamics. To address the challenge of understanding power dynamics across diverse organizational dimensions, the future initiative should implement a strategic framework for fostering a common understanding. Begin by conducting comprehensive consultations and workshops to explore and document diverse perspectives on power within and between organizations. Develop a shared vocabulary and conceptual framework that accommodates these variations, facilitating better communication and alignment of objectives. Additionally, establish ongoing feedback mechanisms to adapt the framework as perspectives evolve. This strategic approach will enhance the feasibility of creating universally applicable metrics for assessing power dynamics, fostering collaboration across diverse entities in the Global South, INGOs, donors, and beyond.

An example: For critical self-reflection and to have direct input from members of the Flying Labs Network, WeRobotics organized a co-creation session to explore the topic of power in the context of community engagement, technological empowerment, and collaborative problem-solving. The key takeaway from this exercise was that in a global collaborative network such as the Flying Labs Network, power is a facilitator rather than a restrictor. For some members, power is the ability to effect change in their communities, while for others, it's about having the resources and knowledge to innovate and solve complex problems within their communities. Though the definitions were largely broad, the overarching theme in the co-creation session emphasized empowerment, collaboration, impact, and mutual growth. While the insights shared by members were enlightening, it was clear that perceptions of power can change rapidly with changes in personal experience, societal shifts, educational development, technological advancement, and cross-cultural interaction.



Apply a strategic approach to balance time commitments with financial support:

The endeavor to secure contributions from the funder community proved to be a challenge. Although there was notable interest among several funders to financially support the initiative, the request for both financial assistance and an active time investment in the co-creation of metrics encountered significant hurdles. Regrettably, the majority of funders found this dual ask unfeasible. The future initiative should consider a phased engagement model where funders are initially involved in high-level discussions to align expectations and establish the initiative's scope. Co-creation activities can then be introduced gradually, allowing funders to contribute actively without overwhelming their time constraints. Additionally, providing clear timelines and milestones for collaborative efforts can enhance transparency and make the process more manageable for funders, encouraging their sustained participation in both financial and time investments.



Prioritize strategic facilitator selection and dedicated leadership:

Embarking on initiatives that involve joint learning journeys necessitates identifying the right organization to spearhead such endeavors. In the case of the Power Footprint initiative, the initial approach involved WeRobotics taking on both the facilitator and contributor roles. However, the organization encountered tensions stemming from this dual role, highlighting the importance of a dedicated organization to lead as the facilitator, a role that was taken on by Camber Collective. Recognizing the need for specialization in facilitation, the future initiative should involve an organization dedicated to leading and facilitating, thereby optimizing coordination and effectiveness. This organization should possess the expertise and commitment needed to serve as a neutral and effective facilitator, avoiding conflicts of interest that may arise when an organization is both a facilitator and an active contributor. This approach will ensure that the initiative is not treated as a side project but as integral to the facilitator's mission, contributing to the overall success and sustainability of collaborative learning journeys.



Anticipate resistance; adopt a phased approach:

Full adoption of the Power Footprint model, while promising in its potential for systemic change, demands a fundamental redressing of ownership and leadership paradigms. This transformation represents a long-term outcome, likely causing apprehension among many CEOs who may view it as a challenge to their established structures. Consequently, securing buy-in from organizations becomes a complex task. Acknowledging this inherent resistance is crucial for devising strategies to communicate the benefits of change effectively and fostering a more inclusive and equitable organizational culture. To overcome resistance, the future initiative will need to engage in transparent and inclusive communication with organizational stakeholders, particularly with leaders of INGOs and foundations, emphasizing the long-term benefits of systemic change. A vital element will be the development of a comprehensive change management strategy that addresses concerns and showcases how adopting the Power Footprint model aligns with organizational goals, values, and industry trends. Additionally, a phased implementation plan can ease the transition, allowing organizations to gradually adapt to new paradigms without feeling overwhelmed.



Relationship-building is key to success:

Establishing the Power Footprint is an ambitious undertaking that requires extensive relationship-building efforts for the next organization that assumes this responsibility. Building robust connections with various stakeholders, including international organizations, foundations, potential donors, and partners, will be paramount to the initiative's success. Given the nature of the project, which involves a profound reshaping of power dynamics, forging meaningful relationships becomes a linchpin for garnering support, fostering collaboration, and navigating potential challenges. The ability to cultivate alliances, nurture open communication, and inspire commitment will be instrumental in mobilizing the collective effort needed to bring the Power Footprint to fruition. Recognizing the centrality of relationship-building in this endeavor, the next organization leading this initiative must approach this role with a strategic focus on cultivating strong, collaborative networks to propel the initiative forward.

Key considerations for the next phase

Dedicated Leadership: Recognize the need for passionate, full-time commitment to drive the initiative forward.

Relationship-Building: Prioritize extensive relationship-building efforts with international organizations, foundations, potential donors, and partners.

Thorough Preparation: Invest time and resources upfront in meticulous proposal development and workstream creation for potential funders.

Strategic Communication: Develop clear, compelling, and aligned communication strategies to secure buy-in from organizations and stakeholders.

Phased Implementation: Consider a phased implementation plan to ease the transition and allow organizations to adapt gradually to new paradigms.

Flexibility and Adaptability: Embrace adaptability and flexibility in the initiative to suit diverse organizational structures and contexts.

Inclusive Co-Creation: Foster a collaborative environment for co-creation, involving key stakeholders in the development and refinement of the initiative.

Continuous Engagement: Maintain open channels of communication and continuous engagement throughout the implementation process, addressing concerns and gathering feedback.

Alignment with Organizational Goals: Emphasize how the Power Footprint aligns with organizational goals, values, and industry trends to secure long-term commitment from stakeholders.

07.

Envisioning the Future of the Power Footprint



The future of the Power Footprint is one of transformative change, marked by a shift in global power dynamics towards greater equity and inclusivity. And a future is possible where the Power Footprint becomes a widely recognized and accepted framework that illuminates the distribution of power within international organizations, and between those organizations and their partners in the Global South. In this future, the initiative serves as a catalyst for redistributing decision-making influence, funding, and resources from traditional power centers in the Global North to the Global South. The Power Footprint envisions a world where diverse voices are not only heard but actively contribute to shaping the agendas of international organizations. Through the development of comprehensive metrics and a collaborative consortium, the initiative aims to set a new standard for evaluating power dynamics, inspiring organizations to actively engage in the pursuit of shared and collective prosperity. Ultimately, the Power Footprint seeks to become a driving force behind a more just and inclusive global landscape.

While WeRobotics initiated the idea of the Power Footprint in 2021, the organization and the partners who have joined the initiative along the way such as Camber Collective, Disrupt Development, the Hewlett Foundation, and Ashoka, wish to place the idea into an open, creative commons domain. The goal of this report is to publicly share the initial journey of the Power Footprint, allowing the next organization(s) that wishes to take on leadership of this movement to build on the innumerable and invaluable learnings made throughout the past 2 years.

As the initiators of the Power Footprint idea, WeRobotics is keen to see which direction this movement takes next, and are open to sharing additional insights as well as resources, such as the initiative's domain name and initial website, with any organization who wishes to lead the next phase of the Power Footprint initiative. In case of interest, please contact WeRobotics by email at humans@werobotics.org.

Acknowledgments & Thanks

Since the launch of the initiative at an ecosystem event at the (virtual) Skoll World Forum in April 2022, over a hundred individuals of international organizations, foundations, development agencies and local organizations have contributed to discussions, implementation ideas and ways forward of the Power Footprint initiative. Deep gratitude is extended to all individuals who have contributed in a myriad of ways, from initial thought partners to supporters, connectors, challengers and contributors of the initiative.

In order not to exclude anyone from a long list of names, this should be considered a collective “thank you all” instead, and the authors of this report have done their best to reflect the outcomes of the discussions, engagements and contributions shared.

Special thanks are extended to the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation for their investment into the Power Footprint initiative, enabling the documentation of the journey and learnings, and facilitating the open sharing of these insights in the report.

