

*Some issues for managers...*

*“Do you look for cross cultural competencies when recruiting people for postings? Local staff?”*

*“Have you considered offering cross cultural competency training for your staff working in aid / development?”*

*“Have you developed a policy on cultural safety in the workplace?”*

*“Have you planned regular debriefs, mentoring and support mechanisms for staff working cross culturally?”*

*Do you do debriefing / exit interviews after assignments?”*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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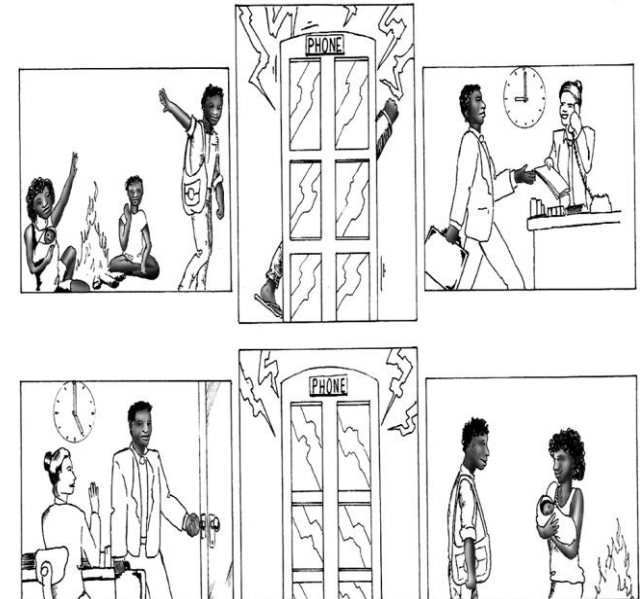
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# Cross Cultural Competency in Development



### **Why is it essential for development workers?**

- Working well with others is crucial to effective sustainable capacity development
- Development workers are part of diverse teams in complex and challenging situations.
- Relationships and communication are central to our work.

### **When I work across cultures...**

*Building relationships & communicating well can be more complex; our usual rules, may not apply...*

*Ignoring culture may cause more harm than good – despite good intentions.*

*Good cross cultural relationships can be deeply rewarding*

### **Developing cross cultural capability:**

- builds better relationships,
- improves outcomes,
- eases tensions,
- strengthens teams,
- helps staff retention
- enhances safety and security
- supports effective development.

### **What is cross cultural competency?**

*A lifelong learning process of developing self awareness, sensitivity to difference and Reflective, adaptable practice.*

***Self-awareness is our capacity to stand apart from ourselves and examine our thinking, our motives, our history, our scripts, our actions, and our habits and tendencies. It enables us to take off our “glasses” and look at them as well as through them.***

From Covey, S.C. & Merrill A.R & R.R. First Things First 1994: 59

### **Cross cultural competency includes ...**

1. Knowledge
2. Skills
3. Values
4. Attitudes

*... and the ability to apply a range of tools in unique ways to complex situations using your professional judgment.*

### **Some of these tools include...**

- Cultural Adjustment and self-care
- Rapport & relationships
- Participatory approaches
- Capacity development strategies

### **What can I do to work more effectively across cultures?**

Take it slow - Listen, observe, wait...

Build relationships - find common ground.

Let locals lead

Develop capacity at all levels - don't put all your eggs in one basket

Meet people where they are & build on strengths not deficits

Manage your own expectations - they are your responsibility.

Look for and question my own assumptions

Don't gloss over language and cultural expertise – it is central to good development. Eg. use local people and pay them reasonably.

Invest in policy development, recruitment, training, preparation, support and debriefing.

