

Rebuild:

MENDING BROKEN TRUST

FOR THIS “REBUILD” SECTION, REFER TO PAGES 34-37 OF THE “REPLENISHING TRUST” GUIDE IF YOU NEED CLARITY ON TERMS OR EXAMPLES.

4-step moral repair process with key constituencies

This section of the toolkit explores a step-by-step process that Kurt T. Dirks, Roy J. Lewicki and Akbar Zaheer created to mend trust once it’s broken. Spitfire has adapted this process for civil society organizations. Provide thoughtful answers to each question as you

identify what caused the fracture in trust, and walk through behaviors and practices for repairing the fracture and assessing whether the repair worked over time. Note there may be more than one fracture to repair.



Step 1: Understand what the fracture is.

What led to the real or perceived fracture with your organization?

What was it like before the fracture? What is it like now?



Step 2: Repair the fracture.

Begin to rebuild trust by acknowledging the following:

- This was wrong.
- This is what happened, why it was wrong and who was harmed.
- Restate the moral norm (e.g., inclusivity, fairness, etc.) that will guide behavior moving forward, noting that those harmed may well take a wait-and-see attitude. Stress how the organization will operate differently in the future to uphold this norm. Show change in action.
- Nourish hope that your organization can uphold these norms; they are real, and they are enforceable.

Outline a statement to repair trust that considers all of the above.

What lessons can your organization draw from this trust fracture and act on?

**How will your organization uphold and reinforce these norms for the long term?
Who will be responsible?**

- Commit to this for the long term. These are not statements but ways of being. Successful repair between organizations and communities needs to reinforce reliability, predictability and fairness.**
- If you can, connect with those involved in the trust fracture to repair the relationship. Ongoing connection will decrease distrust if done in good faith.**



Step 3: Take the pulse regularly to see whether the work is paying off with more trusted relationships and what more might be needed.

How often will your organization take a pulse to see whether this work is paying off? Whom will your organization reach out to?



Step 4: Over time, assess whether the moral repair worked.

How does your organization know that people have more trust in the organization as the result of this work? What signs can it point to as evidence?