

“Karibu sana” to our April 2026 update!

Across recent EASUN engagements with civil society organizations (CSOs)—from the Facilitating Organizational Learning and Development (FOLD) to Board-level reflections and follow-up visits with trained leaders, a common thread is emerging: Leadership is not all about directive control. From a developmental perspective, it is the capacity to create conditions for learning, meaningful change, and growth. This polarity requires a leadership practice that is consciously managing the tension between inner work, and organizational performance guidance skills.

This issue documents insights from the different spaces where EASUN facilitated development encounters for East Africa-based CSOs. It highlights why facilitating transformation must begin with the self, how the practice of leadership is shifting from instruction to co-creation, and how practitioners are translating these approaches into real organizational and community contexts. Stories shared here point to a movement that places self-development, reflective inquiry, and openness to new possibilities at the center of leadership, organizational, and community development processes.

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1. Leaders attending FOLD explore how self-awareness strengthens facilitation and leadership practices.
2. FOLD held at EASUN’s own Learning Centre in April 2026—a significant institutional milestone.
3. Coming events at EASUN

Next Generation Leaders Come to EASUN

CSO Leaders Master the Inner Work for Facilitators of Change

EASUN once again opened the new year with powerful interventions for the development of civil society organizations in East Africa. Among these activities was the Facilitating Organizational Learning and Development



(FOLD). Module one for the new Cycle J1 was held from 13-17 April 2026. Participants will attend two other modules between July and November 2026, to be certified as Facilitators of Transformative Learning and Change.

A key point in celebrating this year’s successful start of FOLD is that for the first time ever, since its inception in 1997, this flagship training was held at the EASUN Learning Centre in

Arusha, Tanzania. Holding the course at EASUN’s own premises marks a significant milestone and a critical shift, both practical and symbolic, in the organization’s journey.



Crossing the Threshold: Self-awareness and the Practice of Facilitation

The training brought together institutional leaders, consultants, and community facilitators from Tanzania and Kenya. As is normally the case for module one, participants were introduced to process facilitation, and frameworks for understanding how organizations function. The module also laid the foundation for a deep encounter with the essential methodology of FOLD—**experiential learning**—through back home projects (BHPs) carried out by participants themselves in their own organizations. This activity strengthens facilitation skills in real time of the training.

FOLD, however, is not just another performance skills strengthening excursion. It is a transformative path of growth that reaches deep into the learners’ spirit. It is designed as a threshold place—learning processes and interactions in FOLD expand awareness and strengthen the will for change.

FOLD sessions are designed to stir movement from unconscious patterns into conscious awareness. Crossing this threshold in learning practice is not a gentle passage but an upheaval. Indeed, leaders attending module one in April already started experiencing FOLD as a place that is in between one reality and another, where normal structures and identities are suspended.

FOLD course overview at the very start of the training sparked a significant line of inquiry centered on the “self”. With a new awareness emerging, participants showed much interest in the role the ego plays in the current facilitation and leadership practices, especially, for CSOs, within a project system that now seems to exclusively shape their organizational design and leadership styles. Emerging questions by participants included: 1) “How does the ego contribute to conflict?” 2) In what ways does the ego’s sense of superiority shape our interactions? 3) Can the ego be retrained?

This inquiry generated interesting ideas and insights that are relevant to transformative leadership and facilitation of learning, including the concepts of paradox and polarity. Participants became particularly intrigued by the idea of “consenting to paradox”—which requires accepting that we do not have all the answers, and that reality is often more complex than our current understanding allows. At the core of it is an invitation to recognize and relate to something greater than the ego.

As in the nature of “threshold crossing” generally, the FOLD experience largely felt quite disorienting to participants during module one. However, individuals also felt enhanced sense of creativity and freedom. This was made possible, even within the short time of one 5-day module, by learning exercises and overall methodology that supportively challenged participants to confront the forces one must reckon with to grow—fear, ego, cynicism. These are shadow aspects

*“... we acquired skills for facilitating reflective learning without being judgmental. This is key for creating comfort for people to share their stories without fear.
–Rachel Maina, Anglican Development Service, Kenya*



that will continue to be gradually surfaced through upcoming sessions in which participants' learning and healing will be intentionally facilitated.

In addition to new knowledge acquisition, participants experienced deep shifts in mindsets and values. Going forward into modules two and three, this will further translate into deep changes in habits, including posture—how the attitudes and behaviours of leaders and facilitators shape relationships and success of interventions in the situations where they support the development of others.

Organization Development

FOLD is a training rooted in the challenges of life in organizations and communities, grounded in OD (Organization Development) principles, and brought to life by the creative spirit for human growth and transformation.

The OD angle in FOLD during module one centered on three specific aspects: 1) introduced the concept of complexity and how it applies to organizations and social situations; 2) delved into the nature of change as a continuous process that often happens outside consciousness, with a significant impact on the effectiveness with which organizations manage their transitions; 3) focused on the unique role of *facilitation practice and tools*—means to essential transformative interventions in supporting change processes; 4) introduced the concept and skills of *process facilitation* and the difference it can make for an organization seeking to enhance the consciousness and effectiveness with which it can manage its change.

Next Cycle of FOLD starts with module one from 1-5 June 2026—to be held at EASUN Learning Centre in Arusha, Tanzania. Contact info@easuncentre.or.tz www.easuncentre.or.tz



Organizational Diagnosis Session (16-04-2026)

Generative Governance

Inside EASUN's Board Meeting: Language Called Back into Alignment with Practice

As the Board reviewed documents for its March 2026 Board meeting, it was discovered that the phrase “*The Board instructed...*” appeared repeatedly in the minutes. The Board Chairperson responded quickly, with a sense of urgency, highlighting the view that the phrase did not reflect the real leadership approach applied in EASUN: “Instruct”, she explained, “is not how leadership is practiced in EASUN. It does not reflect how the Board understands its role, nor how authority is exercised in the life of the organization.” She went on to suggest that EASUN’s formal language must tell the truth about its practice—that its documents should reflect the organization’s lived values, including commitments to shared leadership, dialogue, and co-creation.

The force and warmth with which the Chairperson spoke landed deeply in the room. It was heard as affirmation of something long practiced and deeply valued at EASUN—that leadership is at its best when enacted through

engagement, mutual accountability, and generative exchange. Both board members and staff received the moment with visible warmth and relief.

The Executive Director’s reaction was brief but reflected the celebratory atmosphere that had descended on everyone. She responded with a simple statement: “I am happy to hear this”—an expression of gratitude that what had been lived in practice was now being clearly affirmed in governance.

Moulding Generative, Ethical Leaders

The reflections on the occasion of EASUN’s March board meeting can be further illustrated with insights from a conversation when EASUN, in the same month of March 2026, provided coaching support to the Executive Director of a major training institute in East Africa. In the process of deepening-understanding on key leadership and facilitation concepts that had emerged to be of interest to him, he described generative leadership as:

“Less about directing outcomes and more about creating the conditions in which insight, collaboration, and responsible action can emerge.”

This goes to demonstrate how EASUN’s coaching interventions are strengthening leaders’ commitment to facilitating others not merely as implementers of instructions, but as leaders in their own right. It is a shift from compliance-driven models toward leadership that will successfully cultivate agency, responsibility, and insight in civil society organizations and religious institutions, as well as the partners they support in institutions and communities.



EASUN Generative Leadership Greenhouse: 17 Young Social Justice Innovators Trained—August 2025, From Kenya and Tanzania

EASUN Board’s own posture of hosting and holding space for shared growth in the organizational context is a demonstration of generative leadership in practice—and a clear mandate for EASUN’s transformative interventions that enable others to provide leadership through consciously shaped and managed participatory workspaces.

Inquire about possible Board training for your organization. Contact: info@easuncentre.or.tz
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