

We start bright eyed

by Juliet Hunt

27 July 2021



Photo Credit: [Vadim Isakov/UN Geneva/Flickr](#)

We start bright eyed

With strong belief

That we can do some good

Our hearts are pure

But far too sure

That what we have

Is what they need

We do our best

Convince ourselves

We are oppressed

By donors, structures, and the rest

Fail to see we're not the solution

Not experts,

But part of the problem

There is no doubt

Having someone

On the inside's great

It helps so much to smooth the way

Enjoy the ride, no guilt, okay

But how often and when

Do we cede to their say?

We start bright eyed

Convince ourselves

We'll hold the line.

Search for our place,

Compromise.

The line gets blurry

Vale accountability.

This poem was prompted by Anna Gibert's [post](#) 'Useful outsiders – how can external actors support authentic locally led development?'

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Link: <https://devpolicy.org/we-start-bright-eyed-20210727/>