



# Inter-Agency Toolkit on Localisation in Humanitarian Coordination



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# Introduction

## 1. ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

### What's the purpose of this toolkit, and who is it for?

Together with other clusters and partners, the Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility (Global CP AoR), Save the Children and Street Child UK have produced this *Toolkit on Localisation in Humanitarian Coordination*, to equip inter-agency humanitarian coordinators, co-leads and partners to invest in local and national actors' participation and leadership in coordination in diverse humanitarian settings. Importantly, the toolkit also provides specific resources for local and national actors to strengthen their capacity for influence and leadership in coordination fora. This toolkit aims to be the go-to resource for localisation across a range of clusters and humanitarian coordination structures, with tools relevant to a wide range of practitioners.

The specific aims of the toolkit are:

- to support increased meaningful participation of local and national actors in coordination processes throughout the Humanitarian Programme Cycle,
- contribute to increased leadership roles within humanitarian coordination structures, and
- enable increased access to funding.

The toolkit presents a compilation of practical tools organised by target audience for easy use.

### What are the key takeaways from this toolkit?

The development of this toolkit has generated a number of important takeaways, perhaps most important is the recognition that structural discrimination, power imbalances and (unconscious) bias within international organisations and the international humanitarian system constitute significant barriers to localisation. It is therefore crucial that the many advantages of localised coordination are brought to the forefront of the humanitarian agenda, including the following:

- local and national actors contribute contextual understanding of local challenges and solutions
- local and national actors have the trust of, and access to, affected populations, and can mobilise their networks locally,
- when properly funded and supported, national and local actors render the humanitarian response more effective, efficient and sustainable<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> See e.g. [IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms](#) p.3

Moreover, cluster co-leadership between international and local and national actors produces stronger engagement and representation of a diversity of actors<sup>2</sup>, and ultimately better coordination outcomes. Given that in many coordination groups, more than 50% of the membership is made up of local and national actors, clusters are well-placed to take the lead on advancing localisation. Cluster coordinators have a responsibility to promote, model and monitor principled partnerships (i.e. partnerships that are equal, transparent, results-oriented, responsible, complementary, and long-term) amongst local/national and international actors.

It is also key that international organisations and the international humanitarian system commit to addressing both biased attitudes and mindsets that stand in the way of localisation, and reviewing their operational practices and organisational preparedness<sup>3</sup>.

## **How was this toolkit developed?**

This toolkit has been developed in a collaborative, inter-agency manner in consultation with key stakeholders from the following groups and agencies: the Global CP AoR, the Global Education Cluster, the Global Nutrition Cluster, the Global WASH Cluster, Save the Children, Street Child UK, CLEAR Global, the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies, country-level coordinators in Nigeria and Bangladesh, and national and local actors who have participated in localisation in coordination initiatives in South Sudan and Iraq.

A detailed desk review of 170 resources was conducted, in order to identify and categorise promising practices and tools. Following this, key informant interviews and focus group discussions with 23 individuals from 9 countries were organised with in June-July 2021 to understand key user needs and preferences, as well as challenges to localising humanitarian coordination. An in-depth consultation report was then produced, which identified priority areas for the toolkit, made recommendations regarding its structure and format, and suggested tools for development. The consultation report also suggested that the toolkit should be made available in multiple languages, and should be piloted at country-level by clusters/coordination groups, closely involving local and national members, in order to ensure it is operationally relevant and to exemplify localisation in action. Multiple translations and piloting is thus envisaged in a forthcoming phase.

An Advisory Group, made up of inter-agency colleagues, global cluster leads from Child Protection, Education, Nutrition and WASH; country-level coordinators and co-coordinators; and local and national actors in leadership roles in country level coordination groups, has carefully reviewed the development of the toolkit from inception to completion, to ensure it reflects the different resource needs and perspectives across sectors, and is in alignment with existing good practice.

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<sup>2</sup> These include UN agencies, NGOs, IOs and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement (Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at Country-Level, 2015, [https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/cluster\\_coordination\\_reference\\_module\\_2015\\_final.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/cluster_coordination_reference_module_2015_final.pdf), p. 21)

<sup>3</sup> [Localisation in practice – Emerging indicators and practical recommendations](#), p. 22

## What is the scope of the toolkit?

This toolkit focuses on humanitarian crises and its in-country coordination mechanisms (the cluster system and other humanitarian coordination structures), rather than development coordination, or refugee and/or migrant coordination<sup>4</sup>. However, much of the guidance will be applicable to, and may be useful for, other coordination structures, given the intersection between these in practice. Moreover, while the toolkit may be of use for government actors, who are important local and national partners in coordination in many contexts, it was not possible to engage governments in the development of this toolkit, thus far. The toolkit piloting and any future revisions will aim to engage government actors to address this limitation.

Conceptually, this toolkit draws on the Seven Dimensions Framework for Localisation<sup>5</sup>, the pillars of which are:



Within each user section, the tools in this resource are arranged according to these categories.

<sup>4</sup> See [Humanitarian coordination and the cluster approach: a quick guide for local and national organizations](#), p. 5: “Because humanitarian crises vary in scale and complexity, coordination must adapt to the situation, and may change as a response evolves. The cluster system applies when a national government has limited capacity to coordinate a humanitarian response and invites the United Nations to lead on coordination. In other contexts, national and local government authorities lead, while United Nations agencies co-lead; in these cases, the coordination groups are usually referred to as “sectors,” not clusters. Sectors generally do not benefit from the same level of resourcing and support as clusters. In refugee contexts, the United Nations refugee agency, UNHCR, coordinates humanitarian action, and establishes sectoral groups that may be led or co-led by host government bodies, NGOs and other humanitarian organizations. In mixed-migration contexts, IOM, the United Nations migration agency, can take a coordination role. In mixed settings, where affected people include refugees, migrants, IDPs and other groups, clusters can co-exist with refugee or migration coordination.”

<sup>5</sup> See [Localisation in practice – Emerging indicators and practical recommendations](#)

## 2. KEY TAKEAWAYS: what you absolutely need to know about localization in humanitarian coordination

1. **The coverage and quality** of humanitarian response is improved through localisation, because local and national actors can ensure an early response, facilitate access and secure acceptance, deliver cost effectiveness, and reduce the impact of future crises.
2. Cluster Coordinators have a responsibility<sup>6</sup> to promote, model and monitor principled **partnerships** (i.e. equal, transparent, results-oriented, responsible, complementary, and long-term<sup>7</sup>) **between local/national and international actors.**
3. Existing leadership of clusters, coordination groups and Humanitarian Country Teams must invest time and resources to create an enabling environment to ensure local/ national actors' **meaningful participation**, and decision-making in coordination processes and joint actions.
4. **Co-leadership<sup>8</sup> with local/national actors** produces stronger engagement of a diversity of actors<sup>9</sup> and better coordination outcomes<sup>10</sup>.
5. **Capacity exchange** between local/national and international actors should be reciprocal and focus on **complementarity.**
6. **Structural discrimination, power imbalances and (unconscious) bias within** international organizations and the international humanitarian system are key barriers to localisation.
7. **Local and national actors are a diverse group**, and representation must be sought from a range of organisations to ensure the inclusion of actors that are led by and represent diverse genders, races/ethnicities, ages, disabilities, and sexual orientations and gender identities.
8. Local and national actors can contribute an understanding of local challenges and solutions, can mobilise networks locally and have access to affected populations. As a result, they render the humanitarian response more effective, efficient and sustainable and enhance **accountability to affected populations<sup>11</sup>.**
9. Local and national actors can support affected communities in preparedness, response, recovery and after the withdrawal of international actors, by **working across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus<sup>12</sup>.**

<sup>6</sup> Additionally, cluster lead agencies also have a responsibility to promote and monitor partnerships given that in many clusters, the partners depend on the cluster lead agency for funding.

<sup>7</sup> [IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms](#) p.5

<sup>8</sup> NB. "Co-leadership" in this toolkit refers to shared leadership between local/national actors and Cluster Lead Agencies/government. It should be noted that the understanding of the term "co-leadership" varies across clusters. See e.g. [https://www.nutritioncluster.net/sites/nutritioncluster.com/files/2021-11/Guidance%20Note\\_Contribution%20of%20NGOs%20to%20Cluster%20Leadership%20at%20National%20%26%20Sub-national%20level.pdf](https://www.nutritioncluster.net/sites/nutritioncluster.com/files/2021-11/Guidance%20Note_Contribution%20of%20NGOs%20to%20Cluster%20Leadership%20at%20National%20%26%20Sub-national%20level.pdf) for the Global Nutrition Cluster's approach.

<sup>9</sup> These include UN agencies, NGOs, IOs and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement (Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at Country-Level, 2015, [https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/cluster\\_coordination\\_reference\\_module\\_2015\\_final.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/cluster_coordination_reference_module_2015_final.pdf), p. 21)

<sup>10</sup> Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at Country-Level, 2015, [https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/cluster\\_coordination\\_reference\\_module\\_2015\\_final.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/cluster_coordination_reference_module_2015_final.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> [IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms](#) p.3

<sup>12</sup> [IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms](#) p.3

### 3. List of acronyms relevant to humanitarian coordination

<b>3W/4W/5W</b>	Database of who does what/where/when/and for whom
<b>AAP</b>	Accountability to Affected Populations
<b>AoR</b>	Area of Responsibility
<b>CBPF</b>	Country-Based Pooled Funds
<b>CERF</b>	Central Emergency Response Fund
<b>CLA</b>	Cluster Lead Agency
<b>CP AoR</b>	Child Protection Area of Responsibility
<b>ERC</b>	Emergency Relief Coordinator
<b>GCLA</b>	Global Cluster Lead Agency
<b>HC</b>	Humanitarian Coordinator
<b>HCT</b>	Humanitarian Country Team
<b>HNO</b>	Humanitarian Needs Overview
<b>HRO</b>	Humanitarian Relief Operations
<b>HRP</b>	Humanitarian Response Plan
<b>HPC</b>	Humanitarian Programme Cycle
<b>IASC</b>	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
<b>IMO</b>	Information Management Officer
<b>INGO</b>	International Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>L/NNGO</b>	Local/National Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>MSNA</b>	Multi-Sector Needs Assessment
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>OCHA</b>	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>PoP</b>	Principles of Partnership
<b>SAG</b>	Strategic Advisory Group
<b>ToR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>TWG/TWiG</b>	Technical Working Group

## 4. Glossary

**Capacity strengthening:** the strengthening of knowledge, ability, skills and resources to help individuals, communities or organisations to achieve agreed goals<sup>13</sup>.

**Cluster:** groups of humanitarian organisations, both United Nations (UN) and non-UN, in each of the main sectors of humanitarian action, e.g. water, health and logistics. They are designated by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and have clear responsibilities for coordination

**Complementarity:** balancing local and international action in order to maximise the comparative advantages of both, and increase effectiveness of the humanitarian response in a given context<sup>14</sup>.

**Country-Based Pooled Funds:** contributions from donors collected into single, unearmarked funds to support local humanitarian efforts.

**Grand Bargain:** an agreement between the biggest donors and aid organisations made in 2016 that aims to get more means into the hands of people in need. It is essentially a 'Grand Bargain on efficiency' between donors and humanitarian organisations to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action<sup>15</sup>.

**Humanitarian advocacy:** when humanitarian actors try to influence the policies and actions of local, national, regional and international institutions and actors so that they better address the needs of affected populations. The term encompasses not only advocacy in emergencies, but also advocacy conducted before and after crises and in situations of protracted vulnerability, suffering or conflict<sup>16</sup>.

**Humanitarian coordination:** developing common strategies with partners both within and outside the UN system, identifying overall humanitarian needs, developing a realistic plan of action, monitoring progress and adjusting programmes as necessary, convening coordination forums, mobilizing resources, addressing common problems to humanitarian actors, and administering coordination mechanisms and tools<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, 'Glossary: Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, 2019 Edition' <https://alliancecpha.org/en/glossary-minimum-standards-child-protection-humanitarian-action-2019-edition>

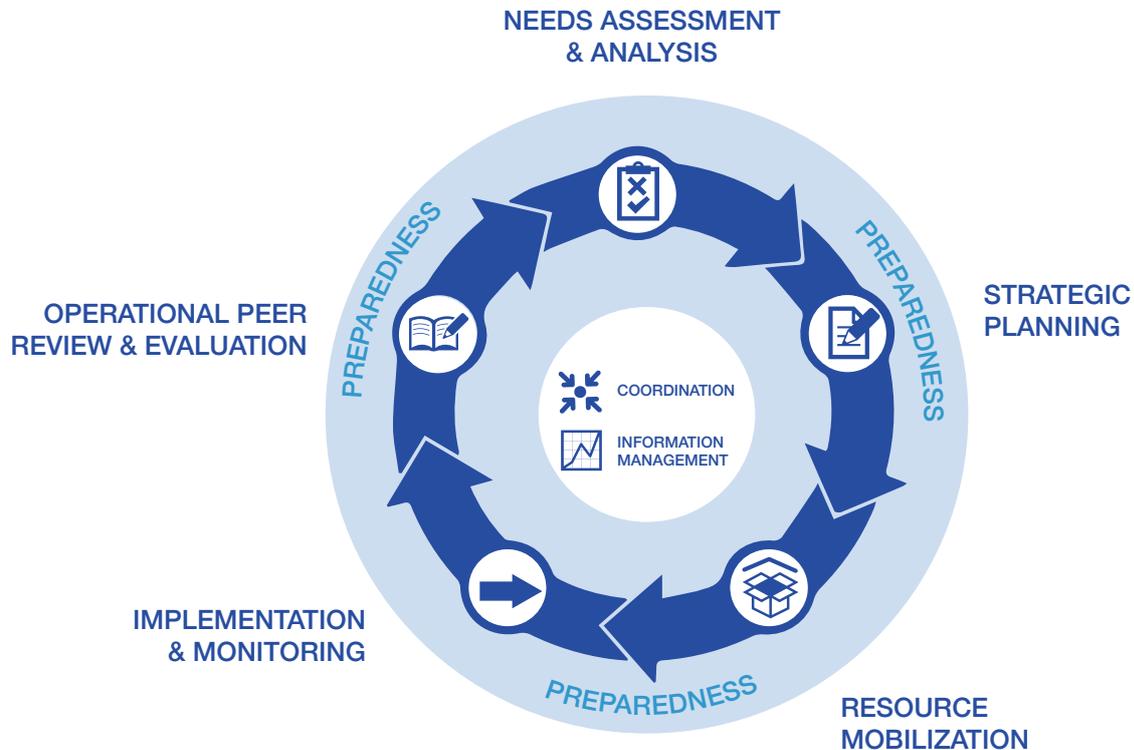
<sup>14</sup> International Federation of the Red Cross, 'Localization: what it means and how to achieve it', <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/ifrc-policy-brief-localization-what-it-means-and-how-to-achieve-it>, May 2018, p. 1

<sup>15</sup> Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 'Frequently Asked Questions on the Grand Bargain', <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/frequently-asked-questions-faqs-on-the-grand-bargain>

<sup>16</sup> Save the Children, '15. Humanitarian Advocacy', <https://www.open.edu/openlearncreate/mod/resource/view.php?id=53750> 2013, p. 3

<sup>17</sup> ReliefWeb, 'Glossary of Humanitarian Terms', 2008, [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/4F99A3C28EC37D0EC12574A4002E89B4-reliefweb\\_aug2008.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/4F99A3C28EC37D0EC12574A4002E89B4-reliefweb_aug2008.pdf), p. 29

**Humanitarian Program Cycle:** An operational framework developed by the IASC that consists of a coordinated series of actions undertaken to help prepare for, manage and deliver humanitarian response. It consists of five elements coordinated in a seamless manner: needs assessment and analysis; strategic planning; resource mobilisation; implementation and monitoring; and operational peer review and evaluation.



**Institutional capacity strengthening:** working at the organizational systems building level to ensure multiple competencies are strengthened, by e.g. improving personnel skills, upgrading or establishing efficient governance, financial and human resource systems and procedures<sup>18</sup>.

**Localisation:** a process of recognising, respecting and strengthening the independence of leadership and decision making by local and national actors in humanitarian action, in order to better address the needs of affected populations<sup>19</sup>. This toolkit makes use of the *Seven Dimensions of Localisation*<sup>20</sup> as its framework, which includes the following elements: relationship quality; participation revolution; funding and financing; capacity; coordination; visibility; and policy.

<sup>18</sup> Global Education Cluster and Child Protection Area of Responsibility, 'Framework for Strengthening Institutional Capacity of Local and National Actors', <https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/wp-content/uploads/Framework-for-Strengthening-Institutional-Capacity-of-Local-National-Actors.pdf>, 2020, p.8

<sup>19</sup> Australian Red Cross, 'Going Local: Achieving a more appropriate and fit-for-purpose humanitarian ecosystem in the Pacific', <https://www.redcross.org.au/getmedia/fa37f8eb-51e7-4ecd-ba2f-d1587574d6d5/ARC-Localisation-report-Electronic-301017.pdf.aspx>, October 2017

<sup>20</sup> Action Against Hunger, START Network, UK Aid, CDAC Network, (2018) 'Localisation in Practice: Emerging indicators and practical recommendations' <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Localisation-In-Practice-Full-Report-v4.pdf>

## 5. Resource centre for localisation

### [IASC Result Group 1/Sub-Group on Localization Online Repository](#)

This online repository includes guidance, policies, good practices, case studies, and information on localization initiatives and projects with a specific focus on the representation of relevant national and local actors in leadership and coordination structures.

### [IFRC Localisation Workstream Resources](#)

Find important resources produced and distributed by the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream here.

### [Localisation Workstream YouTube channel](#)

Visit the Localisation Workstream YouTube channel to watch Workstream videos and webinars, and those of external partners.

### [Child Protection Area of Responsibility Localisation page](#)

This page shares updates related to localisation and child protection, including the development of new resources.

### [The Grand Bargain official website](#)

This is the official website of the Grand Bargain, a unique agreement between some of the largest donors and humanitarian organisations who have committed to get more means into the hands of people in need and to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the humanitarian action.

### [Save the Children Resource Centre – Localisation](#)

The Resource Centre hosts a wide array of content that enable learning and personal growth. The database is searchable and resources include e.g. reports, online trainings and tools.

### **[Humanitarian Advisory Group – Localisation research](#)**

The stream seeks to provide a solid evidence base for localised humanitarian action that can demonstrate impact and support the ongoing momentum in the sector leading towards a genuine shift in power.

### **[Local Humanitarian Assistance Literature](#)**

This website aims to provide a simple, searchable database of articles related to local humanitarian assistance. This database is for anyone attempting to design programs, policy, or new research based on the available evidence.

### **[Global Education Cluster Localisation page](#)**

This page outlines the Global Education Cluster’s vision for localisation and provides a number of resources on the topic, many of which are translated into multiples languages.

### **[Global Protection Cluster Localisation page](#)**

This page gives examples of the Global Protection Cluster’s work on localisation and provides an overview of tools for coordinators, local/national actors, reports from localisation support field missions and learning events, and links to localisation task teams.

### **[START Network – Resource Centre](#)**

This Resource Centre hosts publications, evaluations, learning materials and other resources from across the START Network.

### **[NEAR Network](#)**

The Resources page on the NEAR Network website provides an overview of the Network’s publications on localisation, including the Localization Performance Measurement System (LPMF).

## 6. Acknowledgments

This toolkit was produced through the generous financial support of the UK government and under the guidance of the Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility. Save the Children led the technical development with critical contributions from an inter-agency Advisory Group, the members of which are outlined below.

Special thanks to each of the Advisory Group members, key informants, focus group discussion participants and project sponsors, without whom the development of this toolkit would not have been possible.

### **Advisory group members:**

- Ben Munson, Street Child UK
- Ramya Madhavan, Street Child UK
- Fatuma Ibrahim, Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility
- Ahmad Salem, Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility
- Julie Bara, Global WASH Cluster
- Briony Stevens, Global Nutrition Cluster
- Sarah John Gima, Grow Strong Foundation
- Isaac Otieno, Nile Hope
- Mia Marzotto, CLEAR Global
- Emily Elderfield, CLEAR Global
- Alice Castillejo, CLEAR Global
- Rachel Smith, Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
- Kemal Alp, Save the Children
- Nawres Mahmood, Save the Children
- Faiza Altamimi, Save the Children
- Marian Ellen Hodgkin, Save the Children
- Landon Newby, Save the Children

### **Organisations who participated in consultations:**

- NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq (NCCI)
- SKUS
- Hold the Child
- Institute Promotion Civil Society
- INTERSOS
- BROB
- Africa Development Aid (ADA)
- Community in Need Aid (CINA)
- Save the Children
- International Rescue Committee (IRC)
- Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AoR)
- Global Nutrition Cluster

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# A. Priority actions to advance localisation in humanitarian coordination<sup>1</sup>



1. Conduct meetings in the appropriate **local/national languages** and/ or provide **interpretation** (during meetings) as well as **translation** (of written documents) (for either local/national actors or international actors).



2. Proactively **map and reach** out to local/national actors relevant to the response, including government actors (where appropriate), women and girls organisations, organisations for persons with disabilities, faith-based networks, and youth organisations, and ensure interaction with local/national coordination groups which co-exist with the international humanitarian coordination mechanisms through sharing strategies and plans to mutually inform decisions.



3. Provide all new coordination group members with an **induction session<sup>2</sup>**.



4. Ensure **meeting locations and remote meeting platforms are accessible** to, and suitable for local/national actors, and provide transportation/ logistical support when needed.



5. **Share leadership** roles<sup>3</sup> between local/national and international actors.

<sup>1</sup> This is a summary of the key points from the [IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms](#)

<sup>2</sup> See e.g. 'Humanitarian Coordination and the Cluster Approach: A quick guide for local and national organizations' by the Global Education Cluster, available here: <https://educationcluster.app.box.com/s/3xt0yu68yiryg2k2b2k6t0up6xyipr01>

<sup>3</sup> NB. "Co-leadership" in this toolkit refers to shared leadership between local/national actors and Cluster Lead Agencies/government. It should be noted that the understanding of the term "co-leadership" varies across clusters. See e.g. [https://www.nutritioncluster.net/sites/nutritioncluster.com/files/2021-11/Guidance%20Note\\_Contribution%20of%20NGOs%20to%20Cluster%20Leadership%20at%20National%20%26%20Sub-national%20level.pdf](https://www.nutritioncluster.net/sites/nutritioncluster.com/files/2021-11/Guidance%20Note_Contribution%20of%20NGOs%20to%20Cluster%20Leadership%20at%20National%20%26%20Sub-national%20level.pdf) for the Global Nutrition Cluster's approach.



6. Conduct a **capacity needs assessment**<sup>4</sup> of all cluster partners in order to develop reciprocal institutional and technical capacity strengthening and exchange initiatives.



7. **Advocate for direct and multi-year funding** that cover institutional and technical capacity strengthening for local/national actors among donors, and encourage international actors to form consortium with local and national organisations.



8. **Arrange workshops for local/national actors**, including e.g. community-based organisations who are not members of coordination groups, as well as local/national actors who are already members, in local/national languages, to gather their input and integrate these in all joint plans, measures and reports related to the Humanitarian Program Cycle, including Humanitarian Needs Overviews (HNOs) and Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs).



9. **Explicitly reference localisation practices** and strategies in key planning documents.



10. **Monitor and assess** the progress on localisation in coordination in all relevant reviews and evaluations.



11. Ensure the **Principles of Partnership** are included in the Terms of Reference of the coordination groups/cluster, accompanied by a monitoring tool.

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<sup>4</sup> The [IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms](#) recommends the following: “Conduct a learning needs assessment of all cluster partners. Based on this assessment, support two-way institutional and technical capacity strengthening between L/NAs and HCT/clusters around, but not limited to, coordination, advocacy, fundraising, programme planning, mutual accountability mechanisms, risk management, gender issues, diplomacy, influencing and negotiation skills and pathways to leadership, as relevant for the particular group of partners being addressed.”



## B. Tools for all users



### 1. Working in Partnerships (online training course, 1-2 hours)

This is an online course for those wanting to gain an understanding of the key principles of working in partnerships in humanitarian responses. It is aimed at individuals who have never received formal training on the essentials of humanitarian action, or for those wishing to refresh their knowledge. The course covers e.g. the elements which constitute a good partnerships; the benefits and challenges of partnering; the imbalance of partnerships; and global trends in partnering and localisation.



### 2. Localization – what it means and how to achieve it (6 pages)

This document is a policy brief from the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) which examines what localisation is, and outlines the arguments in favour of localisation. It also gives practical examples of how to implement commitments on localisation in the areas of capacity strengthening, partnerships, funding and coordination.



### 3. Conceptual Framework for Localization in Humanitarian Coordination (table)

This table lists five key dimensions of localisation and offers explanations of how they should be applied in coordination work. The table outlines key elements of localisation in coordination and gives brief examples of how to put these into practice. The table is intended to give a quick overview of key areas of work, and be consulted together with other tools such as the [IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms](#) (20 pages).



### 4. Humanitarian Coordination and the Cluster Approach: A Quick Guide for Local and National Organizations (6 pages)

This guide is designed to help local and national actors understand the humanitarian cluster approach. It gives an overview of what it is, how it works, and why local and national actors should get involved. It also provides a list of resources for further reading and a list of key coordination acronyms. The guidance is available in several languages.



## 5. Examples of how localisation can be integrated into the Humanitarian Program Cycle

This diagram gives examples of coordination actions which promote localisation and situates them within the five phases of the Humanitarian Program Cycle.



## 6. Institutional Capacity Strengthening Steps (diagram)

This diagram shows five successive steps for strengthening the institutional capacity of local and national actors who are cluster members. The diagram is intended to give a visual overview of the process of strengthening institutional capacities and should be read together with the [Framework for Strengthening Institutional Capacity of Local and National Actors](#).



## 7. Competency Frameworks for technical capacity strengthening

This documents provides links to cluster competency frameworks which provide a useful point of departure for technical capacity strengthening initiatives, by outlining key competencies required in coordination for each sector.



## 1. Working in Partnerships (online training course)

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English | Español | Français | عربي

### Working in Partnerships

Online self-directed English
★★★★★ Rated by 8 learners

This course is targeted towards individuals who wish to gain an understanding of the key principles of working in partnerships in humanitarian responses.

Topic: Humanitarian Essentials, Management Essentials

Provider: Humanitarian Leadership Academy

Region: Global

Compatibility: Offline, Tablet, Smartphone

i Click on the button below to join this course

Join course

Access: <https://kayaconnect.org/course/info.php?id=2160>



## 2. Localization – what it means and how to achieve it

**Local humanitarian action already has an enormous life-saving impact around the world.**

**It could do even more – in particular, it could be the key to bridging the growing gap (currently over \$15 billion) between humanitarian needs and available funds-- if the international community began to really invest in it.**

**If we focus our collective efforts on ensuring strong, sustainable, relevant, effective local organizations we will achieve better preparedness, response and recovery in humanitarian settings, improving outcomes for affected populations.**

### 1. What is Localization?

There is no single definition of “localization”. In the Grand Bargain,<sup>1</sup> (a 2016 agreement between some of the largest humanitarian donors and agencies,) signatories committed, under the heading of “more support and finding tools to local and national responders,” to “making principled humanitarian action as local as possible and as international as necessary” while continuing to recognize the vital role of international actors, in particular in situations of armed conflict.<sup>2</sup>

Other actors have developed their own definitions and localization objectives. For example, local actors in the Pacific (government, national societies and local and national NGOs) developed their own definition of localization as “*a process of recognising, respecting and strengthening the independence of leadership and decision making by national actors in humanitarian action, in order to better address the needs of affected populations*”.<sup>3</sup>

**The overall objective of localization is improved humanitarian response**, ensuring access for all in need to fast, quality, impactful and sustainable humanitarian assistance that is efficient, effective and fit for purpose. Local actors are key for this and have distinct strengths, as they often play a crucial role in ensuring early response and access, acceptance, cost effectiveness, and link with development (i.e. reducing the impact of future crises). In order to achieve these benefits, the specific objectives of localization are to increase investment in local actors and to improve partnerships and coordination between international and local responders.

Localization is also about **complementarity**, which looks to a balance between local and international action in order to maximise the comparative advantages of both, and increase effectiveness of the humanitarian response in a given context. International humanitarian action remains extremely important. However, IFRC feels there needs to be far greater recognition of the role of local actors. The Grand Bargain offers us a way forward on this issue.

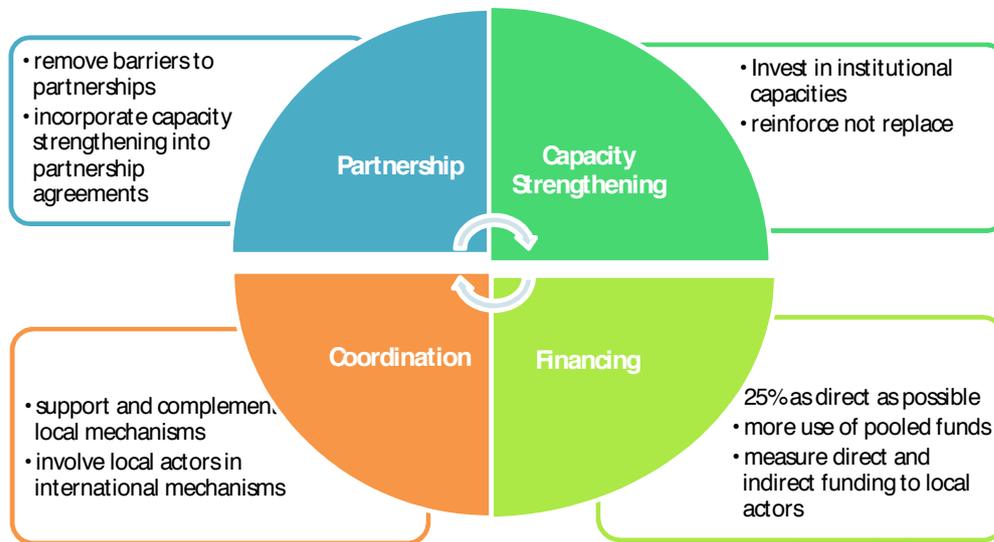
<sup>1</sup> The text of the Grand Bargain is available at

[https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Grand\\_Bargain\\_final\\_22\\_May\\_FINAL-2.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Grand_Bargain_final_22_May_FINAL-2.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> While they have not sought to define “localization”, Grand Bargain signatories have settled on a definition of local actors for purposes of measuring their financing commitments. This includes governmental authorities at the national and local levels, and, for non-state actors, “organizations engaged in relief that are headquartered and operating in their own aid recipient country and which are not affiliated to an international NGO.” For more detail, see the Grand Bargain Localization Workstream document entitled “Identified categories for tracking funding flows” available at <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain-hosted-iasc/documents/categories-tracking-funding-flows>.

<sup>3</sup> Australian Red Cross, *Going Local: Achieving a more appropriate and fit-for-purpose humanitarian ecosystem in the Pacific*, <https://www.redcross.org.au/getmedia/fa37f8eb-51e7-4ecd-ba2f-d1587574d6d5/APC-Localisation-report-Electronic-301017.pdf.aspx>, October 2017

Grand Bargain signatories made **Localization-focused commitments** in four main areas, as shown in the illustration below:



IFRC co-convenes the **Localization Workstream of the Grand Bargain**, alongside the Swiss government. In this role, it has organized consultations and engaged with a wide range of stakeholders on how localization can and should take place and what it should look like. In some circumstances, implementing these commitments will require an updating of existing policies, standards and approaches. The Workstream plans to develop guidance on implementation of the commitments. From the IFRC perspective, there are already some key lessons learned and recommendations, and these are outlined below.

## 2. Why Localization?

**Local actors have clear areas of strength leading to an improved humanitarian response:**

- Local actors are fast because they are close.** When the strongest earthquake ever to impact Ecuador struck, hundreds of Ecuador Red Cross volunteers located in and around the affected communities began responding just minutes afterwards, with search and rescue, first aid, psycho-social and other types of aid.
- Local actors often have access that no international actor can achieve.** While humanitarian access has been extremely constrained for all actors in Syria, the Syrian Arab Crescent has had much more than most. In a different setting after the earthquake in Nepal, UN agencies similarly called on the Nepal Red Cross to manage ‘last mile’ distribution of essential supplies into hard to reach places.
- Local actors have a strong local understanding of local circumstances, politics and culture** When Ebola swept through Western Africa, families faced the agony not only of a terrifying wave of deaths, but the spectre of “space-suited” foreigners telling them they were no longer allowed to conduct traditional funeral rites, involving touching the bodies. Over 10,000 Red Cross



volunteers in Guinea, Serra Leone and Liberia engaged their communities in a respectful, culturally appropriate way to ensure safe and dignified burials. This is further facilitated by strong existing local networks.

- **Local actors are in a strong position to link preparedness and response** In Gabon, as tensions rose connected with the 2016 presidential elections, the National Society held refresher courses on first aid, emergency response, and communications as well as simulation exercises for its volunteers. These were put directly to use after violence broke out. Local actors also remain long after the international actors have gone and can play a key role in both recovery and longer-term achievement of key sustainable development goals. For example, while ICRC has been phasing out of various locations in Afghanistan, the Afghan Red Crescent Society remains.
- Local humanitarian action – particularly when led by volunteers – is generally **cost effective** when compared to efforts directly led by international personnel, remunerated at international rates.

### 3. Implementing localization capacity strengthening commitments:

#### Grand Bargain Commitments:

*Increase and support multi-year investment in the institutional capacities of local and national responders, including preparedness, response and coordination capacities, especially in fragile contexts and where communities are vulnerable to armed conflicts, disasters, recurrent outbreaks and the effects of climate change. We should achieve this through collaboration with development partners and incorporate capacity strengthening in partnership agreements.*

#### In order to be successful, capacity strengthening efforts should:

- **Prioritize:** It is critical that capacity investment be made in national and local governments in disaster prone contexts, in particular to national disaster management agencies, civil-protection authorities, and local governments. Civil society actors in these countries are also crucial for reaching inaccessible populations and must also be included.
- **Have appropriate timing:** This investment should be targeted at local actors in high-risk contexts, well **before a disaster or emergency strikes**, should be part of an overall strategy to reduce and manage risks at the national level, and should not disappear after the emergency phase ends.
- **Support the organizational development of local and national responders** including for financial management, domestic resource mobilization, project management, accountability and reporting, community engagement and good governance.
- **Ensure that financing during emergencies also looks to support long-term sustainability:** rapid scale up or down of activities has significant costs for local and national actors. Funds need to come not only during the emergency, but before and afterwards, promoting longer term sustainability.
- **Invest in local and national responders with sustained attention, time, and energy:** It is a long-term effort that will require multi-year funding that is flexible enough to adapt to the changing needs of an organization and its environment. We must move to a system that encourages true partnership between humanitarian organizations and implementing partners. **Long term core funding** is a vital component of this.
- **Ensure appropriate internal controls:** Effective local action can only happen if there is a supportive **enabling environment** for local action, including adequately strong internal



mechanisms among grantees to ensure the **responsible use of international funds as well as transparency**, including safeguards against the diversion of funds to **corrupt or other non-humanitarian purposes**.

#### 4. Implementing localization partnership commitments

##### Grand Bargain Commitments:

*[E]ngage with local and national responders in a spirit of partnership and aim to reinforce rather than replace local and national capacities.*

*[I]ncorporate capacity strengthening in partnership agreements*

- **Shift from a sub-contracting to a partnership** approach between international and local/ national humanitarian actors.
- **Listen to local and national actors:** This is about listening not only to the needs expressed by local actors, but to their proposed solutions to address these needs.

**Local designed solutions can be more durable:** A Pacific based humanitarian organisation required capacity development for its finance team. The partner international humanitarian organisation looked to its deployment register to source international finance expertise for three months. The Pacific based humanitarian organisation instead suggested training by an accountant in country, who could train in the national language and be on call for a whole year to provide support for roughly the same cost.

See: Australian Red Cross Research in the Pacific

#### 5. Implementing localization funding commitments

##### Grand Bargain Commitments:

*Achieve by 2020 a global, aggregated target of at least 25 per cent of humanitarian funding to local and national responders as directly as possible to improve outcomes for affected people and reduce transactional costs.*

*Understand better and work to remove or reduce barriers that prevent organisations and donors from partnering with local and national responders in order to lessen their administrative burden.*

*Develop, with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), and apply a 'localisation' marker to measure direct and indirect funding to local and national responders.*

*Make greater use of funding tools which increase and improve assistance delivered by local and national responders, such as UN-led country-based pooled funds (CBPF), IFRC Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) and NGO-led and other pooled funds.*

##### How donors (including intermediaries and pooled funds) can implement the funding obligations:

- **Increase the efficiency of funding** to local and national actors. Local actors have repeatedly called for flexible, multiyear funding (as called for in other sections of the Grand Bargain) which **includes overheads, capacity building and support for monitoring and evaluation**

- **Streamline the transaction chain**, to minimize the number of layers (note that sometimes there can be multiple intermediaries between donors and implementers, increasing costs and complicating information flows) and ensure that each transaction layer has a clear added value.
- **Reduce legislative barriers to funding local actors:** Ensure legislation allows direct budget support to local responders, including national disaster response agencies. In crisis contexts where anti-terrorism legislation applies, promote humanitarian action exemptions and appropriate risk mitigation measures that enable partnerships with national humanitarian actors.
- **Address informal barriers to funding:** Other barriers can include language requirements and complex processes. For example, very few donors funding humanitarian action in Syria accept grant applications in Arabic, but some have made efforts to allow this, enabling more local actors to obtain funding.
- **Develop their own ability to financially support local actors directly:** ensure capacity to interact with the humanitarian community, analyse the context, and administer grants to local actors.
- **Invest where you can already trust:** There are existing local and national organizations, including many National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, that have the capacity for financial management and reporting to international standards. Such organizations should be identified receive direct funding.
- **Share the risk:** Working with any actor, including local actors, involves a certain level of risk. Unfortunately breaches of standards, principles and codes of conduct will always happen, the key question is whether efforts are taken to prevent and respond efficiently and appropriately to incidents that do occur. If donors support increased funding to local actors, but are unwilling to share the risk should anything go wrong, this disincentives investment in local actors and is counterproductive. Risks need to be shared amongst all actors.
- **Support pooled funds that are accessible to local actors:** CBPFs, the IFRC's DREF, the Movement's new National Society Investment Alliance, and other pooled funds are a useful tool for donors to provide funds to local actors they might otherwise not encounter. There are some good practices around ensuring access for local actors – such as local actor specific windows, capacity building windows, specific support for applications, etc. - but these should be replicated across funds.



## 6. Implementing localization coordination commitments

### Grand Bargain Commitments:

*Support and complement national coordination mechanisms where they exist and include local and national responders in international coordination mechanisms as appropriate and in keeping with humanitarian principles.*

**OCHA, Humanitarian Country Teams, Clusters, and other humanitarian actors can do much more to engage local actors in coordination**, noting the importance of promoting a **flexible humanitarian ecosystem** which is inclusive of a broad range of actors and strength.

- Local actors can be essential players in effective coordination mechanisms, **ensuring necessary information, as well as gathering local voices and channelling them to key decision-making bodies**
- International actors can do more to **encourage and support governments to develop necessary laws, rules and procedures, as described in the International Disaster Law (IDRL) Guidelines** to ensure that they have the capacity to take a primary role in coordination, facilitation and oversight of international disaster assistance. This is indispensable if governments are to be in the driver's seat.
- **Work with government counterparts in appropriate contexts to ensure that they are ready to co-lead clusters** For example, the Global Shelter cluster includes (and pays for) relevant government personnel in its annual coordination training.
- For greater localisation in coordination, there needs to be much **greater investment in preparedness so that contextual processes can be agreed and understood; capacity built; a sense of overall ownership created** amongst local and national actors and a recognition of the benefits of coordination leading to a better response. The IASC Shelter Cluster for example has seen successful engagement with local actors in its country level clusters which are permanently 'activated' for instance Nepal, Bangladesh and the Pacific. This has allowed for national staff to be trained up and for meaningful engagement with the government, local and national actors. Consequently, there is a sense of ownership of the cluster and an understanding of the benefits of coordination.
- Practical steps also need to be taken to improve the representation and contribution of local and national actors in international coordination structures. Language is often a challenge, so **Key documents should be accessible in the local language/s**
- **Decentralised coordination hubs** – working with other agencies and local governments to co-lead sub national hubs, leads to a higher level of contextual coordination and a more open environment for local actors to engage.





### 3. Conceptual Framework for Localization in Humanitarian Coordination

Dimension	What this means for coordination
<b>Governance and Decision-Making</b>	Local actors should have equitable opportunities to play leadership and co-leadership roles at national and sub-national levels, and have a seat at the table when strategic decisions are made (for example, in Strategic Advisory Groups or Steering Committees).
<b>Participation and Influence</b>	Even if not taking the decisions, local actors should have the opportunity to influence these decisions. To do this, they need equitable access to information and analysis on coverage, results, etc: and the opportunity and skills to effectively and credibly convey their thoughts and ideas.
<b>Partnerships</b>	Coordinators should be promoting a culture of principled partnership both in the way it interacts with its members; and the way in which members interact with each other. In some cases, this requires transitions from sub-contracting to more equitable and transparent partnerships, including recognising the value of non-monetary contributions by local actors (networks, knowledge).
<b>Funding</b>	Local actors should receive a greater share of the humanitarian resources, including pooled funds. Where they have the institutional capacity to manage these funds, local actors should be able to access funds directly.
<b>Institutional Capacity</b>	Whilst technical capacity strengthening is important, coordination groups should also actively encourage more systematic and coordinated opportunities to receive support to strengthen operational functions, as part of the overall sector strategy to scale up services.



## 4. Humanitarian Coordination and the Cluster Approach: A Quick Guide for Local and National Organizations

# Humanitarian coordination

and the

# cluster approach:

a quick guide for local and national organizations

This guide is designed to help you understand the humanitarian cluster approach. It gives an overview of what it is and why your organization should get involved.



This guide was produced by Translators without Borders in collaboration with the Global Education Cluster Localization Task Team and with funding from Save the Children. You can find an editable version of this guide on the Global Education Cluster website that you can adapt to your context.

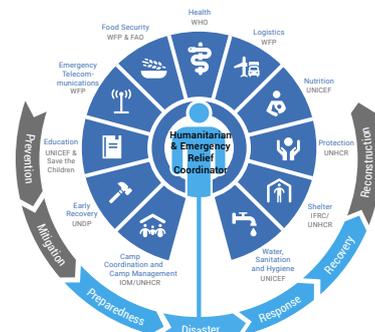
### What is the cluster approach?

It is a set of structures, processes, principles and commitments to coordinate humanitarian action when a national government requests international support. It aims to make the humanitarian community better organized and more accountable to crisis-affected people.

### What are clusters?

Clusters are voluntary groups of humanitarian organizations working in specific technical sectors of humanitarian action, shown in the dark blue segments in the diagram here. Cluster members can include NGOs, United Nations agencies, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, and government bodies involved in humanitarian response. They coordinate action to ensure the best outcomes for people affected by crises, at all the stages shown in the arrows in the diagram. Clusters promote a common strategy and good practices, avoid duplication, address gaps and share information. They build national capacity to prepare for emergencies, and advocate for more effective and accountable humanitarian action. All clusters are responsible for upholding protection principles and preventing sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.

There are 11 clusters globally. The same clusters can be activated at a national level and sometimes at a subnational level in response to a particular emergency. Each global cluster is led by one or two United Nations agencies or a United Nations agency and an international NGO. At the country level, clusters are usually co-led by a United Nations agency and an NGO. The cluster leads must be ready to provide services to affected people where other organizations cannot.



The Education Cluster is co-led by UNICEF and Save the Children at the global level. A strategic advisory group including local and national organizations inputs on priority issues. At the country level, education clusters are usually co-led by UNICEF and Save the Children, but another NGO can also co-lead.

### Why should my organization join the cluster system?

While it has some practical limitations, the cluster system can enable your organization to better serve affected people through:

- Increased influence, visibility, and understanding of procedures
- Funding opportunities
- Access to technical guidance and support
- Access to information about what others are doing and any gaps
- Partnership opportunities with other organizations

### Can my organization have a bigger influence by joining a cluster?

One organization alone can struggle to influence the policies of the United Nations, donors and national authorities. For example, you might feel that United Nations partnership arrangements are not clear, that donor requirements for funding proposals are too restrictive, or that national authorities are unnecessarily blocking humanitarian access. You may persuade them more easily by working with other interested organizations. You can also increase the visibility and impact of your organization by contributing to a cluster's joint work, joining its technical working groups or strategic advisory group, or co-leading the cluster.

### Can my organization get funding through a cluster?

Clusters do not provide funds directly, but cluster members have access to funding mechanisms that non-members cannot access. For example, you can generally only apply for a [country-based pooled fund grant](#) if you are a cluster member. Communicating program needs to the relevant cluster can flag key funding gaps to donors. Donors also often expect organizations they fund to show that their projects are aligned with cluster strategies.

Clusters help to decide how to allocate country-based pooled funds, which combine the financial contributions of several donors. The United Nations humanitarian aid coordination body, OCHA, allocates these funds to multiple projects at country level. Clusters also develop objectives, activities and accompanying budgets for their specialist sectors as part of [Humanitarian Response Plans](#). Donors refer to these to develop their funding priorities.

### Can my organization access technical support by joining a cluster?

Cluster coordinators and cluster members may be able to provide advice on technical issues that are new to you. You may be able to do the same for other members. Several clusters also have remote help desks to answer members' questions and some send in a technical support specialist where a national cluster identifies a need.

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The [Global Education Cluster Help Desk](#) can answer questions and other requests for support about technical coordination and information management. This includes sharing appropriate resources, tools and guidance, or redirecting the request to an expert for further assistance. The help desk can be reached through [email](#) or Skype ([help.edcluster](#)). The help desk supports requests in Arabic, English, French and Spanish.

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A lot of sector-specific technical guidance is also available online and you do not need to be a cluster member to download it. For example, the [Sphere Handbook](#) includes the minimum humanitarian standards for water, sanitation and hygiene, food security and nutrition, shelter and settlement, and health, and is available in over 35 languages.

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The [INEE Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery](#) provide the basis for an effective education response. Further recommended technical guidance for organizations implementing education-related programs can be found on the [INEE website](#) and in the [Global Education Cluster library](#).

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### What information can I get from a cluster?

Clusters produce information management tools like the "4Ws", which map Who does What, When and Where. These can help your organization to make better informed decisions about what programs to undertake and where. Clusters are also responsible for preparing needs assessments and gap analyses as a basis for funding priorities and response strategies. When you share information based on your organization's insights and expertise, you can help find solutions to wider issues and improve the overall quality and accountability of the response.

### Can I expand my partnerships by joining a cluster?

You can build relationships with the cluster lead agencies and other cluster members, as well as national authorities. This can allow you to exchange information with like-minded organizations with complementary expertise to your own. Strong relationships can also lead to joint funding and advocacy partnerships, with both international and national organizations. The widely accepted [Principles of Partnership](#) highlight the importance of equality and transparency in these relationships.

### What is involved in being a cluster member?

There are no fixed membership criteria or application processes to join a cluster, but there are factors you should consider.

- Time investment for sustained engagement: ability to attend regular meetings, input to strategy development, share relevant and timely information at meetings and in tools like the 4Ws, offer technical expertise when needed, take on co-leadership where appropriate, raise attention to advocacy priorities

- Relevance of your work: program implementation relevant to one or more sectors
- Minimum commitments: your organization should
  - Uphold the [humanitarian principles](#) of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence
  - Commit to cluster-specific guidance and [mainstream protection](#) in all programs, including respect for principles of non-discrimination and "do no harm"
  - Be ready to participate in actions that specifically improve accountability to affected people, in line with the [Commitments to Accountability to Affected Populations](#) and the [Six Core Principles Relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#).

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Cluster meetings and documents are usually in the main official language of a country or in international languages like English and French. The minimum commitments for cluster coordination state that clusters should provide interpreting in an appropriate language (including sign language) so all cluster partners can participate, including local organizations. This is unfortunately not standard practice yet, but some clusters in different contexts are making efforts towards it.

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### How can my organization join the cluster system?

- Find out which cluster or clusters are most relevant to your work. Check [humanitarianresponse.info](#) or [reliefweb.int](#) for a list of active clusters and their areas of responsibility. In some cases, you can find this information also on the website of the government agency responsible in your country.
- Find out the strategic priorities for those clusters in your country and see which ones are the best fit for your program activities: this will help you prioritize the discussions you participate in. The strategy document should be available on the websites above. The

main points of the strategy will also be published as part of the Humanitarian Response Plan for your country, again available on those websites.

- Identify one or more of your senior staff members with relevant technical knowledge to work consistently with those clusters.
- Identify the relevant cluster coordinators in your country from the websites above. They work on behalf of the cluster, not just for their agency, so they should be able to give impartial advice about how things work. OCHA staff can also explain more about the cluster system in your country.

### What other structures are part of the cluster system?

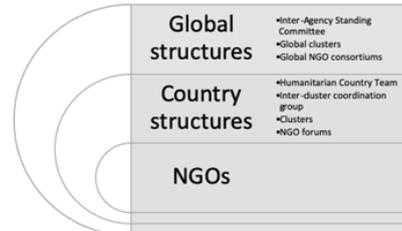
In each humanitarian response, clusters work together in an inter-cluster coordination group chaired by OCHA. The heads of OCHA and other operational United Nations agencies, representatives of local, national and international NGOs, and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement also meet within the Humanitarian Country Team to discuss humanitarian response strategy. A Humanitarian Coordinator chairs the Humanitarian Country Team. Cluster lead agencies are responsible for raising cluster-specific concerns and challenges with the Humanitarian Country Team. National government representatives and donors also sit on some Humanitarian Country Teams.

Humanitarian Country Teams and their members can take issues raised by national clusters to the global level for discussion at the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. This committee is chaired by the Emergency Relief Coordinator and brings together heads of operational United Nations agencies, IFRC, ICRC and global NGO consortium representatives.

In addition to the clusters, there are also initiatives to coordinate cross-sector humanitarian interventions and services. For example, members of a Communication and Community Engagement Working Group might collaborate on increasing accountability to and participation of affected people.

Outside the cluster system, NGOs often coordinate, exchange information and advocate within national or sub-national NGO forums. These forums are member-driven and collectively agree their terms of reference and membership criteria. They can be a useful support network if NGOs feel the cluster system is not addressing their concerns. A number of global NGO consortiums support NGOs to engage with the international humanitarian system. These include ICVA, InterAction, the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response and the NEAR Network.

The diagram here shows the main coordination structures NGOs can engage with at the different levels.



### Does the cluster system apply to all humanitarian crises?

Because humanitarian crises vary in scale and complexity, coordination must adapt to the situation, and may change as a response evolves. The cluster system applies when a national government has limited capacity to coordinate a humanitarian response and invites the United Nations to lead on coordination. In other contexts, national and local government authorities lead, while United Nations agencies co-lead; in these cases, the coordination groups are usually referred to as “sectors,” not clusters. Sectors generally do not benefit from the same level of resourcing and support as clusters. In refugee contexts, the United Nations refugee agency, UNHCR, coordinates humanitarian action, and establishes

sectoral groups that may be led or co-led by host government bodies, NGOs and other humanitarian organizations. In mixed-migration contexts, IOM, the United Nations migration agency, can take a coordination role. In mixed settings, where affected people include refugees, migrants, IDPs and other groups, clusters can co-exist with refugee or migration coordination. While these coordination mechanisms differ in their implementation, many of the principles highlighted in this guide apply to all.

### What else do I need to know?

- Inter-Agency Standing Committee, [Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at Country Level](#) (2015). This document provides an in-depth explanation of the cluster system as a reference for humanitarian practitioners.
- UNHCR, [Refugee Coordination Model](#). This webpage explains UNHCR’s refugee response coordination model and how it links to the broader humanitarian coordination structures and the cluster system.
- UNHCR-OCHA, [Joint Note on Mixed Situations: coordination in practice](#) (2014). This document describes in detail the division of responsibilities between the UNHCR Representative and the HC when a complex emergency occurs that has a refugee dimension.
- Global Protection Cluster, [Protection Mainstreaming](#). This webpage explains how to implement protection principles and links to various protection-related resources.
- ICVA, [Principles of Partnership: A Statement of Commitment](#). This webpage hosts various resources, including translations of the Principles of Partnership main document.

#### Other informative sites

- ICVA, [Online learning stream on humanitarian coordination](#)
- ICVA, [Online learning stream on humanitarian financing](#).
- Humanitarian Leadership Academy, [online courses on the foundations of humanitarian response](#)
- All In Diary (AID), [series of one-page briefings on different aspects of the humanitarian sector](#)
- Building Back Better, [online course based on interactive scenarios and including an introduction to Sphere principles and standards](#)
- DisasterReady.org, [more than 600 training resources covering core topics for the humanitarian sector](#)
- UNICEF, [Global Education Cluster core coordination training](#)

For more information related to coordination of the Education Cluster, you are welcome to contact the Global Education Cluster [Help Desk](#) or email Kemal Alp Taylan, Localization Specialist, [kemal.alptaylan@savethechildren.org](mailto:kemal.alptaylan@savethechildren.org).

### Key coordination acronyms

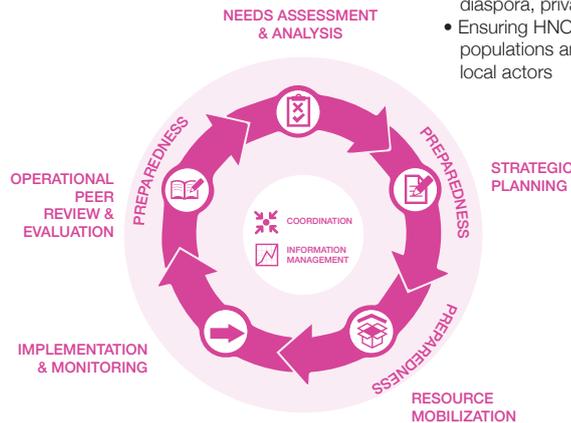
- 3W / 4W - Database of who does what where and when
- AAP - Accountability to Affected Populations
- AoR - Area of Responsibility
- CAP - Consolidated Appeals Process
- CBPF - Country Based Pooled Fund
- CCRM - Cluster Coordination Reference Module
- CERF - Central Emergency Response Fund
- CLA - Cluster Lead Agency
- ERC - Emergency Relief Coordinator
- ERP - Emergency Response Preparedness
- GCCU - Global Cluster Coordination Unit
- GCLA - Global Cluster Lead Agency
- GEC - Global Education Cluster
- GHP - Global Humanitarian Platform
- GPC - Global Protection Cluster
- HC - Humanitarian Coordinator
- HCT - Humanitarian Country Team
- HNO - Humanitarian Needs Overview
- HPC - Humanitarian Programme Cycle
- HRP - Humanitarian Response Plan
- IASC - Inter-Agency Standing Committee
- ICVA - International Council of Voluntary Agencies
- ICCG / ISCG - Inter-Cluster or Inter-Sector Coordination Group
- IM - Information Management
- IMO - Information Management Officer
- INGO - International NGO
- MIRA - Multi-sector Initial Rapid Assessment
- MSNA - Multi-Sector Needs Assessment
- NDMA - National Disaster Management Agency
- NGO - Non-governmental organization
- OCHA - Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
- POLR - Provider of Last Resort
- SAG - Strategic Advisory Group
- Sitrep - Situation Report
- SOP - Standard Operating Procedure
- TEG - Thematic Expert Group
- ToR - Terms of Reference
- TWG / TWIG - Technical Working Group
- UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- UNICEF - United Nations Children’s Fund



## 5. Examples of how localisation can be integrated into the Humanitarian Program Cycle

- Supporting local agencies for Lead/Co-Lead positions or putting leadership transition strategies in place
- Including local actors in Strategic Advisory Groups (SAG) and HCT
- Modelling and monitoring a culture of principled partnerships in Clusters
- Constantly reviewing service delivery and funding arrangements (such as localisation dashboards) with the SAG and AoR members and using recommendations to inform strategy and response.

- Ensure that Cluster membership accurately reflects the diversity of the humanitarian community – including diaspora, private sector, academia, etc.
- Translating key communications into local languages
- Facilitate onsite coaching and mentoring support from international partners
- Share good practices and promote these in future response plans
- Adapt the 5Ws to allow for disaggregation by implementing and funding agency
- Produce and share dashboards that provide analyses disaggregated by local/international implementing agencies
- Continuously identify and advocate for local actors to be supported for service provision and capacity building opportunities



- Ensuring the HNO incorporates the views and data from local actors. This could also include academia, diaspora, private sector, in addition to civil society
- Ensuring HNO includes both needs of affected populations and the institutional capacity needs of local actors

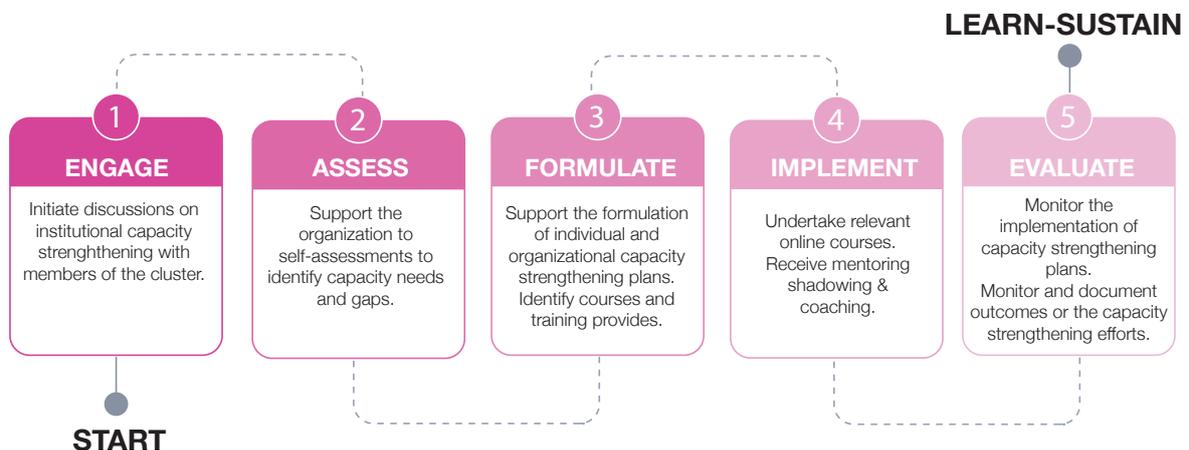
- Prioritising service delivery by local actors HRP and cluster strategies, where possible
- Developing a sectoral institutional capacity building strategy as part of the HRP
- Disaggregate cluster indicators by local/international
- Promoting partnerships that draw on coaching and mentoring approaches, rather than sub-granting
- Including explicit references to institutional capacity building outputs (e.g reduced risk ratings) in Project sheets

- Supporting local actors to contribute to FTS tracking
- Prioritising approved local actors' Project sheets in funding rounds (e.f. pooled funds)
- Advocate for and include investments for institutional capacity building for local partners in pooled funds

See online: <https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/wp-content/uploads/5.-Localization-in-the-HPC.png>



## 6. Institutional Capacity Strengthening Steps





## 7. Competency Frameworks for technical capacity strengthening



### [Nutrition Competency Framework for Cluster Coordination](#)

The Competency Framework for Cluster Coordination outlines the competencies required for those working as Cluster Coordinators in the Nutrition Clusters at global, regional, national and sub-national levels.



### [Child Protection Competency Framework for Cluster Coordination](#)

The Competency Framework for Coordination outlines the competencies required for those working as Coordinators in a Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AoR) at global, regional, national and sub-national levels.



### [Education Competency Framework For Cluster Coordination](#)

The Education Cluster Competency Framework for Cluster Coordination outlines the competencies required for UNICEF staff working as Cluster Coordinators in education clusters at global, regional, national and sub-national levels. Competency frameworks provide benchmarks for attitude, behaviours, knowledge and skills that demonstrate success, impact and value in a specific role.



### [Global Education Cluster Competency Framework for Information Management](#)

The Education Cluster Competency Framework for Cluster Coordination outlines the competencies required for UNICEF staff working as Information Managers in education clusters at global, regional, national and sub-national levels.



# C. Tools for local/national actors (including government partners)



## 1. Advocacy guidance for local/national actors (on how to advocate for key issues in their respective sectors) (6 pages)

This tool gives an introduction to humanitarian advocacy and gives a quick overview of how to develop an advocacy strategy, linking to more extensive guidance. The tool has been compiled primarily from the Save the Children resource [Humanitarian Advocacy](#). It is intended to introduce local and national actors to the basics of humanitarian advocacy, including key issues, suggested targets, and effective approaches, and provides resources for further reading as well as training.



## 2. Know your rights: for local/national actors in partnerships for humanitarian coordination (3 pages)

The purpose of this tool is to outline the roles and rights of local and national actors in partnerships for humanitarian coordination, and to provide examples of how to take action to claim such rights. The tool also provides a number of links throughout to useful resources related to partnerships in humanitarian coordination.



## 3. Proposal Writing Guide (26 pages)

This document is a step-by-step guide for local and national actors in how to develop project proposals for donors. It provides detailed guidance on how to approach donor requirements; identify needs; set project goals and overall approach; and how to draft the proposal. It also outlines common mistakes to avoid, examples of a logframe, Theory of Change, work plan, risk matrix and budget.



## 4. Tip Sheet on Capacity and Complementarity between Local/National and International Actors in Humanitarian Coordination (3 pages)

This Tip Sheet outlines key elements for local and national actors to consider in engaging in capacity exchange with international actors in humanitarian coordination. It highlights that capacity exchange is critical for effective coordination, in order to ensure local, national and international actors possess technical and institutional skills, as well as capacity related to for example contextual, cultural and historical knowledge.



## **5. Frequently Asked Questions on the Humanitarian Program Cycle (6 pages)**

This tool answers frequently asked questions related to the Humanitarian Program Cycle (HPC), including what it is, which elements it is made up of, and what these elements consist of. It also gives examples of how local and national actors can contribute to the HPC, and provides links to further reading on the topics.



## **6. CP AoR Comic series on Needs Identification and Analysis Framework (NIAF), HNO and HRO steps (length TBC)**

The comic series is a visual example of implementation on the Needs Identification and Analysis Framework (NIAF), a conceptual framework that creates a common approach across Child Protection coordination and response actors on the continuous needs identification and data interpretation exercises.



## **7. HPC Needs Assessment and Analysis (video, 6 minutes)**

In this video, colleagues from Iraq, Somalia and South Sudan present case studies about how and why they conduct needs assessments and analysis throughout the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC). The video is accompanied by a document which provides guidance on sharing and using the video.



## **8. Guidance note on the participation of local actors in humanitarian coordination groups (3 pages)**

This document provides an overview of how local and national actors can participate in humanitarian coordination groups, in terms of practicalities such as membership, language and logistics; processes such as the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), strategic response planning, resource mobilisation, implementation and monitoring, and peer review and evaluation; and leadership and representation



## 1. Advocacy guidance for local/national actors (on how to advocate for key issues in their respective sectors)

This tool gives an introduction to humanitarian advocacy, outlines key issues and explains how to develop an advocacy strategy. The tool has been compiled from the Save the Children resource [Humanitarian Advocacy](#)<sup>1</sup>, with additions from the [Nutrition Cluster Advocacy Framework](#).

### 1. What is humanitarian advocacy?

The term ‘humanitarian advocacy’ encompasses not only advocacy in emergencies, but also advocacy conducted before and after crises and in situations of protracted vulnerability, suffering or conflict. In these situations, humanitarian actors try to influence the policies and actions of local, national, regional and international institutions and actors, including donors, so that they better address the needs of affected populations. This can include working to ensure that humanitarian responses: are appropriate to the needs and rights of specific vulnerable groups, (e.g. children, refugees or survivors of sexual and gender-based violence), respect humanitarian principles, and meet humanitarian standards (e.g. [Core Humanitarian Standard](#), [Sphere Standards](#), [Child Protection Minimum Standards](#)). It can also mean seeking to tackle some of the underlying causes of humanitarian suffering faced by affected populations.

As local/national actors, you are probably already humanitarian advocates, particularly if you engage in humanitarian coordination, as well as speak to people affected by crisis to understand their needs, identify what should happen to improve their situation and share this information with others.

### 2. What are the key issues on which humanitarian actors advocate?

The aims of humanitarian advocacy vary from context to context, but there are some overarching themes that are common to different situations.

These may include:

**(a)** humanitarian access and principles

**(b)** protection

**(c)** coordination

**(d)** funding

<sup>1</sup> NB. Some minor adaptations to language have been made, e.g. to broaden the audience from Save the Children teams.

Below are some examples of objectives related to the key issues listed above, which may be useful to review as you develop your own advocacy strategy (see point 3 below), with your own objectives:

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**(a) Ensure respect for humanitarian principles, space and access:**

- Affected populations are able to access essential services and impartial humanitarian relief.
- Donors and other actors do not jeopardize the humanitarian space necessary for independent and impartial humanitarian response.
- All actors (including parties to conflict) protect and respect humanitarian activities, including staff and beneficiaries.

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**(b) Ensure that civilians – especially children – are protected:**

- Governments deliver their obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), relevant UN Security Council resolutions, human rights and refugee law, and other international obligations; and all parties, including non-state armed groups, adhere to international humanitarian law (IHL).
- Child protection and education are fully integrated throughout the response.
- UN and regional peacekeeping missions include adequate capacity to prevent and respond to violations of children's rights.
- Governments and partners provide coordinated assistance to children who are unaccompanied or separated as a result of armed conflict.

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**(c) Ensure optimal coordination and functioning of the humanitarian system:**

- Humanitarian coordination is effective in assessing and communicating needs and promoting predictability, quality, accountability, and independent and comprehensive humanitarian action.
- The voices and expressed needs of affected populations inform the humanitarian response.

The humanitarian response meets internationally agreed standards (e.g. SPHERE, Minimum Standards for [Child Protection in Humanitarian Action](#), [INEE Minimum Standards for education in emergencies](#))

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**(d) Ensure adequate funding for the humanitarian response:**

- There is sufficient funding to protect and support children, and child protection and education are funded to similar levels as other sectors.
- Funding is appropriate to the context, including support for early recovery, preparedness and disaster risk reduction.
- Funding is channelled through the most appropriate mechanisms and organizations with operational reach to quickly respond to affected populations.

### 3. How can one develop and implement an advocacy strategy in a humanitarian situation?

An advocacy strategy seeks to answer three main questions: what change we seek to achieve; who can make change happen; how we can best influence decision-making<sup>2</sup>. Given the rapid pace and great volatility of most humanitarian contexts, you will often need to move quickly and flexibly and be targeted in your prioritization.

#### (a) Keep in mind:

- **Advocacy strategies do not have to be long.** Two to five pages is a good length. Despite the fast pace of many humanitarian contexts, it is important that the strategy is written down and shared with the different colleagues that are working together on implementation. Advocacy messages should be focused on a key message.
- **Focus on priority issues.** Identify the issues for advocacy in an emergency, conflict and humanitarian setting that focus on areas where your organization or coordination group has clear added value and potential for impact.
- **Keep your eyes on the bigger picture.** Depending on the context and resources, you may want to balance your advocacy goals between seeking immediate impact and long-term policy change, and between programmatic advocacy and norm-changing advocacy.
- **Prepare for change.** In humanitarian crisis and conflict settings events often unfold at a rapid pace. Anticipate the need to react to events and opportunities and to adapt the tactics, methods and messages as the situation evolves – for example, you may want to agree on a rapid internal procedure for signing off on any changes to your advocacy plans or messaging which allows you to react quickly. This does not mean we have to change our strategies constantly: despite rapid context changes, your overarching aims are likely to remain unchanged.

#### (b) Who are you targeting with your advocacy messaging, and who are your allies?

[Power mapping](#) is a useful visual tool for identifying targets and allies. Power mapping means identifying which actors hold power and how they are interrelated. In humanitarian contexts, the following stakeholders can be considered:

- **Governments:**
  - National governments or de facto authorities. You will need to be specific (e.g. national or local, what department, etc.).
  - States with influence over your primary targets (e.g. regional governments, allies, state champions of particular issues or causes).

<sup>2</sup> Nutrition Cluster Advocacy Toolkit, <https://www.nutritioncluster.net/sites/nutritioncluster.com/files/2020-04/Nutrition-Cluster-toolkit-low-res.pdf>

- International donors. *Think outside the box! Are there donors other than the traditional ones? Can you partner up with international actors with direct access to donors?*
- Governments represented on the UN Security Council (UNSC). There are five Permanent Members of the UNSC, also called the ‘P5’ (USA, France, UK, China and Russia), as well as 10 elected members<sup>3</sup> that serve two-year terms on a staggered basis.
- **Regional institutions or groupings of governments:** e.g. European Union (EU), African Union (AU), League of Arab States (LAS), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).
- **United Nations:**
  - UN Secretariat: UN Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General and their offices.
  - Humanitarian agencies: OCHA, UNICEF, UNHCR, WHO, WFP, etc. *At which level? Where could contacts in your country help you to reach global level influencers? Are there places where partnerships with iNGOs might help you to influence these agencies?*
  - UN structures in the field (clusters, UN Country Teams, Humanitarian Country teams (HCTs), Humanitarian Coordinators) and international level (e.g. the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), Emergency Directors group).
- **Civil society:** e.g. local or international NGOs, religious actors, prominent ‘Elders’.
- **Private sector actors:** e.g. companies active in the affected area.

**(c) What are the main steps to follow in developing an advocacy strategy<sup>4</sup>?**

The [Nutrition Cluster Advocacy Framework](#) outlines six steps:



<sup>3</sup> See <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/current-members> for the current members of the UN Security Council

<sup>4</sup> See this Toolkit’s sample documents for an example of an advocacy strategy template from the [Nutrition Cluster Advocacy Toolkit](#).

## 4. What are the most effective approaches to humanitarian advocacy?

### (a) Agree a set of messages – and target them intelligently

Clear and targeted talking points based on sound analysis of the context, drawing from your experience on the ground and outlining succinct policy positions and messaging are the core content of our humanitarian advocacy. Used with the right audience, at the right moment, they can tip the balance powerfully in your favour. In humanitarian contexts they generally need to be updated frequently, and it always pays to target them carefully for each intended audience.

Key messages should be:

- **Clear and direct:** use precise language and active verbs.
- **Simple:** make sure your message is clearly understood for non-technical audiences. Avoid the use of technical language and acronyms.
- **Evidence-based:** build on your experiences and programs.
- **Action-oriented:** suggest solutions and provide a concrete ‘ask’ to the target audience.

### (b) Nurture relationships creatively

In a rapid-onset context, it can be difficult to build the trusted relationships that you need in order to be able to get new information or to have influence on important debates. It helps to put yourself in the shoes of your targets and to think creatively about how to engage them – bring them new information that they don’t already have or find ways to support their work so that they quickly see you as a useful and trusted interlocutor. It may be valuable to work as part of a larger group or network of local/national actors to advocate and influence, in order to maximize efficiency. Where values align, it may also be fruitful to collaborate with INGOs for advocacy purposes.

### (c) Invest time in humanitarian coordination meetings

In humanitarian situations it can sometimes feel like the entire relief effort is just an interminable succession of coordination meetings. However, it is almost impossible to influence many important decisions without engaging in at least some of these. Being present and visible is key to having influence – make the time to attend relevant meetings and always make sure you contribute to the discussion once you’re there. Consider coordinating messaging with other coordination group members, or advocating jointly as a team. You can also consider putting your organization forward

to co-lead a cluster; it will be time consuming, but it will enable you to promote your priorities and also to strengthen the involvement of non-UN voices in decision making.

#### **(d) Produce new material**

This could be new research (perhaps based on assessment data) or a short policy brief. In most humanitarian contexts, nobody expects, or particularly wants, long reports – instead they want new facts, analysis or ideas, clearly expressed. When used well these products can shift the focus onto issues we want to prioritize and galvanize real action. New material can also serve as a useful introductory tool to advocacy targets and potential allies, giving you the opportunity to build relationships that you otherwise might not have.

#### **(e) Build coalitions**

Coalitions can take time and resources to coordinate, but in many humanitarian contexts other humanitarian actors are likely to have similar objectives or messages, and a collective voice can often be much more powerful than a large number of disparate voices. In situations where speaking out as one organization can put staff and programs under a spotlight, working together in coalition with a group of partners, or channelling information to other actors, can also help mitigate risks. There are often NGO coordination forums in the field that can be useful vehicles for advocacy, although sometimes some effort is required to get them to think and function strategically and to link up effectively with actors and groups at the national, regional and international levels. At the international level, there are a number of standing coalitions and groupings that are mandated to work on humanitarian advocacy and that can be useful allies<sup>5</sup>.

#### **(f) Share information**

In a fast-paced environment, timely information is crucial. Where relevant, your colleagues in regional and global capitals should know about your work and be ‘kept in the loop’ because there will be important influencing opportunities in those places too. It’s important to establish a culture of systematically reporting back from meetings to make sure that everyone is aware of the latest developments.

<sup>5</sup> These include:

- Crisis Action: an international NGO that works to avert conflict, prevent human rights abuses in conflict situations, and ensure that governments fulfil their obligations to protect civilians. It works behind the scenes to coordinate NGOs’ responses to current and emerging conflict-related crises and to help them increase their impact on government policy. It has offices in Berlin, Brussels, Cairo, London, Nairobi, New York and Paris. Website: <http://crisisaction.org>
- VOICE: a non-operational network representing 83 NGOs active in humanitarian aid worldwide, which are based in 18 European countries. The overall vision of VOICE is a collective European NGO response to humanitarian crises. It is the main NGO interlocutor with the European Union. Website: <http://www.ngovoice.org>
- InterAction: an alliance of more than 180 US-based international NGOs, based in Washington, DC. InterAction serves as a convener, thought leader and voice of the community. Website: <http://www.interaction.org>
- ICVA: the ‘International Council of Voluntary Agencies’ is a network of humanitarian NGOs, based in Geneva. Its main mandate is to make humanitarian action more principled and effective by influencing policy and practice. It represents NGO voices at the highest level of the humanitarian architecture, including at the IASC (see below). Website: <https://www.icvnetwork.org/>
- Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action: is a global inter-agency network of operational agencies, academic institutions, policymakers, donors and practitioners that seeks to strengthen high quality and effective child protection interventions. It sets standards, produces technical guidance, supports capacity building, learning and development, leads evidence and knowledge generation, and engages in advocacy. <https://alliancecpha.org/en>

**(g) Strengthen advocacy capacity**

Whereas many international actors have dedicated and trained advocacy staff, this is less frequently the case for local and national actors. Consider engaging in capacity strengthening of advocacy skills, through training and/or resources such as:

<p><a href="#">Nutrition Cluster Advocacy Framework</a> (21 pages)</p> 	<p><a href="#">UNICEF Advocacy Toolkit</a> (40 pages pages)</p> 
<p><a href="#">Introduction to Advocacy by UNICEF</a> (30 minutes)</p> 	<p><a href="#">Advocacy in Humanitarian Settings</a> (1 hour)</p> 
<p><a href="#">Course: Save the Children – Advocacy and Campaigning</a> (10 hours)</p> 	



## 2. Know your rights: for local/national actors in partnerships for humanitarian coordination<sup>1</sup>

Local/national actors are usually the first responders and continue to operate when international agencies withdraw. You bring cultural and historical knowledge and credibility, and have access to local networks. The purpose of this tool is to outline your roles and rights in partnerships for humanitarian coordination, and to provide examples of how to take action to claim such rights. The tool also provides a number of links throughout to useful resources related to partnerships in humanitarian coordination.



### 1. As a local/national actor, you have the right to participate in humanitarian coordination structures and influence the decisions of the coordination mechanism.

In order to do so, you must be given equitable access to information and analysis on coverage, results etc., and the opportunity and skills to effectively and credibly convey your thoughts and ideas.

**How to take action:** for example, contact the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in your context to be linked up with the specific cluster Coordinator and to join the mailing list.



### 2. As a local/national actor, you have the right to access opportunities for leadership and co-leadership<sup>2</sup> roles at national and sub-national levels.

Humanitarian leadership should be inclusive, representative, gender-balanced, accountable and supportive of the entire humanitarian community. Local/national actors should have equitable opportunities with international actors and among their own peers, (i.e. including for under-represented groups like women-led, youth-led or minority-led organizations) to take on leadership and co-leadership roles at both national and sub-national levels, including as part of strategic advisory groups and coordination mechanisms.

**How to take action:** for example, let coordination leadership know that you are interested in taking on a leadership or co-leadership role in order to contribute your contextual understanding and expertise, and ask how they can support you in doing so. You can also request that coordination leadership advocate for your access to direct funding to cover the cost of taking on coordination leadership roles.

<sup>1</sup> This tool has been compiled from the following documents: Conceptual Framework for Localisation in Humanitarian Coordination; Charter for Change; [IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms](#)

<sup>2</sup> NB. “Co-leadership” in this toolkit refers to shared leadership between local/national actors and Cluster Lead Agencies/government. It should be noted that the understanding of the term “co-leadership” varies across clusters. See e.g. [https://www.nutritioncluster.net/sites/nutritioncluster.com/files/2021-11/Guidance%20Note\\_Contribution%20of%20NGOs%20to%20Cluster%20Leadership%20at%20National%20%26%20Sub-national%20level.pdf](https://www.nutritioncluster.net/sites/nutritioncluster.com/files/2021-11/Guidance%20Note_Contribution%20of%20NGOs%20to%20Cluster%20Leadership%20at%20National%20%26%20Sub-national%20level.pdf) for the Global Nutrition Cluster’s approach.



**3. As a local/national actor, you have the right to access coordination meetings (and material) in a language which allows you to participate fully, held in locations (whether in person or online) which are accessible and acceptable to you.**

Depending on the context, meetings can either be held in the appropriate local/relevant language(s), or simultaneous interpretation can be provided. You should also be provided with transportation and logistical support, where needed, and there should be consideration for security conditions or other local circumstances that may affect your ability to attend. When meetings are being held remotely, you should be supported to acquire online access.

You can access information and minutes of meetings from your country and cluster on e.g. [www.humanitarianresponse.info](http://www.humanitarianresponse.info), by selecting your country under 'Operations' and then selecting the sector along the left hand side, or by contacting the cluster coordinator.

**How to take action:** for example, request from the Coordinator that information is presented in a language relevant to you, or that simultaneous interpretation is made available to allow you to participate fully. You can also request from the Coordinator that meetings are held in locations and at times which allow you to attend.



**4. As a local/national actor, like other humanitarian actors, you have the right to visibility and acknowledgement of your contributions to humanitarian response.**

This includes, amongst other things, raising awareness of your contributions to humanitarian response (including your challenges, opportunities and views), mobilizing funds, as well receiving acknowledgement for your work. As with other humanitarian actors, local/national actors must also consider the security of their staff and the access of their programs, when seeking visibility and recognition.

**How to take action:** for example, request that coordination group members create opportunities for you to interact directly with in-country donors to increase your visibility. Also, request that the role of your local/national organisation is explicitly referenced in public communications and reporting.



**5. As a local/national actor, you have the right to take part in international coordination structures where international actors demonstrate sensitivity towards the potential risks your participation may result in.**

In line with the [UN Guidance note on the Protection and Promotion of Civic Space](#), international actors should focus on the participation of L/NAs in IASC processes, the promotion of civic space and most importantly, the protection of civil society actors.

**How to take action:** for example, request that coordination leadership put in place risk assessments and other preventative measures in order to mitigate exposure to harm or risk of reprisals, and adopt safe communications channels.

**As a local/national actor, you have the right to participate in humanitarian coordination structures where relations among organizations are based on mutual respect, trust and the [Principles of Partnership](#).**

Coordinators have a responsibility to promote a culture of principled partnership (i.e. equality, transparency, result-oriented approach, responsibility, and complementarity), both in the ways they interact with the members of their coordination groups, and in the ways in which members interact with each other.

**How to take action:** for example, request that coordination leadership conduct a [Principles of Partnership Cluster Review](#) on a regular basis, to assess how all members experience the coordination group environment.



## **6. As a local/national actor, you have the right to participate in humanitarian coordination structures which are free from gender and race inequalities.**

Keeping in mind that power imbalances and unconscious bias may influence the setup of coordination structures, members and those facilitating coordination groups should take steps to create an enabling environment for local/national actors to participate and take part in decision-making in coordination structures and facilitate more systematic and active engagement.

This includes forming alliances with smaller, local organizations (such as local women's organizations), not only as local implementing partners, but as humanitarian actors capable of setting their own agendas within the overarching humanitarian coordination structures. Coordination leadership have a responsibility to challenge and take necessary action in response to colonial and racist attitudes in coordination meetings and processes.

**How to take action:** for example, request that coordination leadership regularly conduct awareness-raising and sensitisation exercises on

diversity inclusion. Also, encourage coordination leadership to develop a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination on the basis of race, gender, or other diversity factor.



### 7. As a local/national actor, you have the right to access institutional and technical capacity strengthening in order to engage effectively within humanitarian coordination structures.

Such capacity strengthening should be long-term, include relevant individual and organizational needs, and locally appropriate ways of learning.

**How to take action:** for example, consider what the priority areas for both technical and institutional<sup>3</sup> capacity strengthening might be for your organization, and approach other coordination group members to develop partnership agreements which include commitments to capacity strengthening.



### 8. As a local/national actor, you have the right to participate in humanitarian coordination with international actors who are willing to address their own capacity gaps.

Capacity strengthening opportunities must be reciprocal and include co-learning, two-way learning, and capacity exchanges in both directions, to foster quality, locally appropriate humanitarian response that also support long-term resilience.

**How to take action:** suggest that coordination group members engage in reciprocal capacity assessments<sup>4</sup> to understand where local/national and international actors can learn from each other, and request the commitment of international actors to invest in addressing the identified gaps.

#### **Want to know more?**

For more details on what local/national actors should expect from international humanitarian coordination mechanisms as a local/national actor, see the [IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms](#).

You may also wish to visit [www.humanitarianresponse.info](http://www.humanitarianresponse.info) to find cluster contact information and details on how to subscribe to the relevant mailing lists, by clicking on your country.

<sup>3</sup> See e.g. page 18 of the [Framework for Strengthening Institutional Capacity of Local and National Actors](#)

<sup>4</sup> See e.g. the [OCA – Organizational Capacity Assessment](#), a structured tool for facilitated self-assessment of an organization's capacity followed by action planning for capacity improvements.



## 3. Proposal Writing Guide

### Contents

1. Introduction
2. Understanding the call for proposal & what the donor wants
3. Identifying the problem/need
4. Project goals
5. Project approach/ strategy
6. Drafting your proposal
7. Common mistakes & how to avoid them
8. Logframe
9. Theory of Change
10. Workplan
11. Risk Matrix
12. Budget
13. After submitting: what next?

### 1. Introduction

Before you begin writing your proposal, it is key that you have a clear plan for the project you are proposing and how you are going to sell this project through your proposal document.

Before you start writing, you need to:

- Know your donor – what is the donor’s strategy or what are they looking for?
- Know your organisation – what is your vision, mission and track record and how can you use this to strengthen your proposal?
- Be clear about the specific problem you seek to address – develop your objectives and theory of change.
- Know what needs to be included in your proposal narrative – does the donor have a template or guideline?
- Design your project – who, what, where, when, how.

Making sure you have a clear understanding of all of the above will form the basis for developing a successful proposal that is targeted, logical and realistic, and which demonstrably addresses a clear need. Without these, your proposal will be messier and weaker.

This means that before you start writing, you need to give yourself as much time as possible to develop your plan – clear planning is key, even if the deadlines are short.

The following sections of this guide will help you develop a clear picture of the above. It will also guide you in writing specific sections of your proposal.

**Useful Resources for Proposal Writing Guidance:**

- disasterready.org has several free, online trainings on proposal writing
- <http://www.tools4dev.org/> has tips and guidelines for different elements of proposal writing – search ‘proposal’, ‘grant’ or ‘logframe’, for example.
- many donors have guidelines for their proposal requirements published online

**2. Understanding the call for proposal & what the donor wants**

Proposal development will often be in response to a call for proposal put out by a donor. Donors usually have clear frameworks for what kind of activities they want to fund, which people they want to target, and what outcomes they want to see. Your proposed project must match up with these priorities, and a strong proposal will clearly show the donor how your project matches their strategy. If there is no specific call for proposal or proposal guidelines, this information can be found out by looking at donor strategy papers, past projects they have funded, and speaking to contacts at the donor organisation, sector level or other organisations.

In order to write a convincing proposal, you need to -

**i) Know what the donor wants to fund**

- Carefully read through the call for proposal or proposal guidelines – if you don't adhere to their criteria, your proposal will not be considered!
- See if the donor has a country strategy paper which can tell you more about their goals
- Reach out to other contacts to understand the priorities of the donor, including experience with previously funded projects

**ii) Know your mandate, strategy and experience, and be realistic about how this matches the donor's priorities**

- Not every call/every donor will be right for you! A proposed project won't be strong if it goes too far outside of your core mandate and experience
- Understand your strengths as an organisation and be clear about how these are linked to the gaps and needs on the ground – what is your organisational strategy and what value do you add?

**iii) Have a clear picture of the overlap in the donor's aims and your proposed project. This will form the basis of your proposal.**

- Consider how your proposed project, capacity and past experience matches the donor's call – try making a Venn diagram to understand where the overlap is
- Be clear about what activities you are doing or could realistically do and which the donor will fund. Be clear about what activities you do not have the experience or capacity to do, and whether these are a requirement of the donor.
- Not everything you have done will be relevant to this project/call/donor – be clear about what activities, experiences or achievements are relevant to this donor

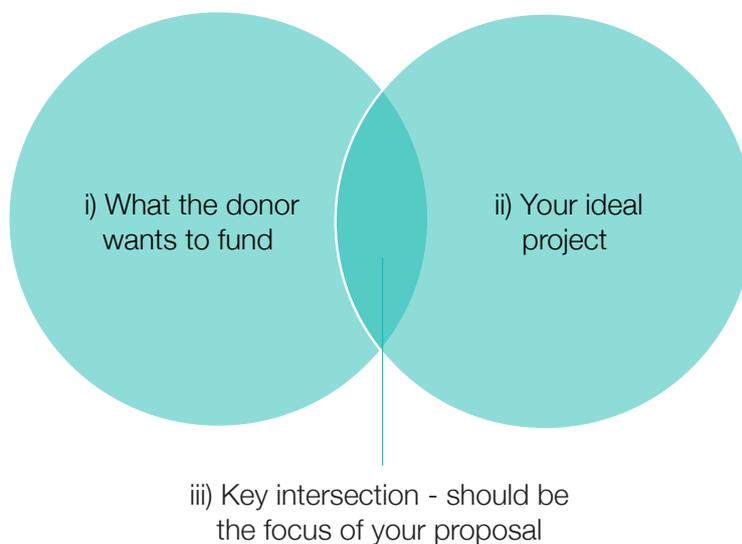
### Checklist:

- Do you know what the donor is looking for? If not, how can you find out?
  - Do you meet the donor's eligibility criteria?
  - Does your mandate and experience match the call/donor requirements?
  - Has your planned project been adapted to the call for proposal/donor strategy?
- Have you identified which elements of your project you should emphasise, in line with the donor priorities?

### Activity:

Make a Venn diagram (example below) to map out the donor's priorities and your priorities, and to identify the overlap in these which should be the focus of your proposal. Try to think creatively and outside of the box -brainstorm all the different elements of your ideal project so that you can identify which elements would most appeal to the donor.

All the elements that overlap (section iii in the diagram below) should be the focus of your proposal. Make a list of these



### Quick Tip:

Do not hesitate to reach out to your contacts for clarification or questions on the proposal or donor priorities. In many cases, donor staff may not be able to give concrete guidance. In this case, you can try to reach out to other organisations or partners who might be able to support you.

### 3. Identifying the problem/need

The needs assessment or problem statement is a critical element of your proposal – it forms the foundation for your project approach. Presenting a clear need and demonstrating that you are capable of meeting this need is the foundation of a compelling, realistic proposal.

#### i) Needs analysis

All proposals must demonstrate an analysis of needs for a target population. However, the needs analysis for different projects of different scopes will be informed by different sources.

Make sure to check whether your donor has requirements for the needs assessment – some calls for proposal specify that you need to carry out a specific assessment instead of leveraging on existing data or knowledge. Some donors will require evidence of community consultation.

Many donors will not specify the scope of the needs assessment, in which case you need to consider which sources of information are the most appropriate to inform your proposal. In general, a larger grant will require a more specific, detailed, in-depth assessment whilst a proposal for a smaller grant can be informed by existing data or assessments). There is no wrong source of information, as long as it is based on evidence!

Examples of sources of information for the needs assessment are:

- Dedicated needs assessment conducted during project design phase
- Existing needs assessments (from a past project or from a different organisation, including MIRA)
- Beneficiary consultation
- Experience/lessons learned from past projects
- Country humanitarian response plan (HRP), humanitarian needs overview (HNO) or other reports
- Government reports or statistics (as long as they are recent)

#### ii) Problem Statement

- The problem statement sets out the particular issue you are seeking to address, for a specific population in a particular location. It should be based on the information you gather during your needs analysis, but will likely be more focused and it is important to cite your sources of information to demonstrate that there is evidence to back up your analysis of the issues.
- It is crucial that the problem you are highlighting is aligned to the donor issues and priorities you have identified. The problem and needs you are putting forward must also be specific – do not report on statistics that are not directly related to your project (ie. describing food security status when your project is focused on GBV).

- Though it may be useful to highlight some key information about the region or community you are targeting, your problem statement should be as narrow and specific as possible – do not simply state general poverty statistics but instead make sure you have specific information on the specific issue and people you are targeting.
- Where possible, go beyond simply stating numbers or statistics to explain the underlying causes of the issue as well as the wider effects of the issue on the target population.

#### **Additional resources:**

- For more resources on conducting needs assessments, search ‘needs assessment’ on [disasterready.org](https://disasterready.org) – there are several guiding documents and trainings which provide excellent information
- For more information on child protection needs assessment, see the [Child Protection Rapid Assessment Toolkit](#) from the global protection cluster

#### **Checklist:**

- Is your problem stated as precisely and narrowly as possible? Are the problems you highlight directly linked to your project?
- Are your sources of information appropriate, up-to-date and clearly stated?
- Does your problem statement match the donor priorities or guidelines?

## **4. Project goals**

To be able to justify what you want to do, you must first be able to clearly state what you want to achieve and how the change will be shown. You need to think about the overall impact-level goal of the project, the specific outcomes of the project, the specific outputs of the project and the project activities – and how of all these link to each other.

- **Impact:** the long-term change which your project will contribute to  
- *Eg. Children in Borno State have improved wellbeing and resilience*
- **Outcomes:** the direct (short-term/medium-term) effects of your project  
- *Eg. 100 conflict-affected children demonstrate increased wellbeing and report improved happiness*

- **Outputs:** the tangible infrastructure, services, products, goods delivered by your project
  - *Eg. Over 6 months, 100 children access PSS activities in CFS*
  - *After 6 months, 4 community PSS facilitators demonstrate increased knowledge of PSS and child protection topics*
- **Activities:** the key project activities which produce the outputs
  - *Eg. Construction of 2 Child Friendly Spaces*
  - *Training of 4 community facilitators on PSS and child protection topics*
  - *Delivery of age-appropriate PSS activities in CFS*

To check that your objectives (outputs) are realistic and appropriate, you can use the SMART principle. Good objectives are:

**S**pecific: clearly defined for a specific group of people

**M**easurable: linked to specific indicators which keep track of progress

**A**chievable: realistic given the context and your capacity

**R**elevant: appropriate to the needs identified, context, donor objectives, organisation vision

**T**ime-bound: linked to a specific timeline

#### **Examples of SMART outputs:**

- 1) Over 6 months, 100 children (50% girls) access PSS activities in 2 CFS
- 2) After 6 months, 70% of children attending CFS demonstrate improved wellbeing (measured through 10% increase on child wellbeing assessment score).

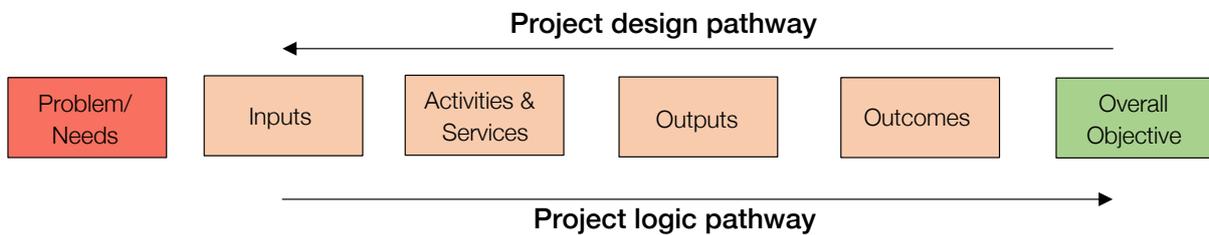
#### **Examples of non-SMART outputs:**

- 1) Over 6 months, children attend child-friendly spaces
  - This output is not specific.
- 2) After 6 months, children attending CFS will be happier
  - Without an explanation of how improved happiness will be measured, this output is not measurable.
- 3) Over 6 months, 7,000 children access PSS activities in 2 CFS
  - This output is not achievable.
- 4) PSS activities are provided in child friendly spaces
  - This output is not time-bound.
- 5) Over 6 months, 500 children are trained on income-generating activities
  - This output is not relevant or appropriate. (not relevant/appropriate)

## 5. Project approach/ strategy

Based on your needs assessment, and in line with the donor's priorities, you should:

- 1) Identify the overall objective of your project (long term impact)
- 2) Identify the outcomes of your project – what does the project need to achieve to contribute to the long-term impact?
- 3) Identify the outputs of your project – what are the immediate results that you want to deliver?
- 4) Identify the activities – what activities and services will you carry out to achieve the outputs?
- 5) Identify the inputs – what do you need to plan and implement your activities?



Identifying your goals and working backwards to your inputs and activities will allow you to clearly identify the logic of your project approach. You should be able to articulate clearly (in 1 or 2 sentences) how will the activities/approach you propose will lead to specific outputs and outcomes which address the problem you have identified.

From this, you will be able to build a logical framework and a theory of change, if needed for the proposal. See section 7 and 8 of this guide for more detail on these.

More generally, this project logic will form the basis for describing your project approach – you can come back to it at different stages of the proposal writing process to make sure your narrative stays focused.

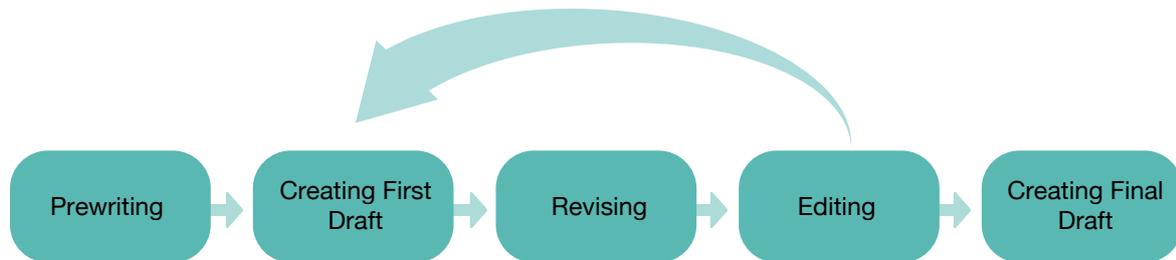
In your proposal narrative (especially in the project strategy/approach sections) you must be able to explain the logic of the approach and why it is the right approach (for your organisation, identified problem, target communities, target location etc.). This includes being able to describe why you chose this approach over other alternatives – what makes this plan the best plan to address the problem?

Remember to also consider other actors and stakeholders when developing your approach – how can you coordinate with and leverage on other actors to maximise efficiency and impact?

## 6. Drafting your proposal

### The Writing Process

Remember that writing takes time and many drafts! A thorough writing process could look like:



Some of the steps will likely be repeated several times, following inputs and feedback.

### Donor requirements & supporting documents

Before you start writing, you must check whether the donor has provided any templates, guidelines, suggestions or requirements for the proposal document. Make sure you understand what is required of you – if you don't include the right information, your proposal will not be eligible no matter how well-planned your project is.

This also includes documents relating to eligibility requirements. Donors often ask for supporting documents to be attached to the proposal as part of their initial due diligence checks. These can include annual reports, audited accounts, policy documents, organograms, CVs of key staff etc. Making sure you have these documents available before you start writing the different sections of the proposal will reduce stress and hassle when you are submitting. It will also give you time to update the documents if needed.

#### **Quick Tip:**

Make a checklist of the different supporting documents or other requirements the donor asks for. Go back to this list throughout the proposal preparation to ensure you have everything you need for the proposal to be eligible.

### Proposal Structure

Some donors or calls for proposal will have a specific proposal template which you need to use. For other proposals, you will have to decide how to structure the proposal.

An example proposal structure is as follows:

1. Project summary
2. Organisational background/capacity
3. Problem statement
4. Proposed approach
5. Activities
6. Expected impact
7. Monitoring and Evaluation
8. Cross-Cutting Themes (eg. sustainability, gender, inclusion, value for money, protection mainstreaming)
9. Annexes (log frame, work plan, theory of change, budget)

### **Quick Tip:**

Assign responsibility of writing each section (ie. narrative, budget, logframe) to different authors. Assign deadlines for drafting each section to each author. Create a timeline for writing the proposal, including review by colleagues, and stick to it.

## **Drafting Each Section**

### **1. Project Summary**

In one paragraph, summarise your project. Be specific – what is the problem you are tackling? What will you do to address this project? Who will you target? In which location? What is the change you expect to see?

### **2. Organisational Background**

This purpose of this section is to introduce your organisation and your aims to the donor – it is your first opportunity to demonstrate your capacity and expertise, and should be focused and succinct.

Think about your experience and track record – what is relevant to show the donor that you are capable to deliver the results of this project? What past projects have you implemented, and for which donors? What is different about the way you work? What is your added value that sets you apart from other organisations?

Remember – not everything you have done in the past will be relevant for this donor or this project. Rather than listing all your activities, think about what this particular donor will be most impressed by (considering the donor strategy and priorities).

### **3. Needs analysis/problem statement**

See section 3 of this guide for more detailed information.

Be careful with word limits – you might have to pick and choose which information you have gathered during your needs assessment is most important to include.

### **4. Proposed approach/strategy**

See section 5 of this guide for more detailed information

Donors are trying to understand what knits your approach together – why have you chosen specific activities and target groups? Why is this the right approach for this problem, these people, this location, at this time? How are you engaging with other stakeholders?

When finalising this section, you need to ask yourself – does the information flow? Is it easy for someone without any knowledge of the project to follow and understand?

### **5. Project activities**

This section describes the specific activities that you will be carrying out. As described in section 5 of this guide, make sure the activities are SMART.

For each core activity, explain what you will be doing, how you will be doing it, with who, and for how long. Think about what is the most useful and clear way to structure this section – will you list each activity by when it will be implemented? Or is it better to group activities by beneficiary group?

You don't need to mention generic activities such as inception meetings or recruitment (unless they link directly to the outcomes and strategy you have planned).

### **6. Expected Impact**

This is one of the most important sections of your proposal. It relates to the outputs you will achieve and outcomes/impact you expect to see - see section 5 of this guide for more information. This section should link closely to your theory of change.

Make sure that you can clearly state the changes you wish to see in one or two sentences. Be specific: for whom will the change be? By when? How will you measure this change?

Change statements can be **PAR** statements; **Purpose** (what issue are you trying to address), **Action** (what will you do to address the issue), **Result** (what will happen as a result).

Example A: **In order to address the gap of low access to specialised support services for children affected by protection risks (including neglect, violence and abuse) in Borno**, this project will **provide tailored and comprehensive case management services to 400 acutely at-risk children (75% girls)**. Provision of specialised support (including referrals) and timely follow-up will ensure **improved wellbeing and resilience for the 400 children**, measured against pre-defined child wellbeing indicators.

*This example is a PAR statement, and is also detailed – it states what the change will be, for whom the change will be and how the change will be measured.*

Example B: 400 at-risk children will receive tailored case management support.

*This is a bad example. It lists the activity, but does not describe what impact this will have.*

Example C: This project will improve wellbeing and resilience for 400 children in Borno state.

*This is a bad example. It lists the impact, but does not describe what the issue is or what will be done to achieve this impact.*

## 7. M&E

A detailed monitoring & evaluation plan should be developed for any project you will be implementing. The key elements of this plan should be set out in your proposal narrative.

**Monitoring** is how you will manage the project; who is in your staff & how will they pick up on & resolve issues; how and how often issues will be fed back into project management decisions. **Evaluation** is when you review the project critically – is it achieving the kind of change you expected? What adaptations might need to be made?

You need to demonstrate a plan for collection and analysis of different types of data, both quantitative (such as service statistics or number of people reached) and qualitative (such as change in knowledge or satisfaction with services provided). In addition to regular data collection related to project outputs, you should think about how you will monitor implementation more generally to check on the quality of activities.

Think about:

- What indicators will you be measuring and where are the indicators tracked (eg. log frame)?
- Who will be responsible for M&E? What roles will different project staff play (eg. collecting data at field level, analysing data, writing reports)
- How often will data be collected?
- How often will reports be shared?
- With who will the reports be shared & how?

For more information on developing indicators and a logframe, see section 7 of this guide.

## 8. Cross-Cutting Themes

If you are writing your proposal based on a donor template, there will likely be specific questions about various cross-cutting themes such as sustainability, value for money, gender or inclusion or protection mainstreaming.

If there is no specific template, think about which themes are the most important for your project. You can either choose to make a dedicate section and sub-heading for these, or you can choose to write about these themes in other sections (as long as you make clear that you have thought about them when designing your project).

When considering sustainability, think about how the benefits will be sustained and by who – do you have an exit strategy? Not all elements of all project will be sustainable – if they will not be sustained, justify why not. Value for money is also linked to sustainability: is the cost of the project activities reasonable, given the outcome you are aiming for?

For more information on gender mainstreaming, see the [IASC Gender Handbook](#). A useful tool for assessing how well you have mainstreamed gender issues into your project design is the [IASC Gender with Age Marker tool](#). When considering gender, remember not only to think about your beneficiaries, but also your project staff and volunteers.

For more information about protection mainstreaming, see the tools developed by the [Global Protection Cluster](#).

## 9. Annexes

Annexes which may be required to include in your proposal are:

- Logframe
- Work plan
- Theory of Change
- Risk register
- Budget

Tips for developing these documents can be found in sections 7 to 11 of this guide.

## 7. Common mistakes & how to avoid them

### 1. Not following instructions & not answering the question

Most calls will have guidelines, instructions or criteria that must be met. Applications are often rejected because they a) did not follow instructions or b) did not explicitly demonstrate that they met the criteria.

- Check the eligibility criteria closely
- Make sure you know what the donor is looking for, and see where in your proposal you can emphasise that you meet these criteria
- Check that you have answered every question explicitly
- Ensure that you have all the required supporting documents at hand
- Make sure to check if there are any page/word/character limits set by the donor - this will affect how you structure your proposal or each section

#### **Quick Tip:**

To make sure you answer each question and include relevant information, you need to be very clear about what the question is asking you. For each question, underline the key words and make a plan for what should be included. Your writing style should be concise and clear.

### 2. Lack of evidence that the proposal presents a solution to an identified problem

- Donors fund solutions to problems. All section of your proposal should be supporting your overall aim of demonstrating to the donor that your project is the best way to address a specific problem that you have identified.
- This is why your needs assessment is a key first step and should be the basis of developing your approach (see section 3 of this document).
- Make sure your outcomes are clearly stated and the logic behind them clearly explained – the donor wants to know not just what you are doing, but what the impact of doing this will be.

### 3. Lack of logic and structure

- Your proposal must demonstrate that the project you want to implement is the right approach – you must show the logic of how your proposed activities will lead to your intended outcomes, and contribute to addressing the problem you have identified. For this, you need clear project approach and theory of change.

- Your narrative must be logical and well structured. Think carefully about what should and should not be included in each section to make sure each section contributes to your overall goal of showing the donor why your project should be funded.
- No matter how good your idea is, lack of clarity due to poor editing or spelling can result in rejection of your proposal. Don't use too many buzzwords or acronyms! Give your draft to a trusted colleague or partner to review for both logic and spelling/grammar.
- Your aim should be that someone who is not familiar with your organisation, your project or the context is able to understand and see the value of your approach.

**Quick Tip:**

To test the logic of your approach, you can:

- a) List the needs you have identified
- b) List the project strategy/approach elements
- c) Check that b) is addressing a)

#### 4. Budget doesn't match narrative

The budget is not a separate tool – it must match up to and support the logic of your proposal narrative and activities.

A big red flag is if activities described in the narrative have been left out of the budget.

Another red flag is if the budget needs and activities to be implemented do not realistically match up. For example, if the narrative describes a very high-intensity project but the budget only includes costs for 3 staff members, the donor will question whether this budget can realistically achieve the activities and aims described in the narrative. Similarly, if the budget includes very high staffing costs for few activities, the donor will question the value for money of the project. In both examples, the stated budget and the stated activities do not match.

## 8. Logframe

Goal indicator: measures long-term goal to which the project contributes

	PROJECT SUMMARY	INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	RISKS / ASSUMPTIONS	
<b>Goal</b>	10% increase in the number of Grades 5-6 primary students continuing on to high school within 3 years.	Percentage of Grades 5-6 primary students continuing on to high school.	Comparison of primary and high school enrolment records.	N/A	Outcome indicator: measures what will change & who will benefit
<b>Outcome</b>	Improve reading proficiency among children in Grades 5-6 by 20% within 3 years.	Reading proficiency among children in Grades 5-6	Six monthly reading proficiency tests using the national assessment tool.	Improved reading proficiency provides self-confidence required to stay in school.	Output indicator: measures tangible, direct deliverables that will result from your activities change & who will benefit
<b>Outputs</b>	1. 500 Grade 5-6 students with low reading proficiency complete a reading summer camp 2. 500 parents of children in Grade 5-6 with low reading proficiency help their children read at home.	Number of students completing a reading summer camp. Number of parents helping their children to read at home.	Summer camp attendance records. Survey of parents conducted at the end of each summer camp.		
<b>Activities</b>	1. Run five reading summer camps, each with 100 Grades 5-6 students who have low reading proficiency. 2. Distribute 500 "Reading at Home" kits to parents of children attending summer camps.	Number of summer camps run. Number of kits distributed.	Summer camp records. Kit distribution records.		

Sometimes called 'purpose' or 'objective'

Though this example only has 1, you can include multiple outcomes

The number of the activity should match the number of the output that it corresponds to (e.g. Activity 1 leads to Output 1).

*This example by [tools4dev](#) is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution – ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License*

**Tip:**

A wide range of logframe templates and formats exist. If the donor has not given a specific template, search around to find the template you find easiest and most logical for your project.

**Logframe columns:**

SUMMARY	INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	RISKS / ASSUMPTIONS
What does the project want to achieve?	How can we tell if we have achieved it?	Where can we get information to tell us this?	What else must happen if it is to succeed?

Source: Farrington & Nelson, 1997

**Logframe logic:**

	PROJECT SUMMARY	INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	RISKS / ASSUMPTIONS
<b>Goal</b>	10% increase in the number of Grades 5-6 primary students continuing on to high school within 3 years.	Percentage of Grades 5-6 primary students continuing on to high school.	Comparison of primary and high school enrolment records.	N/A
<b>Outcome</b>	Improve reading proficiency among children in Grades 5-6 by 20% within 3 years.	Reading proficiency among children in Grades 5-6	Six monthly reading proficiency tests using the national assessment tool.	Improved reading proficiency provides self-confidence required to stay in school.
<b>Outputs</b>	1. 500 Grade 5-6 students with low reading proficiency complete a reading summer camp	Number of students completing a reading summer camp.	Summer camp attendance records.	Children apply what they learnt in the summer camp.
	2. 500 parents of children in Grade 5-6 with low reading proficiency help their children read at home.	Number of parents helping their children to read at home.	Survey of parents conducted at the end of each summer camp.	Children are interested in reading with their parents.
<b>Activities</b>	1. Run five reading summer camps, each with 100 Grades 5-6 students who have low reading proficiency.	Number of summer camps run.	Summer camp records.	Parents of children with low reading proficiency are interested in them attending the camps.
	2. Distribute 500 "Reading at Home" kits to parents of children attending summer camps.	Number of kits distributed.	Kit distribution records.	Parents are interested and able to use the kits at home.

(a) if we do this activity and (b) these assumptions hold then (c) we will achieve this output

**Logic:**

IF we undertake the activities AND the assumptions hold true, THEN we will create the outputs.  
 IF we deliver the outputs AND the assumptions hold true, THEN we will achieve the outcome

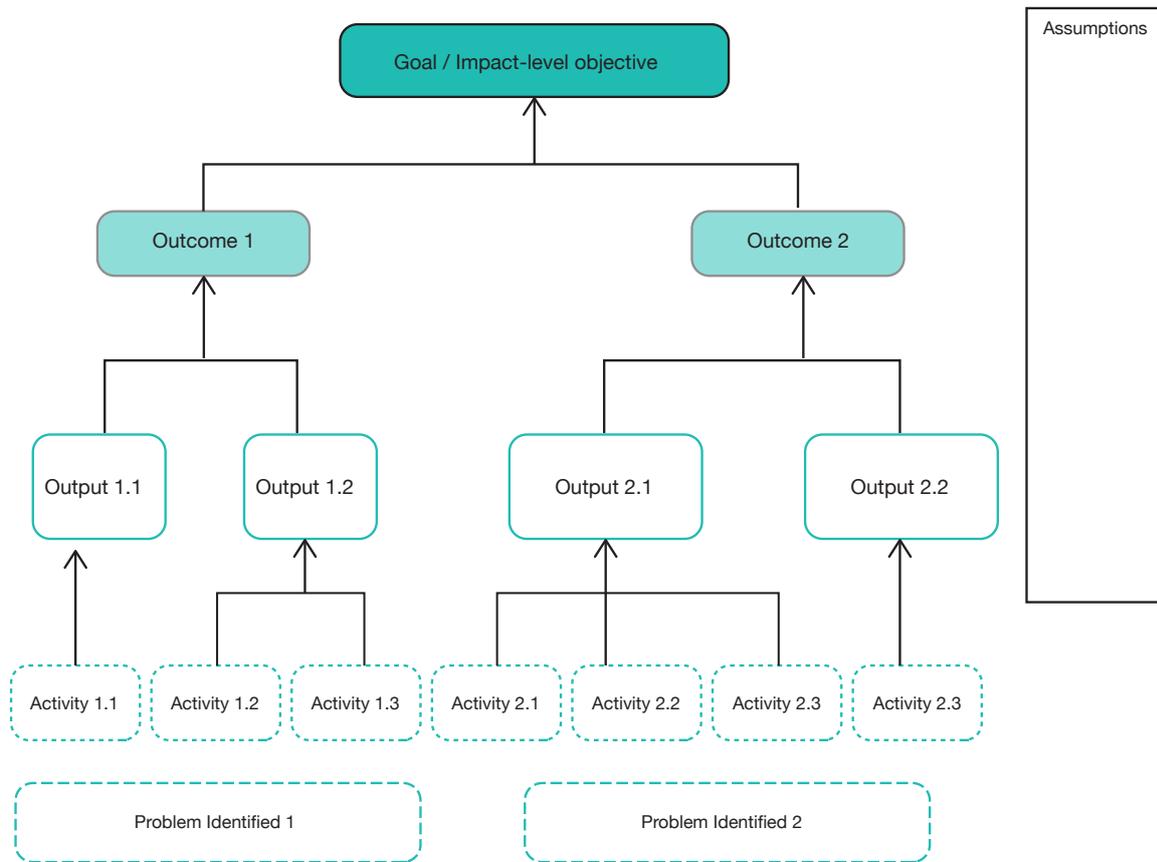
**Tip:**

If applicable, consider using standard indicators from the relevant sector/sub-sector strategy (can be found in the [Humanitarian Response Strategy](#))

## 9. Theory of Change

Every project which seeks to implement certain activities to bring about changes has an implicit theory of change. At its most simple, a theory of change (ToC) describes how you expect different inputs and activities to lead to certain outputs and outcomes over time.

It can be very useful to present your theory of change as a diagram, in order to check the logic of your projects.



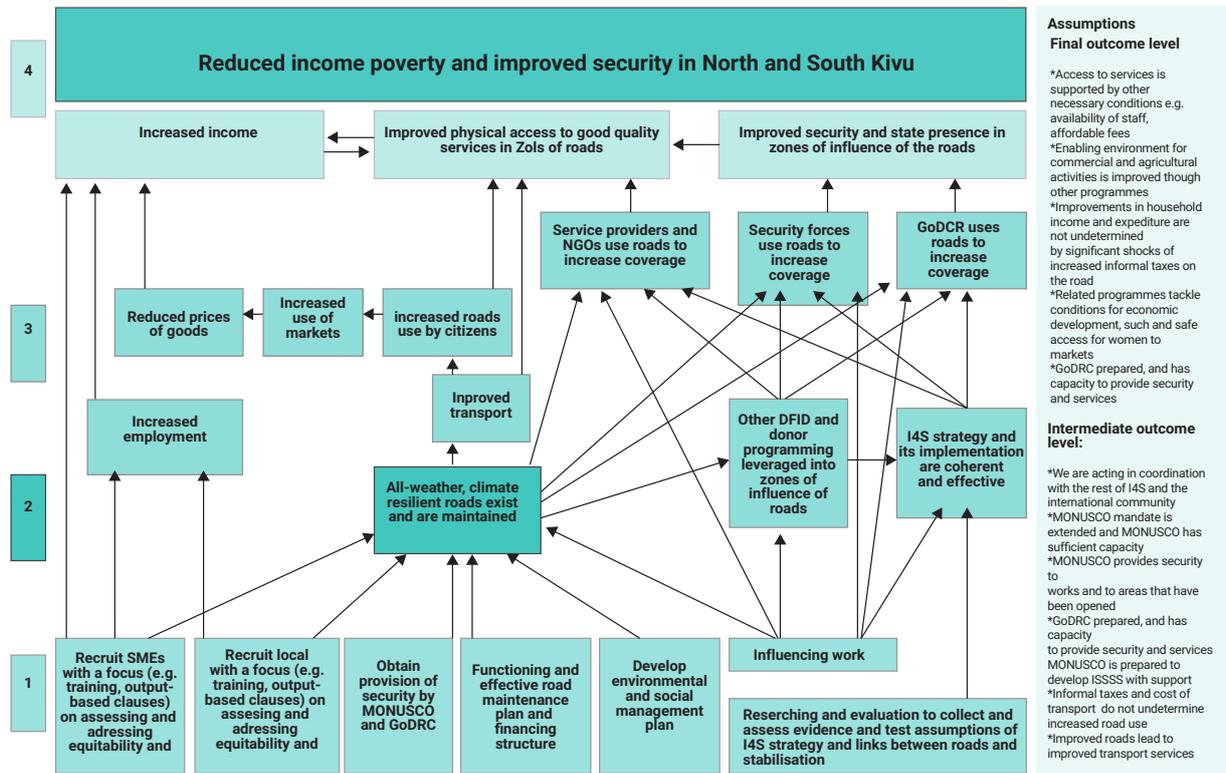
**Tip:**

Start from the top of your theory of change (impact level) and work down.

For example – if your intended outcome is ‘after 6 months, 100 children report improved happiness’ you then need to think what are all the different outputs that are needed to ensure that children report increased happiness by the end of my project? After that, you can think what are all the different activities that I need to do to achieve my outputs?

When you start with the activities and work up, there is more chance that you will miss out certain steps in the logic.

The key element of a ToC diagram is **causal pathway mapping between different inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact objectives**. In the example template above, the causal pathways are relatively simple and clear. In the example below, the causal pathways are more complex and interlinked – how complex your ToC is will depend on the scope and aims of your project.



**Checklist:**

- Are causal pathways well mapped out in your ToC diagram (in detail, without missing links, without being too crowded)?
- Have you included assumptions?
- Are your narrative and ToC diagram consistent?
- Are your logframe and ToC diagram consistent?

## 10. Workplan

A workplan (sometimes also known as a Gantt chart) is a tool that allows you to show how your activities will be sequenced over the course of the project timeline. Workplans can range from simple (activities by month) to more complex (including budget, responsibilities, inputs or objectives). Depending on level of detail and length of the project, they can be organised by week, month, or quarter.

At the design and proposal writing stage, drafting your workplan is useful to check that your planned activities are realistic and achievable within the time frame you have. In the proposal, it demonstrates to the donor that the project is realistic and achievable.

At the implementation and monitoring phase, it then provides a tool to monitor your implementation – are you progressing at the expected rate? If activities are delayed, what effect will this have on later plans and the overall progress of the project? Regularly checking progress against the workplan and editing if needed should be done by both project management and M&E teams.

A very simple workplan could look like this:

Activity	2019				2020			
	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	March	April
1.1	█	█						
1.2		█					█	
1.3		█	█	█	█	█		
1.4		█	█	█	█	█		
1.5						█	█	█
1.6							█	

### Checklist:

- Is your workplan realistic and achievable? Do you know who will be responsible for each activity
- Does your workplan align with your budget – are all activities listed in the budget included in the workplan, and vice versa?
- Does your workplan match your logframe and/or theory of change – are the listed activities the same in both diagrams?



## 11. Risk Matrix

A risk register is a tool to identify, track and manage risks identified which could affect project implementation, and to identify risk mitigation strategies. Risks are inevitable, so it is important that you demonstrate to the donor that you have 1) anticipated the risks and 2) developed mitigation strategies that will help you achieve your project goals even if disruptions occur. Good risk mitigation strategies, including policies and SOPs, also demonstrate your organisational capacity to the donor.

A risk register usually includes:

- A description of each risk identified & how it could affect your project
- An assessment of the likelihood of the risk occurring
- An assessment of the impact of the risk (on your project) if it does occur
- A description of mitigation strategies for each identified risk

To identify risks, you should think about all the different things which could stop your project running smoothly – think about challenges you (or other organisations) have faced in the past.

The most common structure for a risk register is:

<b>Risk Description</b>	<b>Likelihood</b> (low, medium, high)	<b>Impact</b> (low, medium, high)	<b>Mitigation Strategy</b>
<b>Contextual</b>			
<b>Programmatic</b>			
<b>Institutional</b>			

In the template above, the risks have been split into three main categories:

- 1. Contextual risks** - risks external to your project/organisation, over which you have no control. These include escalation or breakout of conflict, economic deterioration or environmental factors, for example.
- 2. Programmatic risks** - risks directly related to your programme. They include risks which would lead to a failure of achieving project objectives, and risks which would lead to harm being caused through the project activities or engagement. For example, the risk of exacerbating social tensions by providing services to a particular group but not another.
- 3. Institutional risks** - risks within your organisation which would affect the organisation or staff, or their reputation.

## 12. Budget

For more information on budgets, see trainings on [disasterready.org](https://disasterready.org) – [Introduction to Project Budgets](#).

### - How much should you ask for?

Check the proposal/donor guidelines – how much can you ask for? Think about what proportion of your annual budget that would be – is that realistic for you to manage?

- Tip: anything over 50% of your annual budget is unlikely to be funded.
- Eg. if your yearly organisational budget is \$300,000, you are unlikely to be approved if you ask for \$250,000 over 1 year. However, \$250,000 over 3 years is less risky.
- Is there a match funding requirement? How could you draw in funding sources from other donors (eg. % of salaries) as a contribution?
- Be careful: you cannot claim more than 100% of any staff member or admin cost – this is a common mistake that you can get in trouble for!
- Think carefully about what is a reasonable proportion of cost for admin, staff and other operational costs (comparing to your annual income & project portfolio to the project budget and timeline – you cannot expect one project to cover everything!)
- If your staff costs are high (for example, because the project activities are services provided by staff) make sure this is explained and justified.
- As a general rule of thumb, operational costs (staffing, rent, communications etc.) should never be above 25%.
- Value for Money: consider your cost per beneficiary compared to the impact each beneficiary will see. Does this cost seem too high or too low for the impact? Go back and review. If the cost is high (eg. because the needs are complex or beneficiary group is hard to reach) you must justify this.
- For multiple year projects – be realistic about the cost of goods. If they are increasing exponentially, include a % increase for each year and justify it.
- Be honest and transparent – the budget should be based on current capacity and costs, and not on predictions for where you want to be in the future. Never inflate costs of goods or services; you will risk losing all credibility.

## 13. After submitting: what next?

### Quick Tip:

If the proposal is to be submitted on an online platform, do not leave it to the last minute! Make sure you submit 1 day before the deadline as high traffic on the website on the day of submission could make it difficult to load and submit.

Most calls for proposal will specify the timeline the donor has in mind – concept note submission deadline, deadline for full proposal submission, and deadline for notification of successful selected proposals. Grant review timelines and processes can vary widely, however – it is not uncommon for reviews to take several months.

It is also common for these deadlines to be extended or missed. Donors may experience internal delays or changes which affect their response time to your proposal. If this happens, you should **follow up via email to request an update on the review process** or ask for expected timelines.

If you hear back from a donor and your proposal is unsuccessful, **make sure that you ask for feedback**. It is important for you to know what you can improve on next time. If possible, try to arrange a meeting to get detailed feedback on your proposal.

## Annex 1: Quality proposal checklist

1	Are you eligible for this grant? Have you included all supporting documents required by the donor to prove eligibility?	
2	Does your proposal demonstrate that your project is aligned to the donor priorities and/or requirements?	
3	Does your proposal reference a clear needs analysis and show evidence of an identified need?	
4	Is your project realistic and achievable given the budget and time frame? Does your proposal provide evidence to convince the donor that this is realistic?	
5	Does your proposal include clear description of expected impact, outcomes, and outputs for your project?	
6	Have you answered every question directly?	
7	Have you addressed/justified any gaps in information?	
8	Have you carefully considered risks and mitigation strategies?	
9	Does your proposal demonstrate consideration of cross-cutting issues (gender mainstreaming, protection mainstreaming, inclusion etc.)?	
10	Is the writing style clear, focused and direct?	
11	Has your proposal been edited for spelling and clarity?	
12	Does your logframe match your narrative and ToC?	
13	Does your budget match your narrative?	



## 4. Tip Sheet on Capacity and Complementarity between Local/National and International Actors in Humanitarian Coordination<sup>1</sup>

As a local/national actor from the affected population(s), you are indispensable participants, partners and leaders in humanitarian responses. You have the trust of, and better access to, affected populations, and an in-depth understanding of the context, its history and politics. As a result, you are well-placed to strengthen the capacity of international actors in these areas, in order to ensure the relevance of their assistance and protection interventions for affected populations.

This Tip Sheet outlines key elements for you to consider in engaging in capacity exchange with international actors in humanitarian coordination. It highlights that capacity exchange is critical for effective coordination: whereas you, as local and national actors, may, for example, require technical and institutional capacity strengthening, international actors may equally require strengthening of their capacity related to for example contextual, cultural and historical knowledge. Additionally, local/national actors may have key technical areas of expertise on which international actors require capacity strengthening.



- 1. Engage in reciprocal capacity assessments<sup>2</sup> with international actors:** capacity exchange, by definition, must be reciprocal between local/national and international actors, and focus on complementarity, and should ideally be outlined in a partnership agreement between the two (or more) agencies, where possible. Capacity assessments simply seek to answer questions such as: What is each actor's comparative advantage? Where can you learn from each other? What are the capacity gaps of both international and local/national actors? What can be done to address these gaps?



- 2. Think beyond the technical skills:** capacity strengthening for local/national partners in coordination groups is commonly focused on short-term or one-off learning events that improve the technical skills of the thematic focus area. However, long-term mentoring and a focus on *institutional* capacity-building is also needed for effective coordination. One of the goals of institutional capacity strengthening is that local agencies are invested with the skills to respond in a long-term manner<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> This tool has been compiled from the CP AoR/GEC [Framework for Strengthening Institutional Capacity of Local and National Actors](#) + [Rethinking capacity and complementarity for a more local humanitarian action](#)

<sup>2</sup> See e.g. the [OCA – Organizational Capacity Assessment](#), a structured tool for facilitated self-assessment of an organization's capacity followed by action planning for capacity improvements.

<sup>3</sup> [Framework for Strengthening Institutional Capacity of Local and National Actors](#) p. 8

Consider the following priority areas<sup>4</sup> for institutional capacity strengthening for your organization:



**Financial management:** putting in place trusted systems to manage financial transactions for internal and external accountability.



**Human resource management:** building the organisation's values and cultures that support the safety, security, health and overall well-being of staff.



**Information technology:** increasing the efficiency and capability of an organization and key areas of its service, including effective use of key software.



**Institutional governance:** appointing a board of directors to provide oversight of the organization by ensuring that there are appropriate structures, policies and systems to deliver on the mission and meet the interests of various stakeholders.



**Leadership:** raising and maintaining morale by communicating with each team member their vital role and valuable contribution to the organization, and offering direction towards where the organization needs to be and how to get there.



**Management:** making decisions guided by principles, and ensuring resources are allocated appropriately, utilized efficiently to deliver a product or service.

<sup>4</sup> To learn more about these areas of institutional capacity strengthening, see page 18 of the [Framework for Strengthening Institutional Capacity of Local and National Actors](#)



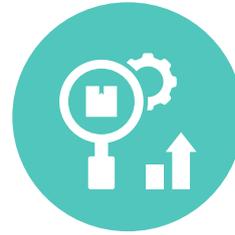
**Resource mobilization:** identifying opportunities to build relationships with potential partners in order to influence decision-makers to contribute resources (whether financial, human resources, goods or services) to specific projects or programs.



**Risk management:** planning for expected risks to protect the strategic vision and operations and therefore setting realistic budgets, schedules and expectations or outcomes.



**Project management:** implementing methodologies which enable better control of cost, time and resources, build the confidence of donors and other interested parties, and meet the requirements of beneficiaries.



**Procurement management systems:** putting in place procurement systems to help maximize the use of funds through bulk purchasing, contracting suppliers and achieving cost-efficiency, which protects organizations from cost overruns due to unexpected changes in market costs.



**Supply chain management and logistics:** providing essential goods and services while ensuring ethical practices, maintaining their accountability as well as maintaining quality and protecting the interests and rights of beneficiaries.



**3. Acknowledge the value of your local/national capacity and recognise the importance of international actors learning from you:** your knowledge of the local language(s), your technical expertise, historical and contextual knowledge and your cultural understanding are core capacities which help ensure the relevance of assistance and protection to affected populations. Local/national organizations are critical in ensuring the sustainability, appropriateness and effectiveness of a humanitarian response, and are key in securing access to hard to reach areas.



**4. Advocate for long-term mentoring and a focus on institutional capacity-building:** seek support for opportunities for mentorship, coaching, shadowing and peer-to-peer support, rather than one-off capacity building workshops. Argue also that this is required to meet Cluster and IASC localization commitments<sup>5</sup>. For example, local/national actors with weak operational capacity and a lack of internal controls should be supported in the long term to overcome the challenges relating to financial accountability required by international donors.



**5. Hold coordination leadership to account:** coordinators have a duty to develop institutional capacity development strategies, integrate them into the Humanitarian Program Cycle (HPC), and prioritise them during resource mobilisation. Coordination leadership also have an important role to play in advocating for partnership agreements which include institutional capacity strengthening.



**6. Hold international organizations and donors to account:** international organisations and donors should take the opportunity to provide funding for institutional capacity development, in line with their Grand Bargain commitments to “increase and support multi-year investment in the institutional capacities of local and national responders, including preparedness, response and coordination capacities”<sup>6</sup>. Equally, signatories of the Charter 4 Change have committed to capacity strengthening to “support local actors to become robust organizations that continuously improve their role and share in the overall global humanitarian response.”<sup>7</sup> Any partnership agreement between local/national and international actors should thus include a component on Institutional capacity strengthening.

<sup>5</sup> See e.g. <https://reliefweb.int/topics/iasc-result-group-1-sub-group-localization-online-repository>

<sup>6</sup> Grand Bargain commitments, available at <https://gblocalisation.ifrc.org/grand-bargain-localisation-workstream-2/>

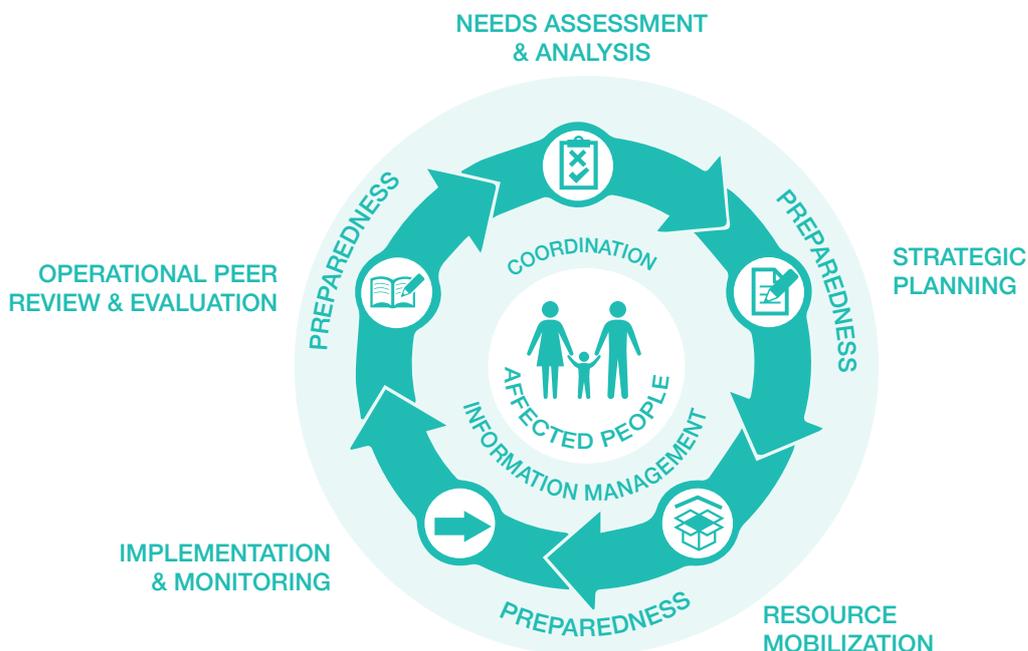
<sup>7</sup> Charter 4 Change, available at <https://charter4change.files.wordpress.com/2019/06/charter4change-2019.pdf>



7. **Advocate for investment in capacity strengthening to build on existing evidence of good practices**<sup>8</sup>: this includes strengthening capacity through partnerships as part of preparedness, providing funding for overhead costs, secondment to allow two-way learning and capacity exchange, particularly in emergency surge (secondment to local organisations to address gaps in capacity rather than deploying separate emergency surge teams); and coordinating capacity strengthening, creating pooled resources.

<sup>8</sup> See <https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/12957.pdf>

## 5. Frequently Asked Questions on the Humanitarian Program Cycle<sup>1</sup>



### 1. What are clusters?

Clusters are groups of humanitarian organisations working in specific technical sectors of humanitarian action, shown in the dark blue segments in the diagram under point 2 below. Cluster members can include NGOs, United Nations agencies, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, and government bodies involved in humanitarian response. They coordinate action to ensure the best outcomes for people affected by crises, at all the stages shown in the arrows in the diagram. Clusters promote a common strategy and good practices, avoid duplication, address gaps and share information. They build national capacity to prepare for emergencies, and advocate for more effective and accountable humanitarian action. All clusters are responsible for upholding protection principles and preventing sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.

There are 11 clusters globally. The same clusters can be activated at a national level and sometimes at a subnational level in response to a particular emergency. Each global cluster is led by one or two United Nations agencies or a United Nations agency and an

<sup>1</sup> This FAQ has been put together from the information available on OCHA's 'Humanitarian Programme Cycle' website: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/programme-cycle/space> + <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/nigeria/humanitarian-response-plan> + [https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/OoM\\_HPC.pdf](https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/OoM_HPC.pdf) + <https://humanitarian.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/imtoolbox/pages/42046915/Resource+Mobilisation> + [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/IASC%20Guidance%20on%20Strengthening%20Participation%2C%20Representation%20and%20Leadership%20of%20Local%20and%20National%20Actors%20in%20IASC%20Humanitarian%20Coordination%20Mechanisms\\_1\\_1.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/IASC%20Guidance%20on%20Strengthening%20Participation%2C%20Representation%20and%20Leadership%20of%20Local%20and%20National%20Actors%20in%20IASC%20Humanitarian%20Coordination%20Mechanisms_1_1.pdf) + <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/nigeria/humanitarian-need-overview> + <https://alliancecpa.org/en/glossary-minimum-standards-child-protection-humanitarian-action-2019-edition>

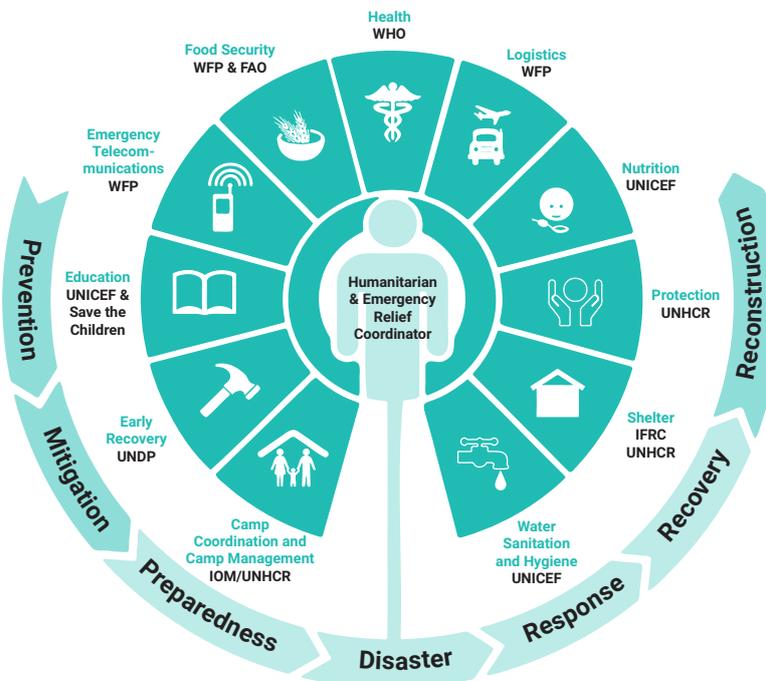
international NGO. At the country level, clusters are usually co-led<sup>2</sup> by a United Nations agency and an NGO. The cluster leads must be ready to provide services to affected people where other organizations cannot.

## 2. Who make up the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT)?

The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) is a body which makes strategic and operational decisions, and has an oversight function. It is established and led by the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC). It includes representatives from the UN, IOM, international NGOs, and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement. In some contexts, there are also national NGOs on the HCT. Agencies that are also designated Cluster leads should represent the Clusters as well as their respective organizations. The HCT is responsible for agreeing on common strategic issues related to humanitarian action.

The HCT, under the leadership of the HC, is the centrepiece of the humanitarian coordination architecture. A well-functioning HCT that is timely, effective and efficient, and contributes to longer-term recovery, will alleviate human suffering and protect the lives, livelihoods and dignity of populations in need.

The HC is responsible for assessing whether or not an international response to crisis is warranted and for ensuring that the humanitarian response efforts, if needed, are well organised. The HC is accountable to the Emergency Relief Coordinator. HCs lead the HCT in deciding the most appropriate coordination solutions for their country, taking into account the local situation. Agreement must be reached on which Clusters to establish, and which organizations are to lead them.



<sup>2</sup> NB. “Co-leadership” in this toolkit refers to shared leadership between local/national actors and Cluster Lead Agencies/government. It should be noted that the understanding of the term “co-leadership” varies across clusters. See e.g. [https://www.nutritioncluster.net/sites/nutritioncluster.com/files/2021-11/Guidance%20Note\\_Contribution%20of%20NGOs%20to%20Cluster%20Leadership%20at%20National%20%26%20Sub-national%20level.pdf](https://www.nutritioncluster.net/sites/nutritioncluster.com/files/2021-11/Guidance%20Note_Contribution%20of%20NGOs%20to%20Cluster%20Leadership%20at%20National%20%26%20Sub-national%20level.pdf) for the Global Nutrition Cluster’s approach.

In each humanitarian response, clusters work together in an inter-cluster coordination group chaired by OCHA. The heads of OCHA and other operational United Nations agencies, representatives of local, national and international NGOs, and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement also meet within the Humanitarian Country Team to discuss humanitarian response strategy. A Humanitarian Coordinator chairs the Humanitarian Country Team. Cluster lead agencies are responsible for raising cluster-specific concerns and challenges with the Humanitarian Country Team. National government representatives and donors also sit on some Humanitarian Country Teams.

Humanitarian Country Teams and their members can take issues raised by national clusters to the global level for discussion at the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. This committee is chaired by the Emergency Relief Coordinator and brings together heads of operational United Nations agencies, IFRC, ICRC and global NGO consortium representatives.

For more information on who does what within humanitarian coordination architecture, follow [this link](#).

### 3. What is the humanitarian program cycle (HPC)?

The humanitarian programme cycle (HPC) is a coordinated series of actions undertaken to help prepare for, manage and deliver humanitarian response. It consists of five elements coordinated in a seamless manner, with one step logically building on the previous and leading to the next. Successful implementation of the humanitarian programme cycle is dependent on effective emergency preparedness, effective coordination with national/local authorities and humanitarian actors, and information management.

### 4. What are the five elements of the HPC?

The HPC elements are:



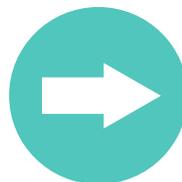
**1. Needs Assessment and Analysis**



**2. Strategic Response Planning**



**3. Resource Mobilization**



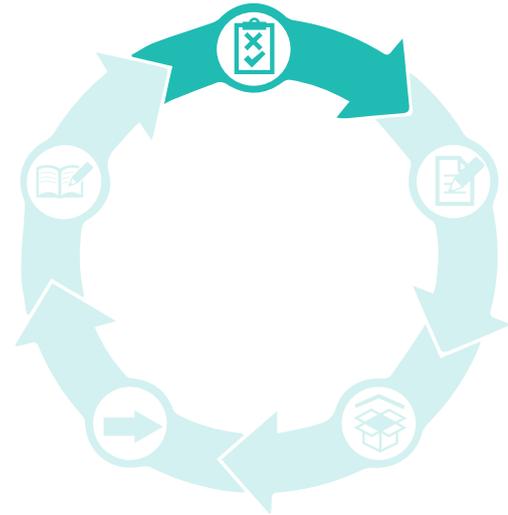
**4. Implementation and Monitoring**



**5. Operational Review and Evaluation**

## 5. What does the Needs assessment and analysis consist of?

Coordinated assessments are carried out in order to assess the humanitarian situation and to identify the needs of the affected population, in partnership with all humanitarian actors. Local and national authorities, civil society and affected communities are encouraged to participate in this process, the output of which is a **Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO)**. Local/national actors have an important role to play in this process given for example their proximity to affected populations and their expertise on the local context.



Needs assessment and analysis provide the evidence base for **strategic planning**, as well as the baseline information upon which **situation and response monitoring** systems will rely. It should therefore form a continuous process throughout the **humanitarian programme cycle**. It is not always necessary to carry out a new needs assessment, as in many cases the review and analysis of existing data may be more appropriate.

### (a) What is the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO)?

This document presents a comprehensive analysis of the overall situation and associated needs. Humanitarian needs overviews (HNOs) should be produced once or twice a year to support the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) in developing a shared understanding of the impact and evolution of a crisis and to inform response planning.

Its development is a shared responsibility among all humanitarian actors, requiring strong collaboration between program and information management staff as well as support from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) country office and the inter-cluster coordination mechanism.

### (b) What is a Multi-Cluster Needs Assessment<sup>3</sup>?

Multi-Cluster Needs Assessment (MCNA), also known as MSNA (multi-sector needs assessment), is a joint assessment conducted collectively by different clusters to provide analysis and inform the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), usually coordinated by OCHA and the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG). MCNA is a coordinated approach to needs assessments, it involves humanitarian and, where possible, development actors to plan and carry out needs assessments to avoid duplication, reduce gaps and obtain a stronger overall vision of the crises.

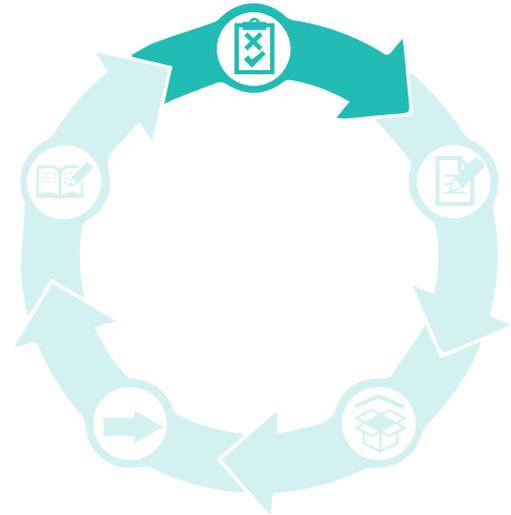
<sup>3</sup> See e.g. the MCNA for Iraq from December 2020: <https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/iraq-multi-cluster-needs-assessment-mcna-round-viii-december-2020>

## 6. What is the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP)?

The Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) is an inter-agency document that describes the shared vision for how to respond to the assessed and expressed needs of the affected population. The HRP is prepared for a protracted or sudden onset emergency that requires international humanitarian assistance.

HRPs build upon Humanitarian Needs Overviews (HNOs) which provide the evidence base and analysis of the magnitude of the crisis and identify the most pressing humanitarian needs. These needs inform the strategic objectives in the HRP. The various cluster plans follow from these strategic objectives.

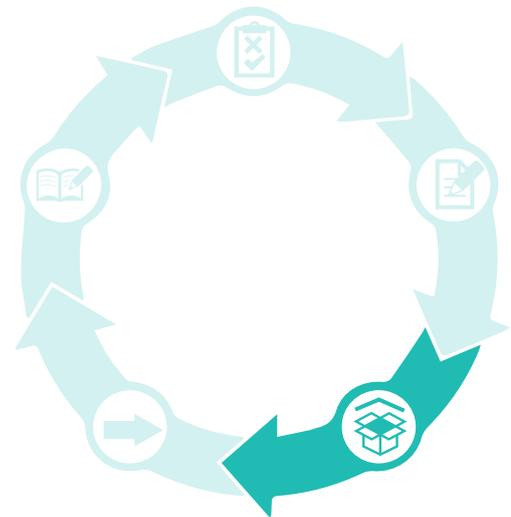
Humanitarian response plans are primarily management tools for the humanitarian coordinator (HC) and HCT. In addition, they can be used to communicate the scope of the response to an emergency to donors and the public, and thus serve a secondary purpose for **resource mobilization**.



## 7. What happens during the Resource Mobilization part of the HPC?

Resource mobilization means fundraising for strategic response plans (SRPs) and includes strategic use of country-based pooled funding mechanisms. Resource mobilization efforts aim to ensure activities in the response plan are well-funded, to demonstrate inter-agency funding priorities to donors, and to raise the public profile of a crisis. It also maintains an on-going dialogue with donors on the evolution of needs, results achieved and funding received.

Resource mobilization is the third element of the HPC, after the humanitarian needs overview (HNO) and strategic response planning. Donors will make decisions regarding funding based on, for example, the credibility of the assessed needs, the country strategy and its response priorities.

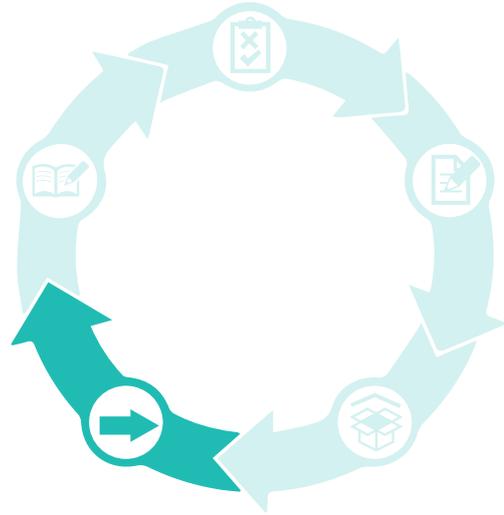


## 8. What is Response Monitoring?

Response Monitoring is a continuous process which tracks the humanitarian assistance delivered to affected populations compared to goals and targets set out in the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), seeking to determine whether these are actually achieved.

Response monitoring has two purposes:

- It provides humanitarian actors with an evidence base for making decisions about what actions should be taken to address shortcomings, fill gaps, and/or adjust the HRP, contributing to a more effective and efficient humanitarian response, in the short and long term.
- It serves to improve accountability of the humanitarian community for the achievement of results under the HRP towards affected populations, local governments, donors and the general public.



## 9. What is the Global Humanitarian Overview?

Every December, the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) launches the Global Humanitarian Overview (GHO). The GHO is the world's most comprehensive, authoritative and evidence-based assessment of humanitarian needs. It presents global funding needs and assesses the humanitarian situation and trends at global, regional and country levels.

## 10. What is Emergency Preparedness?

Preparedness refers to activities and measures taken in advance of a crisis to ensure an effective response to the impact of hazards, including issuing timely and effective early warnings and the temporary evacuation of people and property from threatened locations.

It is an essential aspect of humanitarian action, and one of the core functions of cluster coordination. Local actors (communities, authorities, market actors) must be prepared to the eventuality of a crisis to mitigate its negative impact. Humanitarian actors must be prepared to provide an efficient and timely response, based on experience and lessons from previous emergencies. Coordination platform efforts during preparedness should also include the consolidation of lessons learned from recent emergencies to improve future sector/cluster response planning on key areas.

## 11. How can local and national actors contribute to the HPC?

Local and national actors should contribute to all stages of the HPC. For example, workshops can be specifically arranged for local and national actors, in the appropriate languages, to gather inputs and integrate these in all joint plans, measures and reports related to the HPC, including HNOs and HRPs. Local and national actors can also be involved in community engagement surveys to support strategy development, thereby ensuring that the voice of the affected population is central to the design of operations.

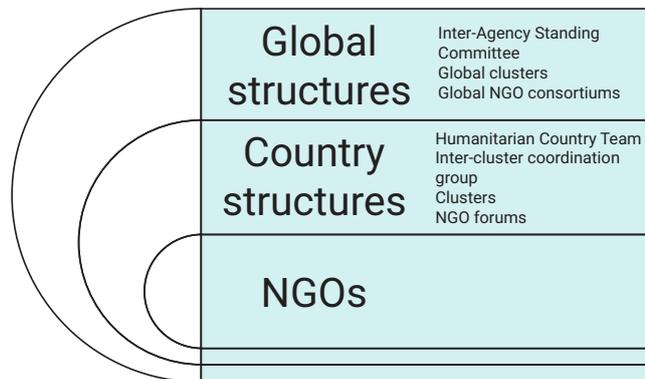
Further, local and national actors can be involved in joint intersectoral analysis, including the development of objectives and expected outcomes. Clusters should capitalize on their knowledge of local context and work with them to validate conclusions from analyses and assessments. Data from local and national actors can also be integrated into analyses, including disaggregated data by sex, age and disability.

Cluster leadership teams should dedicate time and effort to facilitate the inclusion of local and national actors in the HPC process, for example by:

- strengthening their knowledge about these planning tools
- supporting engagement in needs assessments and intersectoral needs analysis
- reviewing planning and other documents
- submitting projects
- monitoring and evaluating the humanitarian response.

[This podcast](#) gives a helpful explanation of how to ensure the participation and inclusion of local and national actors in the HRP/HNO processes.

If local/national actors are not included in the HPC process, they have the right to advocate with the OCHA to become involved. The diagram on the right<sup>4</sup> shows the key coordination structures at the different levels with which local and national actors can engage:



### Further recommended resources:

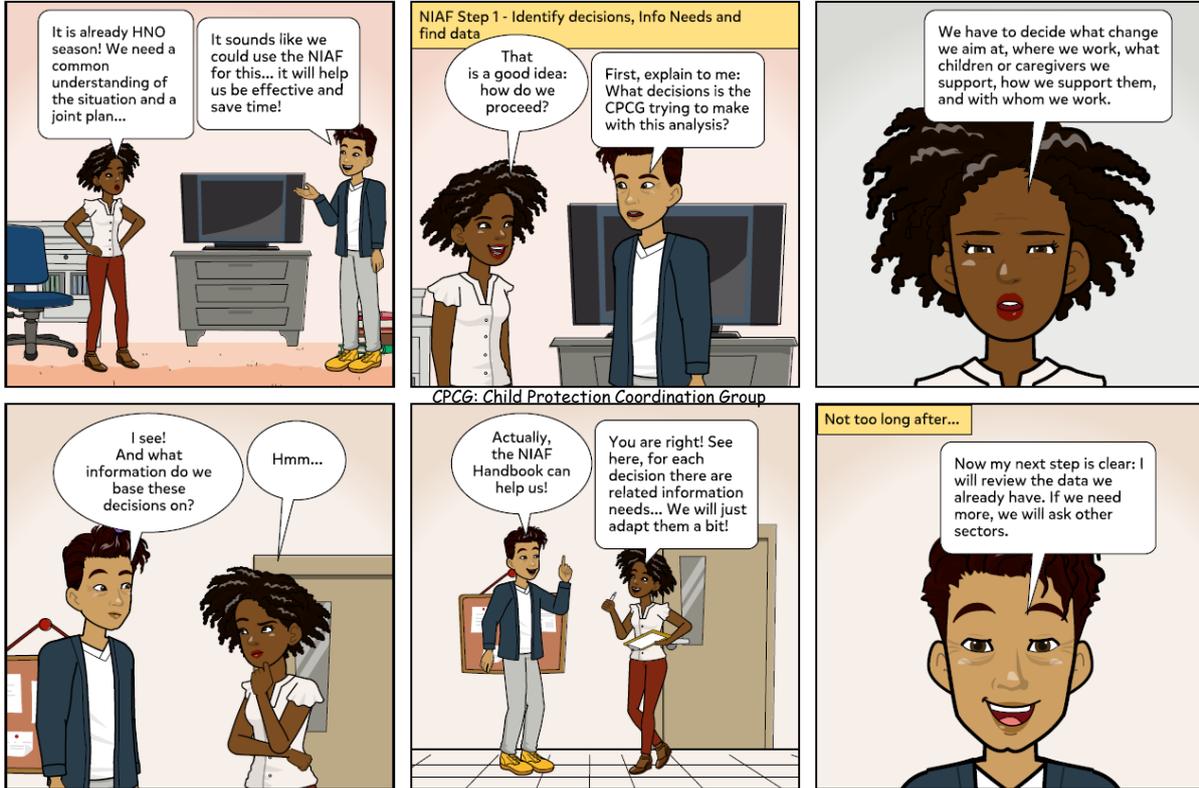
[How to ensure the participation and inclusion of local and national actors in the HNO and HRP process](#) (video, 6 minutes)

Humanitarian coordination and the cluster approach: a quick guide for local and national organizations (6 pages)

<sup>4</sup> Sourced from Humanitarian coordination and the cluster approach: a quick guide for local and national organizations, p. 5



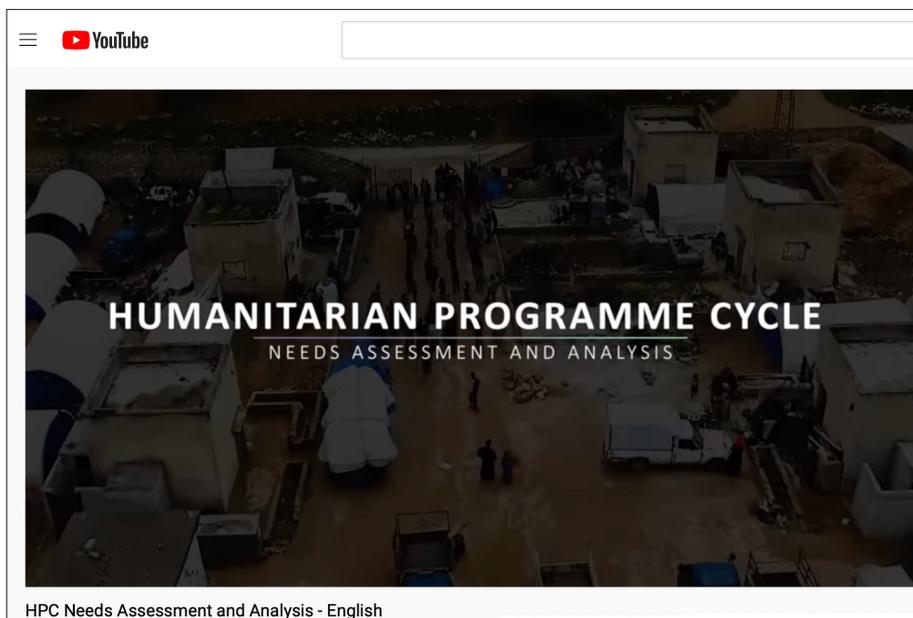
## 6. CP AoR Comic series on Needs Identification and Analysis Framework (NIAF), HNO and HRO steps



Link to the comic series: [https://www.cpaor.net/Needs Identification and Analysis Framework](https://www.cpaor.net/Needs%20Identification%20and%20Analysis%20Framework)



## 7. HPC Needs Assessment and Analysis (video)



Access here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I97N4zKB3N0>



## 8. Guidance note on the participation of local actors in humanitarian coordination groups

This note builds on work done by ALNAP in 2016 on improving humanitarian coordination and the Global Protection Cluster and Global Education Cluster's work on localisation. The note further draws on the regional workshops carried out by the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream in 2019, which included representatives from local and national NGOs, international NGOs, governments, donors and UN agencies. The guidance is predominantly focused on non-governmental actors, however much may also be relevant for engagement of national and local government authorities, depending on context.<sup>1</sup>

This guidance note is a product of the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream but does not necessarily represent the official position of Workstream members and co-conveners.

### Practicalities

Substantial engagement of local actors<sup>2</sup> is critical for effective humanitarian coordination. Many of the barriers inhibiting local actors from more meaningfully and more frequently participating in coordination mechanisms are rooted in practical obstacles. Those facilitating coordination groups should take steps to understand the barriers for local actors' participation in coordination by proactively reaching out to key actors, such as local NGO forums and networks, development actors involved in response, academia, diaspora, women led, private sector, and faithbased organisations, and taking appropriate steps to address the issues. A list of the most common barriers and the pragmatic solutions that can make a significant and positive impact include:

**Membership:** It is often not clear to local actors who is invited to coordination meetings and how membership of groups is determined. When reaching out to local actors and sharing information about the coordination groups and any membership criteria, guidance on the different ways in which organisations can engage, and the benefits of participation should be systematically provided.

**Language:** Coordination Leads should ensure that language does not constitute a barrier to participation in coordination. Translation and interpretation services should be considered as a routine operational cost. Use of jargon should be avoided. Ad hoc translation support from group members should be voluntary, rotational, and temporary. If the majority of members speak a common language, consider providing translation to the international members who may not speak the majority language.

<sup>1</sup> Other Localisation Workstream guidance notes on related topics are [available here](#).

<sup>2</sup> This guidance note uses the term "local actors" to refer both to local responders with a national and sub-national scope.

**Logistics:** Coordination Leads should ask local actors the best way for them to access information and communicate; Whatsapp, Skype, Facebook or Zoom may be more suitable than slow or hard-to-navigate websites, for example. Sending critical information or meeting locations, dates, and times through several channels may mean the messages reach key actors who may not be on an email list yet. When deciding the location for meetings, coordinators should consider convenience, access (e.g. visa requirements), and safety of all actors. Consider rotating the location of meetings so that different groups can attend, and dial-in options, where suitable, for actors who cannot attend in person. As local actors have fewer staff available to cover simultaneous meetings, careful scheduling across sectors is key.

## Processes

Local actors are an integral part of the humanitarian response across all contexts. Their engagement in needs analysis, strategic prioritization and decision making is essential. The quality, accountability and coherence of a humanitarian response will be strengthened if local actors are involved in all stages of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle. Needs Assessment and Analysis: Make certain that local actors are part of the development of Humanitarian



# D. Tools for Cluster coordination leadership and Humanitarian Country Teams



## 1. Evidence-based arguments for localisation in humanitarian coordination (2 pages)

This tool is intended to support Cluster coordination leadership in ‘making the case’ for localisation in humanitarian coordination. It outlines key arguments for funding and prioritizing localisation which are rooted in recent evidence, which may be useful in advocating before Humanitarian Country Teams, donors, and other key stakeholders. It draws primarily from the reports [Localisation in Practice – Emerging Indicators and Practical Recommendations](#) and [Country-Level Financing Solutions for Local Actors](#).



## 2. Advocacy tool regarding direct and multi-year funding for local/national actors (4 pages)

This resource is intended to give Cluster coordination leadership information, arguments and suggested actions to promote and advocate for direct, quality and multi-year funding for local/national actors, for use within coordination mechanisms, as well as with e.g. donors and international organizations. It draws primarily from the reports [Country-Level Financing Solutions for Local Actors](#) and [Localisation in Practice – Emerging Indicators and Practical Recommendations](#).



## 3. Tip Sheet on Promoting Principled Partnerships for Humanitarian Coordination (3 pages)

Applying the Principles of Partnership, this tip sheet outlines practical examples of steps for cluster coordination leadership to take to promote a culture of principled partnerships between members of coordination groups, as well as between members and the coordination leadership itself.



#### **4. IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms (20 pages)**

This guidance note has been developed to support efforts to strengthen the meaningful participation, representation, and leadership of local and national humanitarian actors within IASC humanitarian coordination structures. It draws on over 100 pieces of research and good practice to provide recommendations on how local/national actors can be an integral part of humanitarian coordination structures. It provides guidance for Humanitarian Coordinators, Humanitarian Country Teams, Cluster and Inter-Cluster Coordination Groups, and other related Task Forces and Working Groups.



#### **5. Framework for Strengthening the Institutional Capacity of National and Local Actors (28 pages)**

This tool provides a framework for supporting local and national members of coordination groups (focusing on Child Protection and Education) to improve their operational capacity in key areas. The first section of the framework focuses on unpacking institutional capacity strengthening, integrating institutional capacity in the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) and understanding the phased approach to capacity strengthening efforts. The second section outlines possible components of institutional capacity strengthening efforts.



#### **6. Tip Sheet on Capacity Exchange and Complementarity between local/national actors and international organizations (3 pages)**

Drawing on the Framework for Strengthening the Institutional Capacity of National and Local Actors, this tip sheet provides key considerations on exchanging capacity between local/national and international actors, noting that such processes must be reciprocal and focus on complementarity. The tool provides tips for defining, assessing and strengthening capacity, as well as suggested actions for committing to capacity strengthening.



#### **7. Tip Sheet to Integrate Localisation in the Humanitarian Response Plan and Humanitarian Needs Overview (1 page)**

This tip sheet provides a list of actions on how to ensure localisation is present in the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO).



## **8. Checklist for Localisation in Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms (1 page)**

This checklist provides Cluster leadership, working groups, and other humanitarian coordination mechanisms actions for pursuing localisation in key cluster initiatives, documents and activities, in the areas of partnerships, funding, and governance/influence/participation.



## **9. Supporting Principled Local Action in Humanitarian Response: Practical steps for Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams (5 pages)**

This guidance outlines common challenges for integrating local and national actors into humanitarian response, including in coordination. It gives practical recommendations for Humanitarian Coordinators (HCs) and Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs) to strengthen localisation, including on the integration of local/national actors into the leadership and coordination of the response. The tool also provides a brief case study of localisation of cross-border operations from Turkey into Syria.



## **10. Checklist for induction and onboarding of new coordination group members (3 pages)**

This tool provides a checklist of key elements for the induction and onboarding of new coordination group members, to guide coordination leadership in this vital process. It outlines key concepts and processes which require explanation and illustration for new members, and provides examples of useful resources to this end.



## **11. Opportunities for collaboration - Coordination groups and Diaspora (1 page)**

This note contains a list of options for opportunities for collaboration between coordination groups and diaspora, intended to support both coordinators and diaspora groups. It covers the following areas: advocacy and information; technical support; financial support; and coordination/strategic direction.



## 1. Evidence-based arguments for localisation in humanitarian coordination

This tool is intended to support Cluster coordination leadership in ‘making the case’ for localisation in humanitarian coordination. It outlines key arguments for funding and prioritizing localisation which are rooted in recent evidence, which may be useful in advocating before Humanitarian Country Teams, donors, and other key stakeholders. It draws primarily from the reports [Localisation in Practice – Emerging Indicators and Practical Recommendations](#) and [Country-Level Financing Solutions for Local Actors](#). Given that, in many cases, 50% or more of the membership of coordination groups is made up of local and national actors, clusters have a key role in advancing localisation.



### The programmatic arguments

1. **Local and national actors are from the affected populations**, and their physical, social and linguistic proximity positions them as indispensable participants, partners and leaders in humanitarian responses. They have better acceptance, access and deeper relationships with the population – and a far more nuanced understanding of the history and politics of local areas affected by crises. When strengthened, national and sub-national systems can expedite preparedness, respond faster, be cost-effective and learn from doing with regard to future crises<sup>1</sup>.
2. **International actors should not treat local and national actors like subordinates**. Local and national actors make necessary and valuable contributions to the collective effort, and often do significant parts of the work, sometimes at high risk. Local and national organizations arguing for more equitable partnerships typically do this on the grounds of principle<sup>2</sup>.



### The strategic arguments

3. **The strategic objective of all international cooperation in situations of crisis or ‘development’ should be to support and enhance the capacities of those receiving the international assistance**, in order to enable them to increase their resilience. This is in the medium-term financial interest of the donors; Deploying large international resources every time there is a crisis is not in the best interest of the affected populations nor in the interests of taxpayers from donor countries<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> CP AoR/GEC [Framework for Strengthening Institutional Capacity of Local and National Actors](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Localisation in Practice – Emerging Indicators and Practical Recommendations](#) p. 16

<sup>3</sup> [Localisation in Practice – Emerging Indicators and Practical Recommendations](#) p. 16

4. **Where an affected population and/or local/national actors have the capacity to respond, the international community should support and reinforce, rather than replace national capacity, in order to promote long-term sustainability.** The presence and attitudes of international agencies may be important obstacles to national leadership and to building strong and sustained national capacities. This obstacle will continue until international organizations are prepared to share at least part of the global purse for humanitarian financing. Coordination groups provide an essential forum for the capacity strengthening and leadership development of local/national actors, and for shifting power imbalances.
5. **In order to ensure accountability to affected populations and to be certain that the humanitarian response is relevant, timely, effective and efficient,** national and local actors, including affected populations and communities, must be included in coordination and response as decision-makers. To facilitate this, international actors must provide accessible information, ensure that an effective process for participation and feedback is in place, and that design and management decisions are responsive to the views of affected communities and people<sup>4</sup>.
6. **Local and national actors are able to react and mobilize quickly,** and they are well-placed to identify humanitarian needs, for which reason they are key to effective coordination.



## The financial arguments

7. **Localization is needed because it is more cost-effective.** Local and national actors are more cost-effective than international ones, and funding them directly, or providing cash to crisis-affected people, reduces transaction costs. This financial justification is strong in the [Grand Bargain](#), which is strongly grounded in the earlier [report by the High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing](#). This report drew attention to the growing financing gap between global humanitarian needs and available humanitarian funding<sup>5</sup>. Moreover, research on humanitarian surge has shown that it costs two thirds less to deploy national rather than global staff<sup>6</sup>.
8. **When local/national actors are able to access direct (and multi-year) funding from donors without an intermediary, this builds mutual trust and respect,** redresses power imbalances, and is cost-effective. This type of funding deserves to be increased and encouraged, possibly learning from other sectors/areas such as development and institutional building. Compliance and administrative burdens can be mitigated<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Adapted from the [The Grand Bargain Signatories commitment \(2016\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Localisation in Practice – Emerging Indicators and Practical Recommendations](#) p. 16

<sup>6</sup> Start Network (2018). *The Future of Humanitarian Surge*, p. 26: <https://start-network.app.box.com/s/xzdmprk32biai93cm4izu5n9v-jwi59fnn>

<sup>7</sup> See the [accompanying guidance note](#) to the report [Country-Level Financing Solutions for Local Actors](#) for suggested mitigating actions.



## 2. Advocacy tool regarding direct and multi-year funding for local/national actors

This resource is intended to give Cluster coordination leadership information, arguments and suggested actions to promote and advocate for direct, quality and multi-year funding for local/national actors, for use within coordination mechanisms, as well as with e.g. donors and international organizations. It draws primarily from the reports [Country-Level Financing Solutions for Local Actors](#) and [Localisation in Practice – Emerging Indicators and Practical Recommendations](#).



### 1. What is direct funding?

Category	Sub-category	Definition
<b>Direct funding</b>	Direct funding (donors)	Direct funding from the original donor to local and national actors for humanitarian purposes.
	Direct funding (aid organizations)	Direct funding to local and national actors coming from privately raised donations.
<b>Indirect funding to be tracked</b>	Pooled funding	Funding channelled through a pooled fund that is directly accessed by local and national actors (e.g. country-based pooled fund (CBPF), Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF), START)
	Single intermediary	Funding to a single international aid organization (including a federated/membership organization) that reaches a local/national actor directly from that one intermediary.



### 2. What are the advantages of funding local/national actors directly?

The advantages of directly funding local/national actors include:

- Their proximity, acceptance and access to local communities/affected populations, especially in hard to reach areas
- Their ability to identify humanitarian needs
- Their know-how and understanding of local cultures and contexts
- The potential for sustainability local/national actors' activities over time
- The ability of local/national actors to react and mobilize quickly
- The potential cost-effectiveness of local/national actors' operations compared to international actors and UN agencies.



### 3. What are the barriers which hinder local/national actors from accessing direct funding?

- (a) Operational history: newly-created local humanitarian organizations may be unable to provide evidence of reliable operational implementation, particularly when compared to international actors.
- (b) Lack of financial and management capacities: the absence of formal governance, management and financial systems and structures may hinder local/national actors from meeting the due diligence requirements of international funders and/or provide assurances of organizational ability to manage finances in a transparent and accountable manner.
- (c) Lack of grant management capacity: due to lack of longevity, and having been placed in the role of implementing partner as opposed to lead grantee, local/national actors may have limited experience in direct grant management.
- (d) Donor priorities and restrictions: Some donor government priorities are influenced by strategic direction from their capital cities and therefore focus financial support on specific areas, which may not align with the work of local/national actors. International actors also have biases towards their areas of sectoral specialties. Moreover, some donor governments do not fund local organizations directly or have compliance criteria that are almost impossible for local/national actors to meet.
- (e) Disbursement cycles: Some international actors have inflexible payment cycles where the last disbursement is made once activities are completed and final reports are submitted and accepted, which requires local/national actors to be able to finance activities themselves.
- (f) Lack of access to information: local/national actors may reportedly lack information on how to access funding from UN mechanisms and other pooled funds. Where information and guidance is provided, it is often not in the preferred languages and formats of local/national actors, which perpetuates exclusion from funding opportunities.
- (g) Lack of inclusion in inter-agency fora: local/national actors may find it difficult to engage or be formally included in inter-agency coordination fora, such as clusters, due to e.g. language barriers; capacity restrictions, and lack of familiarity with humanitarian coordination systems.
- (h) Lack of funding for administrative costs and overheads: International actors may have different interpretations on the administrative and overhead costs directly linked to an operation, which may result in local/national not receiving sufficient, or any, funding to cover their overheads.

- (i) Political barriers: for example, a lack of political will on the part of the national government for an international call for support might limit some donors' willingness to fund locally/nationally led humanitarian action.
- (j) Regulatory barriers: both domestic and donor regulatory barriers may restrict funding to local/national actors.
- (k) Availability of human resources: many local/national actors lack the financial sustainability to retain experienced staff, particularly between funding contracts. In addition, there can be competition with the private sector for some roles.
- (l) Restricted access to international donors: although many donors conduct field missions or send initial rapid response teams to affected locations at times of crisis, many donor governments (as well as some international actors) tend to be based in capital cities, which limits access and networking opportunities of local/national actors who have field-based structures. Moreover, many local and national actors lack visibility. As a result, in-country donors are not aware of their contributions to humanitarian responses..



#### 4. What is quality funding?

Quality funding is funding that is predictable, multi-year and flexible. This includes for example unearmarked funding, funding for overhead costs, and funding for capacity strengthening, in particular institutional capacity. For more information, follow [this link](#).



#### 5. What actions can members of humanitarian coordination mechanisms take to promote direct, quality, and multi-year funding for local/national actors, including mitigating the associated risks<sup>1</sup>?

##### Cluster leadership should:

- Increase the visibility of local/national actors by inviting them to meetings with donors, to join donor briefings, or take steps to introduce them to individual donors.
- Invest in, develop and deliver capacity strengthening<sup>2</sup> initiatives for local/national actors, in particular the strengthening of institutional capacity which will help

<sup>1</sup> For an overview of perceived risks, see page 22 of [Country-Level Financing Solutions for Local Actors](#)

<sup>2</sup> See pages 35-36 of [Localisation in Practice – Emerging Indicators and Practical Recommendations](#) for

in meeting the due diligence requirements of donors. Funding for institutional capacity strengthening should thus be included in partnership agreements<sup>3</sup>.

- Promote a shift in partnership models from “police” to partner; CBHF and projects included in HRPs are two key apparatus that cluster coordinators can use to promote these models of partnerships.
- Advocate with e.g. HCTs, OCHA and donors for a certain percentage of pooled funding to go to local/national actors.
- Advocate for local and national actors to take a consortium approach, encouraging them to apply for Humanitarian Pooled Funds as consortium members.
- Create a coordination environment that is more enabling for local and national leadership, in terms of who participates, the languages that are used, and in their conversational and decision-making culture.
- Advocate with donors and international organizations for the harmonization and simplification of due diligence requirements.
- Dedicate time during coordination meetings to promote and support consortium applications and strategic/operational/programmatic partnerships between national and international actors.

### **International actors should:**

- Increase the visibility of local/national actors in direct meetings and global events by making use of influence and access to donors and global level forums.
- Consider contributing to overhead costs of local/national actors, in the same way that international organisations and UN agencies currently benefit.
- Provide flexible budget and unearmarked funding for local partners.
- Consider partnering with experienced local/national actors.
- Consider consortium arrangements with local actors, with joint monitoring and reporting.
- Consider ring-fencing funding for local actors, local actor consortiums or ring-fenced activities just for local actors.
- Develop and/or expand rapid response fund facilities for local actors.
- Encourage and enable direct contact between local/national actors and donors.
- Include increased financial autonomy and sustainability of the local/national actor as a strategic objective in all partnering relationships.
- Provide institutional and technical capacity building and knowledge support for domestic resource mobilization by local/national actors.
- Include modalities such as coaching, mentoring, secondment in partnerships to foster knowledge-sharing, as well as two-way reporting.

<sup>3</sup> Further, findings or recommendations from Organizational Capacity Assessments (OCA) completed during the establishment of partnerships should be addressed. Thus, partnerships should include budget lines for addressing gaps or recommendations from the OCAs. Cluster coordinators can facilitate this by bringing it to the agenda, and including it as a need in the HNO and as an activity in the HRP.

### **Local/national actors should:**

- Consider consortia with each other.
- Assess and take the necessary steps to strengthen their capacity to transparently and accountably manage and report on donated funds, requesting outside capacity strengthening support as needed.
- Use the same reporting tool that the cluster uses to ensure achievements are captured and are visible to the clusters and donors.
- Inform themselves on funding modalities and strategically leverage their partnerships to get access to them.



## **6. What are the main arguments in favour of funding local/national actors directly ?**

- Direct funding from donor governments for local/national actors reduces the need for intermediaries and their overhead costs, which are sometimes considerable
- Direct funding builds mutual trust and respect
- Direct funding is cost-effective, reaching more beneficiaries
- Direct funding readdresses power imbalances
- Direct funding builds long term sustainability of the response in a country

### **Further reading:**

[Country-Level Financing Solutions for Local Actors](#)

[Localisation in Practice – Emerging Indicators and Practical Recommendations](#)

[Guidance note on humanitarian financing for local actors](#)



### 3. Tip Sheet on Promoting Principled Partnerships for Humanitarian Coordination<sup>1</sup>

Cluster Coordinators have a responsibility<sup>2</sup> to promote, model and monitor principled partnerships between local/national and international actors which are equal, transparent, results-oriented, responsible, complementary, and long-term<sup>3</sup>, according to [the Principles of Partnership](#). The equal participation of local/national actors is key in order to strengthen accountability to affected populations, and to ensure the relevance of assistance and protection interventions.

Cluster teams can boost participation by cementing principled partnerships between cluster members by setting an example through the way they coordinate the cluster and approach members in an equitable and constructive manner.

The overall objective in any partnership is to reduce the need for humanitarian assistance. Partnerships should be based on complementarity, and should develop greater trust and promote mutual accountability between members.

**Strategic partnerships** for humanitarian coordination should be long-term and systematically built together, focusing not on the delivery of a specific project, but rather on the strengths and strategic engagement of each party. Such partnerships allow for broad social transformation, the shifting of uneven power dynamics and the erosion of (unconscious) bias between local/national actors and international organizations.

**Operational partnerships** should be flexible, transparent and equitable, and allow local/national actors to contribute throughout the Humanitarian Programme Cycle, as well as strengthen their institutional capacity, where needed.

Local and national actors should be fully included in strategic decision-making processes, and not regarded as implementers or sub-contractors.

<sup>1</sup> This tool has been compiled from the following resources: IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms + [Breaking down the silos webinar series – Good Practices and Tips from the Field on Working with National and Local Actors](#) *Global Cluster Coordinators Group (2017)* + [10 Practical Ways to Use the Principles of Partnership](#) + [Guidance note on partnership practices for localization](#) + [Rethinking capacity and complementarity for a more local humanitarian action](#) + [Localisation in Practice – Emerging Indicators and Practical Recommendations](#)

<sup>2</sup> Additionally, cluster lead agencies also have a responsibility to promote and monitor partnerships given that in many clusters, the partners depend on the Cluster Lead Agency for funding.

<sup>3</sup> [IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms](#) p.5

**This tip sheet outlines practical examples of steps to take to promote a culture of principled partnerships between members of coordination groups, as well as between members and the coordination leadership itself.**



Cluster leadership teams should ensure the Principles of Partnership are included in the **Terms of Reference (ToR)** of the coordination groups/ cluster. ToRs should also

include a method for monitoring principled partnerships.



Cluster leadership teams should explore the possibility of **co-leadership with national actors**, given its potential to strengthen the engagement of

coordination group members and improve coordination<sup>4</sup>.



**Partnership agreements** should outline the roles and responsibilities of both the local/national and the international actors. Such agreements

should specify that risks are shared, and mitigation measures are mutually agreed (including to ensure safeguarding measures are in place). All humanitarian actors should **identify their added value** in any partnership, and work on the basis of complementarity.



International actors should provide **support to local/national partners based on demand** (rather than

supply) and ideally through longer-term strategic partnerships tailored to partner needs, or in accordance with the partner's wishes. This should include areas of institutional or technical capacity strengthening, with complementarity identified before crises.



Coordination groups should commit to **evaluating and reporting** annually on how the Principles of Partnership are being put into practice, using

e.g. the [Principles of Partnership Cluster Review](#) as a point of departure.



Cluster leadership should regularly **seek and act on feedback** from coordination group members on their experience of cluster partnerships, and

offer anonymized ways to submit such feedback.

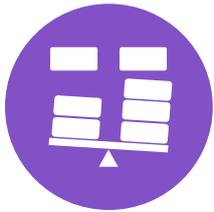


Cluster leadership should allocate time and resources for the creation of an **enabling environment** to promote active participation by

local/national actors. For example, cluster coordinators should support **relationship building, networking and forming alliances** amongst members, where local/national actors

<sup>4</sup> For more information on NGO co-leadership, see [http://unicefintercluster.net/cpaor/sites/default/files/cp/NGO%20Co-leadership\\_Guidance%20and%20tools%202016.pdf](http://unicefintercluster.net/cpaor/sites/default/files/cp/NGO%20Co-leadership_Guidance%20and%20tools%202016.pdf)

are considered not local implementing partners, but humanitarian actors capable of setting their own agendas within the overarching humanitarian coordination structures. Cluster coordinators should dedicate time to mapping out local/national actors and inviting them to the coordination group.



Coordinators should **continuously address power imbalances and work to erode unconscious bias** by ensuring adequate visibility of local/national

actors, by having national co-chairs, ensuring floor time is given to local/national actors, and by highlighting where specific agenda items or perspectives originate from local/national actors. Coordinators should seek to reduce factors which do not contribute to an enabling coordination environment, such as:

- the use of rapid and variably accented English
- the use of acronyms and references part of international relief discourse
- the use of speaking and decision-making styles and rhythms that are different from local ones<sup>5</sup>
- the use of technical terminology which is not explained
- not allocating enough time for adequate interpretation or multilingual communication
- disseminating long written documents that local/national actors may not have the time or resources to engage with, thereby reducing their ability to input



Cluster leadership should engage local/national and international actors in activities aimed at identifying their **partnership expectations**, to address meeting frequency and time; technical capacity required for participation; and the comparative advantages of each partner.



Cluster leadership and international actors, in collaboration with local/national actors, should **ensure visibility, explicitly acknowledge** and proactively support their role in reporting to donors, media and in all other public communications and foster engagement between local/national actors with donors, media and other relevant actors.



International actors should **highlight the role** that local/national partners play in partnership-based / joint humanitarian response at cluster and other humanitarian coordination meetings.



Local actors should be supported to better recognise and constructively challenge **perceived and hidden power dynamics** in the humanitarian system, including at the partnership level. This could be through international actors using their power to give a space and voice to local actors more globally, or through donors supporting platforms and coalitions of local organisations (such as NEAR) whose mission is shifting the power within the humanitarian system.

<sup>5</sup> [Localisation in Practice – Emerging Indicators and Practical Recommendations, p. 4](#)



## 4. IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms

**IASC** Inter-Agency  
Standing Committee

### Guidance

# STRENGTHENING PARTICIPATION, REPRESENTATION AND LEADERSHIP OF LOCAL AND NATIONAL ACTORS IN IASC HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION MECHANISMS

IASC Results Group 1 on Operational Response

July 2021

Endorsed by IASC Operational Policy and Advocacy Group (OPAG)

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1. This guidance note has been developed to support efforts to strengthen the meaningful participation, representation, and leadership of local and national humanitarian actors (L/NAs)<sup>1</sup> within IASC humanitarian coordination structures<sup>2</sup>. It draws on over 100 pieces of research and good practice to provide recommendations on how L/NAs can be an integral part of humanitarian coordination structures. It provides guidance for Humanitarian Coordinators, Humanitarian Country Teams, Cluster and Inter-Cluster Coordination Groups, and other related Task Forces and Working Groups.

2. The guidance contained in this note should be considered with due regard to existing national structures and contextual dynamics. International actors must be sensitive about the potential risks that representatives of local and national organizations might face in taking part in international coordination structures. International actors should seek to accompany and support national and local efforts, rather than impose structures. In line with the [UN Guidance note on the Protection and Promotion of Civic Space](#), international actors should focus on the participation of L/NAs in IASC processes, the promotion of civic space and most importantly, the protection of civil society actors. Finally, international actors must be cognizant of existing contextual dynamics and the varied levels of engagement from L/NAs who may have different expectations and motives in joining coordination mechanisms. Equally, it must be made clear that participation in humanitarian coordination by all actors is contingent on respect for humanitarian principles.

## PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

3. Engaging L/NAs is critical to the success of humanitarian action. L/NAs are often the first responders and are at the heart of humanitarian response. They provide an invaluable understanding of local challenges and potential solutions, are able to mobilize local networks and offer greater access to affected populations, hence contributing to a more effective, efficient, and sustainable humanitarian response with an enhanced accountability to affected populations. They are also often adept at working across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus to support affected communities in preparedness, response, recovery and after international actors withdraw. Yet the international humanitarian system has made limited progress in increasing funding, capacity development, equitable and meaningful partnerships and the participation of L/NAs in their coordination structures, which has overall remained relatively limited over the past years<sup>3</sup> – particularly in terms of risk-sharing, leadership and decision-making.

4. An explicit priority for the humanitarian sector since the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) and the establishment of the Grand Bargain<sup>4</sup> has been to increase support to local actors and communities, including through a specific commitment to strengthen leadership and decision-

<sup>1</sup> Please refer to paragraph 5 for a definition of who is considered to be a local and national humanitarian actor for the purposes of this guidance.

<sup>2</sup> In situations involving refugees, UNHCR leads and coordinates the refugee response. The [Joint UNHCR-OCHA Note on Mixed Situations: Coordination in Practice](#) clarifies leadership and coordination arrangements in situations where a Humanitarian Coordinator has been appointed, and a UNHCR-led refugee operation is also underway. Complementary mapping of best practices to strengthen participation of Refugee-led organizations (RLOs) is being compiled by UNHCR and will be made available to all IASC members.

<sup>3</sup> At the time of writing (2021), L/NAs constituted about 8% of cluster/sector leadership at subnational level, and about 45% of cluster/sector membership on average.

<sup>4</sup> The [Grand Bargain](#), launched during the WHS in 2016, is a unique agreement between 63 of the largest donors and humanitarian organisations who committed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action.

making by local actors<sup>5</sup>. The COVID-19 pandemic further accentuated the need to strengthen the role of L/NAs within humanitarian coordination structures<sup>6</sup>.

5. With regard to refugee response contexts, the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR)<sup>7</sup> recognizes the leadership of the host government and the work of local authorities, community leaders and traditional community governance institutions, who are often the first responders to large-scale refugee situations, with UNHCR playing a supportive and catalytic role. The GCR also recognizes the critical role of civil society organizations, including those that are led by refugees, women, youth or persons with disabilities, in assessing community strengths and needs, inclusive and accessible planning and programme implementation, and capacity development, as applicable.

6. This guidance note identifies practical steps to enhance the participation, representation, and leadership role of L/NAs within IASC humanitarian coordination structures. It is envisaged that relevant coordination forums should use the guidance to spur discussion, identify priority actions and agree on indicators for monitoring progress. It is primarily focused on local and national non-governmental humanitarian actors including local civil society organizations (CSOs), such as: national non-governmental organizations (NNGOs) Red Cross/Red Crescent National Societies; human rights groups; women rights organizations (WROs); women-led organizations (WLOs)<sup>8</sup> and girl-led initiatives; youth-led organizations; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI+) groups; faith-based organizations; organizations of persons with disabilities (OPD) as well as older persons' organizations. Women, WLOs, persons with disabilities and OPDs have tended to be sidelined within humanitarian coordination and decision-making platforms, reinforcing underlying inequalities that obstruct access to humanitarian services by women, girls and others excluded on the basis of their gender and disability. Greater emphasis must be placed on combating gender inequality by supporting and promoting the engagement and leadership of women leaders and other marginalized groups, as emphasized throughout this guidance<sup>9</sup>. Further, for the purposes of this guidance, regional or sub-regional networks of L/NAs would also be considered L/NAs. The term L/NAs may also pertain to other L/NAs according to context: such as national and local authorities<sup>10</sup>, the local private sector and development-focused organizations, who may not define themselves as humanitarian actors *per se* but who may be contributing to humanitarian efforts due to their location and/or community connections.

<sup>5</sup> “Support and complement national coordination mechanisms where they exist and include national responders in international coordination mechanisms as appropriate and in keeping with humanitarian principles,” Grand Bargain Workstream 2 (Localization), commitment 3.

<sup>6</sup> See IASC [Interim Guidance: Localisation and the Covid-19 Response](#), May 2020.

<sup>7</sup> The resolution on the GCR was adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 2018 ([A/RES/73/151](#)).

<sup>8</sup> The definition of WLO is included in the glossary. For the purposes of this guidance and going forward, WLOs are taken to also include WROs.

<sup>9</sup> See also Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream [Guidance Note on Gender-Responsive Localisation](#), May 2020.

<sup>10</sup> For the purposes of this guidance, a wide approach is taken in defining local and national authorities, acknowledging that this varies greatly across different contexts. The main factors are: (i) governance set-up, including the relationship with the national government and the nature of legitimacy versus local communities (for example, elected or appointed positions); (ii) the level of delegation of authority received from central governments (for example, taxation or basic services) and (iii) the human and financial capacities to fulfil their functions.

## EQUITABLE AND MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS

L/NAs are often treated as implementers/sub-contractors and not fully included in strategic and decision-making processes. However, the involvement and participation of L/NAs in all aspects of the humanitarian programme cycle (analysis, strategic planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) is essential for accountability to affected populations and ensuring that assistance and protection is relevant. Coordinators therefore have a responsibility to promote a culture of principled partnership, both in the ways they interact with the members of their coordination groups and in the ways in which members interact with each other. Relations among organizations involved in humanitarian action should be based on mutual respect, trust and the [Principles of Partnership](#). These are equality, transparency, result-oriented approach, responsibility, and complementarity.

Equitable partnerships between international actors and L/NAs also require a shift towards longer-term partnerships that are systematically built together - focusing on the strengths and strategic engagement of each party and not on the delivery of a specific project, allowing for broader social transformation and shifting uneven power dynamics and unconscious bias between L/NAs and international organisations. The overall objective in any partnership is that, over time, the need for humanitarian assistance should be reduced. Partnerships should be based on complementarity and should develop greater trust and promote mutual accountability (see 'Areas of Accountability and Monitoring,' below). Strategic partnerships should also be complemented by operational partnerships that are flexible, transparent, equitable, and allow for L/NAs to contribute throughout the programme cycle (see 'Preparedness, Response and Humanitarian-Development Collaboration' below) and help them to strengthen institutional capacity, as required.

## RECOMMENDED ACTIONS TO SUPPORT LOCALISATION IN COORDINATION

7. Experience from a wide range of humanitarian settings shows that active engagement by humanitarian L/NAs in coordination structures improves the quality and coverage of a response. However, L/NAs face barriers to participation, representation, and leadership, which disproportionately impact local WLOs, WROs and other marginalized groups. These can include language barriers, the heavy use of jargon, cultural or political differences, social structural discrimination (especially gender and race inequalities), logistical and technological obstacles (including challenges to accessing and sharing information in a timely manner), security challenges, as well as resource and capacity constraints due to limited access to funding. The following section provides recommendations for practical actions coordinators and members of coordination bodies can take to enhance the role of L/NAs.

### PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION

8. Keeping in mind that power imbalances and unconscious bias may influence the setup of coordination structures, members and those facilitating coordination groups should take steps to create an enabling environment for L/NA to participate and take part in decision-making in coordination structures and facilitate more systematic and active engagement<sup>11</sup>. This includes forming alliances with smaller, local organizations (such as local women's organizations), not only as local implementing partners but as humanitarian actors capable of setting their own agendas within the overarching humanitarian coordination structures. All actions should be undertaken in the spirit of the principles of partnership (see above box on 'equitable partnerships') to create an enabling environment for L/NAs, in particular WLOs, youth-led organizations, older persons' organizations and OPDs, to participate and influence decision-making in coordination structures and facilitate more systematic and active engagement for the overall benefit of affected people.

9. However, it should be noted that not all L/NAs can or should be expected to participate in internationally led humanitarian coordination structures. IASC coordination structures, including

### GOOD PRACTICE TIPS

- ❖ Promote continuity in representation by minimising turnover in staff attending meetings to foster relationships and trust among participants and to support informed decision-making.
- ❖ Ensure members of humanitarian coordination structures give account, take into account and are accountable to their respective constituency and commit to fairly and transparently represent their views (beyond individual organizations' mandates and priorities) by consulting them in advance of key decisions, as well as informing them of discussions and decisions.
- ❖ Share with L/NAs information about international coordination structures and bodies available to them and discuss their potential role and any leadership opportunities. Do this through information sessions with local and national partners and by arranging for all capacity-strengthening projects to include a session on international coordination structures.
- ❖ As much as possible, aim to operate in local and national languages.

<sup>11</sup> See also Global Cluster Coordination Group [Good Practices and Tips from the Field on Working with National and Local Actors](#), May 2017; and Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream [Guidance Note on the Participation of Local Actors in Humanitarian Coordination Groups](#), May 2020.

the cluster approach, are not the only humanitarian coordination mechanism, and may often coexist with other forms of national or local coordination. Applying the IASC coordination approach must take into account the specific needs and context of a country. Internationally led humanitarian coordination structures should always take existing national and local approaches and structures into account, and proactive efforts should be made to identify, link with and work through these coordination and leadership structures. This entails international organizations and structures having the appropriate resources to link and work with local coordination structures, including staff with the appropriate local/national language skills, not vice versa. To support meaningful engagement, it is important to collectively consult with key L/NAs to clarify existing coordination structures and partnership expectations, including meeting frequency, time and technical capacity required for participation. International actors must recognize that many organizations are fully equipped to participate in international coordination mechanisms and should only offer capacity support when/where it is requested.

10. Implement a process for inclusion of national organizations in the IASC humanitarian response architecture at the national and subnational level with the following elements:

- a. Identify and map L/NAs of relevance to the response and the local context and provide information on humanitarian coordination mechanisms and how to engage. Insofar as possible, extend an invitation to all L/NAs working in affected areas to information exchanges to gather their perspectives, understand the different communities, norms and cultures, and importantly, identify the relevant response, the actors who are best placed (and interested) to contribute and their preference for engaging with international structures.
- b. Undertake courtesy calls and introductory visits to L/NAs to ensure that HCT/cluster responsibilities are understood and appropriate.
- c. Encourage induction sessions for any new member of a coordination group, whether L/NA or international, to ensure mutual responsibilities and accountabilities are agreed and understood, and appropriate support is provided to new members during the initial stages of their participation. Explain any limitations and challenges of an IASC coordination structure to help manage expectations. Explain acronyms, meeting protocols and group dynamics. Minimize and explain the use of jargon or technical language. Provide guidance that is tailored to a new member's needs or area of work and make key documents and information available in relevant local and national languages. Find common language around shared goals. Equally, invite L/NA representatives to participate in induction briefings and present on the local context and local coordination mechanisms.
- d. Promote coordination and active collaboration to strengthen existing partnerships between INGOs and L/NAs, especially in those cases where the L/NAs might be less or not familiar with the international coordination system. Work on institutionalising the information flow between existing local/national partnerships and international structures, to reinforce existing groups rather than undermine them.
- e. Ensure membership of L/NAs in international coordination structures is equitable, (for example, by aiming for equal levels of representation from international and national NGOs, when it comes to NGO seats) or ensuring minimum L/NA

representation overall. Recognize that equitable participation in coordination structures goes beyond membership numbers and also involves access to equipment, advice, security and financial support, among others. Work towards the establishment of baselines for L/NA participation in various coordination bodies in Q3 2021 and, after consultations with HCs and field operations, consider setting a minimum target for local/national representation in these coordination bodies.

- f. Promote an equitable system of representation of historically marginalized groups in international coordination structures with age, gender and diversity considerations in mind, including WLOs, WROs, LGBTI+ groups, OPDs, youth groups and older persons' organizations, as well as other priority and marginalized groups<sup>12</sup>.
- g. To the extent possible, prioritize conducting meetings in local/national languages. Systematically provide translation and interpretation for internationals into local/national language(s) or for L/NAs into the language international actors use to enable all members to participate equally, including as part of relevant documentation. To the extent possible, take into account accessibility measures such as live captioning of online meetings and sign language translations.
- h. Consider organizing coordination meetings as close to operations as possible to minimize the logistical strain on L/NAs (e.g. cluster meetings in subnational locations whenever possible.). Also consider the level of meetings: the objective should not be to have all local and national actors at a pre-determined level present, rather, to have representatives present at the appropriate level where they can provide the most meaningful contribution.
- i. Ensure meeting locations are accessible and acceptable to L/NAs and provide transportation and logistical support, where required. Consider options and support to allow L/NAs to join meetings remotely (e.g. online, where feasible) or rotate meeting locations. Consider whether other arrangements are needed for persons with hearing or visual impairments. For virtual meetings, consider whether connectivity/bandwidth, (un)stable electricity supply and equipment availability might constrain the effective participation of L/NAs. Also consider using innovative tools or applications to increase engagement, such as live polling applications or crowd-sourcing tools to develop agendas. Be cognizant of protecting L/NAs from online threats and attacks.
- j. Pay particular attention to security conditions or other local circumstances that may affect the representation of L/NAs, especially women (e.g. nighttime curfews, cultural acceptability of women's mobility after certain times and childcare-related constraints). Consider mapping the specific and urgent protection needs of L/NAs and establishing referral mechanisms for cases of intimidation and reprisals against local civil society for cooperating with the international community, particularly for marginalized groups and the groups that work with them.

<sup>12</sup> See ICVA NGO [Fora Member Engagement Guide for good practice](#), 2019.

### Tracking progress

This guidance proposes having an annual global report on localization, which would present an overview of globally tracked country-specific indicators included in this document for all IASC humanitarian contexts and would be derived from the annual mapping of IASC coordination structures undertaken by OCHA and the Global Clusters based on inputs from field operations. The overview of indicators will be aggregated by OCHA at global and levels and will be comparable across contexts. IASC humanitarian contexts are defined on an annual basis, based on a combination of criteria such as presence of a Humanitarian Coordinator (HC), HCT/ICCG in place and active clusters. In addition, individual country contexts may decide to do more in-depth analysis around locally tracked indicators. Field operations may choose to - depending on their local contexts - to track additional indicators at country level (hereinafter referred to as locally tracked indicators) as decided by humanitarian actors on the ground (e.g. HCTs).

k. Consider the schedules of L/NAs along with international actors when setting regular meetings to minimize overlaps, and ensure the times are feasible for local partners. When considering schedules, be cognizant of the differentiated burden of care between genders and its implications.

l. Develop meeting agendas with input from all participants, allocate time and a specific agenda item to address the priorities of L/NAs.

m. Ensure adequate visibility of L/NAs by having co-chairs, ensuring floor time is given to them and by highlighting where specific agenda items or perspectives originate from L/NAs.

n. Invite L/NAs to share locally relevant and effective methods for sharing information to ensure L/NAs have equitable access to the information required to effectively participate<sup>13</sup>. Give preference to participatory methodologies such as 'learning by doing'.

o. Support NGO coordination forums and encourage stronger coordination between L/NAs to facilitate stronger

collective power and representation. Encourage pre-meetings among L/NAs prior to key coordination meetings to develop collective analysis and positions, and to ensure that local representatives have sufficient information and time to consult with relevant local stakeholders and communities.

p. As appropriate, have HCT/cluster representation in L/NA coordination structures and mechanisms, enabling a two-way relationship.

### Indicators – Participation and Representation<sup>14</sup>

		Globally tracked	Locally tracked
1	% members of a coordination body (HCTs, ICCGs, Clusters) who are L/NAs	✓	
2	% members of a coordination body (HCT, ICCGs, Clusters) who are WLO or OPDs and other diversity groups <sup>15</sup>		✓

<sup>13</sup> See [Humanitarian Coordination and Cluster Approach: A Quick Guide for Local and National Actors](#), developed by GEC, CP AoR and TWB to help L/NAs understand humanitarian cluster approach.

<sup>14</sup> For indicators 1 and 2, this guidance proposes establishing baselines for L/NA participation in coordination bodies by Q3 2021 and, after consultations with HCs and field operations in 2021, to consider setting a minimum target for L/NA participation.

<sup>15</sup> Including marginalized and excluded groups

<b>3</b>	% coordination meetings (HCTs, ICCG, clusters) held in local/national language(s) or offering translation and interpretation	✓	
<b>4</b>	% of coordination meetings (HCT, ICCG, cluster) with no L/NAs present		✓
<b>5</b>	% of satisfaction level recorded in locally administrated qualitative surveys per different coordination level/body		✓

## LEADERSHIP

11. Humanitarian leadership should be inclusive, representative, gender-balanced, accountable and supportive of the entire humanitarian community. L/NAs should have equitable opportunities with international actors and among their own peers, e.g. for WLOs, to take on leadership and co-leadership roles at both national and sub-national levels, including as part of strategic advisory groups and coordination mechanisms. Ensuring the presence and meaningful participation of local WLOs and WROs in coordination bodies will be important for sustaining women's leadership over time.

- a. Open membership of cluster Strategic Advisory Groups (at global and country level) to L/NAs, including WLOs, OPDs, youth-based groups and others as relevant, and provide funding (if available), coaching support and mentoring opportunities where needed for full and diverse contributions. Identify and support INGOs organizations with a mandate and interest in supporting L/NA leadership in humanitarian coordination so that they can mentor, accompany and support L/NAs to gradually fulfil leadership roles. In parallel, international actors should receive coaching on how to engage with L/NAs in leadership roles including on how to have constructive discussions.
- b. Make the promotion of strengthening L/NA leadership in coordination structures the responsibility of a senior humanitarian official, such as the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) or Deputy HC (DHC), reflecting such responsibilities within his/her performance objectives.
- c. Promote co-leadership and co-chairing of coordination structures with L/NAs<sup>16</sup>, including through the development of transition and handover plans that prioritize L/NA leadership from the outset of an emergency response. Keep in mind the [Placeholder for reference to upcoming IASC framework on engaging with local governments, developed by UN-Habitat] and the [2011 IASC Guidance on working with national authorities](#) which specifies that “Where appropriate and practical, government leads should be actively encouraged to co-chair cluster meetings with their Cluster Lead Agency counterparts. As with all co-chair arrangements, respective responsibilities should be clearly defined from the outset.”
- d. During any leadership transition from the international to national/local level, ensure relevant national/local authorities commit to capitalize upon the expertise of L/NAs in humanitarian response and integrate them into national disaster response mechanisms, while respecting their independent role. Provide guidance to government counterparts on good practice in coordinating with L/NAs and the role these organizations can play in preparedness and response actions at the national and subnational level.

<sup>16</sup> See IASC [Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at Country Level](#), chapter on ‘Sharing Leadership’.

- e. Where possible, elevate national staff of UN agencies, INGOs or L/NAs to cluster leadership positions. This will help encourage participation by and inclusion of L/NAs, increase access by working through local networks, demystify coordination mechanisms and ensure local priorities are reflected in agendas and plans. Recognizing that L/NAs are often not as well-resourced as UN agencies or INGOs, consider providing funding to L/NAs specifically for leadership positions within the coordination mechanisms.
- f. Support transparent and inclusive processes, which are conflict-sensitive and attuned to contextual considerations, for the identification and selection of members and leaders of coordination structures that apply equally to national and international members<sup>17</sup>.
- g. Ensure that the Terms of Reference (TORs) for shared leadership positions are clear and equitable in terms of decision-making and responsibilities and are in alignment with IASC guidance on such roles<sup>18</sup>. Systematize good practices and lessons learned in the fulfilment of shared leadership.
- h. Within different coordination structures, encourage rotational seats for international actors and L/NAs (perhaps annually or every two years) to promote gender, race, age and disability diversities and afford opportunities to new members.
- i. Strengthen accountability mechanisms, including remedies for non-performing representatives (see 'Areas of Accountability and Monitoring,' below).

### Indicators - Leadership

		Globally tracked	Locally tracked
<b>1</b>	% of national-level bodies (clusters) that have L/NAs as leads or co-leads	✓	
<b>2</b>	% of national-level bodies (clusters) that have L/NAs as co-chairs or co-facilitators	✓	
<b>3</b>	% of national-level bodies (technical working groups) that have L/NAs as leads or co-leads	✓	
<b>4</b>	% of subnational-level bodies (clusters) that have L/NAs as co-chairs or co-facilitators	✓	
<b>5</b>	% of subnational-level bodies (clusters) that have L/NAs as leads or co-leads	✓	
<b>6</b>	% of subnational-level bodies (clusters) that have L/NAs as co-chairs / co-facilitators	✓	
<b>7</b>	% clusters that have developed localisation action plans (relevant for their context)		✓

<sup>17</sup> See ICVA [NGO For a Member Engagement Guide](#).

<sup>18</sup> While the [IASC Guideline on Cluster Coordination at Country Level](#) provide some elements to better understand concepts and good practices on shared leadership, there is need for further clarification of leadership terminology to help distinguish between roles/responsibilities for leads, co-leads, co-chairs, etc.

## CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

12. Institutional and technical capacity strengthening is a critical approach to participation and leadership of L/NAs in coordination, as some report that they lack the knowledge and experience to engage effectively within coordination structures. However, capacity strengthening activities designed to address this gap are often poorly matched to individual or organizational needs and locally appropriate ways of learning. One-way capacity strengthening opportunities directed towards L/NAs may also miss opportunities for co-learning, two-way learning and capacity transfers. Institutional capacity strengthening for local partners should be considered as part of the response strategy - as a way to achieve coverage and quality – and not just considered a support cost. It should also be considered as a key aspect of working of humanitarian-development collaboration, as L/NAs (and the broader CSO constituency) are instrumental stakeholders in both humanitarian response and development work, and should be empowered to facilitate effective exit strategies and sustainable transfer of responsibility to L/NAs. Finally, capacity strengthening should be ongoing, taking place before, during and after a crisis.

13. In the spirit of partnership, establish two-way learning and capacity transfers to foster quality, locally appropriate humanitarian responses that also support long-term resilience:
- a. Conduct a learning needs assessment of all cluster partners. Based on this assessment, support two-way institutional and technical capacity strengthening between L/NAs and HCT/clusters around, but not limited to, coordination, advocacy, fundraising, programme planning, mutual accountability mechanisms, risk management, gender issues, diplomacy, influencing and negotiation skills and pathways to leadership, as relevant for the particular group of partners being addressed.
  - b. Identify existing local, national and regional coordination platforms and coalitions, and leaders within these platforms/coalitions, through regular mapping. Try to learn more about their core strategies and business, in order to learn, exchange information, establish better connections and coordinate with the existing L/NA platforms. Proactively reach out to identified leaders and encourage them to join humanitarian coordination structures as appropriate. This should include reaching out to women, youth, persons with disabilities and other representatives of minority groups with leadership potential who may be hesitant or discouraged to join more formal IASC coordination fora due to prevailing social, cultural or contextual norms. Where appropriate, encourage government-led coordination bodies to welcome the participation of L/NAs and to view them as a critical resource and partner during humanitarian response.
  - c. Encourage learning exchange through labs/applications/platforms for mutual learning among different actors and foster/create channels of informal communication between L/NAs and international actors in order to strengthen mutual trust and partnership.
  - d. Undertake regular reciprocal capacity assessments involving local, national, and international actors and jointly develop two-way capacity strengthening plans,

ensuring activities are coordinated, complementary and ideally conducted through a common platform to minimize duplication and gaps. Activities should include training by L/NAs for INGOs and UN actors on local approaches, the local context and other relevant issues.

- e. Move beyond one-off capacity building workshops towards opportunities for two-way twinning, mentorship, coaching, shadowing and peer-to-peer support. Take advantage of existing partnerships to promote learning exchange between organizations and staff. Where possible, budget for these various capacity-building/knowledge-sharing opportunities such as twinning, mentorship, coaching, shadowing and peer-to-peer support.
- f. Prioritize leadership development and structured support for L/NAs to take on leadership roles, particularly for groups whose voice may be muted in a specific cultural context, or share leadership to enable a phased approach to coordination whereby L/NAs assume greater responsibility of for leading coordination over time.
- g. Develop multi-year plans to build local capacities among members of HCTs, clusters, and other related IASC coordination groups, including steps for L/NAs to assume co-ordination and coordination roles. Encourage for any partnership agreement to include that partners are mutually accountable for addressing capacity strengthening recommendations.
- h. Explicitly reference institutional capacity strengthening in HNOs and in HRP sector/cluster chapters to make connection with program outcomes and funding. Make it an eligible budget line in funding applications where it is linked to achieving greater coverage and quality. Reach out to development actors who typically fund institutional development and organizational strengthening of local and national actors as L/NAs often work across the humanitarian- development – peace nexus.
- i. Ensure Cluster Lead Agencies undertake and further provide ongoing training on gender awareness/equality programming and PSEA for all cluster members to actively identify and eliminate gender discrimination/sexual harassment and barriers to women’s meaningful participation within the working environment, as well as to raise awareness of any cultural barriers, gender bias and attitudes and beliefs that may perpetuate discrimination against women. Such trainings could include inputs from L/NAs on local context and culture. Cluster Lead Agencies must promote and respect a zero-tolerance culture for all kinds of gender discrimination and/or sexual harassment. Ensure Cluster Lead Agencies periodically monitor and evaluate compliance with PSEA guidelines and zero-tolerance for discrimination.

### Indicators – Capacity strengthening

		Globally tracked	Locally tracked
<b>1</b>	% of coordination bodies that have induction packages adapted to L/NAs needs (as defined by L/NAs)		✓
<b>2</b>	% of coordination bodies (HCTs, ICCGs, Clusters) providing twinning/mentoring programmes		✓

## RESOURCING FOR COORDINATION

14. Resources are required to overcome many of the barriers L/NAs face when it comes to their participation and effective engagement. Pooled funds<sup>19</sup> (including sub-grants from other recipients) can be particularly effective in allowing local actors to obtain flexible funding that supports operations, institutional capacity, and staffing – all of which facilitate greater engagement by L/NAs within coordination structures<sup>20</sup>.

- a. Advocate for direct and flexible multi-year funding for L/NAs, where possible, including resources to support institutional capacity building for local partners as appropriate. Encourage donors to fulfil their commitments under the Grand Bargain. Coordinate among cluster partners to ensure that one single L/NA is not overwhelmed with funding/partnership offers and instead, support is equitably distributed. Take steps to address the added obstacles that L/NAs, in particular marginalized groups such as WLOs, youth groups and OPDs, face in accessing funds that enable participation in coordination – including by making funding applications available in local/national languages and, if required, providing technical support to L/NAs for the drafting and submission of funding proposals and where feasible, providing constructive feedback on unsuccessful proposals. Allocate specific funding within HRPs, pooled funds or other funding appeals for sub-national coordination structures, coordination and liaison positions within L/NAs, for NGO coordination forums as well as for accountability mechanisms. The elaboration of budgets for such dedicated funding must be done jointly with L/NAs.
- b. Dedicate funding for staffing position/s, who have the necessary local/national language skills, focused specifically on L/NA engagement and participation in humanitarian coordination mechanisms and the response more broadly.
- c. Ensure L/NAs, including WLOs, OPDs, older persons, youth-led and other specialized organizations, are adequately represented in pooled fund advisory boards and other donor governance mechanisms.
- d. Routinely track and report on disaggregated funding to highlight differences between the activities and funding of international and L/NAs and give visibility to good localisation practices.

### Indicators – Resourcing for Coordination

		Globally tracked	Locally tracked
1	# of CBPF advisory boards and review committees with L/NA members	✓	
2	# of staff hours/ or equivalent dedicated to support localisation of coordination (RC/HC Office, OCHA)		✓

<sup>19</sup> Pooled funds is used in the broadest sense, referring to CERF, CBPFs and NGO-managed pooled funds.

<sup>20</sup> See also IASC [Interim Guidance on Flexible Funding](#) and [IASC Results group 5 Humanitarian Financing](#).

**VISIBILITY**

15. L/NAs like other humanitarian actors have the right to be visible *inter alia* to, raise awareness of their contributions to humanitarian response (including their challenges, opportunities and views), mobilise funds as well as receive acknowledgement for their work. As with other humanitarian actors, L/NAs must also consider the security of their staff and the access of their programmes, when seeking visibility and recognition.

- a. In collaboration with L/NAs, ensure visibility and explicitly acknowledge and proactively support their role in reporting to donors, media and in all other public communications and foster engagement between L/NAs with donors, media and other relevant actors.
- b. Ensure visibility for L/NAs, including WLO, OPDs, and other groups, in all joint humanitarian assessment and response documents (e.g. contingency plans, HNOs and HRPs) and respective reporting, for example by explicitly referencing the role of L/NAs.

**Indicators - Visibility**

		Globally tracked	Locally tracked
<b>1</b>	% of HRPs that achieve a medium to high quality score on localisation (through an annual multi-agency scoring exercise, dependent on the multi-agency group’s approval on localisation scoring parameters)	✓	

**PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE AND HUMANITARIAN-DEVELOPMENT-PEACE COLLABORATION**

16. The quality, accountability and coherence of a humanitarian response is strengthened when L/NAs are involved in all stages of response planning and their views and perspectives are reflected in each stage of the response - emergency preparedness, response and the eventual withdrawal of international humanitarian actors. L/NAs can also effectively contribute to leveraging humanitarian-development collaboration and, where appropriate, peace collaboration – particularly social cohesion - to reduce needs, risks and vulnerabilities for affected populations. This also allows L/NAs to lead efforts for a more sustainable, locally owned response given their natural advantages in switching towards resilience and longer-term programming.

17. Efforts should be stepped up to strengthen partnerships with L/NAs and support a nationally and locally led response, especially when this response may relate to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and/or the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. There is also considerable scope to leverage response planning to influence the quality and nature of partnerships (see ‘equitable and meaningful partnerships,’ above), to strengthen both institutional and technical capacities, and to encourage equitable access to unrestricted funds for L/NAs. Localisation should therefore be integrated throughout the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC)<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> See also Child Protection AOI - Global Protection Cluster and Global Education Cluster, [Tips for Integrating Localization in the COVID-19 HNO and HRP](#), April 2020.

## Overall

- a. Facilitate workshops specifically for L/NAs, in local/national languages, to gather inputs and integrate these in all joint plans, measures and reports related to the HPC, including HNOs and HRP. Involve L/NAs in community engagement surveys to support strategy development, thereby ensuring that the voice of affected population is central to the design of operations.

## Emergency Preparedness

- a. Paying due regard to commitments under the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Sustainable Development Goals, involve L/NAs in all activities related to emergency preparedness (and vice-versa, involve HCT/clusters in all local and national activities). These activities may include risk analysis and monitoring, capacity building on disaster risk management, taking care to identify and prioritize humanitarian interventions, including inter-sectoral interventions where appropriate, reviewing existing response capacities, and filling identified preparedness gaps through the use of the Minimum and Advanced Preparedness Actions (MPAs and APAs) and national standards. Encourage L/NAs to take the lead in emergency preparedness activities.
- b. Recognize that L/NAs are themselves often affected during and after emergencies and accordingly, establish risk reduction strategies in collaboration with them.
- c. Establish or strengthen, where needed, national and subnational structures and their preparedness activities before disasters or conflicts occur.

## Needs assessment and analysis

- a. Involve L/NAs in joint intersectoral analysis, including the development of objectives and expected outcomes. Capitalize on L/NAs knowledge of local context and work with them to validate conclusions from analyses and assessments.
- b. Integrate L/NA data into analyses, including disaggregated data by sex, age and disability. Conversely, integrate relevant HCT/cluster data into locally or nationally led needs analysis.
- c. Identify and address analysis capacity needs of L/NAs.

## Strategic response planning

- a. Explicitly reference localisation practices and strategies in key planning documents, especially the HRP, and develop sectoral and intersectoral institutional capacity building strategies, where needed. Whenever possible, response plans should be developed with an exit strategy in mind for international actors.
- b. Ensure L/NAs participate in all stages of the HPC, i.e. by strengthening their knowledge about these planning tools, supporting engagement in needs assessments and intersectoral needs analysis (see previous section), reviewing

planning and other documents, submitting projects, monitoring and evaluating the humanitarian response.

- c. Ensure L/NAs are supported to contribute to 3/4/5Ws matrix and HRP reporting requirements.
- d. As appropriate, ensure key members of the HCT/Cluster Lead Agencies contribute to local or national databases and to reporting requirements.

### Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Collaboration

- a. Develop strategies to strengthen the role of L/NAs in the collaboration between humanitarian, development, and where appropriate, with peace actors<sup>22</sup>, using wherever relevant area-based approaches.
- b. Support L/NAs in contributing to the development of HDP strategies, including the development of collective outcomes <sup>23</sup>, in coordination with other forums, such as UNCTs. In parallel, key members of HCT / Cluster Lead Agencies could participate in locally or nationally led development and/or peace planning, monitoring and evaluation processes.
- c. Consider HDP collaboration particularly in environments where there are complex relationships between civil society and national authorities, and contribute to the strengthening of good governance practices and promoting civil society space.

### Indicators – Preparedness, Response and Humanitarian-Development-Peace Collaboration

		Globally tracked	Locally tracked
<b>1</b>	% IAHE (Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation) in-country advisory group members that are L/NA		✓
<b>2</b>	% L/NAs that are organisations contributing to 3/4/5Ws matrix		✓
<b>3</b>	% members of Joint Intersectoral Analysis Framework teams who are L/NAs		✓

### AREAS OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND MONITORING

18. While humanitarian actors recognize that their ultimate accountability is to affected populations, members of humanitarian coordination structures also commit to other areas of accountability that are needed to accelerate the humanitarian reform process in general and the localisation agenda in particular. Country-level accountability mechanisms should strengthen shared and mutual responsibilities of all humanitarian actors.

<sup>22</sup> See [Engaging with States in Conflict and Armed Violence Settings – CP Area of Responsibility](#).

<sup>23</sup> See IASC [Light guidance on collective outcomes](#), 2020.

- a. Support L/NAs in their accountability to their constituencies and hence, their responsibility to involve them in advance of key decisions, to fairly and transparently represent their views, and to adequately inform them of discussions and decisions coming out of coordination processes.
- b. Ensure localisation is integrated into accountability mechanisms for HCT members (HC performance appraisals, HCT compacts and HCT annual workplans). At every performance review, include an assessment of HCT members performance against localisation indicators and, where failing, create a plan to take corrective measures in areas for improvement on localization. Establish regular consultation mechanisms and feedback loops (including hotlines to register concerns anonymously) to ensure HCT accountability to L/NAs as part of efforts to ensure accountability to affected populations. Support joint advocacy plans to promote transparency and accountability.
- c. Include monitoring and assessment of progress on localization and coordination in the annual coordination architecture review, cluster reviews, Peer 2 Peer support and any other related reviews and evaluations, in order to assess and monitor respective advancement and to take corrective measures, where needed. This requires, as much as possible, collecting and analyzing disaggregated data by gender, race/ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity, among others.
- d. Use, where feasible, localisation self-assessments<sup>24</sup>, localisation dashboards, perception surveys and partnership assessment tools<sup>25</sup> for monitoring progress at country-level (relying to the extent possible on existing global data collection processes, e.g. coordination mapping done by OCHA on an annual basis). Apply the indicators of this guidance for monitoring. Consider doing an annual, joint L/NAs and HCT/cluster 'satisfaction review' about the effectiveness of coordination structures, which differentiates the experience/responses of L/NAs to identify areas of improvement <sup>26</sup>.
- e. Leverage L/NA expertise and experiences to promote accountability to affected populations (AAP) and to inform the development and coordination of AAP practices and policies, including the design of collective feedback mechanisms. Ensure that L/NAs can share their best practices and lessons in relevant coordination structures. Link L/NAs to existing collective feedback mechanisms, thereby ensuring that L/NAs have access to and make use of common services.
- f. As needed, strengthen capacities and mechanisms for internal reporting of abuse, exploitation, harassment and corruption, among others, taking due regard to ensure that the administrative burden of upwards accountability is not overwhelming for L/NAs.

<sup>24</sup> See for example: NEAR, [Localisation Performance Measurement Framework](#), 2019 and Humanitarian Advisory Group and PIANGO, [Measuring Localisation: Framework and Tools](#), 2019.

<sup>25</sup> See the [Principles of Partnership self-assessment tool](#) and NEAR's [Localisation Performance Measurement System](#).

<sup>26</sup> Additional guidance may be developed to establish standard methodologies for perception-based surveys and/or satisfaction surveys.

## Glossary

This list is not comprehensive, it includes the names of United Nations Secretariat departments and offices as well as United Nations agencies, funds and programmes featured in this guidance. For a full list of entities in the United Nations System, please refer to [https://www.un.org/en/pdfs/un\\_system\\_chart.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/pdfs/un_system_chart.pdf). It also includes acronyms for common terminology used in this report as well as definitions or hyperlinks for certain terms used within the text of this guidance.

### Organizations

- **DCO** United Nations Development Coordination Office
- **OCHA** United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
- **OECD** Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- **IASC** Inter-agency Standing Committee
- **UNHCR** Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

### Terminology

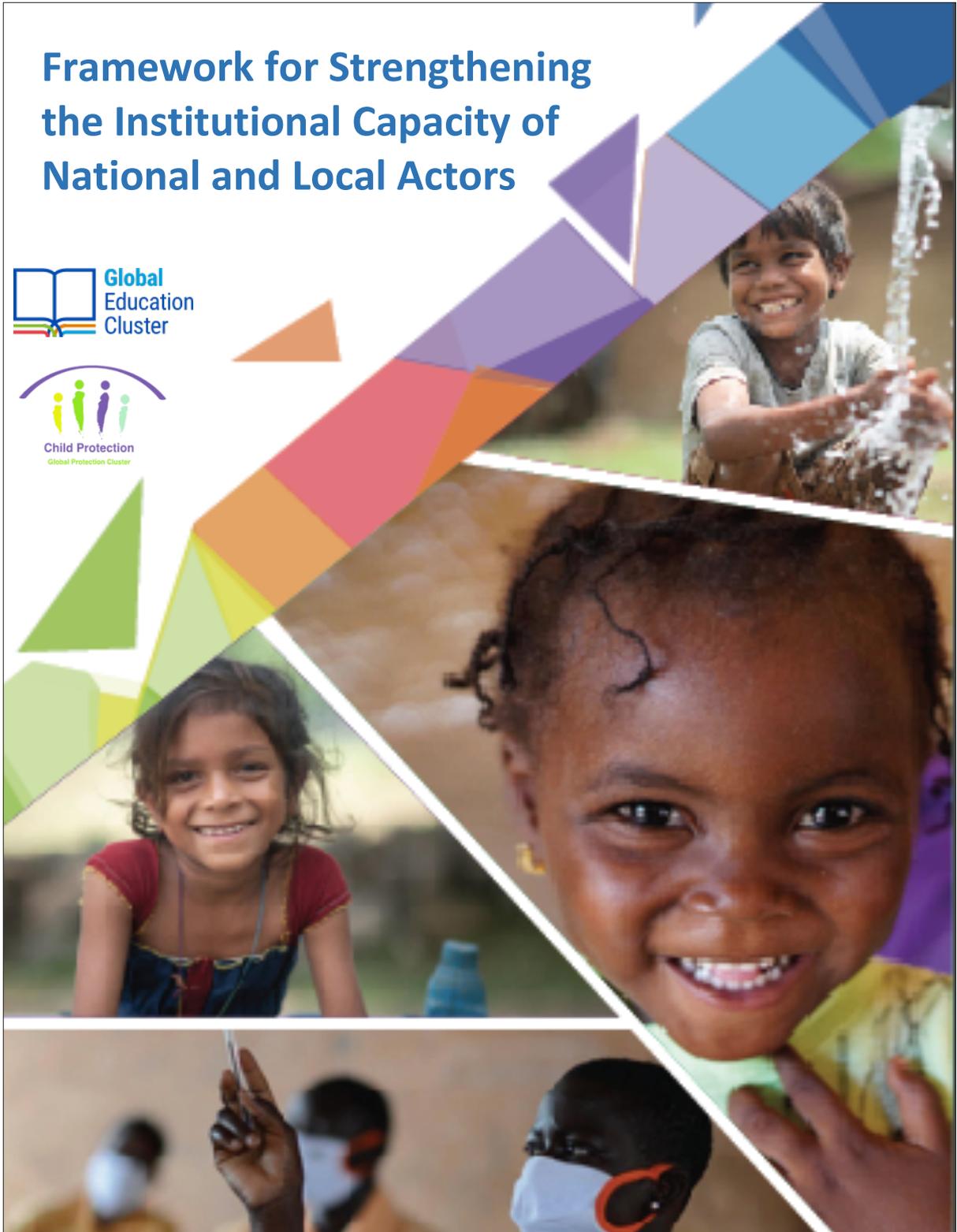
- **AAP** Accountability to affected people
- **CSO** Civil society organization
- **CBPF** [Country-Based Pooled Funds](#)
- **CERF** [Central Emergency Response Fund](#)
- **GBV** Gender-based violence
- **HC** Humanitarian Coordinator
- **HCT** Humanitarian Country Team – an HCT is set up at the outset of a humanitarian crisis to bring together operationally relevant actors in a humanitarian response. This will include country directors (or equivalent) of relevant UN agencies, NGOs and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement. The HCT is chaired by the RC (or HC, if designated) and is the highest-level international humanitarian body in the country. It is primarily responsible for strategic decision-making, and to facilitate the centrality of protection and adequate, efficient and needs-based response and preparedness. (Source: [Leadership in Humanitarian Action: handbook for the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator](#))
- **HPC** [Humanitarian Programme Cycle](#) – the HPC is a coordinated series of actions undertaken to help prepare for, manage and deliver humanitarian response. It consists of five elements coordinated in a seamless manner, with one step logically building on the previous and leading to the next. The elements of the HPC are as follows: needs assessment and analysis; strategic response planning; resource mobilization; implementation and monitoring; and operational review and evaluation.
- **HRP** Humanitarian Response Plan
- **IDP** Internally displaced Persons
- **ICCG/ISCG** Inter-Cluster/Sector Coordination Group –the group of IASC-Cluster/Sector Coordinators (assigned by Cluster Lead/Co-lead Agencies) taking decisions together, with a representative of OCHA acting as the chair (Source: [HPC Step-by-Step Practical Guide for Humanitarian Needs Overviews, Humanitarian Response Plans and Updates](#))
- **IFI** International Financial Institution
- **INGOs** International non-governmental organizations
- **JIAF** [Joint Intersectoral Analysis Framework](#)

- **Intersectoral** – approaches that highlight the importance of system thinking and consider issues as a whole, across sectors, and the range of factors that collectively influences humanitarian conditions or how situations in one sector influence or impact upon one or more other sectors. Focused on intersectoral interventions and coordination (SDGs 2030, health 2020). The objective is to build synergies across sectors so as to tackle complex issues using inter/cross sectors interventions and achieving inter-related humanitarian/development goals and targets (Source: [Joint Intersectoral Analysis Framework Guidance](#))
- **L/NAs** Local and national actors (please see paragraph 5 of this guidance to see listing for this category).
- **MPAs** Minimum preparedness actions
- **NGO** Non-Governmental Organization
- **ODA** Overseas Development Assistance
- **OPD** Organization of persons with disabilities
- **PSEA** [Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#)
- **SDG** [Sustainable Development Goals](#)
- **WLO** Women-led organization – an IASC definition currently does not exist, however, many women-led organizations accept that WLOs are any non-governmental, not for profit and non-political organization where two-thirds of its board (including the Chair) and management and staff/volunteers (including the Executive Director) are female, and it focuses on women and girls as a primary target of programming. The Grand Bargain defines a women-led organization is one whose leadership is principally made up of women, demonstrated by 50 per cent or more occupying senior leadership positions at both board and staff level, although this is being challenged.
- **WRO** Women’s rights organization – closely linked to WLO, there is no formal IASC definition for these. However, the [OECD defines WROs](#) as civil society organizations with an overt women’s or girls’ rights, gender equality or feminist purpose.



## 5. Framework for Strengthening the Institutional Capacity of National and Local Actors

### Framework for Strengthening the Institutional Capacity of National and Local Actors



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## 1. Introduction

### Background

The 2016 World Humanitarian Summit recognized the centrality of local (national and sub-national) actors in humanitarian responses. Since then, the Grand Bargain initiative – initiated at the World Humanitarian Summit – has had up to 62 signatories from humanitarian organizations, and donors have made a series of pledges and commitments captured in 10 workstreams, including increasing investment towards strengthening the capacities of local and national partners in humanitarian preparedness, response and coordination.<sup>1</sup> Workstream 2 of the Grand Bargain emphasizes localization as a priority and acknowledging that

*“National and local responders including governments, communities and local civil society are often the first to respond to crises, remaining in the communities they serve before, during and after emergencies. Grand Bargain Signatories are committed to making principled humanitarian action as local as possible and as international as necessary. They recognize that international humanitarian actors play a vital role and engage with local and national responders in a spirit of partnership with the aim of reinforcing rather than replacing local and national capacities.”*

In addition to this acknowledgement, investing in the development of the technical and institutional capacity of local and national actors is one of the first steps to advancing effective localization. This acknowledgement is emphasized by the commitment of the Grand Bargain Workstream 2 to “increase and support multi-year investment in the institutional capacities of local and national responders, including preparedness, response and coordination capacities, especially in fragile contexts and where communities are vulnerable to armed conflicts, disasters, recurrent outbreaks and the effects of climate change. We should achieve this through collaboration with development partners and incorporate capacity strengthening in partnership agreements.” This investment will help local and national partners achieve the capability to fulfil their core functions and to better respond to humanitarian crises.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on humanitarian responses, whereby the containment and safety measures enacted have dramatically reduced the footprint of international actors across all of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs’ (OCHA) active humanitarian responses.<sup>2</sup> This vacuum has meant a consequent reliance on local actors as the primary providers of humanitarian response services at an equivalent output level to what the international humanitarian actors would normally do.

Local actors (national and sub-national) are from the affected populations, and their physical, social and linguistic proximity positions them as indispensable participants, partners and leaders in humanitarian responses. They have better access and deeper relationships with the population – and a far more nuanced understanding of the history and politics of local areas affected by crises. When strengthened, national and sub-national systems can expedite preparedness, respond faster, be cost-effective and learn from doing with an eye to future crises.

<sup>1</sup> On more support and funding tools for local and national responders in the Grand Bargain Workstream 2, please see <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/more-support-and-funding-tools-for-local-and-national-responders>.

<sup>2</sup> Please see OCHA’s official humanitarian response [website](#).

## Localization in Coordination

The Global Protection Cluster, the Child Protection and the Gender-Based Violence Areas of Responsibility and the Global Education Cluster envisage more inclusive and participatory coordination mechanisms as having huge potential for a system-wide shift.<sup>3</sup> This is because in many countries, local actors constitute up to 75 per cent of coordination group members. In addition, local actors are usually the first responders and continue to operate when international agencies withdraw. “Country coordination groups lead the development of national humanitarian response strategies; and they help government, donors and pooled fund managers decide when and where to invest advocacy, funding and other resources.” As a consequence, the coordination system has both an obligation to promote localization and an opportunity – to support agencies to take successful localization pilots to scale; to mobilize adequate financial and human resources; secure structural or systemic change and ultimately, strengthen the humanitarian response.<sup>4</sup>

The Protection and Education Clusters developed the conceptual framework for localization in coordination with five dimensions, shown below:

### A conceptual framework for localization in protection and education coordination

Dimension	What this means for coordination?
<b>Governance and Decision-Making</b>	Local actors should have equitable opportunities to play leadership and co-leadership roles at national and sub-national levels and have a seat at the table when strategic decisions are made (for example, in Strategic Advisory Groups or Steering Committees).
<b>Participation and Influence</b>	Local actors should have the opportunity to influence the Area of Responsibility/Sector’s decisions. To do this, they need equitable access to information and analysis on coverage and results, etc., and the opportunity and skills to effectively and credibly convey their thoughts and ideas.
<b>Partnerships</b>	Coordinators should be promoting a culture of principled partnership, both in the way a coordination group interacts with its members and how members interact with each other. In some cases, this requires transitions from subcontracting to more equitable and transparent partnerships, including recognizing the value of non-monetary contributions by local actors, such as networks or knowledge.
<b>Funding</b>	Where they have the institutional capacity to manage their own funds, local actors should be able to access funds directly. Local actors should receive a greater share of the humanitarian resources, including pooled funds, where applicable.
<b>Institutional Capacity</b>	While technical capacity strengthening is important, coordination groups should also actively encourage more systematic and coordinated opportunities to receive support to strengthen operational functions, as part of the overall sector strategy to scale up services.

<sup>3</sup> Protection Cluster and Education: Localization in Coordination Summary, 2017.

[https://www.dropbox.com/s/yu6f1i6z6ezgc1b/2\\_Localisation\\_in\\_Coordination\\_Summary.pdf?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/yu6f1i6z6ezgc1b/2_Localisation_in_Coordination_Summary.pdf?dl=0)

<sup>4</sup> Global Protection Cluster, the Child Protection and the Gender-Based Violence Areas of Responsibility and the Global Education Cluster: Localization in Coordination Summary, 2017

While there has been some notable investment in the first four dimensions (governance and decision-making, participation and influence, partnerships, and funding) in the conceptual framework, there has not been as much focused attention on institutional capacity. Hence, the development of this framework to bring institutional capacity development to the core of localization in coordination.

### Problem Statement

Capacity development for local partners in coordination groups is commonly focused on learning events that improve the technical skills of the thematic focus area. Conversations with national, local and community-based organizations, indicate the need for developing their capacities beyond their technical competencies. For instance, in the assessment of the Child Protection Area of Responsibility's (CPAoR) localization initiative, several key informants noted that the majority of capacity-building has focused on one-off child protection technical skills training. In contrast, long-term mentoring and a focus on institutional capacity-building is needed to advance the localization agenda. Limited institutional capacity to absorb funding is recognized as a critical challenge, yet in 2019 only four coordination groups (13 per cent of the total) reported conducting institutional or organizational development trainings.<sup>5</sup> A significant number of local actors face weak operational capacity and a lack of internal controls. This key challenge makes it difficult for local actors to provide the level of financial accountability required by international donors.

### This Framework

The goal of this framework is to support local and national members of the Child Protection and Education Country coordination groups to improve their operational capacity in key areas. This investment is expected to lead to measurable results in achieving their organization's goals and objectives. Organizations can continuously develop their ability to respond with efficiency and effectiveness in larger, more complex situations and to reach more people who require humanitarian assistance. Since 2017 the Protection and Education Clusters have been working to increase the coordinated participation of local and national actors using the conceptual framework mentioned above.

The **objective of this framework** is to provide:

1. CP AoR and Education Country Coordinators with information to develop institutional capacity development strategies and integrate them into the Humanitarian Programme Cycle.
2. Humanitarian organizations and donor investment opportunities to support the institutional capacity development of Workstream 2 of the Grand Bargain commitments. The framework provides information on the overall cost of the different components of institutional capacity improvement that will bring national and local operational capacity into the foreground.
3. International humanitarian organizations with information on how they can meet the Grand Bargain Localization Workstream 2 obligations and act towards strengthening the institutional capacity of their partners and other local actors. Working with their local partners, humanitarian organizations can identify areas for immediate capacity strengthening and develop a road map of support for sustaining the growth of partners in a medium- to long-term manner.

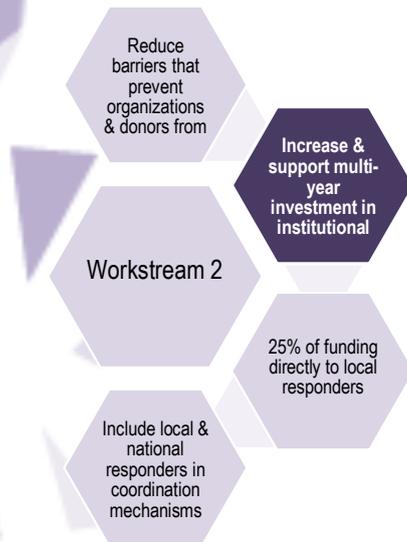
In terms of implementation, this framework comprises a structured set of processes to identify institutional capacity gaps or needs and offers options and opportunities to fill them. It includes information on how to apply acquired knowledge, skills and techniques; how to monitor performance

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., one country for financial management; one for leadership and management; three for project design; and one for programme management.

and how to integrate continuous institutional capacity development efforts into programmes and operations. The framework is a living document and will have periodic reviews and updates to support monitoring and continuous institutional capacity development. The first edition provides information on the current priority areas identified by national and local organizations to build their operational capacities. Updates will provide information on significant new priority themes for strengthening institutional capacity and a wider choice of training and development forms.

The framework is divided into two sections: The first section focuses on unpacking institutional capacity strengthening, integrating institutional capacity in the Humanitarian Programme Cycle and understanding the phased approach to capacity strengthening efforts. The second section is the annex with information on possible components of institutional capacity strengthening efforts.

Figure 1: Localization as envisaged under Workstream 2



## 2. Unpacking Institutional Capacity Strengthening of National and Sub-national Actors

To achieve the aim of Workstream 2 of the Grand Bargain<sup>6</sup>, focused institutional capacity investment will allow local organizations to attain the required technical and operational skills. The empowerment of local organizations is further emphasized in the Inter-agency Steering Committee (IASC) Interim Guidance: Localization and COVID-19 Response.<sup>7</sup> It stipulates that strengthening the organizational capacity of local partners will increase their capability to deliver timely humanitarian response services at the same scale as traditional international humanitarian agencies. Increased immediate investment in personnel skills and establishing or upgrading systems will allow organizations to scale up delivery of professional humanitarian assistance. This investment will pave the way for organizations' long-term capability to respond to current and new crises that may arise.

With increased and sustained investment in local operational infrastructure, local partners can take on increasingly complex tasks. With strengthened confidence in local organizations' institutional capacity, they are more likely to directly access funding from country-based pooled funds and other donors – the very aim of the Grand Bargain Workstream 2.

Traditional capacity development efforts have been programmatic/technical in nature – directed at local response and individuals at the periphery and not the institutional levels of national and local responders. Concurrently, efforts to strengthen capacity have centred on delivering short, boilerplate trainings to check humanitarian minimum-standard markers. Until now, overall response continues to be managed by large international agencies funded by equally large donors, who in turn carry out these trainings in perpetuity as “refreshers.” Consistently integrating institutional capacity strengthening into the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) implies sustained and comprehensive capacity strengthening efforts, based on identified gaps, needs, capacities and strengths.

The Localization Workstream of the Grand Bargain makes clear this must change. Capacity development practitioners increasingly recognize the importance of working at the organizational systems building level to ensure multiple competencies are strengthened. Consequently, enhanced capacity is brought to bear in complex – and often protracted – crises with the goal that local agencies are invested with the skills to respond in a long-term manner.<sup>8</sup> This includes adequate investment targeting, improved personnel skills, upgrading or establishing efficient governance, financial and human resource systems and procedures.

The aim of localization is also to ensure a larger share of the humanitarian coordination space is allocated to experienced and technically sound local actors who bring the added value of indigenous knowledge to a response.

<sup>6</sup> See <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/more-support-and-funding-tools-for-local-and-national-responders>

<sup>7</sup> See <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/inter-agency-standing-committee/iasc-interim-guidance-localisation-and-covid-19-response-developed>.

<sup>8</sup> See [www.betterevaluation.org/en/themes/capacitydevelopment](http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/themes/capacitydevelopment).

The outcomes of the investment in strengthening the institutional capacity of sub-national and national actors will be demonstrated by:

- Improved knowledge, skills and competencies of organizational staff through training, mentoring and coaching support.
- Change in the attitudes and practices of staff who have received training, mentoring and coaching support. For instance, staff who have benefited from financial management training, mentoring and coaching should be able to implement an updated or new financial policy.
- Staff who have received capacity training will be able to cascade the skills and knowledge learned to colleagues in administration, supply chain management and procurement.
- Changes in the organizational policies and procedures that will demonstrate the organization's mode of operation. This may include, but is not limited to, changes in governance, financial management, fundraising and human resource management, leadership and so forth. In financial management, these changes will be realized through timely financial reporting, retirement of funds, proper use of bank transfers, monthly reconciliations, etc. There will be increased efficiency, clear decision-making procedures and stronger internal controls.
- Ultimately, there will be a marked change in the way the target organization manages projects to achieve its main objectives. An organization with stronger internal control systems is more likely to be more effective and efficient in implementing humanitarian response. It is also likely that such an organization will quickly scale up its operations and take more projects when required.

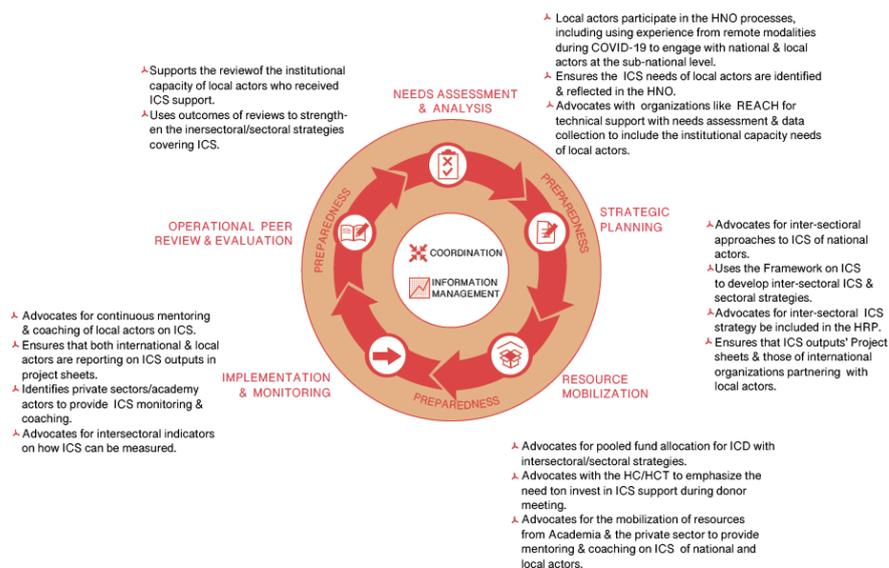
### 3. Integrating Institutional Capacity Strengthening into the Humanitarian Programme Cycle

Every stage of the existing HPC should consider institutional capacity needs of national and sub-national organizations. For instance, the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) identifies and assesses affected populations and their needs. At this strategic time, it is critical to ensure that the institutional capacity of the national and local organizations is highlighted throughout the stages of the HPC.

The diagram below illustrates how institutional capacity strengthening can be brought in to the HPC.

- **Needs assessment and analysis:** Concerted efforts will be required to ensure that local actors participate in this process and their institutional capacity needs and gaps are identified at the same time as those of the affected populations are being identified.
- **Strategic planning:** The capacity needs, and gaps identified during the needs assessments are reflected in the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), making the implementation of the capacity strengthening plans possible.
- **Resource mobilization:** Clusters advocate for allocation of funds, including country-based pooled funds (CBPF) for implementing institutional capacity strengthening plans.
- **Implementation and monitoring:** There will be continuous monitoring during implementation of the capacity development plans and provision of additional support as required to achieve them.
- **Operational Peer Review and Evaluation:** The outcomes of the institutional capacity development evaluation will be used to inform further investments in strengthening the operational capacities of local and national actors.

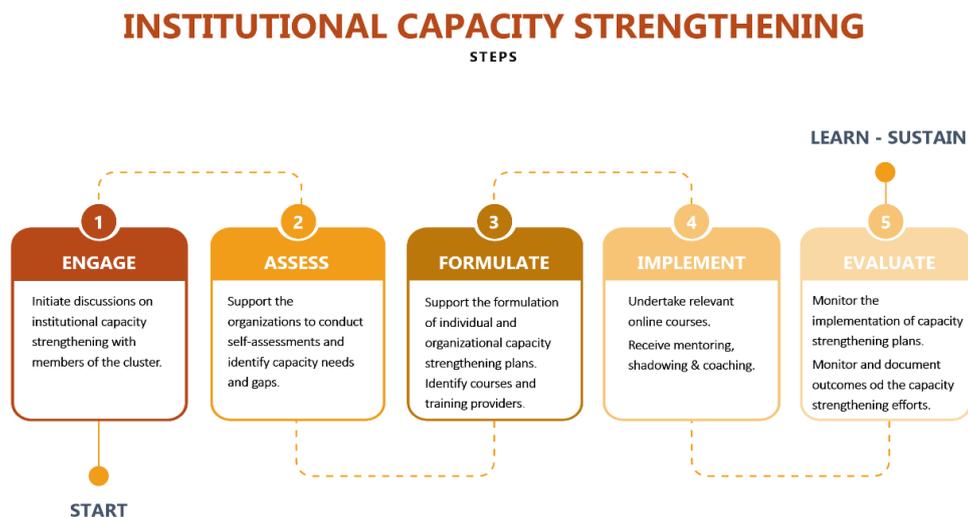
Figure 2: Integrating Institutional Capacity into the HPC



Integrating institutional capacity strengthening into the HPC provides opportunities for clusters to work together to accelerate the improvement of operational capacities of local actors. Improved operational capacities and strong internal controls will translate into improved programmatic response. Refer to the sample [project template](#) for institutional capacity strengthening relative to the HPC.

**Information and Communication Technology (ICT) enhanced engagement:** Owing to COVID-19 and to keep this framework on track, the proposed immediate and medium-term institutional capacity development initiatives will be largely online, and adequate ICT will be a pre-requisite for effective Institutional Capacity Strengthening. Thus, initial assessments (and possible investment) in information technology infrastructure will be a part of the needs assessment stage. Local and national organizations require smartphones and Internet connectivity for content-rich engagement with trainers, partners and stakeholders. It is also understood that some personnel will require basic computer literacy skills for research, word-processing, spreadsheets and use of other applications at the outset.

Figure 3: Institutional Capacity Strengthening Steps



**Step 1 Engage: initiate discussion of institutional capacity strengthening issues**

Issues related to capacities of local and national members of clusters have dominated and continue to dominate cluster coordination meetings across the board. Often these discussions have focused on technical/programmatic capacity. International organizations who are members of clusters who partner with local actors have often provided trainings to improve technical capacities of their partners. Discussions on capacity now need to focus on institutional capacity needs of the local actors across the board, not just limited to the cluster strategies. Clusters should provide opportunities for local actors to discuss their operation capacity needs and exchange ideas on how these needs can be met. International members of the clusters should discuss ways they can contribute to the enhancement of the local actors’ operational capacities. There should also be discussions on how local actors can contribute to capacities of international actors relative to local knowledge and needs of affected populations. This complementary approach will enhance the principles of partnership.<sup>9</sup> Wherever

<sup>9</sup> see [www.icvanetwork.org/system/files/versions/Principles%20of%20Partnership%20English.pdf](http://www.icvanetwork.org/system/files/versions/Principles%20of%20Partnership%20English.pdf).

feasible, the discussion with local actors on their institutional capacity strengthening can be led by institutional capacity providers.

The outcomes of the discussions on institutional capacity of local actors can then be fed into organizational HNO/HRP processes where this is applicable. This will allow for the initial identification of capacity needs and gaps during the HNO and the development of strategies to address the gaps during the HRP process. The outcomes of these discussions can also be fed into partnership agreements between international organizations and their local partners.

### **Step 2 Assess: support the assessment of institutional capacity needs and gaps**

Once the institutional capacity needs and gaps have been identified, an in-depth capacity assessment will be needed. From this stage onward, the local actors participating in the institutional capacity initiative will require the support of international organizations to either support the next step in the process or identify organizational development experts/firms to lead these processes.

The organizational capacity assessments will examine management structure, financial and resource management systems, human resources and logistics management and the effect on the overall organizational performance. This in-depth assessment will also help to determine the organizational potential to apply new technologies or skill sets.<sup>10</sup> The individual staff capacity assessments will consider the performance of staff and/or units to determine if they have the skills and competencies to perform critical tasks. There are several tools that may be used in conducting organizational or sector specific capacity assessment of humanitarian actors such as:

- [Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool \(OCAT\)](#)<sup>11</sup>
- [CADRI Tool by the Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative \(CADRI\)](#)<sup>12</sup>
- [Organizational Capacity Assessment \(OCA\)](#)<sup>13</sup>
- [The Simple Capacity Assessment Tool \(SCAT\)](#)<sup>14</sup>

Local actors participating in the organizational capacity assessment will have the opportunity to access external, independent or specialized consultants, or training service providers. Consultations through external experts can provide a more comprehensive view of the organization's potential for expansion and growth.

### **Step 3 Formulate: capacity strengthening plans**

Local actors will play a leading role in the development of the plans with the support of experts if required. The institutional capacity assessment will a) identify, categorize and prioritize capacity gaps; b) establish the extent of training/learning levels needed; and c) recommend internal controls,

<sup>10</sup> Human and Institutional Capacity Development Handbook, A USAID Model for Sustainable Performance Improvement (2010). [https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNADW783.pdf](https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADW783.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Please see [ALNAP](#). The Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT) is a standard survey completed by key people within an organization and was initially developed by McKinsey & Company to assess their operational capacity and identify strengths and areas for improvement.

<sup>12</sup> Please see [CADRI](#), a 20-member global consortia working towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by providing countries with capacity development services to help them reduce climate and disaster risk with sector specific guides for capacity assessments.

<sup>13</sup> Please See [USAID](#) Learning Lab. OCA is a structured tool for a facilitated self-assessment of an organization's capacity followed by action planning for capacity improvements.

<sup>14</sup> This is an example of an assessment tool.

restructuring/remodelling or other operational materials and tools. The organizational development experts or firms will use this information to discuss with the local actors and agree on organizational and staff capacity development plans. These plans will contain suggested training courses, timeline and budgets. These plans can be the basis for the development of strategies for strengthening the institutional capacity of local actors. These strategies can be provided to the HRP where applicable or incorporated into partnership agreements between international and local partners.

These plans will include mandatory trainings that will enable local organizations to interact with humanitarian donors and have greater engagement at the coordination level. The capacity enhancement framework will facilitate the following:

1. National and local organizations that are seeking qualification for Harmonized Cash Transfers (HACT)<sup>15</sup> must conduct a macro assessment to determine the organization's financial management capacity. This can be done in tandem with the institutional capacity assessments. Both identify opportunities to improve internal systems and processes, which are a condition for increased funding towards capacity-building and scaling up their operations.
2. International and local humanitarian organizations must go through OCHAs Due Diligence<sup>16</sup> process before applying for funding, including pooled funds at country level. The Due Diligence assessments confirm if an organization has the required operational systems and processes in place and opens up opportunities to appeal for other humanitarian funding opportunities.
3. Through the UN Partner Portal,<sup>17</sup> the UN seeks to partner with organizations with proven management practices, good governance, transparency, accountability and successful financial management.

#### Box: Training Domain Options included in the Framework

The Annex of this Framework provides information about the various stages and training domain options that the CP AoR and Global Education Cluster GEC propose for institutional capacity development under the Localization Workstream 2:

a) Descriptions of key/priority areas for institutional capacity strengthening; the key elements of the work area and the relevance it has towards institutional capacity development; and basic guidance on establishing or strengthening the priority area.

b) A compiled list ([catalogue](#)) of learning and development opportunities, recommended structure, and cost for the recommended forms of training and development.

c) A list of suggested training and development service providers who can be pre-selected and commissioned to support the training development cycle.

#### Step 4 Implement: capacity strengthening plans

The local actors participating in the capacity strengthening activities will be at the forefront of implementing the mutually agreed organizational and individual staff development plans. The local

<sup>15</sup> UNDGs Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT) Framework

<sup>16</sup> [Grants Management System \(GMS\) Due Diligence. See also the GMS Overview \(https://gms.unocha.org/content/grants-management-system-gms-overview?plid=466\)](#)

<sup>17</sup> [UN Partner Portal](#)

actors will make decision on readiness for implementing the plans. They will make decisions on resources and the choice of the experts to engage. The local actors will also decide whether they would like to embark on this process as individual organizations or would like to work as a consortium and benefit from peer learning opportunities.

### **Online Courses and Resources<sup>18</sup>**

Several organizations and institutes offer free online courses or at a minimal fee in a wide range of specialized topics for humanitarian NGOs, notably [OCHA](#).<sup>19</sup> Additionally, the CP AoR and the GEC have assembled a [catalogue](#) of recommended institutional capacity strengthening providers to this framework. The catalogue offers a range of courses from basic to advanced and certifiable.

### **Mentoring and Coaching Services**

Professional (in-person or online) mentoring and coaching services are essential to help staff apply their skills and manage the organizational systems and policies within their respective domains. Online courses range from a few hours to less than two weeks. Mentoring and coaching options can include on-the-job learning, expert secondment or shadowing in conjunction with the self-paced courses.

Mentoring identifies skills and competencies for further development and helps shape productive relationships across the organization's functions. Coaching and shadowing allow for professionals to be deployed in an observatory role to ensure that learning is applied professionally and appropriately. Select specialized service providers or partnerships can also be used with either UN agencies or international and national organizations to provide mentoring and coaching.

The level of capacity-building investment needed will be based on a [capacity assessment](#) to identify areas and skills that should be improved. Country Coordinators will use this information to cluster organizations according to their competencies and levels of capacity for mentoring, coaching and training. This widens the reach of national and local actors, for example, by clustering 2–3 organizations with minimum capacities, or 3–4 organizations with basic but weak systems. Clustering organizations fosters peer learning, longer term peer support and allowing more organizations to receive support within a short period. In addition, help desks (Arabic, French and Spanish) will identify regional mentoring and coaching service providers who may be contracted to provide continuous support to several organizations simultaneously.<sup>20</sup> For example, organizations that already have a financial policy but have gaps in financial management may require a shorter period for mentoring and coaching.

For organizations with weak or no functional systems or structures, introducing new systems or management tools will occur alongside training and staff mentoring. For example, finance staff receive practical mentoring support when financial accounting tools such as excel accounting sheets or ledger books are being introduced. Here, the mentoring and coaching support will be extended depending on the organizational and individual capacity development plan. A mentoring and coaching schedule will consist of the induction and application phases of new skills and techniques, followed by a period of monitoring their application or possible advanced training or systems introduction.

### **Mentoring and coaching service providers available for national and local organizations:**

<sup>18</sup> Internet connectivity may create challenges in accessing online courses; hence, on page 8 of the framework, there is an explanation on assessing the local partners' IT infrastructure, and support strengthening this before implementing the capacity strengthening plans.

<sup>19</sup> The most comprehensive example of this is OCHA's [gateway for humanitarian training opportunities](#).

<sup>20</sup> CP AoR and GEC Helpdesks are now operational in multiple languages.

- a) At the global level, organizations such as [Micromentor](#),<sup>21</sup> [Humentum](#)<sup>22</sup> and the [Global Mentoring Initiative](#)<sup>23</sup> offer humanitarian organizations mentoring and coaching services for institutional capacity strengthening. The mentoring and coaching services can be online or face to face or both.
- b) Private sector organizations such as KPMG, Deloitte and Haskins provide tailored mentoring and coaching services. They include shadowing and on-the-job training. Most require a fee, and a few services are offered at no cost depending on the relationship between the private sector organization and the national and local organization. These services can be online or face to face or both.
- c) International organizations provide coaching and mentoring services to their national and local partners, often by international organizations' staff; for example, operations, finance, human resource or reports officers provide on-the-job training to the national or local partners on site. The operations staff of the international NGO (INGO) provide considerable technical knowledge to local partners to build their systems and structures. Additional funding to INGOs earmarked specifically for mentoring and coaching can further develop and strengthen the systems, structures and procedures.
- d) Local actors, particularly national NGOs with more efficient operational systems and structures, can mentor and coach local organizations. This can be through shadowing, on-the-job training, or staff exchanges, where a local organization staff works for some time at the national NGO or vice versa. Like INGOs, national NGOs would also require funding to provide mentoring and coaching services to local organizations.
- e) Consulting firms or organizations in the region or countries experiencing a humanitarian crisis will offer both online and face-to-face mentoring and coaching services at a fee. These consultancy firms are flexible and can provide well-suited services to even community-based organizations and community-based networks. They will work with them throughout the process and in local languages, too.

An array of capacity strengthening methods can be adopted among partners in each thematic area, including coaching, communities of practice and modular training courses. A full list of these and other options can be found [here](#).

The capacity strengthening process will enhance the effectiveness of these efforts by taking a network approach to the individual, organizational and institutional levels and integrating capacity strengthening into each. It will set forth specific benchmark indicators while monitoring and evaluating progress towards achieving them. Measurement will be specifically linked to sustained performance across whatever capacity enhancement needs are identified – from finance, to programmes and operations, to talent management and to individual competencies themselves to deliver results.

### **Step 5 Monitor: the implementation of capacity strengthening efforts**

There will be two levels of monitoring the capacity development efforts: a) monitoring performed during implementation of the capacity development plans, and b) monitoring the outcomes of the capacity strengthening efforts.

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<sup>21</sup> [www.micromentor.org/](http://www.micromentor.org/)

<sup>22</sup> [www.humentum.org/](http://www.humentum.org/)

<sup>23</sup> [www.gmentor.org/](http://www.gmentor.org/)

**a) Monitoring the implementation of the capacity strengthening plans**

Local partners will discuss and agree with the mentoring and coaching experts/advisers on monitoring of performance of individual staff who are receiving the training support. These experts/advisers will provide additional support and identify challenges in the learning or application of the learning. These monitoring activities will include supporting:

- Management and staff in reviewing the expected tasks, milestones and timelines, and track their performance.
- Staff who receive training or mentoring and coaching support in cascading the training to other colleagues.
- Organizations in developing options for horizontal and vertical growth for staff, which can improve staff retention.
- Group learning sessions for members of coordination mechanisms to learn from their experiences or solve specific and common operational problems.
- Members of units or personnel from other organizations with similar capacity gaps.

Local partners will discuss and agree with the mentoring and coaching advisers on monitoring changes in the performance of organizations participating in the institutional capacity strengthening initiatives. The experts/advisers will monitor how the learned skills are being used and whether this is improving the operational systems of the organizations.

**b) Monitoring the outcomes of the capacity strengthening efforts**

The focus here will be on the short-term and long-term changes in performance and operational efficiency. The short-term targets are the changes that are expected to be seen in everyday actions and accomplishments of organizations. It includes cost-effectiveness, strong internal controls and quality of services provided to affected communities. Long-term targets would include how well the organization is achieving its objectives and its ability to scale up and the ability to effectively respond to humanitarian crises. In the long run, the communities affected where the organization is working would demonstrate their appreciation for the services provided.

In monitoring capacity development efforts, advisers will work with the organizations to set targets around what organizations wish to accomplish. This creates incentives to develop capacity in ways that work for the organization. It means going beyond the development of policies such as finance policy or human resources policy. For example, how an organization is implementing finance policy to strengthen financial reporting and how is accountability assured? Does the detailed human resources manual result in better staff management?

It takes time for capacity strengthening support to change actual performance. When the mentoring and coaching advisers are working with the organizations to set the targets, it is important to acknowledge the lag time for capacity development efforts to yield change. There are tools available for tracking organizational capacity strengthening in the development contexts that the mentoring and coaching advisers can adapt to organizational development in humanitarian contexts.

**4. Roles, Responsibilities and Ownership**

**Global CP AoR and GEC who are leading the efforts to develop this framework will:**

- Advocate for other global clusters to support efforts for the institutional capacity strengthening of local and national actors.
- Advocate with donors and raise funds to support institutional capacity strengthening efforts.

- Advocate with international organizations to commit to strengthening the institutional capacity of their local partners.
- Provide guidance to country coordination groups for supporting institutional capacity strengthening.

**Country coordinating groups whose role is to ensure coverage and quality of services in humanitarian contexts will:**

- Ensure the participation of local actors in the HNO/HRP process at national and sub-national levels.
- Facilitate the identification of institutional capacity needs and gaps and ensure that these are reflected in the HNO.
- Advocate for allocation of funds to support institutional capacity strengthening efforts.
- Develop strategies for institutional capacity strengthening of local partners who are members of their clusters.
- Advocate for inclusion of institutional capacity strengthening activities in the HRP.
- Develop the selection criteria for the local members of the cluster who will participate in the capacity strengthening efforts.
- Advocate with the international members of the clusters to commit to strengthening the capacities of their local partners as part of partnership agreements.

**National and local actors who are members of the country coordination groups will:**

- Engage in the discussions on institutional capacity strengthening issues and share their thoughts and views. They have the primary responsibility for the change processes.
- Prepare to participate in the HNO/HRP process and discuss with cluster coordinators how they will participate.
- Respond to calls for proposals once a selection criterion is opened up.
- Prepare their staff to participate in the institutional capacity strengthening efforts if selected.
- Conduct an initial self-assessment of their own institutional capacity.
- Work with the identified training, mentoring and coaching advisers who may have been identified to assist selected organizations in the institutional capacity strengthening efforts.

**International actors who are members of the coordination groups are expected to:**

- Participate in cluster discussions regarding institutional capacity strengthening of local actors.
- Support clusters in identifying institutional capacity needs and gaps of other local actors during the HNO process.
- Advocate with donors to include funds to support institutional capacity strengthening of their local partners.
- Develop outputs on institutional capacity strengthening of local partners and include these in project sheets for the HRP.
- Facilitate the formulation, implementation and monitoring of the institutional capacity strengthening efforts for their local partners.

**Annex: Priority Areas of Institutional Capacity Strengthening (ICS)**

This annex provides information on some of the priority areas for institutional capacity strengthening for local actors. It contains brief descriptions of priority areas for addressing institutional capacity needs and gaps. There will be periodic reviews and updates of the catalogue courses with new opportunities for learning and development.

Capacity development for coordination groups focuses on learning that aims to improve technical skills. National and local organizations who are members of Coordination Groups often express the need for developing their capacities beyond their technical competencies. The following areas are highlighted as a priority for institutional capacity strengthening:

1. Financial Management
2. Human Resource Management
3. Information Technology
4. Institutional Governance
5. Leadership
6. Management
7. Resource Mobilization
8. Risk Management
9. Project Management
10. Procurement Management Systems
11. Supply Chain Management and Logistics

## 1. Financial Management

### The importance of Financial Management for Institutional Capacity

Financial management is central to sound operational planning and programme implementation. Financial management should be based on trusted systems to manage financial transactions for internal and external accountability. Some of the key aspects involve a) the procedures of estimating monetary resources; b) tracking estimated costs of activities to establish budgets; c) monitoring of expenditures against the status of projects; and d) reviewing financial transactions to help improve future efficiencies, correct gaps and forecast for sustainability and expansion.

Without strict financial planning and control measures, NGOs risk financial losses, failure to provide critical humanitarian assistance and/or inability to cope with a funding shortfall. Irrespective of the size of the operating budget, NGOs must be conversant in the same financial management measures of the donor community to achieve sustainability.

Significant benefits of financial planning and control measures include:

- Allowing local NGOs, which survive on donor funding that requires total financial accountability to maintain and grow donor confidence, to secure operational sustainability through trust when done correctly.
- Ensuring governance, legal and regulatory compliance.
- Allowing organizational objectives to be achieved smoothly without cash shortages.
- Supporting proper documentation and better decision-making.
- Effectively deploying funds, minimizing losses, and reducing the risk of overruns, fraud and theft.

Key components of financial management to align with the required principles of accountability, transparency, efficiency and consistency include:

- Organizational strategic plan(s)
- Financial management policy, which includes a responsibility framework (who does what, when, and how?)
- Financial management operational, strategic and contingency plans

- Human resource annual and cycle plans
- Programme workplans with schedules
- Procurement plans
- External environment factors profile – market conditions, published commercial information
- Donor agreements
- Organization processes – templates, software, accounting books, reconciliation logs
- Financial auditing framework
- Risk registry and contingency plans
- Legal, taxation and regulatory laws and standards handbooks
- Asset and infrastructure registry

## 2. Human Resource Management

### **The Importance of Human Resource Management for Institutional Capacity**

In addition to the capacity in systems and infrastructure, human resources are the foundation of humanitarian delivery. This is due to the sensitivity of crisis, the urgency of intervention and the demands of working in difficult environments.

In planning and managing employees, Human Resource Management matches the right skills with the right roles and responsibilities and motivates and develops the team. The human resource department works with managers to build the organization's values and cultures that support the safety, security, health and overall well-being of staff. This maximizes the overall productivity of an organization by ensuring employees work in a supportive environment. To strengthen the institutional capacity of an organization, Human Resource Management:

- Supervises the talent management process to ensure skills are inside the organization to meet its operational tasks.
- Constantly monitors staff and identifies opportunities to motivate staff, maintain momentum and sustain high performance.
- Ensures healthy employer–employee relations.
- Addresses appropriate remuneration and maintains high job satisfaction.
- Protects the reputation of the organization by following national labour laws, codes of conduct and safeguarding measures including the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.

### **The Main Components of Human Resource Management**

Recruiting, training, developing, compensating and evaluating employees, and maintaining the workforce with proper incentives and motivations, should include the following components:

- Human Resource Handbook containing Ethics, Values, Codes of Conduct, Safeguarding Procedures and Conflict Resolution articles in line with Commitment 8 of the [Core Humanitarian Standard](#) and the [Child Protection Minimum Standards, Standard 2: Human Resources](#).
- Organizational Structure detailing job profiles, functions, categorization and grades.
- Human Resource Plan forecasting human resource requirements for each programme cycle.
- Recruitment and Policy listing process, appointment, orientation and retention details.
- Performance, Compensation and Benefits Handbook.

- Employee Relations and Legal Compliance.
- Staff Development Plan with learning and skills development activities.
- Health, Safety and Security Standards.

### 3. Informational and Communication Technology (ICT)

Technology continues to transform the response to crises with respect to tracking, monitoring and reporting, and implementation of humanitarian interventions have evolved. A suitable informational (technology) system can increase the efficiency and capability of an organization and key areas of its service. Some technological features and capabilities of importance to building organizations' capacity include:

- Information Management Capacity: Increases the organization's ability to collect, store, process, analyse, visualize and report large volumes of data.
- Communication: Strengthens communication and collaboration within the organization and its key partners, both internationally and locally.
- Efficiency: Leads to improvement in quality and speed of delivery of services. Real-time information recording, exchanging and processing ensure expediting humanitarian operations.
- Remote Monitoring and Management: Supports and manages fieldwork, providing the teams with essential technical guidance to enhance responsiveness.
- Information and Data Processing: Supports decision-making through easier data collating; provides opportunities for scenario simulation, especially for disaster preparedness.
- Knowledge Base: Benefits the efforts of advocacy, awareness building and skills development.
- Risk Reduction: Protects confidential information related to the operations and/or beneficiaries when appropriate data protection protocols are in place; security and authorizing codes prevent fraud.

Information and data that is collected and used to manage humanitarian interventions are often sensitive, and the confidentiality and privacy of the affected populations must always be protected. A fundamental component of IT must be the data security of information with strict management of who can manage the system or access the information.

### 4. Institutional Governance

To enhance governance, organizations appoint a board of directors to provide oversight of the organization by ensuring that there are appropriate structures, policies and systems to deliver on the mission and meet the interests of various stakeholders. The board of directors act independently of management but work closely with senior managers to ensure conformity with the strategic direction of the organization.

#### **The importance of Institutional Governance for Institutional Capacity**

Governance is an important capacity for every type of organization. Various research projects have concluded that the most successful companies or organizations either for-profit or non-profit have the common element of good governance that ensures organizations are well directed and controlled. Institutional Governance for humanitarian organizations has the responsibility to ensure that the programme and operation plans and activities meet the Core Humanitarian Standards of Quality and Accountability.

Of key importance are the following points regarding good governance:

- It avoids mismanagement and enables organizations to operate more efficiently, improve access to resources, mitigate risk, and safeguard and fit the stakeholders' interests.
- It ensures the organization's successful and sustainable impact on its constituents.
- Strong governance builds the credibility of the organization, investors'/funders' confidence, enabling the organization to increase its resources.
- It provides proper oversight on management to achieve objectives that are of interest to stakeholders.
- It also minimizes waste, corruption, risks and mismanagement.
- It helps to build the brand and supports the organization's long-term viability.
- It ensures an organization is managed in a manner that fits the best interests of all.

Irrespective of the size or nature of the organization, good governance contributes extensively to the successful implementation of operation and organization, benefiting the organization, stakeholders and recipients of services.

#### **The Main Components of Institutional Governance**

A governance body develops and communicates the norms, strategic vision and direction and formulates high-level goals and policies. The oversight role steers the organization by identifying and safeguarding a mission, articulating a strategy to achieve organizational goals and evaluating progress in meeting those goals. Organizations must provide special safeguards for children and people who are vulnerable. The governance structures must have guidelines so that programme and operation policies apply this requirement.

The body also supervises the financial affairs, human resources and operations of the organization, ensuring that the organization develops and follows a plan while deploying and managing resources accountably and efficiently. Governance aims to ensure compliance with legal regulation. Important elements of Governance include:

- A Constituted Board of Directors: Embodies the spirit of non-discrimination, equity, inclusivity and credibility.
- Organizational Blueprint: Mission, vision, values, by-laws or guiding principles, strategies and action plan.
- Organizational Structure: Chain of command, departments, coordination system, reporting system.
- Compliance Protocols and Manuals: Risk mitigation policy, human resource policy, change management policy, financial management manual, communication and stakeholder engagement protocols, high-level key performance indicators for employees and the organization, internal control protocols, legal and industrial laws and standards.

## **5. Leadership**

### **The Importance of Leadership for Institutional Capacity**

A leader ensures that employees have the motivation and commitment to the success of the organization. This includes raising and maintaining morale by communicating with each team member their vital role and valuable contribution to the organization. Leaders offer direction towards where the organization needs to be and how to get there. Sound leadership can help the organization in multiple ways.

Strong and competent leadership has a significant impact on an organization's capacity in some of the following ways:

- **Setting the organizational direction:** Effective leadership translates the mission, vision and objectives of the organization into a clear road map, which lays out the direction for the team to achieve its goal.
- **Improves effectiveness and productivity:** Leaders influence the organization's effectiveness by motivating and inspiring employees. Motivated employees perform better and allow the organization to improve outcome. Leadership should energize staff, especially when the outlook has been negative.
- **Influences behaviour:** Integrity and doing the right thing is vital for leadership, whom the team follows.
- **Ensures good succession planning:** Coaching and mentoring staff instill leadership qualities for smooth succession planning. Mentoring helps transfer critical knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- **Builds the organization's reputation:** Leaders have an overall influence on the internal and external reputation of an organization. They build the organizational values and culture by their example.
- **Inspires innovation and creativity:** To respond to changing (dynamic?) crises, organizations need leaders who anticipate change and encourage staff to consider unique ways to make sure the humanitarian intervention is appropriate.

#### **The Key Components of Organizational Leadership**

Organizational leadership requires focusing on two complementary objectives: working towards what is best for individuals to perform at their best while also maintaining focus on what is best for the entire organization. It also requires the right attitude and a working principle that encourages individuals in any role to lead from the top, middle, or bottom of an organization.<sup>24</sup>

Organizational leadership comprises several components, including:

- **Strategic Vision:** A leader understands the mission, objectives, plans and goals of the organization, unit, or team. Leaders map out the way, define the tools and process the values and principles applied to achieve the goals. Strong leadership understands the overall operational context, the social and economic impact of the crises, and the strengths or weaknesses of the organization, team, or unit.
- **Administrative Function:** The vision defines the outcomes whose delivery is the responsibility of the leader of the team or organization. The leadership role oversees the functioning of the team, ensures quality and provides the supporting structure and systems. It requires authorization, delegation, coaching and standards-setting.
- **Resolving Issues:** The leadership role creates sound policies, organizational culture, change management procedures and conflict resolution mechanisms. The humanitarian sector deals with constant changes that affect internal operations. The leadership determines the working environment, ethics and standards of practice conditions which determine the design and delivery of team activity.
- **Support Structures:** Good leadership develops systems and structures that encourage continual productivity. It includes effective (internal and external) communication, training and developing

<sup>24</sup> TDK Technologies - Key Components of Organizational Leadership

staff, team-building initiatives and human resource mechanisms to ensure a safe, healthy and secure working environment.

## 6. Management

### **The Importance of Management for Institutional Capacity**

When an institution operates without a systematic application of skills, knowledge and techniques, it reduces its capability to accomplish goals. Management consists of making decisions guided by principles, and ensuring resources are allocated appropriately, utilized efficiently to achieve a product or service. The resulting actions aim to meet the expectations of all targeted beneficiaries and the interested parties, including donors and other partners.

Non-governmental organizations have multiple stakeholders. They are the custodians of donations and work for social well-being. Therefore, there is greater pressure to demonstrate their effectiveness, organizational reliability and reputation to meet the international standards of humanitarian response.

Good management practices have several benefits for the organization's performance, and which contribute to its institutional capacity.

- Works to ensure that the combined effort of all the organization's functions are aligned to an overriding goal and complies to ethical, legal, regulatory and sector standards.
- Continuously plans for and can meet the capacity required to respond to crises.
- Motivates staff and keeps them focused and driven to meet and exceed expectations of beneficiaries, donors, government and other partners.
- Takes extra caution to manage humanitarian resources, ensures accountability to all constituents (and the public at large), adheres to the mission, and is effective in fulfilling the mandate.

### **The Main Components of Management**

Management of an organization's units or departments encompasses integrating all the organizational functions and units and administering them systematically and progressively.

Key components of the different phases of a strategic or programme cycle include:

- **Planning:** Organizational strategy, constituted mission and vision, SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis of the organization, feasibility and baseline studies.
- **Organizing:** Organizational structure, accountability structure, delegation of authority, human resource plan, financial management plan, risk assessment and management plan, procurement and logistics projections and plan, stakeholder and internal communication plan
- **Directing:** Articulated vision, Key Performance Indicator (KPI) matrix, staff development, internal and external communication strategy.
- **Controlling:** Key Performance Indicators reviews, risk monitoring, change management policy and plan, financial accounting and audits, Risk Mitigation and Change Management Framework, Quality Control Framework, infrastructure and asset management, legal, regulatory and industrial standards.

## 7. Project Management

### **The Importance of Project Management for Institutional Capacity**

Project management methodologies enable better control of cost, time and resources, build the confidence of donors and other interested parties, and meet the requirements of beneficiaries.

Key benefits of project management towards the institutional capacity include providing:

- Clarity of focus and alignment of a plan with the organization's strategy.
- Appropriate leadership and direction for the project: Creates a sound base for teamwork, transparency, communication and reporting.
- Realistic expectations of the outcome(s): Controls schedule and costs.
- Efficiency in risk and change management: An orderly process for proper tracking, monitoring and evaluation and the timely resolution of problems, from which lessons learned define future risk management.
- Careful management and assessment of projects: Resources are reassigned, and the trickle-down effect of risks from one project to another or the organization is stemmed.
- Facilitated programme cohesion within an organization and stakeholder coordination.
- Proper documentation of processes and outcomes: Simplifies capacity forecasting, builds a knowledge base and provides lessons learned, all allowing for best practices to inform future projects.

Project Management practices consider the roles and responsibilities of teams, functions and resources and allows managing them in a coordinated manner. This results in efficiency, ensuring that nothing affects the delivery or quality of a service or product and meeting expectations of all targeted beneficiaries of the project.

#### **The Main Components of Project Management**

Project Management performs activities in the phases of a project as follows:

- Project Assessment and Analysis: Project justification/concept note; feasibility and baseline studies; strategic plan; stakeholder–Beneficiary collaboration.
- Strategic Response Planning: Project workplan with the schedule and budget; Key Performance Indicators Framework; communication plan; risk management plan; logistics and infrastructure projections; financial management and human resources plans; legal and regulatory compliance standards; Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan.
- Resource Mobilization: Project activities and budget, project concept note and proposals, donor compliance and agreement.
- Implementation and Monitoring: Staff contracts and deployment; procurement, logistics and supply chain management; donor relations; stakeholder engagement events; communication tools and techniques; accounting and bookkeeping.
- Operational Review and Evaluation: Budget tracking; schedule tracking; change management; risk mitigation; donor reports; KPI Matrix, M&E Logframe, compliance implementation; capacity adjustment; staff development.
- Project Closure: Final project and donor report; financial reconciliation and audited accounts; delivery, installation and handover documentation; employee/volunteer release/redeployment protocol; supplier contract termination; Supply Chain Reconciliation Report; asset release and redeployment protocol; legal, financial or industrial compliance certificate; baseline update; M&E evaluation; learned lesson and best practices dissemination.

For local actors, the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan is the road map that defines, tracks and helps the quality of both the process and the desired outcome. The M&E framework is developed alongside the project workplan, with indicators that measure progress. The M&E matrix consists of the quantitative and qualitative measures of tasks and deliverables, which are linked to staff and departmental KPIs. This information feeds into donor reports and stakeholder updates and influences decisions for change and risk management.

## 8. Resource Mobilization

Resource Mobilization (RM) replaces the more traditional and narrow term “fundraising,” where “resource” refers to not only funds but also to human resources, goods and services.

### The Importance of Resource Mobilization

- Resource mobilization supports the organization’s capacity and its growth potential.
- Ensures the continuity of an organization’s service provision to clients and communities.
- Supports organizational programming, institutional and financial sustainability.
- Allows for improving and scaling up the organization’s products or services.
- Both public and private organizations must generate new business to stay operational and meet the ever-changing needs of the targeted beneficiaries or community.

### The Main Components of Resource Mobilization

Resource Mobilization is about matching the organization’s or project’s comparative advantages with the contextual priorities and partners’ interests. An organization needs to build or reinforce its unique features, products and services that differentiate it from other organizations. To attract the interest and support of potential partners, the organization works to show ability to meet the priorities of the current context and the partners’ needs.

When developing the RM Strategy and Action Plan, it is helpful to consider this five-step process:

- **Identify:** Identifying partners/clients is an ongoing process. It requires continuous updating of the details and specific interests of potential resource partners.
- **Engage:** First, it involves finding opportunities to build strong relationships with potential partners; second, providing suitable information to influence the decision makers about the programme or project that requires resources. It is establishing and maintaining open and regular dialogue with partners to build mutual trust and respect.
- **Negotiate:** This step involves multiple sets of knowledge and skills to dialogue, creatively share information and showcase its contributions. Negotiating aims to agree on the terms of the partnership that meet the resource needs and the partner’s interests. The organization may use expert advice to confirm the agreement is in line with legal and humanitarian principles.
- **Manage and Report:** The organization acknowledges the agreement by maintaining good relations, providing the required deliverables and reports and working towards long-term partnerships.
- **Communicate Results:** Communicating the value of partnerships is important. Regular and quality communication material conveys key messages on the project or service for specific audiences. This builds the organization’s reputation for reliability and illustrates the partner’s contribution. The organization and partners gain visibility within the sector and attract the interest of more partnerships.

## 9. Risk Management

Risk management is the culture, processes and structures that are directed towards effective management of potential opportunities and risks. Risk management is recognized as an integral part of good management practice. It is an iterative process consisting of steps, which, when undertaken in sequence, enable continual improvement in decision-making.<sup>25</sup>

### The importance of Risk Management for Institutional Capacity

Risk management is important for good governance, which dictates that the management of a non-profit organization is obligated to protect the interests of its stakeholders. Effective risk management ensures prudence in decision-making and guards against complacency and potential damage to its credibility. The proactive approach and preventive process prepare for possible negative and positive impacts to the operations of an organization, ensuring the accomplishment of its objectives.

Risk management is part of humanitarian response preparedness and takes into consideration all possible internal or external factors that can affect the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Contingency plans consist of options for programme implementation, if and when changes in the crisis affect the schedule, cost or overall delivery of humanitarian assistance. Planning for expected risks protects the strategic vision and operations and therefore sets realistic budgets, schedules and expectations or outcomes.

Key benefits to the organization include:

- Planning for potential shocks to protect the assets and existence of an organization.
- Avoiding complacency and ensuring compliance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and international norms.
- Avoiding laxity in standards of operations, maintaining the quality of service, minimizing losses and adequately planning for the capacity to absorb external shocks.
- Maintaining communication and improving reporting.
- Improving controls and operational efficiencies.
- Improving loss prevention and incident management.
- Improving organizational learning and organizational resilience.
- Understanding potential risk inspires creativity and innovation in creating solutions and design of humanitarian response mechanisms.
- Facilitating continual improvement of the organization.

### The Main Functions and Components of Risk Management

Risk management analyses the probability of risk factors in management policies and operational procedures inherent in its programming and external context. This establishes the negative (i.e., threats) or positive (i.e., opportunities) consequences and quantifies them in terms of the cost to the organization, the schedule of its programmes and overall quality of objectives and/or likelihood to accomplish the objectives. In so doing, an organization plans and allocates capital, both financial and human resource, to mitigate the risk factor. The key components of risk management encompass the activities of identifying, measuring, mitigating, reporting and monitoring, and include:

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

- Risk management policy
- Programme, operations, and health and safety contingency plans
- Risk management framework aligned and integrated into policies, procedures, practices and values
- Risk matrix tool for ranking risk
- Risk register for recording risks and how they are managed
- Risk reporting and communication plan
- Risk management oversight unit
- Risk management monitoring and review framework

## 10. Procurement Management System

### The Importance of a Procurement Management System for Institutional Capacity

In recent years, strengthening procurement management is increasingly recognized as critical to scaling up humanitarian assistance more effectively. Applying the basic procurement principles of open competition and transparency along with operational efficiency, reduces the possibility of corruption, increases professionalism, has greater value for money, and increases the speed of delivery of essential humanitarian assistance.

Modern procurement systems encompass a digital record of actions to provide the information to support a supply chain. Procurement systems help to maximize the use of funds through bulk purchasing, contracting suppliers and achieving cost-efficiency, which protects organizations from cost overruns due to unexpected changes in market costs.

There are several benefits of a good procurement system beyond efficiency such as:

- Enabling higher process efficiency at every stage of the procurement cycle. The different functions of an organization plan better, which in turn shortens the time to source for goods and services and avoids changes to humanitarian delivery schedules.
- Supporting good governance and building the organization's reputation with donors and stakeholders through transparent and sound procurement processes.
- Protecting against fraud through the strict application of rules, regulations, policies and authorization procedures, documented digitally with applicable security controls.
- Assessing all suppliers to make sure that they meet the requirements to safeguard children and protect the rights of all during the production and distribution of goods and services.
- Facilitating decision-making by generating management reports with information of the relevant departments responsible for any procurement, vendors, costs, modes of payment and delivery, and inspection reports, among others.
- Having key performance indicators in most systems that measure procurement performance, such as order processing, invoice accuracy, and order delivery times.

The role of a procurement management system is to ensure an organization conducts its functions by purchasing goods and services through a network of suppliers that meet the organizational standards and service levels.

### The Main Components of a Procurement Management System

An effective procurement process involves an in-depth understanding of requirements by all operation and programme units, identifying the right supplier for meeting those requirements, periodically evaluating supplier performance and negotiating contracts that can provide the highest value at minimum cost.<sup>26</sup> Key components include:

- Procurement management strategy with clear guidelines and policies
- Programme and operations workplan with purchasing needs for activities
- Product and service requirements
- Organizational structure for purchasing, with approval authorities
- Contractual agreements for contract administration and management
- Purchase, return and maintenance terms and conditions
- Procurement Standards Handbook, including ethical standards and child safeguarding procedures
- Organizational governance and compliance policy
- Service and Quality Inspections Standards Manual
- Supplier, industrial and technical equipment catalogues

## 11. Supply Chain Management and Logistics

### The Importance of Supply Chain Management and Logistics for Institutional Capacity

In the last four decades, the frequency and impact of disasters has tripled. Humanitarian organizations are under great pressure to deliver the right humanitarian assistance to the right people in the shortest possible time and avoid prolonged distress of affected populations. Disasters are unpredictable and often sensitive or complex. This places an increasing demand on supply chains for humanitarian response, which can accelerate converting resources into essential goods and services.

Supply Chain Management and Logistics have a significant impact on actors' ability to provide essential goods and services while ensuring ethical practices, maintaining their accountability as well as maintaining quality and protecting the interests and rights of beneficiaries. Factors that contribute to its increasing significance as a building block towards successful accomplishment of objectives and building institutional capacity include:

- Using logistical efficiency and effective management of the supply chain to reduce cost and enhance service, ensuring the functionality of the end product or service and providing opportunities to add value to the outcome.
- Seeking the best value for money in the entire cycle of supply, enabling the limited humanitarian resources to be maximized.
- Protecting the organization from reputational risks by following the humanitarian principles of doing no harm and avoiding a supply chain that has negative ethical, social or environmental impacts. This includes working with suppliers who agree to and strictly follow a child safeguarding policy.
- Giving the organization flexibility and options for better humanitarian responsiveness through the network and relationship with manufacturers and suppliers.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

- Encouraging greater collaboration across the organizational functions and with governments, implementation partners, the private sector, communities and across the supply chain, which builds the organizations relevance and potential for growth.
- Inspiring innovation and creativity in seeking solutions to humanitarian crises based on the wealth of knowledge available in the implementation of its role.

#### **Components of Supply Chain Management and Logistics**

The goal of supply chain management is to link the marketplace, the distribution network, the manufacturing process and the procurement activity so that beneficiaries are serviced at higher levels and yet at a lower total cost.<sup>27</sup> Key components to achieving this include:

- Programme and operations workplan with details of key deliverables
- Governance structures; financial, procurement and human resource policies
- Risk matrix and risk registry
- Suppliers registry, market analysis reports and price indices
- International and regional trade agreements and tariffs
- National and international standards, such as quality, environmental, health and safety, IT security, and food and safety standards
- Cargo, freight, and warehousing regulations, standards and tariffs
- Fleet management manual

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<sup>27</sup> Martin, Christopher. *Logistics and Supply Chain Management*. Third Edition. London, Pearson Education Limited. 2005.



## 6. Tip Sheet on Capacity Exchange and Complementarity between local/national actors and international organizations<sup>1</sup>



### Key considerations

- Capacity does not flow one way – from international actors to local actors – rather, capacity exchange is **a reciprocal process**<sup>2</sup> where capacity gaps are identified on both sides, which leads to different ways to collaborate and partner.
- Institutional capacity strengthening for local partners is part of the response strategy – as **a way to achieve coverage and quality** – not just a support cost.
- Local and national actors are not a homogenous group and include a diverse range of actors (e.g. women-led organizations, youth-led organizations, older persons' organizations, community-based organizations, indigenous-led organizations, and organizations of persons with disabilities) with different **experiences and skill sets**.
- Local and national actors have skills related to managing and maintaining **access, understanding local contexts and relationships with communities**, among many others, **including technical skills**.



### Defining capacity

- Define capacity needed for each actor to deliver the humanitarian response **in relation to each specific context** and each specific crisis, rather than assuming what the strengths and weaknesses of each actor are.
- Define the capacity needed to respond to a specific humanitarian situation through **local consultation** with a wide and diverse group of stakeholders, including **affected people**.

<sup>1</sup> This tip sheet has been developed in full from the reports '[Rethinking capacity and complementarity for a more local humanitarian action](#)', Humanitarian Policy Group, December 2019, + IASC [Guidance note on partnership practices for localization & IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms](#) + [Framework for Strengthening Institutional Capacity of Local and National Actors](#)

<sup>2</sup> See e.g. '[Rethinking capacity and complementarity for a more local humanitarian action](#)', p. 21 and IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms, p. 12



## Assessing capacity strengths and gaps

- **Invest in efforts to analyse who is best placed to do what in each sector**, and map out existing and potential capacities.
- **Identify existing local, national and regional coordination platforms** and coalitions, and leaders within these platforms/coalitions, through regular mapping.
- **Conduct a capacity/learning needs assessment<sup>3</sup> of all cluster partners, in order to identify both strengths and gaps.** Based on this assessment, support two-way institutional and technical capacity strengthening between local/national actors and Humanitarian Country Teams/clusters around, but not limited to, coordination, advocacy, fundraising, programme planning, mutual accountability mechanisms, risk management, gender issues, diplomacy, influencing and negotiation skills and pathways to leadership, as relevant for the particular group of partners being addressed.
- **Provide opportunities for local actors to discuss their operational capacity needs and exchange ideas** on how these needs can be met. International members of the clusters should discuss ways they can contribute to the enhancement of the local actors' operational capacities.
- **Based on the capacity/learning needs assessment**, facilitate discussions on how international actors can learn from and integrate the capacities of local and national actors relative to local knowledge and needs of affected populations.
- **Feed the outcomes of discussions on/assessments of institutional capacity of humanitarian actors into organizational Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO)/Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) processes** where this is applicable, to allow for the development of strategies to address the gaps. The outcomes of these discussions can also be fed into **partnership agreements** between international organizations and their local/national partners.
- Where international actors require a risk assessment or capacity gap assessment (e.g. to provide funding and work in partnership), these assessments should come hand in hand with **the investment and commitment to addressing the gaps identified.** These assessments should also be reciprocal to identify capacity gaps of both international and local actors.



## Strengthening capacity

- Encourage **learning exchange** through labs/applications/platforms for mutual learning among different actors, and foster/create channels of informal

<sup>3</sup> See e.g. [OCAT – Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool](#) and [OCA – Organizational Capacity Assessment](#)

communication between local/national and international actors in order to strengthen mutual trust and partnership.

- **Complement traditional capacity strengthening workshops** with opportunities for two-way learning, mentorship, coaching, shadowing and peer-to-peer support.
- **Evaluate capacity strengthening initiatives<sup>4</sup>** in order to learn and improve going forward.
- Develop **multi-year plans to build local capacities** among members of HCTs, clusters, and other related IASC coordination groups, including steps for local/national actors to assume co-coordination and coordination roles.
- **Prioritize leadership development and structured support** for local/national actors to take on leadership roles, particularly for groups whose voice may be muted in a specific cultural context.
- Alternatively, **share leadership** to enable a phased approach to coordination whereby local/national actors assume greater responsibility of leading coordination over time.
- **Support local/national actors to demonstrate their capacity** through capacity assessments, for example by equipping them to conduct self-assessments and encouraging them to approach international actors with requests for partnership, or by identifying well-matched organisations through the assessment in order to bring them together.
- **Ensure investment in capacity strengthening builds on existing evidence of good practices<sup>5</sup>**: this includes strengthening capacity through partnerships as part of preparedness; strengthening capacity through providing funding for overhead costs; strengthening capacity through secondment to allow two-way learning and capacity transfers, particularly in emergency surge (secondment to local organizations to address gaps in capacity rather than deploying separate emergency surge teams); and coordinating capacity strengthening, creating pooled resources.



## Committing to capacity strengthening

- **Refrain from practices which undermine existing local capacity**, for example when international actors poach staff from local organizations, or rely on local actors for ad-hoc translation and interpretation which takes them away from their assigned roles and duties.
- Encourage for any partnership agreement to include that partners are **mutually accountable** for addressing capacity strengthening recommendations.

<sup>4</sup> See e.g. [Strengthening local actors in north-east Nigeria: a nexus approach](#)

<sup>5</sup> See e.g. ['Rethinking capacity and complementarity for a more local humanitarian action'](#)

- **Explicitly reference** institutional capacity strengthening in HNOs, HRP sector/ cluster chapters and within cluster strategies to make connection with program outcomes and funding. Make it an eligible budget line in funding applications where it is linked to achieving greater coverage and quality.
- **Document and provide evidence** of innovative practices on partnering that leads to better complementarity. Such approaches should continue to provide evidence of how complementarity can be achieved through partnerships and the benefits of working in complementarity. The contribution and impact of partnerships should be a standard item in humanitarian evaluations.

**For step-by-step instructions on how to integrate institutional capacity strengthening into the Humanitarian Program Cycle, consult the [Framework for Strengthening Institutional Capacity of Local and National Actors](#).**



## 7. Tip Sheet to Integrate Localisation in the Humanitarian Response Plan and Humanitarian Needs Overview



### Tip Sheet to Integrate Localisation in the HNO and HRP

#### General

- Explicitly reference localisation practices and strategies in the HNO/HRP.
- Provide information sessions on the HNO/HRP process for national NGOs in local language.
- Ensure national NGOs are invited to workshops on HNO and HRP planning to help drive selection of priorities based on field reality.
- Ensure the HNO/HRP incorporates the views, knowledge and data from a wide range of local actors (civil society, private sector, academia, diaspora).
- Ensure consultation with national authorities throughout the process, wherever appropriate and possible.
- Translate final HNO/HRP document in local languages.
- Encourage local partners to use these documents for their own operational purposes.

#### Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO)

- Explicitly reference localization in the 'overview of needs' chapter, if applicable.
- Explicitly reference the role of local actors and the involvement of community members in data collection and analysis.
- In the 'operational presence' chapter, disaggregate partners according to whether they are national or international.
- In the 'operational capacity' chapter, make reference to the importance of institutional strengthening of local partners, if applicable.
- Disaggregate 'people reached' and 'funding trends' from previous year by type of agency that delivered the services (e.g. local government, NNGO, INGOs, UN), including where possible, in coverage maps.

#### Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP)

- Indicate the Cluster leadership/co-leadership structure and if applicable the strategy for transition plan to local co-leadership.
- Prioritize service delivery by local actors, where possible.
- Whenever discussing partners, disaggregate by local/international actors.
- Disaggregate cluster indicators (or proportion of the Cluster response) that will be delivered by local/international actors.
- Explicitly reference institutional capacity building outputs as part of the Cluster response.
- Reference the importance of partnerships with local actors and the complementary roles and approaches of national and international cluster members.
- In the response plan and project sheets, promote partnerships that draw on coaching and mentoring approaches, secondments, shadowing, accompaniment and joint implementation, rather than sub-granting.
- In the list of appealing organisations and funding requirement available in annexe, differentiate local and international actors.

The Child Protection AoR, on behalf of the Global Protection Cluster, has compiled examples of where these have been done in previous HNOs and HRPs and/or sample wording that could be used. If you would like examples, or support to advocate for the inclusion of the above, please contact your Cluster/AOR Helpdesk.



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## 8. Checklist for Localisation in Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms

This checklist is developed for the leadership of the clusters, working groups, and other humanitarian coordination mechanisms on how to pursue localisation agenda in key cluster initiatives, documents and activities. The list is not exhaustive, and can be further populated based on need.



### Encouraging partnerships modalities that build local capacities:

- Incentivize partnership modalities that include coaching, mentoring, and joint-implementation, for ex. by prioritizing applications of funding by such partnerships in project review scorecards, sharing best practices at cluster meetings, encouraging two-way reporting between partners, etc...
- Encourage the inclusion of “institutional capacity needs assessments” and “capacity-building targets” in partnership agreements. Give floor to partners to share their best practices.
- Strengthen the culture of transparency and principled partnership between partners by encouraging sharing of relevant information on programmes and available funding. Introduce Principles of Partnership to cluster membership during meetings.
- Boost cooperation, coordination, and information-sharing within membership by circulating needs assessments and reports done by members



### Funding opportunities for local actors:

- Advocate with donors for direct funding of the local NGOs.
- Reduce or influence for reducing minimum funding cap to a level that is manageable by smaller local partners. This amount should be determined in discussion with donors and local partners.
- Advocate for multi-year funding to give local NGOs some financial stability to retain their staff and build into their capacity
- Include funding needs for institutional capacity building of local actors in key cluster documents, including HNO and HRP, which will help local actors to raise their standards to donor due diligence requirements. Suggested wording:

*“The institutional and technical capacities of local actors, including NGOs and ministry/directorate of education, need to be improved in order to achieve sustainability, cost efficiency, rapid scale-up, and expansion of areal coverage.”*



## Governance, Influence, and Participation

- Local actors are represented and are member of governance bodies, such as Strategic Advisory Group (SAG), and technical working groups/task forces. Wherever possible, they should lead these bodies.
- Ensure all cluster-produced documents are shared with cluster membership for review and feedback, translated when necessary.
- Ensure the local actors understand the coordination mechanism at the national and sub-national levels, and how they can be part of it. Draft Terms of Reference for Cluster SAG and Cluster Membership for more clear pathways
- Local members of the cluster take part in drafting the Cluster Strategy, HNO, and HRP, including data collection, analysis, and drafting the narrative. The cluster strategy should be updated
- Make certain feedback mechanisms are an essential part of cluster coordination and projects to collect information on quality of coordination and quality of service delivery
- Plan an exit strategy that is based on handover of the coordination to local actors, i.e. governmental bodies or local NGOs.



## 9. Supporting Principled Local Action in Humanitarian Response: Practical steps for Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams

**Peer 2 Peer Support** For Humanitarian Leaders in the Field

**IASC** Inter-Agency Standing Committee



### SUPPORTING PRINCIPLED NATIONAL AND LOCAL<sup>1</sup> NGOS IN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Working with and investing in local actors as equal and strategic partners is a priority for the humanitarian response and the leadership of humanitarian operations. Localisation is a vital element for strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian assistance and became firmly established in the humanitarian lexicon in the build-up to the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016. In the context of this paper, localisation is about recognizing and strengthening the role of local and national NGOs in humanitarian response strategically, institutionally and operationally.

The Peer-2-Peer Project visited Gaziantep, Turkey, to assess the integration of Syrian NGOs into the humanitarian response system with the overall goal of involving them in strategic decision-making and strengthening their engagement in a coordinated and principled humanitarian operation. Syrian NGOs in this area work as part of the cross-border response in Syria. The Peer-2-Peer mission was carried out with the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC), and on the invitation of the Deputy Regional Humanitarian Coordinator (DRHC) in Gaziantep.

### COMMON CHALLENGES FOR INTEGRATING NATIONAL AND LOCAL NGOS INTO HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Local actors often have distinct advantages compared to their international counter-parts in responding to a crisis as they have a nuanced knowledge of the context in which the humanitarian operation is being implemented, are geographically close to crisis affected communities, and can respond rapidly to meet the needs of people. Yet, their physical and socio-cultural proximity to communities can raise questions concerning their independence, impartiality, and neutrality. There are also concerns about the institutional and operational capacities of newly-established national NGOs to deliver assistance effectively on limited budgets in a high-risk environment, and to manage operations in line with donors and/or other international partners' requirements.

Finally, localisation is a long-term process that requires dedicated human resources and financial investment to ensure sustainability.

#### BROAD CHALLENGES

- **Dedicating human resources and financial investment** to ensure a sequenced and sustainable localisation process. This implies the development of partnerships that do not turn national and local NGOs into sub-contractors and do ensure that they do not carry the **brunt of the risks involved** in delivering assistance.
- **Building local and national NGO institutional and operational capacity** to ensure they are well-governed, adhere to the highest standards of professionalism and transparency and are empowered to deliver on a principled and effective humanitarian response. This includes building **trust and confidence** with donors so that local and national NGOs can receive **direct funding**.
- **Integrating local and national NGOs into the strategic decision-making** bodies and coordination groups to ensure they have a voice in the strategic direction of the response and are engaged in a coordinated effort.
- **Coordination among local and national NGOs** to ensure their representation in humanitarian fora is **based on a transparent and inclusive process** led by the local and national NGO constituency. This mitigates the potential for a few NNGOs to dominate and influence the humanitarian narrative at the expense of less prominent NGOs.

<sup>1</sup> The difference between a local and national NGO relies on the geographical scale of activities: a local NGO is active at local level (one sub area of a given country) while a national NGO is active in various sub-areas of a given country.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HCs AND HCTs TO STRENGTHEN LOCALISATION

### BUILD THE INSTITUTIONAL AND OPERATIONAL / STAFF CAPACITIES OF LOCAL AND NATIONAL NGOS

- Develop a comprehensive and contextualized programme in the country language to build national and local NGOs' institutional and operational capacities that relate to the 'business' side of an NGO such as governance structures, financial management, reporting on funding and project implementation; and operationally to deliver assistance effectively, transparently, based on need, and in accordance with humanitarian principles.
- Coordinate training between organisations and clusters through a common platform to minimise duplication and gaps.

### DEDICATE RESOURCES AND CAPACITIES WITHIN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO SUPPORT LOCALISATION

- Dedicate human resources within UN Agencies and international NGOs to support partnership approaches and localisation processes.
- Recruit dedicated National NGO coordination officers within OCHA.
- Cluster Lead Agencies to engage with national and local NGOs and ensure dialogue with the humanitarian leadership and coordination structures (Humanitarian Liaison Group (HLG)<sup>2</sup> and cluster system).
- Fully use interpretation, translation and other mechanisms to overcome language challenges to ensure full participation of national and local NGOs in coordination fora.
- Use country based pool funds as a possible inception source of funding.

### INTEGRATE NATIONAL AND LOCAL NGOS IN THE LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION OF THE RESPONSE

- Include national/local NGOs in the Humanitarian Country Team (or equivalent leadership body) and ensure their representation is based on a transparent and inclusive election process led by the national/local NGO constituency.
- Encourage and incentivise cluster participation for national NGOs to better integrate into the cluster system.
  - Establish national NGO co-coordinators alongside international coordinators.
  - Hold cluster meetings in the local language to encourage participation.
  - Utilise simultaneous translation technology.
  - Condition access to pooled funds with cluster participation.
- Support national platforms or networks to facilitate national NGO coordination, information sharing, and engagement with the international humanitarian system.

### CONTEXTUALISE THE HUMANITARIAN APPROACH TO THE LOCAL CONTEXT

- Develop (in close consultation with the humanitarian community – and especially national and local NGOs), circulate and make humanitarian and non-humanitarian stakeholders aware of context-specific guidelines and principles of conduct that support NGO delivery of aid.
- Provide specific trainings and awareness-raising sessions on the contextualized humanitarian guidelines.

<sup>2</sup> The Humanitarian Liaison Group (HLG) is the senior leadership body of the cross-border response in Gaziantep. It is the equivalent of a Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) in other countries.

## BACKGROUND: CROSS-BORDER OPERATIONS FROM TURKEY INTO SYRIA

Since the Syrian conflict began in 2011, cross-border operations have been used to deliver assistance to parts of Syria that cannot be reached from the operational hub in Damascus, Syria. National and local NGOs have been at the forefront of these operations and play an essential role in delivering assistance to people affected by the crisis.

Localisation has been a priority of the Turkey cross-border humanitarian leadership, and they have had to overcome a number of acute challenges. There was a limited 'NGO culture' in Syria before the conflict, and there was a substantial and rapid growth in the sector which has given birth to a high number of national and local NGOs which were initially operating in a rather fragmented approach to the response. Significant efforts have been required to build national and local NGO capacities, institutionally and operationally, and to bring them together in a more coherent way to support a large-scale operation.

This case study examines how the Gaziantep cross-border operation strengthened the role of national and local NGOs in the humanitarian response to parts of Syria. The team's efforts have helped strengthen engagement between international humanitarian organisations and Syrian NGOs; improved coordination between Syrian NGOs; and integrated Syrian NGOs more substantially in strategic decision-making, planning and operational elements of the cross-border operation.

## 1. DEDICATING RESOURCES AND CAPACITIES WITHIN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO SUPPORT NATIONAL AND LOCAL NGOS

### a. Dedicated capacity makes all the difference

- OCHA recruited two full-time Arabic-speaking Humanitarian Affairs Officers (one international, one national) to support outreach and partnership between the international humanitarian community and national NGOs, and to strengthen Syrian NGOs engagement with the international humanitarian system.
- OCHA leads the Syrian Civil Society Organisations' Platform (Syrian CSO platform) which provides support to 137 Syrian NGOs (as of June 2018). Members of the platform must commit to a range of principles and standards to demonstrate their independence and neutrality as principled humanitarian actors. OCHA screens applications to the platform (over 700 applications have been received up to date) and uses the platform to encourage Syrian NGOs to engage in the humanitarian coordination mechanisms, participate in inter-agency and humanitarian advocacy activities, network with INGOs, UN agencies, donors, and other international organizations/bodies, receive information on funding opportunities, calls for proposals, meetings with decision makers, and to benefit from capacity building opportunities<sup>3</sup>.

### b. Overcoming language barriers for national and local participation

Clusters recognize the importance of allowing participant to speak in Arabic to ensure full participation in coordination meetings. This includes holding meetings purely in Arabic, using simultaneous translation, and allowing documents to be submitted in Arabic as well as in English.

- OCHA has invested substantially in simultaneous translation equipment and Arabic staff translators. The equipment and interpreters are available to the humanitarian community as part of a common service and are used extensively by UN agencies, international NGOs, and Syrian NGOs.
- Cluster Lead Agencies have recruited Arabic speaking cluster coordinators who can conduct meetings and circulate information in Arabic.
- OCHA facilitates a monthly Humanitarian Information Sharing Meeting in Arabic (HISMA) to facilitate information exchange with Arabic speakers from humanitarian organizations. The meetings attract around 160 humanitarians.

## 2. BUILDING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL AND LOCAL NGOS.

### a. Training and funding for institutional and operational capacities

The leadership of Gaziantep's cross-border operation has taken several steps to build the institutional and operational (including staffing) capacities of national and local NGOs to help them navigate the intricacies of the international humanitarian system and manage projects and administrative and financial functions.

<sup>3</sup> The FAQs on the Syrian CSO Platform provides further details and is available on [https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/2018/12/Syrian-CSO-Platform-FAQs\\_July-2018.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/2018/12/Syrian-CSO-Platform-FAQs_July-2018.pdf).



For Humanitarian  
Leaders in the Field



- Donors actively support international organizations with funds that are dedicated to national and local NGO capacity building projects. This has included mentoring and secondment approaches, as well as more traditional trainings focused on (1) the ‘business’ aspect of running and managing a humanitarian organization, and (2) supporting effective, principled and transparent delivery of cross-border assistance.
- Cluster Lead Agencies and a number of international NGOs invested in technical and managerial training for national and local NGOs that helped strengthen programme management (reporting, finances, transparency and accountancy, administration etc.) and to build technical capacities. One cluster hired a full-time Arabic-speaking trainer.
- OCHA invested in contextualized trainings on humanitarian principles, SPHERE standards, international legal frameworks, and the humanitarian programme cycle that supported Syrian NGOs in delivering more effectively and in an independent, impartial and neutral manner. OCHA has also supported the establishment of pools of Syrian trainers who deliver trainings on the above-mentioned subjects inside Syria.
- International organizations have used remote training modalities and technology such as WhatsApp and Skype to overcome logistical, administrative, and access issues that prevented international staff from travelling into Syria and made it difficult for Syrian staff to cross the border into Turkey, for face-to-face training.
- Recently, the cross-border humanitarian community in Turkey has increasingly focused on the key humanitarian issues such as PSEA, Duty of Care, and Security and Safety. More needs to be done to respond to challenges associated with the extremely dangerous and unpredictable environment in which humanitarian organizations operate.
- A working group composed of Syrian NGOs, INGOs and UN agencies is promoting the Principles of Partnership (as adopted by the Global Humanitarian Platform in 2007) and is advocating for training providers to coordinate efforts and minimize duplication capacity building programs for national and local NGOs.

#### **b. Direct funding to national and local NGOs**

- The Turkey Humanitarian Fund (THF) provides direct funding to national and local NGOs. From 2014 to 2018, the THF directly allocated 37 per cent of its funds (more than 80 million USD) to national and local NGOs to empower them to operate as an integral part of the humanitarian response and not as sub-contractors of international organisations. The THF requires that national and local NGOs establish a robust and transparent risk management system to provide a degree of confidence to permit them to receive direct funding.
- The THF allows Syrian NGOs to include a 7 per cent overhead within their project budgets (a provision not usually included in grants from donors and international humanitarian organisations).
- Some donors allocate direct funding to national NGOs that have demonstrably built their operational capacity.

### **3. INTEGRATING NATIONAL AND LOCAL NGOS IN THE LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION OF THE RESPONSE**

The large number of organisations involved in the cross-border Syria operation presented a serious coordination challenge to the cross-border operation. While the breadth of knowledge from a diverse number of organisations can be an advantage in many ways, decision-making bodies should be small, flexible, and sufficiently agile to facilitate decision-making. The leadership of the Gaziantep operation has taken steps to broaden representation to include Syrian NGOs into the leadership and coordination structures of the response without compromising an effective decision-making process.

#### **a. National and local NGOs participation in clusters**

Cluster coordinators in Gaziantep actively reach out to Syrian NGOs to ensure their inclusion in the coordination of the response, ensuring that information is shared between international and national / local actors, and that there is effective collaboration between international and national / local actors in a spirit of equal partnership.

- Cluster coordinators have developed membership criteria and incentivized national / local participation in the cluster structure by holding meetings in Arabic and tying pooled fund access to cluster membership. This has increased Syrian NGOs engagement and participation in discussions and decision-making. Hundreds of Syrian NGOs are participating in the cluster meetings in Gaziantep. The Health Cluster has a membership that includes 40 Syrian NGOs and the Education Cluster has 90 Syrian NGO members (as of June 2018).
- Several Cluster Lead Agencies have brought Syrian NGOs into a co-coordination role alongside their international counterparts, which facilitates the enablement of Syrian NGO staff to learn about cluster coordination.



#### b. National and local NGOs involvement in operational and strategic decision making

- Syrian NGOs were allocated a number of seats at the Inter Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG), the Humanitarian Liaison Group (HLG), the Inter-Sector Group (ISG) and the Strategic Steering Group (SSG) to ensure their active participation in strategic decision-making bodies for both the cross-border operation (ICCG, HLG) and the Whole of Syria response (ISG, SSG). The League of Syrian Networks (see below) provides the platform to support Syrian NGOs to organize their representation in these fora.

#### c. Supporting internal coordination among national and local NGOs

The Syrian NGO community is fragmented and there are a number of separate Syrian NGO networks to which the different NGOs belong. This fragmentation challenges at times cohesion of a unified national / local NGO position on key strategic decisions.

- Donors have directly and indirectly supported several Syrian NGO networks through technical capacity initiatives and direct funding to empower Syrian NGOs to be more cohesive and better coordinated.
- OCHA helped establish the League of Syrian Networks that is currently composed of six networks and over 300 organisations. While OCHA supported the establishment of the League, it is an entirely Syrian construct and has effectively strengthened coordination among the different Syrian networks, and enhanced Syrian NGO participation and representation in humanitarian mechanisms and fora. The League is the mechanism used by Syrian NGOs to select their representatives in Gaziantep's ICCG and HLG, and the SSG and ISG at the Whole of Syria level. Furthermore, the League of Syrian Networks has an observer seat at the HLG.

## 4. CONTEXTUALIZING THE HUMANITARIAN APPROACH TO THE SYRIA RESPONSE

National and local NGOs in particular are subject to political and military pressures given their strong ties with the communities they serve and the volatility and complexity of the Syrian conflict. In close consultation with the humanitarian community (and especially Syrian NGOs), the HLG has designed and endorsed contextualized guidelines to support NGOs in the delivery of assistance in a principled manner.

- The HLG established Joint Operating Procedures (JOPs) that operationalize International Humanitarian Law (IHL) in the Syrian context and outlines requirements to ensure that humanitarian organisations deliver assistance in a principled manner while engaging with parties to the conflict.
- The HLG endorsed in October 2017 the *Principles of engagement of humanitarian organizations with Civilian Administration Entities*<sup>4</sup> in the cross-border humanitarian response which outlines a clear approach to principled humanitarian engagement in complex environments where linkages to civilian administration entities and stabilization actors can facilitate delivery but can also blur the lines in regard to humanitarian principles. UN agencies and international NGOs conduct extensive training with Syrian NGOs on IHL, humanitarian principles, the JOPs, the Principles of engagement with Civilian Administration Entities and other areas. These trainings are conducted in Arabic and have been adapted to the Syrian context. They are delivered both in Turkey and in Syria through a pool of Syrian trainers.

#### The Peer-2-Peer Support Project

The Peer 2 Peer Support team (formerly known as the Senior Transformative Agenda Implementation Team - STAIT) was created by, and reports to, the Emergency Directors' Group (EDG). It provides direct peer support to Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams to deliver effective, principled, quality, timely, and predictable collective humanitarian response in field operations. For more information, please visit: <http://www.deliveraidbetter.org/>

<sup>4</sup> The guidelines are composed of two main documents ("Principles of engagement of humanitarian organizations with Civilian Administration Entities" and "Operationalization of the Principles of Engagement throughout the Project Cycle Management phases") and two annexes ("Humanitarian Principles" and "Phases of the Project Cycle Management"). All documents are available in English and Arabic on <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/stima/document/principles-engagement-humanitarian-organizations-civilian-administration>.



## 10. Checklist for induction and onboarding of new coordination group members

Cluster Coordination leadership should put in place induction sessions for any new member of a coordination group, whether local, national or international. Sessions should aim to ensure mutual responsibilities and accountabilities are agreed and understood, and appropriate support is provided to new members during the initial stages of their participation.<sup>1</sup>

Below is a checklist of key elements for induction and onboarding of new members:



### 1. Introduce the member to the cluster approach

Explain what clusters are, and the implications of being a member. Draw on existing resources such as the [Humanitarian coordination and the cluster approach: a quick guide for local and national organizations](#). Please note that the guide is available in 11 languages, available at: <https://www.educationcluster.net/localization>.

Explain leadership structures within clusters (e.g. Cluster Lead Agencies, Strategic Advisory Groups, etc.), as well selection criteria and opportunities for the new local/national member to become involved in cluster leadership.



### 2. Explain the limitations and challenges of an IASC coordination structure to help manage expectations

Coordinators should present the challenges that are applicable for their context. For example, these may include:

- cluster lead agencies often lack impartiality
- there may be a limited representation of diverse local and national actors
- cluster coordination is a labour intensive endeavour which requires significant time and resources to be effective
- there are insufficient mechanisms in place for the promotion of accountability to affected populations

Enquire whether the new member is part of other national or sub-national coordination structures, to understand how the two might work together.

<sup>1</sup> This tool has been compiled from the following resources: [Humanitarian coordination and the cluster approach: a quick guide for local and national organizations](#) ; [IASC Guidance Note on Coordination May 2020](#)



### 3. Explain meeting protocols, group dynamics and acronyms.

Share the cluster Terms of Reference (ToR) and talk about who the other members are; what happens during coordination meetings; when and where they are held; how agendas are set, what is expected of members, etc. Coordination leads should ask local/national actors the best way for them to access information and communicate; WhatsApp, Skype, Facebook or Zoom may be more suitable than slow or hard-to-navigate websites, for example. Ask the new member about potential security conditions or other local circumstances that may affect their ability to participate in meetings (e.g. night time curfews, cultural acceptability of women's mobility after certain times and childcare-related constraints).

Outline the different ways in which organizations can engage, and the benefits of participation to both the individual actor, as well as the coordination group as a whole.

For a list of key coordination acronyms, see page 6 of '[Humanitarian coordination and the cluster approach: a quick guide for local and national organizations](#)'.



### 4. Explain what being a cluster member involves: mutual accountabilities and responsibilities

There are no fixed membership criteria or application processes to join a cluster. However, they may exist at the country-level, in which case these should be made available to the new member.

These are the factors new members should consider:

- (a) **Time investment for sustained engagement:** for example, ability to attend regular meetings, input to strategy development, share relevant and timely information at meetings and in tools like the 4Ws, offer technical expertise when needed
- (b) **Relevance of work:** the new member is an organisation which implements programs relevant to one or more sectors;
- (c) **Minimum commitments:** the new member organization must
  - Uphold the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence
  - Commit to cluster-specific guidance and minimum standards, and mainstream protection in all programs, including respect for principles of non-discrimination and “do no harm”
  - Be ready to participate in actions that specifically improve accountability to affected people, in line with the Commitments to Accountability to Affected Populations and the [Six Core Principles Relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#) (available in over 100 languages)



## 5. Provide guidance that is tailored to a new member's needs or area of work, and make key documents and information available in relevant local and national languages.

Endeavour to minimize and explain the use of jargon or technical language, and establish shared definitions and understandings of shared goals. Consider making use of or developing a glossary of topic-specific terms<sup>2</sup> to ensure communication with local/national actors is accurate.

Explain that cluster meetings and documents are usually in the main official language of a country or in international languages like English and French. The minimum commitments for cluster coordination state that clusters should provide interpretation in an appropriate language (including sign language) so all cluster partners can participate, including local organizations.



## 6. Give examples of what the added value of being a cluster member is:

- Access to guidance and national repository of key documents
- Ability to raise concerns and influence response strategies
- Working in a complementary way with other NGOs
- Access to peer-analysis of local vulnerabilities, risks and capacities to prioritize needs
- Discuss quality issues and ways forward
- Integration of preparedness efforts into a larger inter-sector preparedness plan
- Increased chances to address your funding gaps
- Guidance to improve protection and gender in your response
- Guidance to support complaints feedback mechanisms to improve your accountability to affected population



## 7. Invite existing members to participate in induction briefings.

For example, members who are local/national actors can present on the local context and local coordination mechanisms. Existing members may also wish to share their perspective on the benefits and challenges of participating in coordination mechanisms.

<sup>2</sup> See e.g. Translators without Borders' glossary at <https://translatorswithoutborders.org/twb-glossaries/>

Moreover, the Cluster's Information Management Officer should arrange an induction on the 4W database and reporting to the reporting focal points of new members.



### **8. Inform the new members who they can turn to for further information, support, to give feedback or to make a complaint about the coordination group.**

Ensure support structures are in place and accessible, including an anonymous way to register concerns, in a language and format the member is comfortable using. Such support structures might include mentoring schemes where existing members, or Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) members, are available to answer questions and offer support.

Let new members know about plans and procedures for internal reviews where they can give feedback on the way the cluster operates, for example [the Principles of Partnership Cluster Review](#).



# 11. Opportunities for collaboration - Coordination groups and Diaspora



## WORKING WITH DIASPORA

### *Opportunities for Collaboration - Coordination Groups and Diaspora*

Against the background of numerous protracted humanitarian crises, diaspora communities in the northern hemisphere are increasingly recognized for their access, cultural and language skills, local knowledge, trust and networks with affected communities. This opens up potential spaces for engagement, cross-fertilization and better coordination between diaspora and ‘conventional’ relief and aid providers in an extended humanitarian system.

Diaspora organisations can play a central role in localization. Many can be considered frontline responders themselves, making direct and concrete contributions to emergency responses in their home countries. Many others work closely with local authorities, local organisations and community groups, providing technical and financial support, playing a role in advocacy and linking local actors with additional sources of support. They are heterogeneous – they have different capacities, values and approaches – and as part of broader humanitarian community, can play a valuable role in the humanitarian responses.

Because of this diversity, coordination groups will engage with each diaspora organization differently. This note provides a [list of options](#), intended to support coordinators and diaspora groups to identify potential ways in which they can collaborate. Additional resources are available at: <http://www.demac.org/>

<b>Advocacy and Information</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Including diaspora organisations on the coordination group mailing list</li> <li>• Sharing advocacy notes and having bilateral discussions with diaspora organisations on how this information can be used for advocacy to donors and national authorities</li> <li>• Drawing on diaspora organisation’s local networks and influence in local advocacy (e.g. prevention of child recruitment, promoting girls education etc)</li> </ul>
<b>Technical Support</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connecting diaspora organisations with local partners who are seeking capacity strengthening support (including secondments for technical advice and developing institutional systems, coaching and mentoring etc)</li> <li>• Encouraging local actors to join the DEMAC <a href="#">coaching and mentoring community</a></li> <li>• Encouraging cluster members to take the <a href="#">online training</a></li> </ul>
<b>Financial Support</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing approved project sheets, particularly for local partners, and encouraging direct financial support from the diaspora to local partners; and connecting diaspora to possible funding opportunities for themselves</li> <li>• Encouraging diaspora to report funding to OPS</li> </ul>
<b>Coordination – Strategic Direction</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of diaspora organisations in meetings (e.g. dialing in option) and governance structures</li> <li>• Including diaspora organisations in efforts to develop and validate needs assessments, HNOs and response strategies</li> <li>• Supporting diaspora to include their service delivery results in cluster/sector IM systems</li> </ul>

For more information:

Global CP Area of Responsibility Helpdesk: [cp-aor@unicef.org](mailto:cp-aor@unicef.org)

DEMAC: [info@demac.org](mailto:info@demac.org)





# E. Tools for other Cluster coordination members



## 1. Guidance note on partnership practices for localization (3 pages)

This guidance note outlines priority partnership practices for localisation, in the areas of project and financial management; capacity strengthening and sharing; financing; coordination; safety and security; and advocacy. It is intended to guide all those who participate in humanitarian coordination on designing and implementing principled and equitable partnerships.



## 2. Guidance note on capacity strengthening for localization (2 pages)

This guidance note outlines key considerations and provides specific recommendations related to capacity strengthening. It is intended to improve understanding of complementary capacities between local/national and international actors, and provide areas of action for donors and international actors, as well as local and national actors.



## 3. Presentation on Institutional Capacity Strengthening of Local Actors (10 PowerPoint slides)

This presentation complements the Framework for Strengthening the Institutional Capacity of National and Local Actors developed by the Global Education Cluster (GEC) and the Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AoR). It explains the rationale for investing in the institutional capacity strengthening of local and national actors, outlines what the role of Cluster coordinators in doing so is, and presents a sample budget for capacity strengthening.



## 4. Localization in Coordination - Q&A (7 pages)

This tool provides answers to key questions related to localisation in humanitarian coordination, including what the role of coordination structures in promoting localisation is, what the evidence to support localisation looks like, and how coordination groups can monitor and measure progress in this area. The document also provides links to a number of related resources for further reading.



## 1. Guidance note on partnership practices for localization

More than 400 humanitarian agencies contributed to identifying the priority partnership practices for localisation; approximately 85% of them were local/national actors. The basis of the guidance note is the findings of the research conducted in Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria and South Sudan in 2018 as part of the *Accelerating Localisation through Partnerships* programme<sup>1</sup>. It was further reviewed by participants of the regional and global Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream conferences in 2019 and Localisation Workstream members. This guidance note is a product of the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream but does not necessarily represent the official position of Workstream members and co-conveners.

'Local actors/partners' refers to the full diversity of local and national government, NGOs, CSOs, CBOs, womenled organisations, youth groups and more. 'International actors/partners' refers to the full diversity of international NGOs and UN agencies. 'Humanitarian actors' refers to all those engaged in humanitarian action.



### Project and financial management

1. Local actors design projects and budgets or co-design with international actors who provide technical expertise on proposal writing and technical issues, including conducting joint needs assessments, where needed.
2. Local actors are treated as equal partners, not as sub-contractors presented with already agreed projects and budgets. Partnership agreements include roles and responsibilities of *both* parties, risks are shared, and mitigation measures are mutually agreed, including to ensure safeguarding is addressed.
3. Partners conduct joint monitoring visits to beneficiaries, providing opportunities for joint reflection on progress, obstacles and required modifications. Local partners maintain relationships with local communities, and international partners and donor agencies visit communities in agreement with, or when accompanied by, local actors when appropriate.
4. International actors and donors are open to discussions on findings from local partner monitoring and allow flexibility to adapt programmes and budgets in response to evidence of changing needs and community feedback as much as is practicable.
5. Project budgets include funds for local partners, relevant to the context and needs, for: 1) overheads including set-up costs; 2) indirect costs (as % of project budget); 3) assets vital for project implementation, safety and/or organisational financial sustainability; and 4) organisational strengthening. Budgets should clearly show core funding allocations.

<sup>1</sup> Funded by ECHO. For more about Accelerating Localisation through Partnerships visit: <http://caid.org.uk/54>.

6. All humanitarian actors follow ethical recruitment practices. International actors attempt to keep salaries/benefits within as close a range as practicable to local actors. Local actors strive to support staff to do their job effectively and treat them fairly and equitably.
7. All actors support the active participation of crisis-affected people in project design, monitoring, implementation and evaluation with particular focus on involving marginalised, minority and groups in vulnerable situations such as women, children, young people, and persons with disability.
8. All humanitarian actors identify their added value in any partnership and work on the basis of complementarity. International actors provide support to local partners based on demand (rather than supply) and ideally through longer-term strategic partnerships tailored to partner needs, with complementarity identified before crises.
9. International actors highlight the role their local partners play in external communications and media.



### **Capacity strengthening and sharing** – see also capacity guidance note [here](#)

10. Capacity assessments are conducted jointly for both local and international partners. Strengths are recognised, and gaps used to develop tailored, long-term, capacity strengthening/sharing plans which are shared with other partners to coordinate effective support and investment.
11. Capacity strengthening/sharing plans are contextualised, mutually agreed, long-term, based on project and institutional needs, and identify a range of training and mentoring approaches, such as secondments, shadowing, peer exchanges and on the job training, with follow up monitoring.
12. International actors and donors include/allow capacity strengthening and organisational development budget line(s) in all projects and partnership agreements. Ideally an explicit % of budgets and/or specific funds are earmarked for this. Local actors commit time and other resources to invest in their own capacity and organisational development.
13. International actors assess their capacity strengthening skills, and address gaps by either strengthening staff skills or investing in local training providers and accompaniers.
14. International actors articulate plans to adopt an advisory, backstopping or secondary role once adequate local capacity exists from the outset, including review and partner ‘graduation’ strategies.



## **Financing** – see also humanitarian financing guidance note [here](#).

15. International actors and donors support local actors to build their sustainability (including retention of key staff) by providing multi-year funds, allowing core funds in project budgets, and supporting local actors in income-generating activities or generating local funds.
16. Local actors actively participate in meetings, communication and coordination with donor agencies to support relationship building, facilitated by international actors if needed.
17. International actors credit the role of their local partners in communications with supporters and donors, recognising the positive impact narratives on reframing perceptions of local leadership of humanitarian response.
18. Donor agencies coordinate to identify minimum standards for accountability and compliance, reforming processes where necessary. International actors and donors support local partners to meet these minimum standards, mitigate risks, and ensure safeguarding. Local organisations invest in meeting these standards.



## **Coordination** – see also coordination guidance note [here](#).

19. International actors, particularly UN and cluster coordinators, promote and facilitate active participation of local partners and other local actors in relevant coordination fora, and ensure a diversity of organisations represented, including women and youth led organisations.
20. International actors highlight the role their local partners play in partnership-based / joint humanitarian response at cluster and other humanitarian coordination fora meetings.



## **Safety and security**

21. Training, advice and timely information on security and risk management, and safeguarding is provided to local actors for operations in high-risk areas. Donors and international actors allocate funds/budget to establish and maintain sustainable national provision of such services.
22. Local actors are involved in decision-making about security risk management with their international partners, with adaptations made for local context as advised by local actors.



## Advocacy

23. International agencies support local actors to engage with relevant governments, when requested and appropriate, to influence humanitarian response decisions to ensure effectiveness.
24. Local actors are facilitated to connect crisis-affected people with relevant international actors and government authorities for advocacy related to the humanitarian response, including safety of local aid workers.

For the *Accelerating Localisation through Partnerships* research reports, and global paper *Pathways to Localisation*, visit the webpage: [caid.org.uk/54](https://caid.org.uk/54). Refer also to: [Principles of Partnership](#) (Equality, Transparency, Results-Oriented Approach, Responsibility, and Complementarity); [Charter 4 Change](#); [NEAR Localisation Performance Measurement Framework](#) (Section 1: Partnerships); and [Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability](#) (CHS).



## 2. Guidance note on capacity strengthening for localization

This guidance note collates recommendations on capacity strengthening drawing from three regional workshops conducted by the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream in 2019, including representatives of local and national NGOs, international NGOs, government and regional donors, and UN agencies. It also draws on key findings from a research project carried out by the Humanitarian Policy Group of ODI between 2017 and 2019 that explored the issue of capacity and complementarity between local<sup>1</sup> and international actors, including how capacity could be better understood and applied to support more collaborative responses<sup>2</sup>.

This guidance note is a product of the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream but does not necessarily represent the official position of Workstream members and co-conveners.



### Understanding capacity

- The capacity needed to alleviate human suffering includes respect for humanitarian principles, the ability to prepare for, anticipate and deliver timely and cost-effective humanitarian services of appropriate quality, and to strengthen the resilience of affected population and transparent and accountable management of resources. Just as important, however, are understanding of the context, the ability to understand and relate effectively to affected persons and other stakeholders, and the ability to bridge humanitarian and development activities, among others. Moreover, capacity should be understood in relation to specific contexts and crises.
- It is helpful for all relevant stakeholders to seek shared understandings of what capacity means in a particular context through an inclusive process that involves local actors through meaningful engagement.
- Terminology matters. Capacity is usually defined as ‘lacking’ and needing to be ‘built’. Instead, the terms ‘capacity strengthening’ or ‘capacity exchange’ or ‘capacity sharing’ acknowledge existing skills and assets that can be supported and shared.

<sup>1</sup> This guidance note uses the term “local actors” to refer both to local responders with a national or subnational scope.

<sup>2</sup> The project drew upon case study findings from the conflict in South Kivu and Kasai Central in the [Democratic Republic of the Congo](#) (DRC) and the Rohingya refugee crisis in [Bangladesh](#), as well as a [literature review](#).



## Assessing capacity

- The current process by which different organisations consider the respective contributions and value of others is largely limited to that of international organisations assessing local organisations for the purpose of funding and partnerships. A context-wide mapping of existing capacities could inform the extent to which humanitarian action can be local and how gaps in local capacity could be addressed.
- Each organisation's 'capacity' is dynamic and evolving, and often dependent upon individuals and context. For example, an organisation that has capacity to respond to flooding, may not have the capacities needed to respond to an influx of refugees. It should also be recognised that every organisation requires investment to grow in a sustainable manner.



## Overall recommendations:

- Capacity strengthening between international and local actors should be a two-way process, whereby international actors also take the opportunity to learn from local actors, including technical skills, operational considerations and a better understanding of the political, social and cultural context.
- Local actors should set the priorities for and take full "ownership" of, any capacity-strengthening support they receive with an eye both to immediate delivery and long-term sustainability.
- Moreover, actors involved in capacity strengthening initiatives and local actors should share information and explore a joint vision for context-wide capacity goals in order promote synergies in their efforts.
- Ideally, donors and international actors should opt for long-term approaches to capacity strengthening supported by multi-year, predictable and flexible funding. Context wide capacity support could target groups or network or local actors or national entities. Strategically, such investments should also cover early warning systems, contingency plans, government institutional capacities or support to regional entities. All actors are encouraged to explore innovative and non-traditional capacity strengthening methodologies, such as shadowing and mentoring initiatives that allow a more organic process of peerto- peer learning, and secondments including in donor institutions where possible that could allow more two-way learning as an alternative to emergency surge teams in times of crises.
- As far as possible, capacity strengthening should be an activity conducted in advance rather than following a crisis.



## Recommendations for key actors

### 1. Donors and other international actors

- Donors should make strengthening local capacities – particularly long-term institutional capacities as needed, an express goal of their support to humanitarian contexts. Investments should build on existing good practices and funding arrangements be made as flexible and long-term as possible, in order to facilitate approaches that are appropriately tailored to each local actor.
- International actors should critically interrogate their own ability to strengthen the capacity of local organisations and prioritise the use of domestically-available expertise and resources for imparting knowledge and skills.
- Where donors and international actors require a risk or capacity gap assessment to be conducted in order to provide funding and work in partnership, investment should be secured to address any gaps identified. This assessment should ideally build upon any assessments that the local actor has already undertaken.
- International actors should partner with local actors to document best practices and develop consensus models for capacity strengthening to build donor confidence to invest in scale-up.

### 2. Local actors

- Prior to seeking partnerships, local actors should assess their own organisational capacity strengths and weaknesses. This will encourage ownership of their capacity gaps and how to address them.
- Local actors should also use the power of networks and peer review exchange to share knowledge and increase their collective voice in advocating for more equitable partnerships and capacity strengthening<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> One example that uses this approach is Oxfam's *Empowering Local and National Humanitarian Actors* (ELNHA) programme which assesses capacities at the level of 'networks' of organisations in a given context and conducts joint discussions on capacity gaps and existing expertise available across these groups. Other examples of effective capacity strengthening approaches to further more localised humanitarian responses can be found in section 3.2 of the [Grand Bargain annual independent report 2019](#).



### 3. Presentation on Institutional Capacity Strengthening of Local Actors



#### Institutional Capacity Development of Local Actors



Why investing in the institutional capacity strengthening of local actors is critical

- Local actors with strengthened institutional capacities are likely to be more effective and efficient in responding to complex humanitarian situations
- Strengthened operational capacities of local actors is a vital precondition to delivering at scale.
- Strong institutional capacity is required for effective preparedness
- COVID-19 has created heavy reliance on local actors and hence they need to have both technical and institutional capacities for effective response

## CP AoR and GEC Framework on Institutional Capacity Strengthening of Local Actors

### The framework provides:

- Menu of options for institutional capacity strengthening of local actors (examples include: Financial Management, Resource Mobilization, Human Resources, Governance, Risk Management, Procurement and Supply Chain Management etc.)
- Information on how institutional capacity strengthening can be integrated into the Humanitarian Programme Cycle
- Generic costing of the different components of institutional capacity strengthening



## Why integrate institutional capacity strengthening into the HPC

### Provides opportunities for:

- Identification of institutional capacity needs during the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO),
- Integration of institutional capacity strengthening strategies into the Humanitarian Response Plans (HRP)
- Advocacy for the allocation of Country Based Pooled Funds for institutional capacity
- Preparation of local partners for the OCHA Due Diligence, the UN Partners Portal and the HACT processes

Anchoring institutional capacity support within clusters' assessment, planning and monitoring systems, will ensure a systematic and sector wide approach to strengthening institutional capacity.



## Role of Cluster Coordinators

- Advocate for the integration of institutional capacity strengthening into the HNO/HRP process
- Develop strategies for institutional capacity strengthening of their local members
- Advocate for allocation of CBPF towards capacity strengthening
- Develop criteria for selecting the local actors who will benefit from the capacity strengthening
- Select the local partners who will benefit from the capacity strengthening
- Advocate for UN and iNGO members of the Cluster to support the capacity strengthening of their local partners



## The framework is composed of:

- section on planning and implementation of institutional capacity strengthening activities
- section on different components on institutional capacity development
- section on information on various online and face to face training courses on the different components of institutional capacity.



## Expected outcomes of the investment in ICS of local actors

- Improved operational capacity which allows for scaling up response in humanitarian crisis
- Improved efficiency and effectiveness of local actors which helps to reduce risks
- Increased preparedness to respond to future crises
- Systematic and sector wide approach to strengthening institutional capacity of local actors



## Minimum package on institutional capacity strengthening of local actors.

### For resource mobilization and focuses on:

- Integration of institutional capacity strengthening into the HPC
- Organizational assessments
- Selection of self-paced online training courses
- Provision of mentoring and coaching services to support learned skills and enhance the organizations' operating systems
- Establishment of the Information Technology infrastructure of participating organizations;
- Estimated budget for institutional capacity strengthening support for local actors (initially)



### Estimated Budget for Institutional Capacity Strengthening for 1 Local Organization

Certified online training courses organizations with some level of institutional capacity	100
Certified online training courses for individual organizations with little or no institutional capacity	200
Shorter training for organizations with some level of institutional capacities (Mentoring and Coaching)	10,000
Longer training and establishment of systems for organizations with little or no institutional capacity (Mentoring and Coaching)	20,000
Costs related to IT for organizations with some level of IT capacity	9,000
Costs related to IT for organizations with very little IT capacity	25,000
Implementing partners	18,000
Overhead costs for implementing partners (7%)	5,761
<b>Total</b>	<b>88,061</b>





## 4. Localization in Coordination - Q&A



### Localisation in Coordination- Q&A

#### What is localization?

Page 22 of the WHS Report refers to a collective commitment to promote responses that are both “as local as possible” and “as international as necessary<sup>1</sup>.” Localisation is a process in which the humanitarian response is re-configured to meet this collective commitment.

Two excellent summaries have also been prepared by ICVA and HPG:

[https://www.icvanetwork.org/system/files/versions/ICVA\\_ODI\\_Localisation\\_paper.pdf](https://www.icvanetwork.org/system/files/versions/ICVA_ODI_Localisation_paper.pdf)

SDC and Local2Global: [http://www.local2global.info/wp-content/uploads/L2GP\\_SDC\\_Lit\\_Review\\_LocallyLed\\_June\\_2016\\_final.pdf](http://www.local2global.info/wp-content/uploads/L2GP_SDC_Lit_Review_LocallyLed_June_2016_final.pdf)

#### 1. Does localization mean that the humanitarian response must be localized or locally-led?

Not necessarily. Localisation requires us to promote a humanitarian response that is as local as possible. Sometimes – where this is possible – the response should be locally led and locally delivered. But there are many considerations that we have to take into account when determining what is possible. At times, local actors may be overwhelmed by the scale or complexity of the humanitarian crisis. There may also be issues related to technical and/or institutional capacity, access or resources. There may also be other reasons why local actors are unable or unwilling to adhere to humanitarian principles (particularly if the actors are party to a conflict, are perpetrating human rights violations or are compromised by their (perceived or actual) political or other affiliations. In these cases, the international community would respond – as much as necessary.

At all times, however, local and international actors should all continuously review their involvement and contributions, and ensure that they remain in line with the principle – as local as possible, as international as necessary.

We should also always bear in mind that that what is possible, or necessary, will likely change over time, depending on the context – such as when there are changes in capacity, access and resource availability.

#### 2. What is the role of the coordination system in localization?

Finding the right balance between what is as local as possible, as international as necessary may be perceived differently by different actors and the coordination system is well placed to help the

<sup>1</sup>[http://www.agendaforhumanity.org/sites/default/files/resources/2017/Jul/WHS\\_Commitment\\_to\\_Action\\_8September2016.pdf](http://www.agendaforhumanity.org/sites/default/files/resources/2017/Jul/WHS_Commitment_to_Action_8September2016.pdf)



humanitarian community to reach a consensus on what is “the right balance.” This requires several things from the coordination leadership teams:

- To continuously assess what is possible; and what is necessary; and ensure that the humanitarian response strategy reflects this;
- To model an appropriate balance in their own leadership and decision-making structures;
- To identify and share opportunities to promote localization; and advocate for these to be realized.

### 3. Why is it important for the coordination system to promote localization?

The global commitment to localization is based on the assumption that locally led and locally delivered responses – where possible – offer the best opportunity to maximize reach, quality and sustainability.

Many of the promising examples of localization have, so far, been limited to small scale pilot initiatives, and the coordination system is uniquely placed to support these to go to scale (as this system guides humanitarian actors on when, where and how to deliver humanitarian responses). The coordination system is also in a position to act as a semi-neutral broker, to help local and international actors find and agree on the best way forward.

To some extent, localisation is also inevitable (for example, the donor community is becoming increasingly diversified and disruption by technological advances will continue to change the way in which resources and capacities are made available<sup>2</sup>). It is therefore prudent for the humanitarian system to proactively support local actors to prepare for, and effectively utilise this opportunity.

### 4. What is the evidence that proves localization works?

The global commitment is based on the collective experience of many humanitarian organisations and humanitarian experts who agree that locally led and locally delivered services have the potential to be most effective, when there is sufficient local capacity, local resources and the ability to adhere to humanitarian principles. Elhadj As Sy (Secretary General of the IFRC) noted that local actors are the first to respond. O’Brien (Head of OCHA) has also observed that aid delivered by local NGOs is often “...faster, cheaper and more culturally appropriate...”<sup>3</sup>

There are also so wonderful examples of how localization can led to good protection outcomes – the START Network ([www.startnetwork.org](http://www.startnetwork.org)), the NEAR Network (<http://www.near.ngo/>) and the

<sup>2</sup> For more on this, see Wall, I., & Hedlund, K. (2016). Localisation and Locally-Led Crisis Response: A Literature Review. Global2Local. Available at <http://www.local2global.info/resources>

<sup>3</sup> For more on the value of localization, see: [https://www.icvanetwork.org/system/files/versions/ICVA\\_ODI\\_Localisation\\_paper.pdf](https://www.icvanetwork.org/system/files/versions/ICVA_ODI_Localisation_paper.pdf)



Local2Global initiative (<http://www.local2global.info/>) have all documented some of these on their websites.

It is true, however, that much of the evidence for this is anecdotal or based on assessments of pilot projects and one of the priorities for the Child Protection Area of Responsibility (and the broader Protection Cluster) is to better document how localization can be used to strengthen the humanitarian response.

This piece by HPG and ICVA provides a more detailed review on why localisation is important:

[https://www.icvanetwork.org/system/files/versions/ICVA\\_ODI\\_Localisation\\_paper.pdf](https://www.icvanetwork.org/system/files/versions/ICVA_ODI_Localisation_paper.pdf)

## 5. Who/What is a local actor?

There is no simple definition for this, and many actors in different contexts have interpreted this differently. In general, the CP AoR interprets local actors as government, civil society, academia and private sector from within the relevant country; and that country's diaspora community. More detailed work on definitions has been done by the IASC Humanitarian Financing Task Team, and can be found in the footnote below.

This paper is not yet published, but you can reach out to the CP AoR ([anolan@unicef.org](mailto:anolan@unicef.org)) for a more detailed discussion on this, in the meantime.

## 6. How can the Global CP AoR support me in moving more towards localisation in my country?

The Education Cluster and the CP AoR (on behalf of the Protection Cluster) are currently implementing a localisation initiative. Some specific outputs in 2017 will include:

- Self-assessment tools for CP Coordination Groups on the Principles of Partnership
- An orientation webinar for all interested coordinators in December (date to be announced)
- An orientation module for coordinators to use in-country, to develop a contextualized Action Plan
- A sample Action Plan from Nigeria (based on an in-country analysis and action plan development process)
- Training for Government Child Protection Coordination Focal Points in West Africa (completed)

Additionally, the following are being prioritized in 2018:

- In-country support visits and remote support for coordinators who would like to develop country-level Action Plans, or incorporate localization into HRP or CPWG Strategies/revisions
- Guidance for coordinators on working with Governments
- Training for Government Child Protection Coordination Focal Points in at least one additional region



- Decentralising the Global Helpdesk – establishing 4 language based Helpdesks (French, Arabic, Spanish and English) which will be based in local organisations or UNICEF offices in countries affected by humanitarian crises

For more information on this, please contact the CP AoR ([anolan@unicef.org](mailto:anolan@unicef.org))

### Some important background:

#### 7. What is the World Humanitarian Summit?

The first -ever World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) took place in Istanbul, Turkey, on 23 and 24 May 2016. It brought together some 9,000 participants representing 180 Member States, over 700 local and international NGOs, the private sector and other stakeholders. The Summit mobilized support and action for the Agenda for Humanity, and catalyzed major changes in the way we address humanitarian need, risk and vulnerability. At the Summit, stakeholders made more than 3,500 commitments to support the implementation of the Agenda for Humanity, and launched dozens of initiatives and partnerships to help deliver the changes needed. Some of the major change initiatives launched at the Summit include the New Way of Working to bridge the humanitarian - development divide; the Grand Bargain on improving humanitarian efficiency and effectiveness; and a major push by all stakeholders to empower local humanitarian actors and reinforce local systems.

For more information:

[https://www.worldhumanitariansummit.org/sites/default/files/media/WHS%20Commitment%20to%20Action\\_8September2016.pdf](https://www.worldhumanitariansummit.org/sites/default/files/media/WHS%20Commitment%20to%20Action_8September2016.pdf)

#### 8. What is the Grand Bargain?

The Grand Bargain is an agreement between more than 30 of the biggest donors and aid providers, which aims to get more means into the hands of people in need. It includes a series of changes in the working practices of donors and aid organisations that would deliver an extra billion dollars over five years for people in need of humanitarian aid. These changes include gearing up cash programming, greater funding for national and local responders and cutting bureaucracy through harmonised reporting requirements. It also commits donors and aid organizations to providing 25 per cent of global humanitarian funding to local and national responders by 2020, along with more un-earmarked money, and increased multi-year funding to ensure greater predictability and continuity in humanitarian response, among other commitments.

For more information: <http://www.agendaforhumanity.org/initiatives/3861>

#### 9. What are the Principles of Partnership?

These Principles were developed in 2007 and endorsed by 40 leaders of humanitarian organisations from the UN, NGOs, the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, the International Organization for Migration and the World Bank and provide a framework to improve partnerships between the diverse



humanitarian community. In particular, these Principles are designed to promote more equal, constructive and transparent partnerships between international and national partners.

For more information: <https://www.icvanetwork.org/principles-partnership-statement-commitment>

#### 10. Who else is working on localisation?

The Global Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream is bringing together partners from all over the world, to share good practices, lessons learned and provide guidance on how we can collectively strengthen our humanitarian responses. More information is available here:

<https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/more-support-and-funding-tools-local-and-national-responders>

There are also a number of other interagency forums and networks, some of which are listed below:

- The Near Network: <http://www.near.ngo/>
- The Start Network: <https://startnetwork.org/>
- The Charter for Change: <https://charter4change.org/>

Many countries also have NGO Consortium or representative bodies. Where possible, we should encourage them to join our coordination groups, as they also have a role to play in policy and advocacy around localization.

#### 11. The Grand Bargain indicates that funding should be as direct as possible. What is “as direct as possible”?

This has been the topic of significant debate. Devex has provided a summary of their perspective on how this debate has rolled out: <https://www.devex.com/news/dispute-over-grand-bargain-localization-commitments-boils-over-90603>.

The Localisation Workstream has prepared a definitions paper which outlines who are considered “local” actors and what funding is considered “direct”. This includes funding which is passed from a donor straight to a local organization; or funding from an aid agency which is mobilized directly from private donors and passed straight to a local organization.

What constitutes “as directly as possible” remains open to interpretation, as it will depend on the context (access, partner capacity etc).

See the following for more information:

[https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/categories\\_for\\_tracking\\_direct\\_as\\_possible\\_funding\\_to\\_local\\_and\\_national\\_actors\\_003.pdf](https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/categories_for_tracking_direct_as_possible_funding_to_local_and_national_actors_003.pdf)

#### 12. Why haven't we been successful at localization to date?



This is a difficult question and there is no universally agreed answer. From the perspective of the CP AoR, there are a few important lessons learned:

1. **Going to scale** – we often assume that good practices will automatically be scaled up. In reality however, this is not always the case. It also requires us to take the political context into account (the country context, and also the political context in relation to the humanitarian system itself). We need to anchor programmes in the humanitarian architecture – so that the right strategies are prioritized in the national plan or HRP and prioritized in project sheets and other funding proposals. We also need to improve information flow between global, national and sub-national levels and ensure that individual agencies strengthen their systems for institutional memory.
2. **Structural challenges** – these will take some time; and a lot of political will. For example, donors may want to work more directly with local actors, but they often don't have the necessary staff to manage so many small direct agreements. For some international organisations, the incentives are not yet in place to encourage CEOs and Directors to prioritise localization initiatives – for some agency heads, overseeing the shrinking of their organization might be perceived to be poor performance, rather than successful transition to localization.

### 13. What are the different partnership models that UN and INGOs could use when they collaborate with national NGOs?

There are a number of ways in which international organisations could partner more effectively with local organisations (and many already are!). Some examples are below. Whatever the type of partnership, it should ideally be compliant with the Principles of Partnership (<https://www.icvnetwork.org/system/files/versions/Principles%20of%20Partnership%20English.pdf>).

1. **Coaching partnerships:** This would involve intensive support, with specialists working alongside the local partner for an agreed set of time to assist them to develop an agreed set of competencies, skills or organizational systems.
2. **Mentoring partnerships:** This would involve regular, defined specialist support (which could be provided onsite or remotely) and is focused on helping to review implementation, support problem solving and brainstorm ways of improving a program or organizational system.
3. **Joint implementation:** This would involve both the international and national organization hiring staff (ideally using the same ToR and conditions of service) and work alongside each other, to jointly achieve common targets or goals. They can attend common staff meetings etc and both partners are responsible for their own targets; and collectively for the combined results.
4. **Long term, strategic partnerships:** From the CP AoR perspective, these are the “gold standard.” They involve agreeing on a long term engagement strategy with a local partner, focused on mutually agreed goals, rather than a single project. They are also structured around the results that both partners want to achieve, rather than a budget. In this type of partnership, there may be periods where there is no funding, or limited funding, but the international partner continues to commit to providing whatever support is possible (e.g. regular coaching discussions, joint monitoring etc) whilst both sides continue to try to mobilise funding.

If interested in examples of these different types of partnership, please contact the CP AoR Helpdesk and we can help put you in touch with relevant partners.



#### 14. There is a lot of emphasis on institutional capacity building. How can international partners support this?

At present, a majority of international partners invest in assessment of their local partners to identify risk; and investments in compliance monitoring. Whilst this is critical in managing risk, it is not sufficient for many local partners who are seeking to strengthen their institutional systems. There are several practical steps that international partners can take to strengthen the institutional capacity of their local partners:

1. Support local partners to develop their own institutional capacity strengthening plan, based on their own strategic priorities. This allows them to have a more coherent plan and to maximize the use of limited resources from multiple partners.
2. Work together with other international partners to align support and reduce the administrative and transactional costs on the national partner.
3. Ensure that partnership agreements more explicitly link capacity assessments, partnership agreements, partnership budgets and mutual monitoring systems and processes.
4. Explicitly reference the recommendations that the international partner will assist the national partner to address. This makes it easier to hold both partners accountable for meeting these commitments.
5. Ensure that budgets explicitly address the capacity strengthening commitments.
6. Draw on coaching and mentoring strategies, in addition to centralized training efforts.
7. Provide unearmarked funding, which national organisations can use to invest in their own institutional and individual staff development.

#### 15. How can the coordination group monitor and measure progress in localization?

The following tools are available from the CP AoR Helpdesk:

1. Module for Coordination Group Self-Assessment: This is split into 2 half day sessions and will enable you to take your coordination groups through a self-assessment process to bring the group to a consensus on their localisation priorities and possible solutions in advance of the next HRP.
2. Localisation dashboard: This doesn't require the collection of any new information but rather, analysing and presenting existing data to the coordination group, to facilitate a more informed discussion about localisation.
3. Partnership Assessment tools: There are two tools, based on the Principles of Partnership (which many coordination group members have formally signed on to). The first is for cluster members to provide feedback on the extent to which the coordination group is modelling the principles of partnership; and the other enables the coordination leadership team to better understand the nature and quality of partnerships that exist between your members. At the moment, these are paper-based and require manual data entry – but the global CP AoR can do the entry and analysis whilst the online versions are being developed.

**For more information on localization and what the coordination groups can, contact your Global Helpdesk.**



# F. Case studies



## Localization across contexts: Lessons learned from four case studies

A FEINSTEIN INTERNATIONAL CENTER BRIEF 

*Sabina Robillard, Kimberly Howe and Katja Rosenstock*

The Feinstein International Center, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University and Save the Children Denmark conducted research on the localization of humanitarian action in several different contexts—Indonesia following the 2018 earthquake in Sulawesi, and the Horn of Africa, specifically humanitarian situations in Kenya, Somalia, and South Sudan. The goal was to unpack assumptions related to locally led humanitarian action and to identify the factors that lead to effective, timely, and principled responses. Research was qualitative and primarily focused on engaging with local actors<sup>1</sup> in each context. While the studies were substantially different in scope and context, this brief is meant to highlight some of the key similarities and differences found across localization processes, and to begin to identify lessons learned that may reach beyond these specific emergencies.

This brief is based on two studies available in full at: <https://fic.tufts.edu/publication-item/perspectives-on-localization-sulawesi-earthquake-indonesia/> and <https://fic.tufts.edu/publication-item/perspectives-on-localization-in-the-horn-of-africa/>

### Case contexts

The Indonesia study focused on a single acute natural disaster (an earthquake) in a single country/context that has a strong civil society and government presence. The Horn of Africa study was a comparison of broader trends across three different countries dealing with a complex mix of conflict, displacement, and climate-related challenges like drought, each with varied degrees of government and civil society strength. The presence of international actors in these contexts varied widely as well: in Indonesia, a government directive limited international organizations to indirect participation in the response; in Kenya, there is a significant presence of international organizations, many of whom have their regional headquarters in Nairobi; and in Somalia and South Sudan,

international organizations are significantly involved in responses but tend to have a limited physical presence on the ground due to security restrictions, and they often operate through remote partnerships.

By definition, the discussions over localization and local humanitarian leadership are context specific. They require an acknowledgement of and reckoning with different types of crises, types of civil society, roles of governments and international actors, and even conceptions of what the word “local” means in practice. At the same time, there is an ongoing global discussion about localization. By comparing the results from these diverse cases, we can identify sets of common and divergent themes that can contribute to the broader discourse.

<sup>1</sup> While the binary between local and international is reductive and does not reflect the full diversity of actors in a crisis-affected area, this synthesis brief uses the term “local” to describe organizations based in the affected countries and “international” to describe organizations based outside of the affected countries. Nationalized non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (international NGOs that have formed independent but affiliated organizations in the affected country) are considered “local” in this context.

## Funding and partnerships

Modes of funding and methods for partnership were topics of importance for local actors in all case countries. The main concerns and priorities of participants in both studies are summarized in the following table and further explained below.

In the Horn of Africa in particular, the most important issues were related to the international humanitarian funding systems. Local actors in Kenya, Somalia, and South Sudan reported numerous frustrations, including barriers to accessing funds, an unwillingness of donors and INGOs to cover core costs, and short-term funding cycles. There was broad frustration with the gap between the theory and practice of the localization agenda: many actors reported having more adversarial and competitive relationships with international actors, with some alleging that INGOs actively blocked their access to funding.

This narrative of active competition between international and local actors was less apparent in Sulawesi, as the Indonesian government’s policies required international groups to cooperate, at some level, with local actors. These relationships had their own pressures and tensions, but the very structure of the response shifted the locus of competition away from internationals and towards larger Indonesian

NGOs, particularly nationalized ones. While funding concerns were not as prominent in the Sulawesi study, some local and national NGOs did express frustration at only being given operational funds or that funding was released too slowly. Participants in the Sulawesi study focused more on how Indonesia’s government could improve the policies, standards, and coordination mechanisms of the response to better facilitate partnerships.

Despite the obligation for international NGOs to work through Indonesian NGOs in the Sulawesi response, there was a wide range in the quality of those partnerships. While some international partners were commended on their transparency and engagement, others were critiqued for treating Indonesian NGOs as “workers rather than partners.” This critique was reflected in the Horn of Africa study, where participants in all three countries expressed their frustration of being “worked through” rather than “[worked] with.” This criticism of local actors being treated as sub-contractors instead of meaningful partners or leaders by international actors is well-reflected in the [literature](#).

In line with the sub-contracting dynamics of many international-local partnerships, there were concerns from actors in the Horn of Africa that capacity-

### Concerns and priorities of study participants

Horn of Africa study	Indonesia study
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Competitive and exclusionary nature of international funding</li> <li>Gap between theory and practice of localization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inflexible and limited nature of international funds</li> <li>Interest in reforming national systems to facilitate better response and partnerships</li> </ul>
Both case studies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Sub-contracting” nature of some international non-governmental organization (INGO) partnerships</li> <li>Need for a different approach to capacity building</li> </ul>	

strengthening measures were ill-fitted to their actual needs and primarily designed for “upwards accountability” towards donors. In addition, for capacity strengthening to better reflect the diverse needs of local actors, there were calls for capacity strengthening to be a longer-term effort with periodic training and testing in the field. These calls

were echoed in the Sulawesi study, with local actors also calling for longer-term and more field-based approaches to capacity strengthening. Participants in both studies questioned the assumption that capacity building is the exclusive domain of international groups, highlighting examples of local and national actors building each other’s capacity.

## Quality and effectiveness

Both studies asked participants to provide their insights into which capacities were necessary for an organization to deliver a principled and effective humanitarian response. While both studies also spoke to actors who would be considered international, the following table displays the responses provided by national and local actors.

large volumes of funding. It may also be a reflection of the intense competition for funding in these environments, in which these capacities are seen as essential for donors. In contrast, participants in the Sulawesi study described capacities that were more related to emotional and relational capacities, which may be a reflection of a different operational environment, one that allowed actors to prioritize these skills.

There were several key institutional qualities that participants in both studies identified as important capacities. Participants in the Horn of Africa study focused more on institutional and administrative capacities, which have typically been areas in which local and national organizations are seen as lacking. However, this focus could be due to the fact that capacity has typically been framed in terms of “upwards” accountability and the ability to manage

In both studies, participants were asked to identify what factors enabled and inhibited an effective, timely, and appropriate humanitarian response. While both studies also spoke to actors who would be considered international, the following table displays the responses provided by national and local actors.

### Necessary capacities identified by local actors for an effective humanitarian response

Horn of Africa study	Indonesia study
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong procurement and logistics systems</li> <li>Ability to advocate and build relationships with governments, INGOs, and donors</li> <li>Strong resource mobilization skills</li> <li>Expertise and professionalism of staff</li> <li>Sector-specific technical skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emotional capacity to respond to a disaster (empathy, solidarity, etc.)</li> <li>Local knowledge and relationships</li> <li>Ability to communicate with the affected community</li> </ul>
Both case studies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong monitoring and evaluation systems</li> <li>Strong coordination skills</li> <li>Strong management and administration systems</li> </ul>	

Factors identified as enabling or inhibiting a timely, appropriate, and high-quality response

Both studies	
<b>Enabling factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proximity to and relationships with affected communities</li> <li>Accountability to the affected population</li> <li>Broad geographic coverage and access</li> <li>High-quality needs assessments</li> <li>Strong organizational capacities</li> <li>Ability to mobilize staff and volunteers</li> <li>Existing relationships that can be leveraged for a disaster (in Horn of Africa, specifically relationships across ethnic groups and clans)</li> </ul>
<b>Hindering factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of sufficient or flexible funding</li> </ul>

There was relative consensus around enabling factors between the studies. One point of divergence was that participants in Indonesia emphasized a sense of solidarity and empathy as an important enabling factor, echoing the capacities section. In addition, participants in Indonesia brought up the availability of funding as an enabling factor, whereas in the Horn of Africa, funding (or the lack thereof) was only brought up as a hindering factor.

There was more divergence in terms of hindering factors, which could be a reflection of the different operating environments. Some of the main hindering factors identified by local and national actors can be found in the table below.

The majority of the factors seen as facilitating effective and principled responses are those that are typically associated with local and national

Factors identified as inhibiting a timely, appropriate, and high-quality response by context

	Horn of Africa	Indonesia
<b>Hindering factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of direct access to donors</li> <li>Competition with INGOs for implementation and funding</li> <li>Lack of access to appropriate capacity-strengthening activities or a “graduation” process</li> <li>Rigid and pre-determined donor priorities, with little room for holistic or cross-sectoral approaches</li> <li>Rigid and narrow risk mitigation plans that shift burden to local NGOs</li> <li>Lack of trust between local and international actors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conflicts of interest at the local level</li> <li>Language and cultural barriers</li> <li>Lack of electricity and phone communication in aftermath of disaster</li> <li>Responders also victims</li> <li>Lack of clear standards and policies guiding the response</li> <li>Local-level community conflicts</li> </ul>

actors. These factors include relationships, access and coverage, context-specific knowledge, and accountability with the affected population. The hindering factors largely focused on the extra-organizational context. Findings from the Horn of Africa study were mostly concerned with the international response environment, while the Sulawesi study focused more on the Indonesian response environment.

There is significant discussion in the literature about whether local actors' relationships with and proximity to affected populations, expressed as a strength above, may hinder their ability to provide a principled response. In both studies, there were narratives of local actors attempting to navigate complex webs of local politics and relationships,

which sometimes resulted in a response that was not entirely impartial. However, in both studies, local and national actors pushed back on the assumptions that they were inherently less able to carry out a principled humanitarian response. They also cited certain attributes more commonly associated with local actors, such as greater downward accountability and greater coverage, as favoring principled responses. Actors in both studies noted that international organizations struggle with adhering to humanitarian principles in their own way. Indeed, there is not sufficient evidence in either of these two studies to support the hypothesis that local and national actors are inherently less able to deliver a principled response than international actors are.

## Comparing recommendations

The recommendations from these two studies diverge significantly in their respective areas of focus, which corresponds to the different priorities and challenges of actors in these diverse contexts. The recommendations for the Horn of Africa study centered largely on reforming international humanitarian funding mechanisms, shifting the burden of risk away from local actors, and integrating local actors more fully into coordination and project development mechanisms. The recommendations from actors in Sulawesi were more inward facing, with a greater emphasis on reforming government policies, decentralizing national response and coordination systems, and reckoning with the relationships between Indonesian organizations. However, it is notable that despite the vastly different contexts, there were some common recommendations:

- Donors and international partners need to ensure **longer-term and more flexible funding** structures.
- International actors need to invest in **building relationships and trust** with their local and international partners.
- International actors need to **adapt capacity-building/strengthening activities** to be more tailored to local priorities, more long-term, and more field-based.
- Local and national actors should **build and invest in networks** that can facilitate advocacy, donor engagement, and collaboration in the field.

## BACKGROUND: CROSS-BORDER OPERATIONS FROM TURKEY INTO SYRIA

Since the Syrian conflict began in 2011, cross-border operations have been used to deliver assistance to parts of Syria that cannot be reached from the operational hub in Damascus, Syria. National and local NGOs have been at the forefront of these operations and play an essential role in delivering assistance to people affected by the crisis.

Localisation has been a priority of the Turkey cross-border humanitarian leadership, and they have had to overcome a number of acute challenges. There was a limited 'NGO culture' in Syria before the conflict, and there was a substantial and rapid growth in the sector which has given birth to a high number of national and local NGOs which were initially operating in a rather fragmented approach to the response. Significant efforts have been required to build national and local NGO capacities, institutionally and operationally, and to bring them together in a more coherent way to support a large-scale operation.

This case study examines how the Gaziantep cross-border operation strengthened the role of national and local NGOs in the humanitarian response to parts of Syria. The team's efforts have helped strengthen engagement between international humanitarian organisations and Syrian NGOs; improved coordination between Syrian NGOs; and integrated Syrian NGOs more substantially in strategic decision-making, planning and operational elements of the cross-border operation.

## 1. DEDICATING RESOURCES AND CAPACITIES WITHIN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO SUPPORT NATIONAL AND LOCAL NGOS

### a. Dedicated capacity makes all the difference

- OCHA recruited two full-time Arabic-speaking Humanitarian Affairs Officers (one international, one national) to support outreach and partnership between the international humanitarian community and national NGOs, and to strengthen Syrian NGOs engagement with the international humanitarian system.
- OCHA leads the Syrian Civil Society Organisations' Platform (Syrian CSO platform) which provides support to 137 Syrian NGOs (as of June 2018). Members of the platform must commit to a range of principles and standards to demonstrate their independence and neutrality as principled humanitarian actors. OCHA screens applications to the platform (over 700 applications have been received up to date) and uses the platform to encourage Syrian NGOs to engage in the humanitarian coordination mechanisms, participate in inter-agency and humanitarian advocacy activities, network with INGOs, UN agencies, donors, and other international organizations/bodies, receive information on funding opportunities, calls for proposals, meetings with decision makers, and to benefit from capacity building opportunities<sup>3</sup>.

### b. Overcoming language barriers for national and local participation

Clusters recognize the importance of allowing participant to speak in Arabic to ensure full participation in coordination meetings. This includes holding meetings purely in Arabic, using simultaneous translation, and allowing documents to be submitted in Arabic as well as in English.

- OCHA has invested substantially in simultaneous translation equipment and Arabic staff translators. The equipment and interpreters are available to the humanitarian community as part of a common service and are used extensively by UN agencies, international NGOs, and Syrian NGOs.
- Cluster Lead Agencies have recruited Arabic speaking cluster coordinators who can conduct meetings and circulate information in Arabic.
- OCHA facilitates a monthly Humanitarian Information Sharing Meeting in Arabic (HISMA) to facilitate information exchange with Arabic speakers from humanitarian organizations. The meetings attract around 160 humanitarians.

## 2. BUILDING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES OF NATIONAL AND LOCAL NGOS.

### a. Training and funding for institutional and operational capacities

The leadership of Gaziantep's cross-border operation has taken several steps to build the institutional and operational (including staffing) capacities of national and local NGOs to help them navigate the intricacies of the international humanitarian system and manage projects and administrative and financial functions.

<sup>3</sup> The FAQs on the Syrian CSO Platform provides further details and is available on [https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/2018/12/Syrian-CSO-Platform-FAQs\\_July-2018.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/2018/12/Syrian-CSO-Platform-FAQs_July-2018.pdf).

- Donors actively support international organizations with funds that are dedicated to national and local NGO capacity building projects. This has included mentoring and secondment approaches, as well as more traditional trainings focused on (1) the ‘business’ aspect of running and managing a humanitarian organization, and (2) supporting effective, principled and transparent delivery of cross-border assistance.
- Cluster Lead Agencies and a number of international NGOs invested in technical and managerial training for national and local NGOs that helped strengthen programme management (reporting, finances, transparency and accountancy, administration etc.) and to build technical capacities. One cluster hired a full-time Arabic-speaking trainer.
- OCHA invested in contextualized trainings on humanitarian principles, SPHERE standards, international legal frameworks, and the humanitarian programme cycle that supported Syrian NGOs in delivering more effectively and in an independent, impartial and neutral manner. OCHA has also supported the establishment of pools of Syrian trainers who deliver trainings on the above-mentioned subjects inside Syria.
- International organizations have used remote training modalities and technology such as WhatsApp and Skype to overcome logistical, administrative, and access issues that prevented international staff from travelling into Syria and made it difficult for Syrian staff to cross the border into Turkey, for face-to-face training.
- Recently, the cross-border humanitarian community in Turkey has increasingly focused on the key humanitarian issues such as PSEA, Duty of Care, and Security and Safety. More needs to be done to respond to challenges associated with the extremely dangerous and unpredictable environment in which humanitarian organizations operate.
- A working group composed of Syrian NGOs, INGOs and UN agencies is promoting the Principles of Partnership (as adopted by the Global Humanitarian Platform in 2007) and is advocating for training providers to coordinate efforts and minimize duplication capacity building programs for national and local NGOs.

#### **b. Direct funding to national and local NGOs**

- The Turkey Humanitarian Fund (THF) provides direct funding to national and local NGOs. From 2014 to 2018, the THF directly allocated 37 per cent of its funds (more than 80 million USD) to national and local NGOs to empower them to operate as an integral part of the humanitarian response and not as sub-contractors of international organisations. The THF requires that national and local NGOs establish a robust and transparent risk management system to provide a degree of confidence to permit them to receive direct funding.
- The THF allows Syrian NGOs to include a 7 per cent overhead within their project budgets (a provision not usually included in grants from donors and international humanitarian organisations).
- Some donors allocate direct funding to national NGOs that have demonstrably built their operational capacity.

### **3. INTEGRATING NATIONAL AND LOCAL NGOS IN THE LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION OF THE RESPONSE**

The large number of organisations involved in the cross-border Syria operation presented a serious coordination challenge to the cross-border operation. While the breadth of knowledge from a diverse number of organisations can be an advantage in many ways, decision-making bodies should be small, flexible, and sufficiently agile to facilitate decision-making. The leadership of the Gaziantep operation has taken steps to broaden representation to include Syrian NGOs into the leadership and coordination structures of the response without compromising an effective decision-making process.

#### **a. National and local NGOs participation in clusters**

Cluster coordinators in Gaziantep actively reach out to Syrian NGOs to ensure their inclusion in the coordination of the response, ensuring that information is shared between international and national / local actors, and that there is effective collaboration between international and national / local actors in a spirit of equal partnership.

- Cluster coordinators have developed membership criteria and incentivized national / local participation in the cluster structure by holding meetings in Arabic and tying pooled fund access to cluster membership. This has increased Syrian NGOs engagement and participation in discussions and decision-making. Hundreds of Syrian NGOs are participating in the cluster meetings in Gaziantep. The Health Cluster has a membership that includes 40 Syrian NGOs and the Education Cluster has 90 Syrian NGO members (as of June 2018).
- Several Cluster Lead Agencies have brought Syrian NGOs into a co-coordination role alongside their international counterparts, which facilitates the enablement of Syrian NGO staff to learn about cluster coordination.

#### b. National and local NGOs involvement in operational and strategic decision making

- Syrian NGOs were allocated a number of seats at the Inter Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG), the Humanitarian Liaison Group (HLG), the Inter-Sector Group (ISG) and the Strategic Steering Group (SSG) to ensure their active participation in strategic decision-making bodies for both the cross-border operation (ICCG, HLG) and the Whole of Syria response (ISG, SSG). The League of Syrian Networks (see below) provides the platform to support Syrian NGOs to organize their representation in these fora.

#### c. Supporting internal coordination among national and local NGOs

The Syrian NGO community is fragmented and there are a number of separate Syrian NGO networks to which the different NGOs belong. This fragmentation challenges at times cohesion of a unified national / local NGO position on key strategic decisions.

- Donors have directly and indirectly supported several Syrian NGO networks through technical capacity initiatives and direct funding to empower Syrian NGOs to be more cohesive and better coordinated.
- OCHA helped establish the League of Syrian Networks that is currently composed of six networks and over 300 organisations. While OCHA supported the establishment of the League, it is an entirely Syrian construct and has effectively strengthened coordination among the different Syrian networks, and enhanced Syrian NGO participation and representation in humanitarian mechanisms and fora. The League is the mechanism used by Syrian NGOs to select their representatives in Gaziantep's ICCG and HLG, and the SSG and ISG at the Whole of Syria level. Furthermore, the League of Syrian Networks has an observer seat at the HLG.

## 4. CONTEXTUALIZING THE HUMANITARIAN APPROACH TO THE SYRIA RESPONSE

National and local NGOs in particular are subject to political and military pressures given their strong ties with the communities they serve and the volatility and complexity of the Syrian conflict. In close consultation with the humanitarian community (and especially Syrian NGOs), the HLG has designed and endorsed contextualized guidelines to support NGOs in the delivery of assistance in a principled manner.

- The HLG established Joint Operating Procedures (JOPs) that operationalize International Humanitarian Law (IHL) in the Syrian context and outlines requirements to ensure that humanitarian organisations deliver assistance in a principled manner while engaging with parties to the conflict.
- The HLG endorsed in October 2017 the *Principles of engagement of humanitarian organizations with Civilian Administration Entities*<sup>4</sup> in the cross-border humanitarian response which outlines a clear approach to principled humanitarian engagement in complex environments where linkages to civilian administration entities and stabilization actors can facilitate delivery but can also blur the lines in regard to humanitarian principles. UN agencies and international NGOs conduct extensive training with Syrian NGOs on IHL, humanitarian principles, the JOPs, the Principles of engagement with Civilian Administration Entities and other areas. These trainings are conducted in Arabic and have been adapted to the Syrian context. They are delivered both in Turkey and in Syria through a pool of Syrian trainers.

#### The Peer-2-Peer Support Project

The Peer 2 Peer Support team (formerly known as the Senior Transformative Agenda Implementation Team - STAIT) was created by, and reports to, the Emergency Directors' Group (EDG). It provides direct peer support to Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams to deliver effective, principled, quality, timely, and predictable collective humanitarian response in field operations. For more information, please visit: <http://www.deliveraidbetter.org/>

<sup>4</sup> The guidelines are composed of two main documents ("Principles of engagement of humanitarian organizations with Civilian Administration Entities" and "Operationalization of the Principles of Engagement throughout the Project Cycle Management phases") and two annexes ("Humanitarian Principles" and "Phases of the Project Cycle Management"). All documents are available in English and Arabic on <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/stima/document/principles-engagement-humanitarian-organizations-civilian-administration>.



# G. Sample documents



## 1. Principles of Partnership: Cluster Review

Are you from:

NNGO

INGO

UN Agency

Government

Donor

EQUALITY	Not at all	Somewhat	Substantially
Are meetings open to all partners ('open door policy')			
Are you able to influence which items are discussed at the Cluster meeting?			
Are you able to influence decisions that are taken by the Cluster?			
Are you treated as an equal member of the Cluster?			
Do you feel comfortable raising a different or alternative view to others during Cluster meetings?			
What could the Cluster do differently to improve equality of all members?			

COMPLEMENTARITY	Not at all	Somewhat	Substantially
Are different members' mandates and capacities taken into account when the Cluster is developing strategies or deciding how to respond to coverage gaps?			
Do local and international actors have different roles in the HRP?			
Are local NGO members able to contribute own perspectives, experience and capacities to the Cluster's work as much as international UN/NGO members?			
Is there strong collaboration between the Cluster and other Clusters (CCCM, WASH etc) where relevant, to ensure that the Cluster approach is complementary to what others are doing?			
What could the Cluster do differently to maximise the benefits of the diversity?			

TRANSPARENCY	Not at all	Somewhat	Substantially
Does the Cluster regularly share relevant information with all members?			
Do all members regularly share relevant information with the Cluster?			
Does the Cluster tell all members what resources it has available for the Cluster itself(e.g funding for staff, meetings, training etc) and how the Cluster is spending it?			
Does the Cluster create a safe environment formembers to speak openly about their mistakes?			
Do all members share relevant information with the Cluster about their own fundingsituation?			
What else could the Cluster do differently to improve transparency?			

RESULTS ORIENTED	Not at all	Somewhat	Substantially
Does the Cluster have a strategy and work plan, which was developed jointly with all members?			
Is the Cluster Work plan and strategy regularly reviewed with all members; and updated when necessary to reflect new priority areas?			
Does the Cluster regularly provide updates on progress and facilitate discussions about how to address gaps?			
Does the Cluster discuss programme quality and encourage members to meet these standards?			
What could the Cluster do differently to improve its results?			

RESPONSIBILITY	Not at all	Somewhat	Substantially
Are members able to meet their commitments to the Cluster Workplan and Strategy			
Does the Cluster support members that are not delivering and try find alternative responses/solutions when necessary?			
Does the Cluster encourage and promote local partners to scale up, where possible?			
Does the Cluster monitor and encourage partnerships that allow actors to scale up responsibly (e.g. not too fast, with appropriate support)			
Does the Cluster encourage all agencies to have a code of conduct to prevent abuse and other human rights violations			
Does the Cluster ever discuss and promote the Principles of Partnership?			
What else could the Cluster do to make sure all members are taking their accountabilities seriously?			



## 2. Principles of Partnership: Partnership Review

### EDUCATION SECTOR REVIEW:

Are you from:  NNGO  INGO  Govt  UN Agency  Donor

Consider your largest partnership (in terms of funding) and answer the following questions:

**Equality: Equality requires mutual respect between members of the partnership irrespective of size and power. The participants must respect each other's mandates, obligations and independence and recognise each other's constraints and commitments. Mutual respect must not preclude organisations from engaging in constructive dissent.**

On a scale of 1 to 10...

Do you feel respected by your partner?

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not at all				Sometimes			All the time		

Do you feel that your partnership allows you to maintain your organisations' mandate, obligations and independence?

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not at all				Sometimes			All the time		

Do you feel that your organisations' constraints and challenges are acknowledged and taken into account in the partnership?

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not at all				Sometimes			All the time		

How comfortable are you raising concerns or disagreements with your partner?

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not at all				Somewhat			Completely		

**Transparency: This is achieved through dialogue (on equal footing), with an emphasis on early consultations and early sharing of information. Communications and transparency, including financial transparency, increase the level of trust among organisations.**

On a scale of 1 to 10...

To what extent were your ideas and views taken into account when designing the partnership?

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not at all			Somewhat				Completely		

How equal do you think the following are (between your organisation and your partners')?

*Access to relevant information for programming*

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not equal at all							Very equal		

*Access to relevant information about each others' funding and finances*

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not equal at all							Very equal		

*How much do you trust your partner?*

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not at all							Completely		

**Results-oriented approach: Effective humanitarian action must be reality-based and action-oriented. This requires results-oriented coordination based on effective capabilities and concrete operational capacities.**

On a scale of 1 to 10...

Do you agree with the programme design and strategy in your partnership?

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not at all			Somewhat				Very Much		

- Are the targets reasonable?  Yes  No
- Do you provide progress reports to your partner?  Yes  No
- Does your partner provide reports to you?  Yes  No

	What are <b>your organisations'</b> top three constraints?	What are <b>your partners'</b> top three constraints?
1.		
2.		
3.		

**Responsibility: Humanitarian organisations have an ethical obligation to each other to accomplish their tasks responsibly, with integrity and in a relevant and appropriate way. They must make sure they commit to activities only when they have the means, competencies, skills and capacity to deliver on their commitments. Decisive and robust prevention of abuses committed by humanitarians must also be a constant effort.**

On a scale of 1 to 10...

Is the budget in your partnership sufficient to meet targets and maintain minimum quality standards?

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not at all			Somewhat				Completely		

Is there a Code of Conduct for your staff?  Yes  No

Does your partner have a Code of Conduct?  Yes  No

Have the risks **to your staff** been adequately taken into account in the partnership?

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not at all			Sometimes				Completely		

Have the risks **to your partners' staff** been adequately taken into account in the partnership?

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not at all			Sometimes				Completely		

**Complementarity**

**The diversity of the humanitarian community is an asset if we build on our comparative advantages and complement each other's contributions. Local capacity is one of the main assets to enhance and on which to build. Whenever possible, humanitarian organisations should strive to make it an integral part in emergency response. Language and cultural barriers must be overcome. Think about your own organisation. What do you think are the unique skills, expertise, experience etc that your organisation brings to the partnership to help make it a successful partnership?**


**Now think about your partner. What do you think are the unique skills, expertise, experience etc that your partner brings to the partnership that helps make it a successful partnership?**




### 3. Termes de Reference pour la structure tripartite de coordination du GTPE Sud Kivu

Le Groupe de Travail Protection de l'Enfance National identifie des aires de coordination géographique de la Protection de l'Enfance (PE) qui sont dotées d'une représentation provinciale du groupe de travail. Ces coordinations sont appelées Groupes de Travail Protection de l'Enfance.

La facilitation se fait par l'agence lead (UNICEF) avec un ou des co-facilitateurs (co-leads). En mars 2020, la coordination du GTPE Sud Kivu a choisie de se doter d'une structure tripartite, avec un co-lead issu d'une organisation de la société civile (élu par le GTPE) et un co-lead de l'Etat (point focal de la Division des Affaires Sociales, DivAS). La coordination a également opté pour l'ajout d'un poste de secrétaire dans le but de faciliter les tâches comme le rapportage ; ce poste est réservé à une ONG nationale dans le but d'offrir une meilleure compréhension et une expérience de la facilitation/coordination aux acteurs nationaux.

#### I. Les principales responsabilités du lead du GTPE (UNICEF)

- Établir des mécanismes de coordination des acteurs de protection de l'enfance sur le terrain ;
- Coordonner la mise en œuvre des évaluations, identifier les gaps et priorités pour la protection de l'enfance et coordonner les réponses ;
- Assurer un bon fonctionnement du Système de Gestion de l'information en suivant les lignes directrices prévues par le GTPE national et notamment :
  - i. Récolte des alertes, transmission ponctuelle au GTPE national ou gestion au niveau provincial ;
  - ii. Analyse mensuelle de la problématique de protection de l'enfance et proposition de pistes de solutions dans le rapport narratif mensuel ;
  - iii. Récolte des données mensuelles, compilation et transmission au GTPE national de la matrice 6W;
- Etablir des mécanismes de référencement pour les cas de protection de l'enfance et coordonner la mise à jour de la cartographie des services (protection, santé, VBG, RECOPEs, etc) ;
- Maintenir la liste de contact du GTPE à jour et partager les informations pertinentes aux membres GTPE et sous-GTPE ;
- Inviter les membres et diriger les réunions mensuelles et ad hoc du GTPE ;

- Appuyer les membres du GTPE dans la pleine compréhension et mise en œuvre des documents et orientations provenant du GTPE national ;
- Renforcer les capacités des membres du GTPE sur la coordination et les aspects techniques de la PE et promouvoir l'échange de bonnes pratiques ;
- Appuyer les membres du GTPE dans la mise en œuvre d'activités de PE en ligne avec les approches principales et des standards minimum de PE et dans le respect des principes humanitaires fondamentaux de PE ;
- Promouvoir la transversalité de la PE ainsi que veiller à la prise en compte des questions transversales dans les activités de PE, tels que le genre, le VIH/SIDA, handicap, sauvegarde des enfants etc. ;
- Appuyer les leads et co-leads des sous-GTPE territoriaux pour la coordination au niveau territorial, y compris leur donner des orientations et feedback sur les rapports mensuels, renforcer leur capacité, et les visiter chaque semestre dans la mesure du possible ;
- Diriger la contribution du GTPE Sud Kivu au HNO et HRP et autres plans de réponse ;
- Représenter le GTPE Sud Kivu à la réunion du Cluster Protection provincial ;
- Représenter le GTPE Sud Kivu aux réunions de l'ICR et d'autres cadres de coordination du Hub Centre Est.

## **II. Les principales responsabilités du co-lead, représentant étatique (DivAS)**

- Représenter l'Etat Congolais au sein de la coordination du GTPE ;
- Être une personne ressource quant aux normes et standards en protection de l'enfance nationaux et renforcer les capacités des membres du GTPE sur ceux-ci ;
- Mettre à jour régulièrement (chaque trimestre) le mapping des FAT et CTO pour le Sud Kivu et les partager au GTPE SK et aux sous-GTPE au niveau territorial ;
- Appuyer les membres du GTPE qui souhaitent homologuer des placements en FAT ;
- Faire la liaison entre le GTPE et la Coordination provinciale de Protection de l'Enfant (dirigé par la DivAS) pour mieux coordonner l'action des deux structures ;
- Faciliter la collaboration entre les membres du GTPE et les représentants de la DivAS au niveau territorial ;
- Contribuer au développement des messages de plaidoyer, en particulier envers les acteurs étatiques, et être porteur de ces messages ;
- Accueillir les réunions du GTPE dans la salle de la DivAS chaque deux mois environ (donc une réunion sur deux) ;

- Appuyer le lead du GTPE dans la facilitation des réunions ;
- Réviser les rapports mensuels et compte-rendu de réunions et donner un feedback dans les 3 jours ouvrables dans la mesure du possible ;
- Participer régulièrement dans les évaluations des besoins dans la mesure des moyens logistiques disponibles (ou mis à disposition par les membres du GTPE) et impliquer d'autres services étatiques comme pertinente.

### **III. Les principales responsabilités du co-lead, (ONG/organisation de la société civile)**

- Assurer l'intérim du lead pour ses fonctions au GTPE en cas d'empêchement, et principalement : l'animation des réunions, la gestion de la liste de contacts, la compilation et partage du rapport mensuel et 6W, et la participation à la réunion du Cluster Protection provincial ;
- Appuyer le lead dans la facilitation des réunions ;
- Appuyer le secrétaire à finaliser le compte-rendu de la réunion mensuelle ;
- Réviser les rapports mensuels et donner un feedback dans les 3 jours ouvrables dans la mesure du possible ;
- Prendre le lead du développement du Plan d'Action annuel du GTPE ;
- Briefer les nouveaux membres du GTPE sur le fonctionnement et les outils ;
- Appuyer les membres du GTPE pour le remplissage de la matrice 6W ;
- Soutenir les membres du GTPE dans le développement des messages clé en la matière de plaidoyer et prendre le lead de la coordination des activités de plaidoyer ;
- Appuyer les leads et co-leads des sous-GTPE territoriaux pour la coordination au niveau territorial, y compris leur donner des orientations et feedback sur les rapports mensuels, et les visiter pour un renforcement de capacités lorsque l'occasion se présente;
- Monitorer et assurer le respect et la mise en œuvre des engagements et standards globaux du secteur ainsi que des normes et principes humanitaires, y compris la sensibilisation/formation des membres du GTPE en la matière ;
- Assurer le renforcement des capacités des membres du cluster en matière d'évaluation des besoins, planification, monitoring, rapportage et plaidoyer.

### **IV. Les principales responsabilités du secrétaire (ONG/organisation de la société civile locale)**

- Faire un compte-rendu des réunions draft à partager au lead et co-lead du GTPE ;
- Faciliter la compilation de diverses informations, par exemple des sondages internes auprès des membres du GTPE ;

- Conserver les archives du GTPE ;
- Participer aux réunions du groupe de travail VBG en tant que point focal du GTPE et faire la restitution au GTPE ;
- Assister le co-lead à appuyer les membres du GTPE pour le remplissage de la matrice 6W ;
- Appuyer le lead et co-lead dans la rédaction de divers documents ou dans divers processus à leur demande ;
- Co-faciliter les réunions en l'absence de deux des (co-)leads.
- Participer régulièrement dans les évaluations des besoins dans la mesure des moyens logistiques disponibles.

**Notes :**

Les 3 membres de la coordination et le secrétaire vont se rencontrer chaque deuxième mardi du mois (ou comme convenu) pour préparer la réunion mensuelle du GTPE. Les postes de co-leads et secrétaire sont volontaires. Les élections pour le co-lead (ONG/organisation de la société civile) et le secrétariat auront lieu tous les 3 ans.



## 4. PowerPoint presentation for Induction to new cluster coordinators and information managers by the Global Education Cluster





## Objective of the Induction:

Familiarize with GEC support available, toolkits, Helpdesk, RRT, Capacity Development options and specific GEC thematic areas



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## Responding to New Realities: 2020 Overview of RRT Support

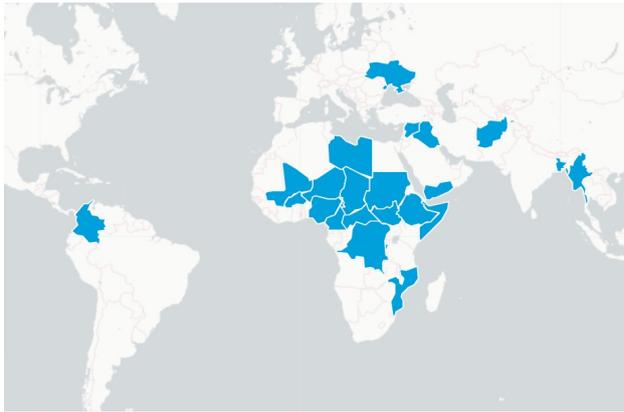
Overview of how the GEC RRT navigated COVID-19 to ensure support to country teams was not disrupted.

## GEC Supported countries/contexts



As of April 2021, GEC supports 35 contexts:

- 27 Activated clusters: 27 officially activated IASC Education Clusters<sup>2</sup> (ipg, Whole of Syria)
- 3 WoS hubs: (NE Syria, NW Syria and Damascus) and
- 5 EIE working groups in MYRP 2021 countries (Burundi, Haiti, Pakistan, Lebanon and Uganda – for CCT only)



Countries	Leads
Afghanistan	UNICEF/SC
Bangladesh	UNICEF/SC
Burkina Faso	UNICEF/PLAN
Cameroon	UNICEF/PLAN
Central African Republic	UNICEF/NRC/ACTED
Chad	UNICEF
Colombia	UNICEF/SC/NRC
Democratic Republic of the Congo	UNICEF/SC
Ethiopia	UNICEF/SC
Honduras	UNICEF/SC
Iraq	UNICEF/SC
Libya	UNICEF/NRC
Mali	UNICEF/SC
Mozambique	UNICEF/SC
Myanmar	UNICEF/SC
Niger	UNICEF/SC
Nigeria	UNICEF/SC
Occupied Palestinian Territories	UNICEF/SC
Pacific	UNICEF/SC
Syria (WoS hub and 3 Operations: Damascus, NE, NW)	UNICEF/SC
Somalia	UNICEF/SC
South Sudan	UNICEF/SC
Sudan	UNICEF
Ukraine	UNICEF/SC
Venezuela	UNICEF/SC
Yemen	UNICEF/SC
Zimbabwe	UNICEF/SC
<b>Total Activated Clusters: 27 (including WoS)</b>	
NE Syria	SC
NW Syria	UNICEF/SC
Damascus	UNICEF
<b>Total Syria Hubs: 3</b>	



### Meet the Team

[Meet the Team | Education Cluster](#)

### GEC team members:

- 2 Global Coordinators
- 2 Deputy Coordinators
- Rapid Response Team (CCs and Ims) and thematic Specialists (Cash and Voucher Assistance, Localization, Child Safeguarding and Accountability, Attacks on Education, RRM, Cp-EiE collaboration)
- Capacity Development Specialists (also RRTs)
- Communication
- Knowledge Management



## GEC Offer of Support



E-mail: [help.edcluster@humanitarianresponse.info](mailto:help.edcluster@humanitarianresponse.info) or help.edcluster (skype)

For EIE programmatic requests refer to: [helpdesk@inee.org](mailto:helpdesk@inee.org)

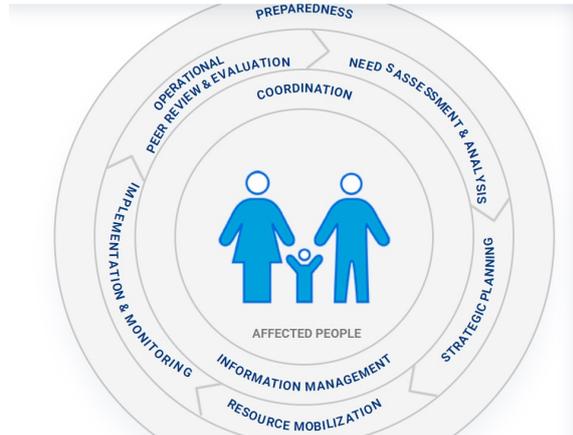


## Regular GEC Support Cluster Teams

- [Annual meeting and Cluster Team's Retreat](#)
- [Start-of-the-year Support Planning Call](#)
- [Communities of Practice](#)
- [HNO and HRP Webinars](#)
- [Thematic webinars throughout the year](#)
- [Cluster Performance Monitoring exercise](#)
- [GEC satisfaction survey](#)
- [Mid-year and End-Year HRP monitoring surveys](#)



## Education Cluster Toolkit



## Needs Assessments

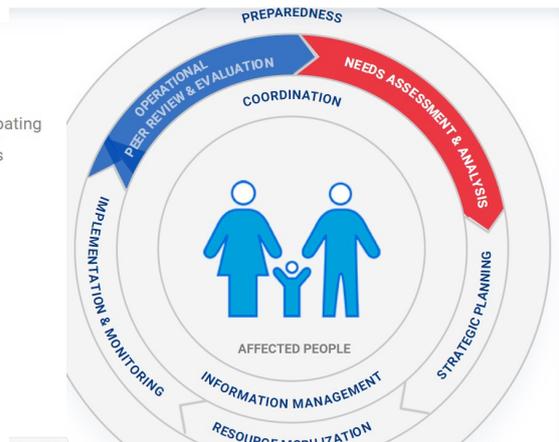
### Needs Assessment and Analysis

Key resources, tools, and guidance for conducting, coordinating and participating in secondary data reviews and joint, harmonized and/or multi-sector needs assessments.

[Education in Emergencies Needs Assessment Guide](#)

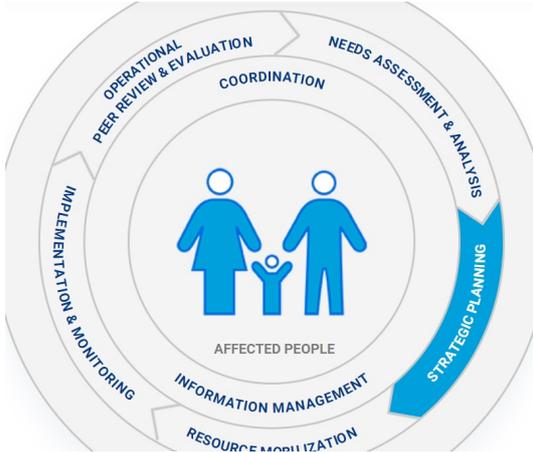
[Needs Assessment Package](#)

[Calculating People in Need Resources](#)





## Strategic Planning



### Strategic Planning

Key resources, tools, and guidance for developing and planning comprehensive strategies and EiE response.

[Education Cluster Strategy Development Package](#)

[Developing Education Cluster Strategy Guide](#)

[Guide to Developing Education Cluster Strategy Summary](#)

[Education Cluster Strategy Template](#)

[Education Cluster Strategy Template Instructions](#)

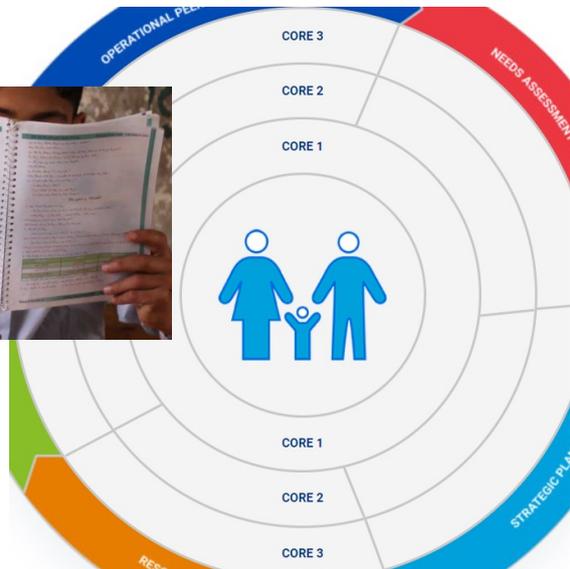
[Modèle de Stratégie du Cluster \(FR Example\)](#)

[Calculating People in Need Resources](#)

[Indicator Guidance](#)

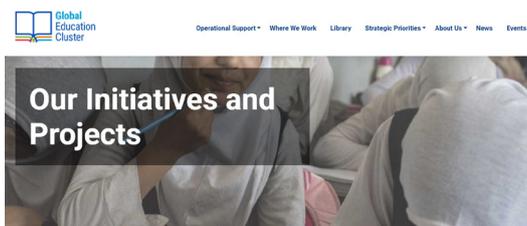


- [Core 1 ENG](#)
- [Core 1 FR](#)
- [Core 1 SP](#)





## Thematic Workstreams



[Our Initiatives and Projects | Education Cluster](#)

- **Cash and Voucher Assistance** (For further guidance/support contact [Dana](#) and [Romana](#))
- **Localization** (For further guidance/support contact [Kemal](#))
- **CP-EIE Collaboration** (For further guidance/support contact [Mackenzie](#))
- **Child Safeguarding and Accountability to Children**(For further guidance/support contact [Serena](#))
- **GBV and Gender**
- **Disability Inclusion** (for further guidance/support contact [Anais](#))



## Strategic Priorities

<p><b>Accountability</b></p> <p>Accountability, both to affected populations and for the Education Cluster's results and performance.</p>	<p><b>Partnership</b></p> <p>Collaborative, inclusive and meaningful engagement contributing towards realizing the Education Cluster's vision.</p>	<p><b>Humanitarian Development Nexus</b></p> <p>Working together for uninterrupted education for children and youth in crisis.</p>
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**Initiative for Strengthening Education in Emergencies Coordination**



**Deepening Partnership with Education Cannot Wait**



**Global Partners Project**



**Strengthening Coordination and Rapid Response with DG ECHO**



**Any questions?**



## 5. Standard Terms of Reference for Humanitarian Country Teams

**IASC** Inter-Agency  
Standing Committee

**Standard Terms of  
Reference for**

**HUMANITARIAN  
COUNTRY TEAMS**

February 2017

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Endorsed by: IASC Emergency Directors Group  
2.2017

## INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE

### STANDARD TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR HUMANITARIAN COUNTRY TEAMS<sup>1</sup>

#### INTRODUCTION

These standard Terms of Reference (ToR) for Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs) are the foundation for developing country-specific HCT ToR that are adapted as necessary. The ToR define the roles and responsibilities for participation and functioning of HCTs. They also reinforce the reciprocal and mutual accountabilities of the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and HCT members.

The ToR build on the IASC *Guidance for Humanitarian Country Teams* and the IASC *Terms of Reference for the Humanitarian Coordinator* endorsed in 2009. They are also consistent with the commitments of the World Humanitarian Summit and Grand Bargain.

#### PURPOSE

The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) is led and chaired by the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC)<sup>2</sup>. The HCT's overall goal is to ensure that inter-agency humanitarian action alleviates human suffering and protects the lives, the livelihoods and dignity of people in need. As the top inter-agency humanitarian leadership body in a country, the HCT's primary purpose is to provide strategic direction for collective inter-agency humanitarian response.

The HCT makes decisions to ensure that country-level humanitarian action is well-coordinated, principled, timely, effective and efficient. It also ensures that adequate prevention, preparedness, risk and security management measures are in place and functioning.

The HCT is ultimately accountable to the people in need. The affected State retains the primary role in the initiation, organization, coordination, and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory.<sup>3</sup> Whenever possible, the HCT operates in support of and in coordination with national and local authorities.

#### ESTABLISHMENT AND DISESTABLISHMENT

An HCT is established in all countries with an HC position. In countries where there is no HC position, an HCT is established when a humanitarian crisis erupts or a situation of chronic vulnerability sharply deteriorates. An HCT is also established to steer preparedness activities, if no other adequate coordination mechanism exists. In countries where there is no HC position, the decision to establish a HCT is taken by the Resident Coordinator (RC), in consultation with relevant operational agencies and the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC).

<sup>1</sup> Final draft endorsed by the IASC Emergency Directors Group, February 2017.

<sup>2</sup> In the absence of an HC position, the Resident Coordinator (RC). The term 'HC' refers to both RC/HCs and stand-alone HCs.

<sup>3</sup> See UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182 of December 1991.

The HCT may be disestablished in the transition phase, if and when other coordination mechanisms are considered more effective and appropriate. The decision to disestablish the HCT is taken by the HC or, in the absence of a HC position, the RC, in consultation with the HCT and the ERC.

## COMPOSITION

The HCT is composed of organizations that undertake humanitarian action in-country and that commit to participate in coordination arrangements.<sup>4</sup> It should include UN agencies, OCHA, national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and, subject to their individual mandates, components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement<sup>5</sup>. The UNDSS Chief Security Adviser will have a standing invitation as an observer to the HCT.

The size of the HCT is limited, to allow for effective decision-making. Membership criteria are clear, generally accepted and well-known. The main criterion is operational relevance.

Members are represented at the highest level (Country Representative or equivalent). In addition to their own organization, members may represent one or more organizations that are not members of the HCT, at their request. An appropriate balance should be sought between representation from the UN and NGOs. Representation from national NGOs should be particularly encouraged and supported.

Representatives of Cluster/Sector Lead Agencies represent their cluster(s)/sector(s) in addition to their organization.

When appropriate, other institutions and agencies may be invited to participate in HCT meetings.

## ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The HCT function is guided by international humanitarian and human rights law, the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, and the Principles of Partnership.<sup>6</sup> Working in support of the HC, the HCT has the following responsibilities:

- a) **Provide a shared strategic vision for collective humanitarian action in-country which is set out in a common strategic plan (the Humanitarian Response Plan or equivalent).** The plan should be based on documented needs and integrate cross-cutting issues (for example age, gender, diversity, human rights, HIV/AIDS and the environment) as well as activities in support of preparedness and early recovery. The HCT should:

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<sup>4</sup> Humanitarian action includes relief, early recovery and protection activities in the response preparedness and response phases in either disasters or complex emergencies.

<sup>5</sup> The components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement attend Humanitarian Country Team meetings in an observer capacity, except the IFRC when it is attending as representative of the country-level convener of the Shelter Cluster. They coordinate with other humanitarian actors to the extent necessary to achieve efficient operational complementarity and a strengthened response for people affected by armed conflict, situations of violence and other crises, as appropriate, according to their individual mandates.

<sup>6</sup> Equality, Transparency, Results-oriented approach, Responsibility, Complementarity. See also ICVA's background and rationale page which explains the Principles of Partnership and provides a direct link to the PoP commitments, <https://icvanetwork.org/principles-partnership-statement-commitment>.

- Agree on the most effective division of labor to support implementation of the strategic plan, including through an appropriate cluster<sup>7</sup> and cluster leadership arrangements.
- Ensure the principled, timely, effective and efficient implementation of the strategic plan, including through strategic oversight of needs assessment and monitoring and evaluation.
- Lead efforts to ensure that the strategic plan is sufficiently funded in a timely manner, with the HC and HCT members promoting and contributing to inclusive resource mobilization.
- Provide clear direction on key in-country humanitarian concerns that require common positions in the HCT.
- Monitor implementation of the strategic objectives and ensure corrective action is taken when required.

**b) Oversee the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG), sub-national coordination bodies and other groups that are part of the inter-agency coordination architecture in-country.** This responsibility includes oversight of the implementation of the strategic plan, encouraging joint analysis and inter-sectorial outcome-based programming, ensuring implementation of the response, endorsing in-country positions and responding to requests from these bodies. As appropriate, the HCT will encourage and support decentralization to the sub-national level, including by facilitating two-way information exchange and communication.

**c) Support efforts led by the HC to obtain free, timely, safe and unimpeded access by humanitarian organizations to populations in need.** The HCT should:

- Engage in coordinated negotiations with relevant parties, including non-state actors where appropriate.
- Promote respect for international humanitarian and human rights laws by all parties, including contributing to private and/or public advocacy as appropriate.
- Support the efforts of the HC to influence Member States, regional organizations, UN entities, civil society, the private sector, the media and other relevant actors.

**d) Ensure that preparedness and response efforts are inclusive and coordinated.** The HCT should strengthen early warning and preparedness capacity, and enhance synergies and relationships with national and local authorities. These efforts should build on the interface between the HCT and UNCT. Clearly defined commitments and support for engagement of local and national NGOs as strategic and equal partners should also be a priority.

**e) Ensure that the international humanitarian response is coordinated with national, sub-national and local level authorities,** including crisis management agencies, as appropriate.

**f) Support and contribute to efforts to address the humanitarian-development nexus.** The HCT should endeavor to coordinate with development platforms to develop a shared understanding

<sup>7</sup> IASC clusters are formally activated clusters created when existing coordination mechanisms are overwhelmed or constrained in their ability to respond to identified needs in line with humanitarian principles. For more information in particular on when IASC Clusters or Government-led coordination please refer to the IASC Reference Module For Cluster Coordination at Country Level (July 2015); <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-transformative-agenda/documents-public/reference-module-cluster-coordination-country-level>.

of sustainability, risk and vulnerability, achieve a shared vision for outcomes and facilitate shared analysis and multi-year planning and financing as appropriate.<sup>8</sup>

### HCT COMPACT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The HC and the HCT are ultimately accountable to the people in need. The HC leads and chairs the HCT and reports directly to the ERC, forming an annual Compact.<sup>9</sup> HCT membership is conditional on a commitment to mutual accountability among the members. Individual HCT Members and their respective organizations, make a commitment to contribute to the HCT as a collective, and to pursue collective outcomes. This contribution should be considered a key component of the responsibilities and performance of country-level operational leadership of each member agency.

Members of the HCT outline specific mutual responsibilities, in an annual<sup>10</sup> HCT Compact, that is developed in country and provides the basis for periodic review of the performance of the HCT. The Compact should set out the important actions required to collectively achieve the “role and responsibilities” mentioned above, as prioritized by the HCT, as well as four mandatory responsibilities:

- A collective approach for ensuring that **protection**<sup>11</sup> is central to humanitarian action, including developing and implementing a common HCT strategy on protection.<sup>12</sup>
- A collective approach to **Accountability to Affected People (AAP)** for engaging with, ensuring feedback to and adjusting the response based on the views of affected people.
- A collective mechanism and approach to **Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) by humanitarian workers**, including a Code of Conduct, aligned with any other mechanisms in place to deal with this issue.
- A collective approach to addressing **Sexual and Gender based Violence**.

### MODUS OPERANDI

The modus operandi of the HCT is governed by the **Principles of Partnership**.<sup>13</sup> The HCT should be chaired in a consensual and facilitative manner.<sup>14</sup> Membership should be collaborative and constructive.

<sup>8</sup> See Commitment 10, ‘Enhance Engagement between Humanitarian and Development Actors,’ *The Grand Bargain*: <https://consultations.worldhumanitariansummit.org/bitcache/075d4c18b82e0853e3d393e90af18acf734baf29?vid=580250&di sposition=inline&op=view>, and the UNSG *World Humanitarian Summit ‘Commitments to Action,’* [https://www.worldhumanitariansummit.org/sites/default/files/media/WHS%20Commitment%20to%20Action\\_8September2016.pdf](https://www.worldhumanitariansummit.org/sites/default/files/media/WHS%20Commitment%20to%20Action_8September2016.pdf), sets out an agenda for a new way of working by transcending the humanitarian – development divide.

<sup>9</sup> See IASC Terms of Reference for the Humanitarian Coordinator (2009): The annual compact between the HC and ERC spells out agreed objectives and planned outcomes, and what each can expect from the other.

<sup>10</sup> The compact may be negotiated for a shorter duration if HCTs are established for shorter terms.

<sup>11</sup> As concerns refugees, UNHCR will brief the HCT on the protection and solutions strategy envisaged.

<sup>12</sup> *The Centrality of Protection in Humanitarian Action*, Statement by IASC Principals, endorsed by the IASC Principals on the 17 December 2013. Also see the *IASC Protection Policy*, endorsed by the Principals in October 2016. Available at: <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/protection-priority-global-protection-cluster/documents/inter-agency-standing-committee-policy>. The HCT Protection Strategy should be based on the analysis of the protection cluster and members should commit to share information and analysis with the Cluster.

<sup>13</sup> See ICVA’s background and rationale page which explains the Principles of Partnership and provides a direct link to the PoP commitments, <https://icvanetwork.org/principles-partnership-statement-commitment>.

<sup>14</sup> In case of an L3 response, the decision-making process and chairmanship style might need to be adjusted in accordance to IASC Transformative Agenda Reference Document, 3. [Responding to Level 3 Emergencies What ‘Empowered Leadership,’ looks](#)

Meetings are strategic in purpose, focused on clear objectives, action-oriented and produce realistic decisions with clear and agreed follow up.

### **INTERFACE WITH MEMBER STATES, REGIONAL BODIES AND IN-COUNTRY COORDINATION MECHANISMS**

While representatives of Member States and regional bodies, including donors, are not members of HCTs, the HC/HCT should ensure regular, consistent engagement with these representatives. It is especially important to ensure proactive engagement in planning, information exchange and strategic discussions with Member State and regional body representatives who do or could provide financial and strategic support for the inter-agency response. A fortnightly, monthly or quarterly HCT-donor meeting is advisable. The frequency will depend on the crisis and HCs/HCTs are encouraged to ensure regular ad hoc engagement as required.

The HC or, in the absence of an HC position, the RC, is responsible for ensuring complementarity between the HCT and UNCT.<sup>15</sup> Building on complementarities is particularly important in the areas of preparedness, early recovery and strengthening the humanitarian-development nexus.

Where a UN Disaster Management Team (DMT) exists at the level of Country Representative, the HC, or in the absence of the HC, the RC is responsible for ensuring complementarity with the HCT.

Where possible, the HCT complements government-led coordination structures and response.

The HCT interfaces with the UN Security Management Team (SMT) as appropriate, with the Chief Security Adviser having a standing invitation to participate in the HCT as an observer.

When a decision has been taken to phase out the HCT, the HC, or in the absence of an HC position, the RC is responsible for ensuring transition of responsibilities to other coordination mechanisms in the country.

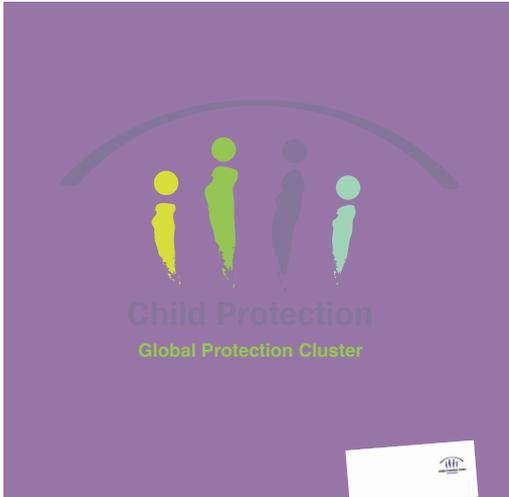
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*like in practice*, PR/1209/4175/7 November 2012; IASC Transformative Agenda Reference Document 1. [Concept Paper on 'Empowered Leadership'](#), (Revised) March 2014.

<sup>15</sup> If the HC is not also the RC, such responsibility befits both the HC and the RC.



## 6. Localisation Orientation Module Presentation by the Child Protection Area of Responsibility



**Localisation in Child  
Protection Coordination**  
Preliminary Conceptual Framework  
and Approach



# SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION



What does “localisation” mean to you?

(Write your answer on the cards provided and hand to the facilitator)



Break into groups of 2-3.

1. Introduce yourselves
2. Discuss – who do you consider to be a local actor?



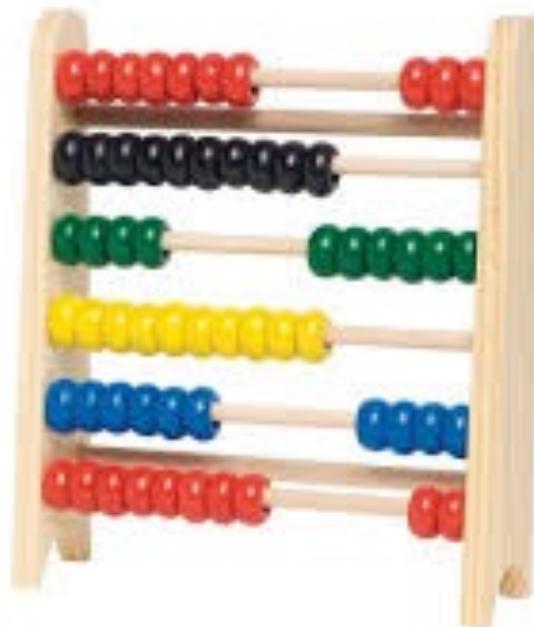
*“as local as possible, as international as necessary.”*

For more information on the World Humanitarian Summit:

[https://www.worldhumanitariansummit.org/sites/default/files/media/WHS%20Commitment%20to%20Action\\_8September2016.pdf](https://www.worldhumanitariansummit.org/sites/default/files/media/WHS%20Commitment%20to%20Action_8September2016.pdf)

For more information on the Grand Bargain:

<http://www.agendaforhumanity.org/initiatives/3861>





Child Protection

# SESSION 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

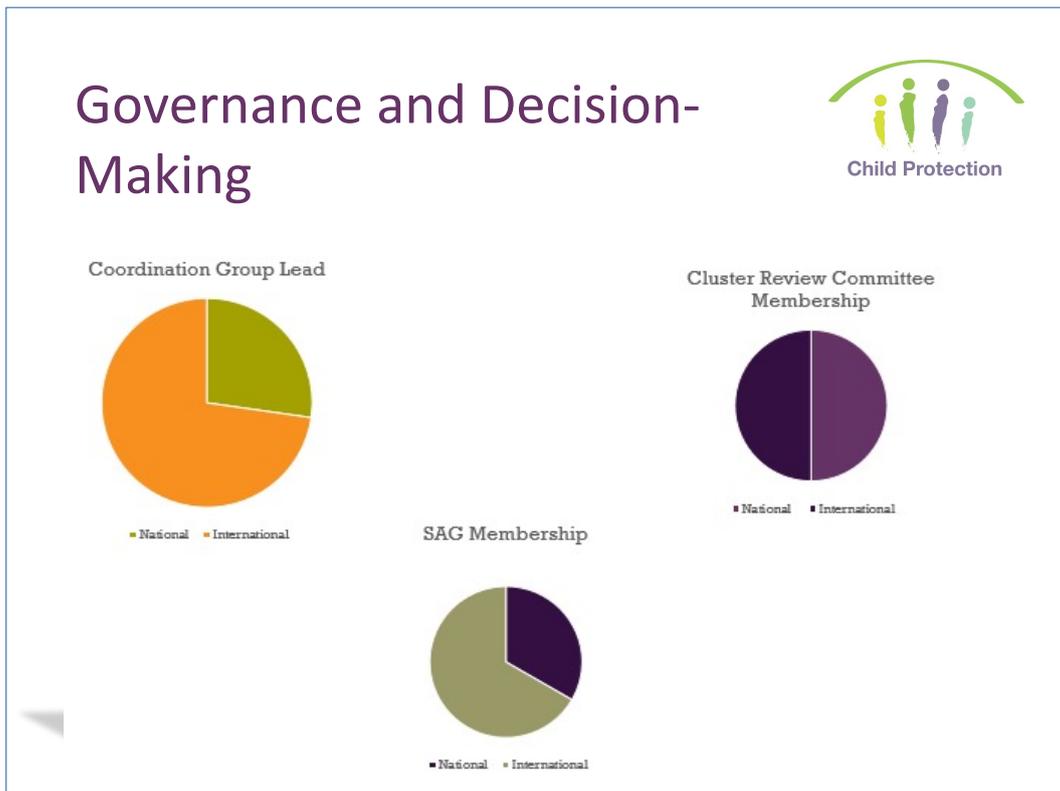
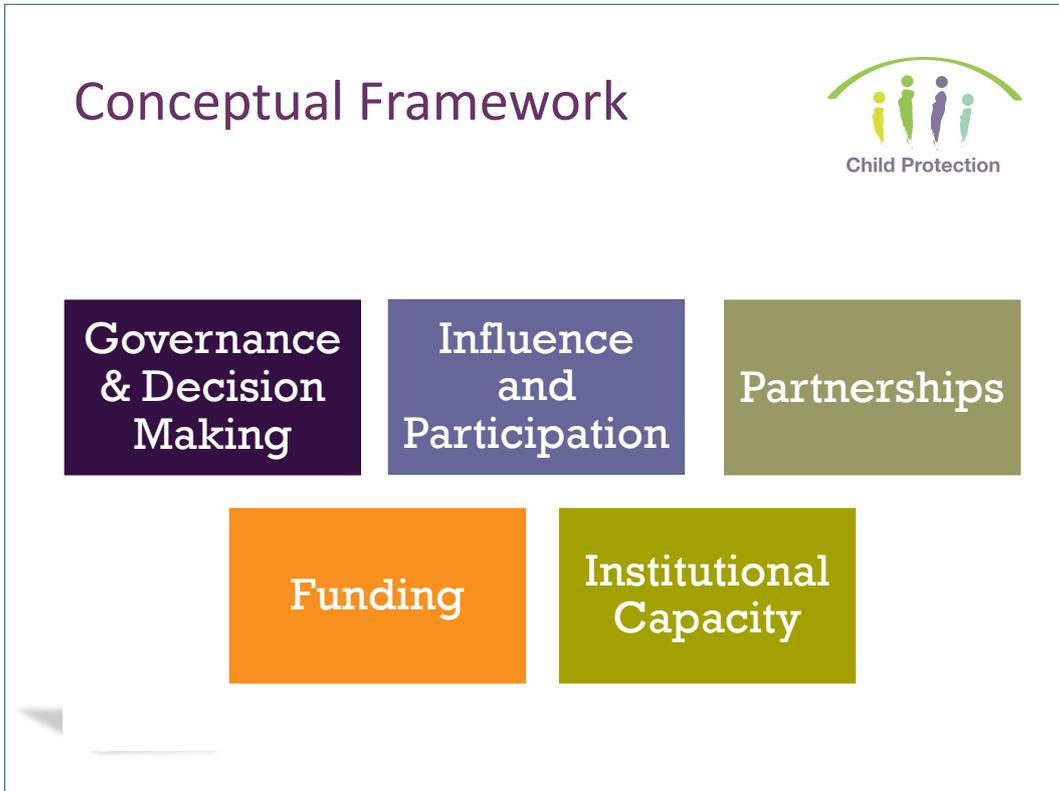


## The role of the coordination system in localisation



Child Protection

- There is an obligation to promote localisation (WHS/Grand Bargain)
- More importantly, localisation can help us achieve our coordination objectives – increased coverage and quality.
- The coordination system can support agencies and networks to:
  - **amplify localisation efforts**
  - **take successful pilots to scale**
  - **Influence internal structural changes**

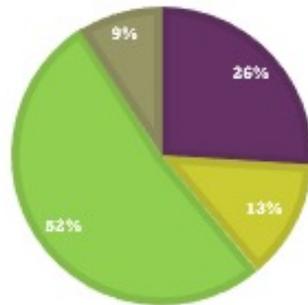


## Influence and Participation



### NIGERIA

International NGOs   Govt Agencies   National NGO   UN Agencies



*“... the door to cluster meetings is open, while the power dynamics in them are skewed towards INGOs and UN...”*

## Partnership - Cluster

Education Cluster

Combined   National   International



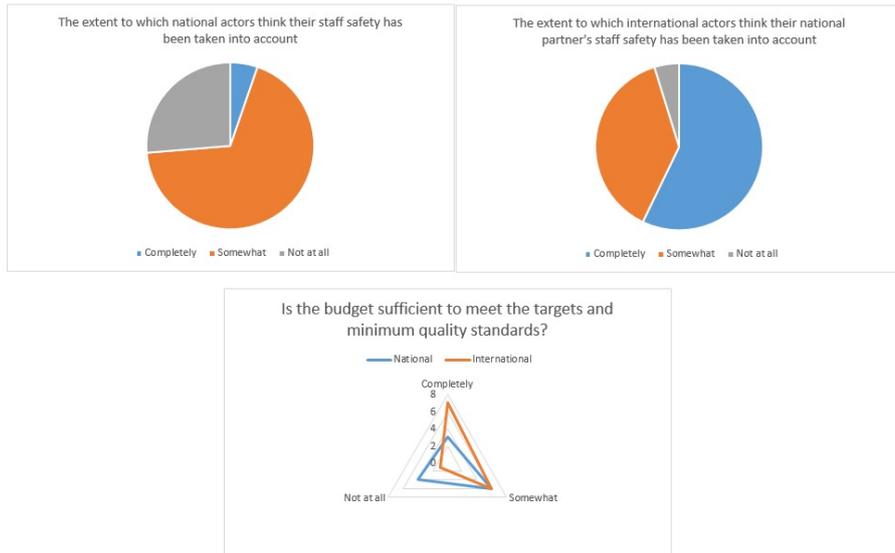
Child Protection

Combined   National   International

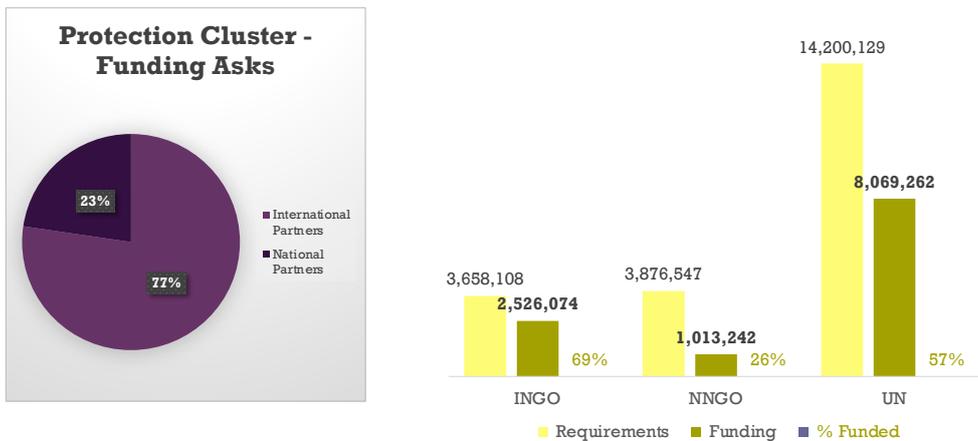


**Principles of Partnership:**  
 Equality, Transparency, Results-Oriented Approach,  
 Responsibility and Complementarity

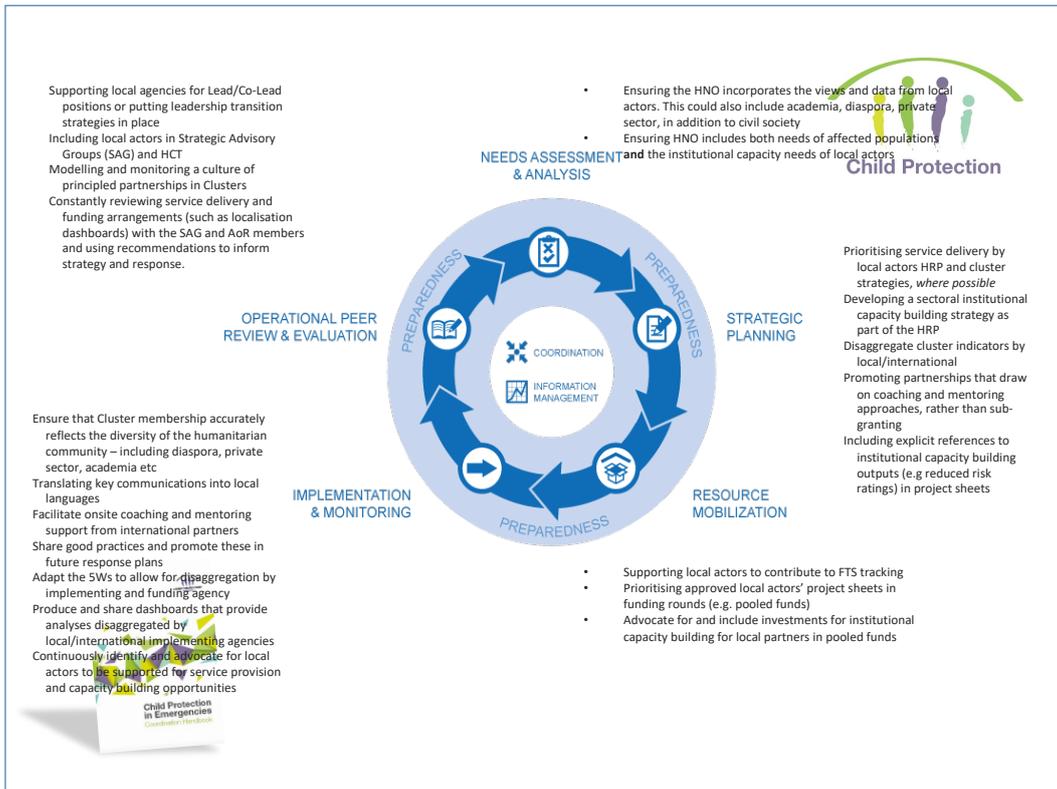
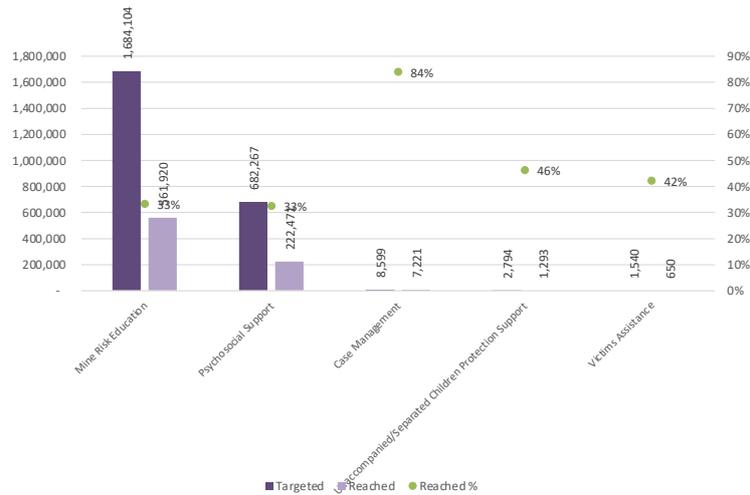
## Partnership (Principle: Responsibility)



## Funding



# Institutional Capacity





# SESSION 3: CURRENT SITUATION & FUTURE VISION



- Break into 5 groups
- Each group gathers around one of the “stations”. You will find a continuum:  
National  $\longleftrightarrow$  International.
- As a group, debate where along the continuum you believe best satisfies the phrase “as local as possible, as international as necessary.”



# SESSION 4: ACTION PLANNING



- Return to your original group and “station”.
- List the actions or activities that the Coordination Group could undertake to achieve the desired localization
- When instructed, move to the next “station” and add any additional ideas you have to the existing list.
- At the end, the whole group will select the top 2-3 priorities.



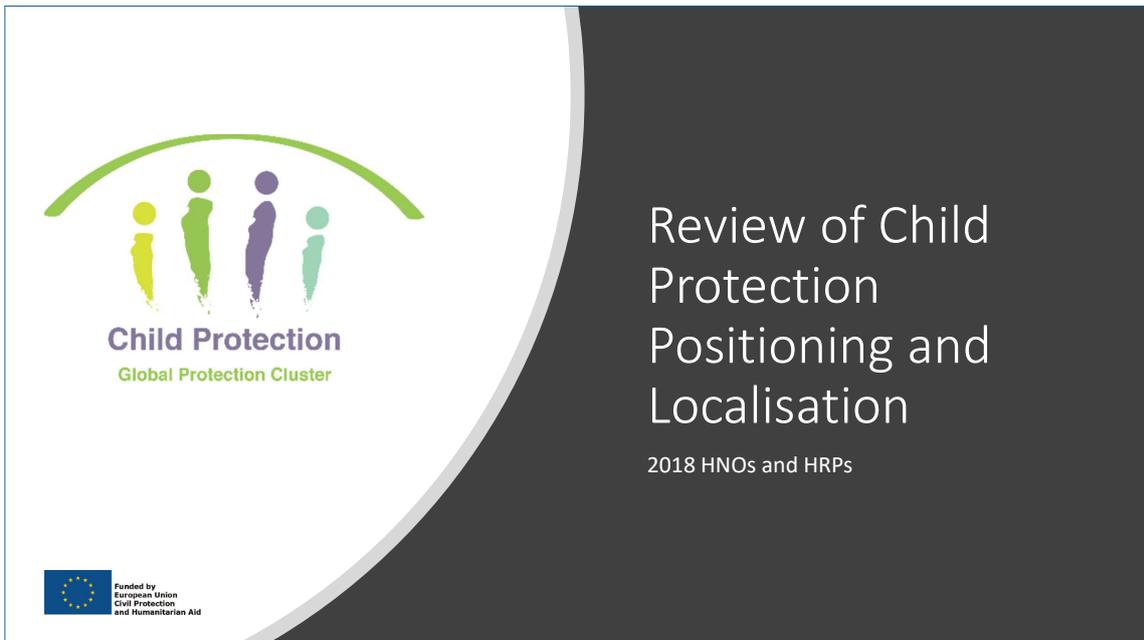
# SESSION 5: MONITORING



- Return to your original group and “station”.
- Review the top 2-3 priorities selected in the last session and answer the following:
  - *How can the activities be integrated into the existing or upcoming HRP*
  - *Identify an indicator for monitoring each one.*
  - *How could the Cluster monitor progress?*



## 7. Review of Child Protection Positioning and Localisation in HNOs and HRPs by the Child Protection Area of Responsibility



### Survey Methodology

- Desk review, conducted by Global CP AoR team
- 24 out of 25 HNOs for 2018 reviewed (Iraq HNO is not finalized, incl. JRP for Bangladesh)
- 23 out of 24 HRPs for 2018 were reviewed (Syria not finalized, incl. JRP for Bangladesh)
- Standardised set of indicators used
- Shared with coordinators for validation.

## Children in Need of Protection

- Globally, around **92,000,000** people are in need of Protection in humanitarian settings.
- Almost **50,000,000** of these are children (53% of total people in need of Protection).
- These children account for **32%** of the total 153,132,851 people in need of humanitarian support, globally.

## Disaggregation in HNOs

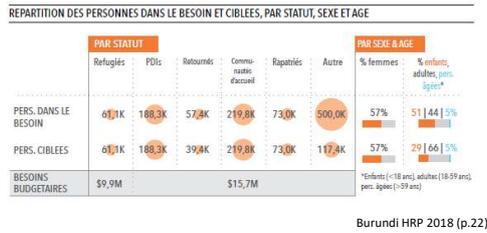
- **18 HNOs** (75%) disaggregate protection targets by adult/child
- **Only 2 HNOs** (8%) disaggregates further within the child category
- **79%** of Protection targets in HNOs are disaggregated by sex (n=19)

BREAKDOWN BY SECTOR/SEX/AGE							
NUMBERS IN MILLIONS	Male	Female	Children (0-4)	Children (5-17)	Adults (18-59)	Elderly (>59)	People in need of assistance
 Protection	6.5	6.8	1.5	4.0	7.2	0.6	13.3 M 

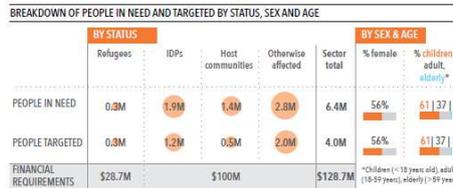
Example from Syria (p.23)

## Disaggregation - HRP

- **12** HRP (52%) disaggregate protection targets by adult/child
- **No** HRP disaggregates further within the child category
- **91%** of Protection targets are disaggregated by sex (n=21)



Burundi HRP 2018 (p.22)



South Sudan HRP 2018 (p.22)

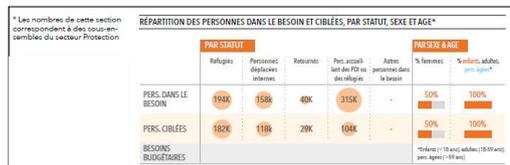
## Disaggregation - HRP

- **70%** of HRPs specify the proportion of the Protection Cluster PIN that is targeted with child protection interventions (n=16).

### Child protection

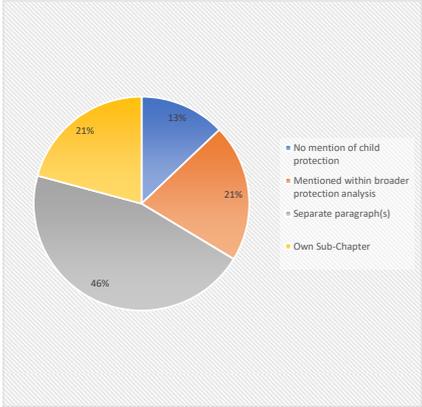
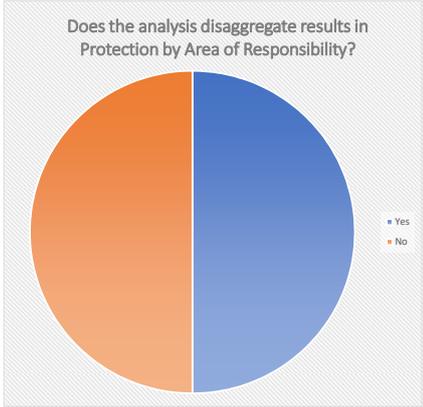
In light of continuing grave violations of children's rights, 2.7 million children will be targeted for coverage under the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism for both evidence-driven advocacy and referrals for services such as medical and rehabilitation for injured children. 682,268 children will be targeted for psychosocial support activities. 1.7 million children will be targeted for life-saving mine risk education messaging. 12,932 children and community members will be targeted for critical child protection services, which includes family tracing and reunification services for unaccompanied and separated children, victim assistance as well as case management.

Yemen HRP 2018 (p.37)

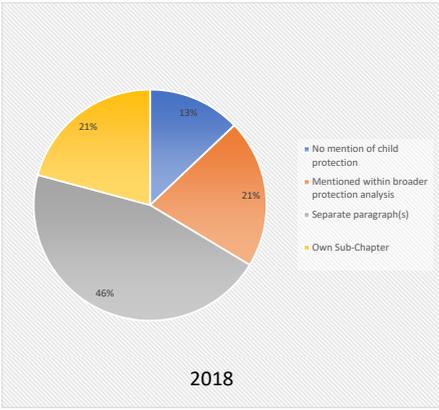
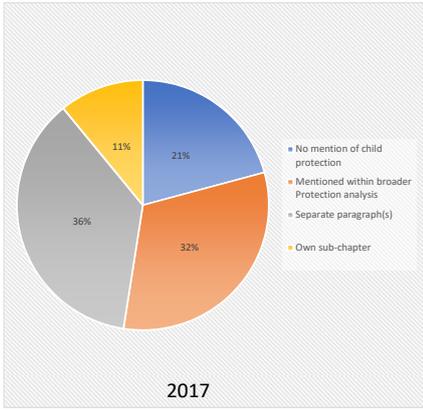


Cameroon HRP 2018 (p.23)

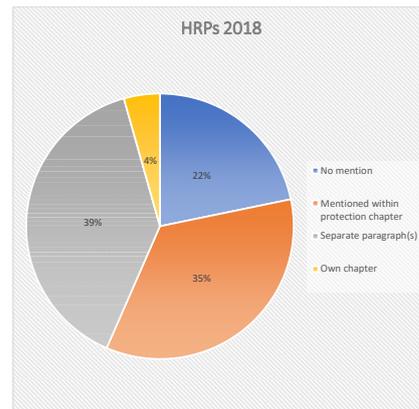
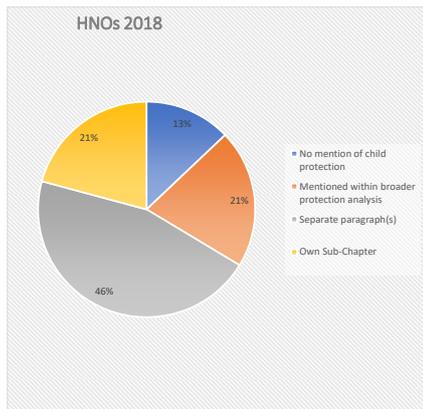
## Positioning of CP in the HNOs



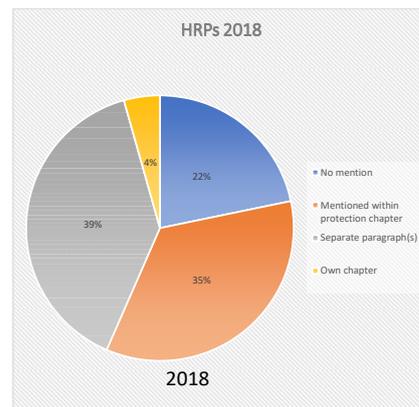
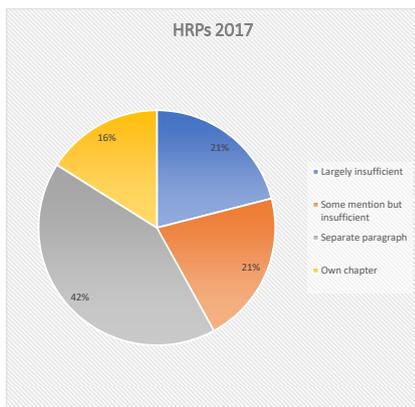
## Comparison of CP Positioning in HNOs



## Comparison of CP in 2018 HNOs vs HRPs



## Comparison of CP Positioning in HRPs



## Examples of Separate CP Chapters in HNOs

### Cameroon:

**PARTIE II :  
APERÇU DES BESOINS  
PAR SECTEUR**

INFORMATION PAR SECTEUR

- Abris et NFI
- Eau, hygiène et assainissement (EHA)
- Éducation
- Nutrition
- Protection
  - Protection de l'enfance
  - Violences basées sur le genre (VBG)
- Relèvement précoce
- Santé

### Nigeria:

**PART II:  
NEEDS OVERVIEW  
BY SECTOR**

- Health
- Protection
  - Child protection
  - Gender-based violence
- Early recovery and livelihoods
- Food security
- Nutrition
- Water, sanitation and hygiene
- Education

## Examples of Separate CP Chapters in HRPs

### Cameroon

**PERS. DANS LE BESOIN\***  
707k

**PERSONNES CIBLÉES\***  
433k

**SOUS-SECTEUR  
PROTECTION DE L'ENFANCE**

Suite à la recrudescence des attaques dans la région de l'extrême-Nord en 2017 et à l'augmentation des déplacements de populations, les enfants et adolescents sont particulièrement affectés. La détresse psychosociale et les séparations familiales restent des problématiques majeures alors que les identifications familiales sont rendues difficiles par le contexte sécuritaire instable. La situation des enfants arrêtés et détenus pour suspicion d'association à Boko Haram ainsi que la réintégration des enfants retournés du Nigeria dans des conditions d'extrême vulnérabilité, requièrent une attention particulière et des stratégies innovantes pour la protection de leurs droits. Les non-enregistrement des naissances et la perte des documents civils sont aggravés par la crise et la fragilisation du système d'état civil.

**La stratégie d'intervention pour l'année 2018 s'articulera autour des points ci-après:**

- Renforcer le système de soutien alternatif temporaire pour les enfants non-accompagnés/ séparés et faciliter la réidentification familiale des enfants non-accompagnés;
- Assurer un soutien psychosocial et psychologique à tous les enfants et adolescents affectés;
- Faciliter l'obtention d'actes de naissance pour les enfants affectés par la crise en appuyant le système d'enregistrement des naissances;
- Poursuivre le plaidoyer en vue de la signature et de la mise en œuvre du protocole d'accord entre le SNU et le gouvernement Camerounais pour l'identification des enfants.

**Appuyer les structures gouvernementales de protection de l'enfance** notamment les structures opérationnelles du ministère des affaires sociales de celui de la promotion de la femme et la famille et les services d'état civil;

**Renforcer les mécanismes de coordination et d'harmonisation des interventions** des acteurs de protection de l'enfance sous le leadership du gouvernement;

**Contribuer aux mécanismes de surveillance et de communication de l'information** du Nigeria à travers la collecte et le rapportage des cas de violations graves/commises contre les enfants en situation de conflits armés par des forces ou des groupes armés dans la région de l'extrême-Nord.

**Assistance monétaire**  
Le secteur initié une réflexion avec le groupe de travail CASH sur l'opportunité de transferts monétaires pour répondre aux besoins fondamentaux des enfants et adolescents victimes des conflits tout en veillant à l'intérêt supérieur de l'enfant.

**Neuvs humanitaire développement**  
Un accent particulier sera mis sur le renforcement des capacités techniques et opérationnelles des structures gouvernementales (travailleurs sociaux, centres sociaux, système d'enregistrement des naissances) en vue de la prévenance des acquis et le transfert de compétences pour la prise en charge des enfants et le réinvestissement efficace entre les différents services documentés.

### Nigeria:

**PEOPLE IN NEED**  
2.9M

**PEOPLE TARGETED**  
1.0M

**REQUIREMENTS (USD)**  
39.7M

**# OF PARTNERS IN HRP**  
13

**CHILD PROTECTION OBJECTIVE 1**  
1 Conflict affected children, adolescents and caregivers receive quality protection services, including psycho-social am. life skills and livelihood supports enhance their resilience to cope with the protracted crisis.  
RELATES TO SDG1 AND SDG5

**CHILD PROTECTION OBJECTIVE 2**  
2 Children facing protection risks (violence, neglect, abuse

**PROTECTION: CHILD PROTECTION**

**Summary of needs**  
The physical safety and psycho-social well-being of 2.5 million of girls and boys in north-east Nigeria remains greatly compromised due to the protracted exposure to extreme protection threats and brutal violence. Family separation, heightened abuses, severe psycho-social distress, sexual violence and other grave child rights violations are among the major concerns requiring immediate intervention.

The crisis has not only affected children. While attending to the needs of children and adolescents is imperative for the Child Protection sub-sector, caregiver support must also be taken into account to achieve long-lasting benefits in terms of child safety and positive development. Multiple displacement, loss of property and livelihoods, GBV and disruption of community support, have deeply undermined the well-being of caregivers and their capacity to care to children under their care.

**Response plan**  
Over 700,000 caregivers, and in particular widows, single caregivers with several children and foster parents, are in need of assistance. The Child Protection (CP) sub-sector intends

and violations (children and caregivers) is fundamental to restoring health and dignity and prevent the development of more severe forms of psycho-social distress. The sub-sector will provide integrated case management services to at least 15,000 children and will harmonise and strengthen the use of the CP Information Management System (CIMS), including through the roll-out of the advanced software 'CIMS+' to ensure a timely and coordinated response, in addition to a safe and accurate data collection and storage.

Girls and boys in particular continue to be targeted by sexual and other forms of GBV, including child marriage, sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation and the worst forms of child labour. Children alone compose 44 per cent of the total GBV caseload of survivors seeking assistance with 46 per cent being survivors of sexual violence. The CP sub-sector intends to support at least 7,000 children and women who survived conflict-related sexual violence with a timely and integrated package of services, promoting a survivor-centred approach. Tailored intervention and specialised psycho-social programmes will be required in situations where recreational activities and other general programmes are insufficient to address cases of particular concern.

## Integrated Responses in HNOs

- **71%** (n=17) Protection Chapters reference integration of CP with another sector.
- Within the 5 specific CP Chapters, **four (17%)** had some references to integrated analyses:

	Education	GBV	FSL	Health	Mine Action
Cameroon					
Nigeria					
CAR					
Palestine					
Yemen					

## Integrated Responses in HRPs

- **48%** (n=11) Protection Chapters have evidence of integrated CP responses
- 7 of these included integrated programmes with other sectors/clusters

### Inter-cluster / sector linkages

To enhance protection outcomes and impact, the Protection Cluster will provide technical support and guidance to other clusters/sectors to mainstream protection in their interventions. It will contribute to inter-cluster operations that address policies and practices that cause protection violations and other key vulnerabilities, such as gender, food insecurity, displacement, and disabilities. Examples of inter-cluster/sector support that is envisioned for 2018 include: support to the Education Cluster on child protection mechanisms in schools, including ERW risk education; referrals to child protection/structured psychosocial support and the provision of child protection training for teachers, parents and counselors; collaboration and joint programming with the Education Cluster to systematically address child drop-out and child labour; support to the Shelter and NFI Cluster via the provision of legal counseling and representation and ensuring security of tenure for vulnerable groups; linkages with the Health and Nutrition Cluster to strengthen gender sensitivity and support to GBV survivors.

The Protection Cluster will support the HCT to strengthen the centrality of protection and the integration of human rights and accountability in all aspects of the HCT's policies and operations.

Palestine HRP 2018 (p.26)

### Response Strategy

1. The response strategy will be articulated around strengthened monitoring, identification, referral and reporting mechanisms. Implementation strategies will include community-based protection and monitoring approaches coordinated with governmental action in the fields of social protection, education, justice and health in order to enhance protective outcomes.
2. Transversal themes of this response strategy are: the reinforcement of local structures and embedded community mechanisms, community participation and engagement, gender and protection mainstreaming, support to livelihoods and durable solutions and the strengthening of humanitarian accountability processes and mechanisms.
3. Cross-sectoral links with the Education, Health, Nutrition, Food Security and Early Recovery sectors will be strengthened and built upon in order to ensure the needs of the most vulnerable are prioritized. Ensure localized and centralized monitoring and reporting mechanisms to reinforce protection risks analysis, response mechanism and advocacy actions in order to enhance protection outcomes for vulnerable women and children, children in institutional care, in detention, elderly, person with disabilities. Monitoring also encompasses the population at the border to better understand the risk of exploitation and trafficking in Haiti to serve as a baseline for all counter-trafficking-related response and prevent, trafficking, smuggling and exploitation.
4. Support to existing structures set up by local, national and international actors, including civil society, local governmental and technical authorities, such support aims at empowering local actors to identify, prevent and respond to protection risks.

Haiti HRP 2018, p.28

## Localisation in HNOs

- Only **two** (8%) HNO explicitly referenced localization in the Needs Overview
- **Five** (21%) make reference to localization related terms (e.g. Grand Bargain, Principles of Partnership etc)

(d) Local actors (national NGOs, CSOs and the Private Sector) still require capacity enhancement to support localization of humanitarian response and contribute to resilience enhancement.

Example from Yemen (p.50)

## Localisation in HRPs

- **10** (43%) of HRPs explicitly referenced localization
- **13** (57%) make reference to localization related terms (e.g. Grand Bargain, Principles of Partnership etc)

### 4. Strengthen partnership with national authorities and ensure localization of the response

The Government of Haiti remains the primary responsible to the Haitian population with regard to the provision of lives saving and basic services and the respect of human rights. In 2017 and 2018, the aid community will continue to play an important role in supporting these efforts, particularly in responding to emergency situations when national capacity is surpassed. The HRP will keep supporting the Government-led effort to respond to the most pressing needs in a complementary way while also advocating for long-term assistance to national mechanisms and systems. As mentioned in the first point of the response strategy, the humanitarian response will be anchored into existing national disaster management and development plans.

Haiti HRP 2018, p.15

### Mobilisation des ressources

La mise à disposition de financements adaptés avait été soulignée comme indispensable à la bonne mise en œuvre du PSH 2017-2019. En 2017, un important plaidoyer a été mené par la communauté humanitaire, notamment à travers l'élaboration de l'Appel Eclair pour l'urgence dans la région du Kasaï, puis la déclaration de crise niveau L3. Cependant, malgré tous les efforts déployés, les ressources mobilisées ont globalement été insuffisantes, 49 pour cent du montant nécessaire reçu (au 30 novembre). De plus, le délai du processus d'allocation des financements par les bailleurs de fonds reste très long et inadéquat au contexte d'urgence de la RDC. Il est essentiel de continuer le plaidoyer pour un meilleur alignement des priorités des bailleurs de fonds avec les réflexions stratégiques de la communauté humanitaire en RDC, en lien avec les engagements déjà pris dans le cadre de l'accord «Grand Bargain» du Sommet Mondial de l'Humanitaire. Ce plaidoyer devra mettre l'accent sur les engagements collectifs pris notamment la multisectorialité (plus de deux secteurs) la pluri-annualité (sur trois ans), l'amélioration des mécanismes de coordination (clusters au niveau national et provincial), et de veille, et le renforcement des capacités d'évaluation et réponse rapide aux alertes.

DRC HRP 2018(p.17)

### Localization of aid

Humanitarian action in Somalia continues to be aligned with the policy commitments and outcomes of the 2018 World Humanitarian Summit and the Grand Bargain. These include strengthening the role of local actors in the response and ending needs. International partners have taken strides in 2017 to better support Somali-led approaches to address root causes of the humanitarian crises and remain committed to work with local actors, including local and national NGOs, Somali authorities and private sector community-based organizations, to realize this.

In 2017, one concrete achievement in support of localization agenda has been the prioritization of local partners, where and where possible, by the SHF, The Fund, which remains the

Somalia HRP 2018 (p.16)

## Leadership

“...Under the IASC Transformative Agenda, Cluster Lead Agencies were encouraged to consider developing a clearly defined, agreed and supported sharing of cluster leadership by NGOs wherever feasible...” (p.21)

“...national coordination arrangements should be reviewed annually...” (p.39)

IASC Cluster Coordination Reference Module, p.21)

Increasing the visibility of leadership capacity and arrangements in the HNO is important for justifying the leadership arrangements that subsequently oversee HRP and the transition plans that CLAs should develop together with the Cluster.

## Leadership in HNOs

Only **one** HNO (Bangladesh) references the agencies who are responsible for national child protection coordination leadership structure (in the Joint Response Plan that covers both the Needs Overview and the Response Plan, p.34)

Only **one** HNO (Palestine) explicitly references coordination leadership capacity as part of its assessment of the humanitarian situation (p.44-45).

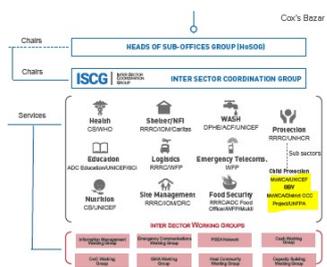


Because of the long history of international assistance in oPt, the international community already has in place many key components for an effective emergency preparedness system and has a proven track record of providing support to recurrent emergencies linked both to the on-going conflict and, to a lesser degree, to extreme weather events, through mobilization of in-country and international resources. However, some aspects of overall disaster preparedness, such as inter-agency coordination structures, national-local coordination and coordination with national and local authorities for different types of scenarios and a unified systematic approach, remain only partly completed.

## Leadership in HRPs

**1** (4%) of HRPs indicate their current leadership arrangements/structure.

**1** (4%) reference a transition strategy towards local co-leadership.



### Exit Strategy

Efforts dedicated to embedded and localized responses and support to existing structures will gradually build sustainability. They will allow a gradual transfer of responsibility to local authorities and actors through support to local development plan anchored to the national strategy for disaster management. Close link will be ensured with the DPC and other governmental technical services as well as with the early recovery cluster to develop the exit plan. The response strategy will place a specific focus in enhancing the protection capacity of governmental and social protection institutions as well as humanitarian organizations.

Haiti HRP 2018, p.29

## Influence and Participation

- As we shift towards greater involvement of local actors, particularly in assessment and measurement, the visibility of local actors in this work should also increase.
- Explicitly referencing their role in data collection and analysis brings credibility to the methodology and highlights areas where future responses may need to include additional capacity strengthening.
- There are also significant investments being made to shift to more continuous, real time monitoring systems (for situation and response). Where this is reflected in the HNO, we can start tracking how effectively these are going to scale, globally.

## Influence and Participation in HNOs

- **Nine** HNOs (38%) reference the involvement of local partners in the data collection
- Only **one** HNO (Palestine) references local actors in the analysis of data for the HNO (4%)

### INFORMATION GAPS AND ASSESSMENT PLANNING

#### The Vulnerability Profile Project (VPP) 'plus':

In 2015, OCHA coordinated a multi-cluster/ multi-partner nation-wide vulnerability assessment that captured information on a wide range of humanitarian indicators related to physical protection, access to land and livelihoods, water and sanitation, education and health. The methodology is based on perceived vulnerability as expressed by Key Informants at the community level. The aim of the assessment is to make vulnerability information accessible to the humanitarian and development actors, general public and decision makers to understand humanitarian needs, vulnerabilities and risk; at a deeper level. The VPP+ was conducted in partnership with the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) and clusters. (Palestine HNO 2018, p.47)

#### MIRA Assessment (2015 - 2017)

Between January 2015 and September 2017, 87 MIRA missions and assessments have been performed in most departments, such as Antioquia, Arauca, Caquetá, Cauca, Chocó, Córdoba, Guaviare, La Guajira, Meta, Nariño, Norte de Santander, Putumayo, Valle del Cauca and Vaupés, with the presence of Local Coordination Teams.

Of the total MIRA assessments performed, 63 correspond to chronic situations and 24 to sudden emergencies, of which 57 respond to emergencies related to the armed conflict and 20 are related to disasters of natural origin. Likewise, three missions with double affectation and three focused on the assessment of the affectation in the border with Venezuela were identified.

The sectors most prioritized by the recurrence of affectation in MIRA assessments have been food security and nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene, health and protection. Likewise, in-depth need assessments were conducted by some sectors in some non-prioritized departments, given the situation of the context, e.g., protection, education in emergencies, among others).

Approximately 50 United Nations humanitarian partners, international and national NGOs belonging to the Country Humanitarian Team, as well as members of local governments, have participated in the conduct of MIRA assessments.

Colombia HNO 2018

## Influence and Participation in HNOs

- **No** HNOs disaggregate reach data from the previous year by type of agency that delivered the service
- **No** routine situation/response monitoring (in addition to stand-alone assessments) was used, although some HNOs noted that this was a gap.

well as insecurity and a lack of access to affected populations, inhibits comprehensive data gathering with sufficient detail on protection violations and needs across Somalia. Innovative approaches to protection monitoring and data analysis, at individual and community level, remain a priority, ensuring protection needs and concerns are identified and enabling targeted protection service delivery to and evidence-based advocacy on behalf of those who are most affected and vulnerable.

(Somalia HNO 2018, p.34)

## Influence and Participation in HNOs

**Community feedback:** To reflect the voices of affected people in the HNO, **Internews** analyzed 2,365 pieces of community feedback it collected between January and September 2017, and conducted 59 focus group discussions (FGD) and five key informant interviews (KII) in September 2017 across three PoC sites (Bentiu, Malakal and UN House) and three refugee camps/settlements (Ajoung Thok, Pamir and Yida) where Internews humanitarian information service operates. Each focus group discussion involved the participation of 9-10 individuals for a total of approximately 550 individuals participating in the survey across the country. Focus groups consisted of women's groups, men's groups, youth groups, mixed groups and community leaders. The community feedback was collected from Humanitarian Information Service radio stations/Boda boda talk talk and through call-ins, **listening** groups and correspondents reaching out to residents. **REACH** provided additional focus group reports to inform the analysts. (South Sudan HNO 2018)

- Two (8%) reference the involvement of community members, children or women in data collection
- No HNOs reference the involvement of community members, children or women in the data analysis
- Most HNOs note that local actors were consulted, but do not explicitly reference their role, if any, in the collection or analysis. Where specific agencies were noted, it is usually an international actor(e.g.).

## Influence and Participation in HRPs:

- **No** Protection Chapters include a commitment to the CP situation and response monitoring toolkit/approach
- **No** HRPs indicate the previous year CP results, disaggregated by type of agency; although many HRPs did reference the number of people reached the previous year (in total, or for the Protection Cluster).

## Partnerships

- Whilst many HNO and HRP reference partnerships and note their importance.
- The nature and types of partnerships are rarely discussed and as such, it is difficult to ascertain whether these partnerships are fit for purpose.
- Partnership approaches can have a direct influence on our efforts to achieve coverage and quality.
- The implications of dominant partnership models should therefore be discussed in the HNO and then used to inform the shape and nature of the role of partnerships in the HRP (both in general and specifically in relation to Child Protection).

## Partnerships in HNOs

- **Three** HNOs (13%) mention the nature or type of protection partnerships and/or their implications for service delivery coverage and quality.

• Local-level actors, and particularly municipalities, are trying to fill in gaps left by the central public administration, often through collaborative solutions with civil society, the private sector and community leaders. However, their limited decision-making autonomy, weak technical capacities and low financial resources, greatly limit their responsiveness and ability to address needs in fast-changing conditions. Only a few municipalities have a baseline describing the developmental context and needs of their territory and populations.<sup>57</sup>

Libya HNO 2018 p.25

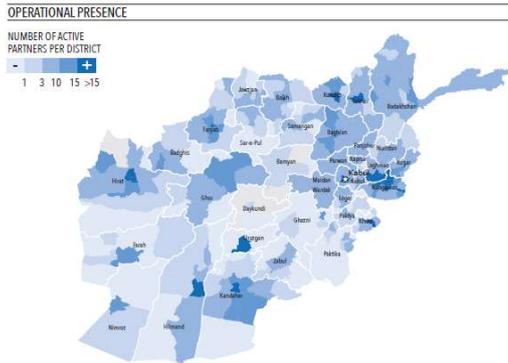
While technical capacity continues to grow, there remains a need for long-term capacity building, particularly in areas such as cash-based programming, resilience and early recovery, shelter rehabilitation, protection, including HLP technical capacity. Combined with the lack of partnership opportunities, the limited capacity in these areas constitutes an obstacle to substantively scaling up and diversifying services across Syria through quality programming. This is especially important in areas where large international NGOs have reduced reach, and local organisations have been newly established, and where local expertise is particularly important.

Syria HNO 2018 p.35

Despite the challenging operating environment, humanitarian partners continue to expand their reach across the country. Humanitarian partners are involved in the delivery of humanitarian assistance in all 18 regions of the country. International organizations continue to contract local NGOs and community based organizations to deliver assistance in areas there they have no access. In 2017, a broad range of actors including local communities stepped up to contribute to the famine response and provided the first line of response, with support from local and government authorities, the private sector, national and international humanitarian partners and charities.

Somalia HNO 2018 p.15

## Partnerships in the HNOs



(Afghanistan HNO 2018, p.17)

Many HNOs provide coverage maps, also indicating the concentration of partners.

**No** HNO disaggregated partners according to whether they were national or international, which makes it difficult to assess the degree of complementarity of roles and whether different models of partnerships would be useful to achieve greater coverage or quality in future responses.

## Partnerships in HRPs

- **Six** Protection Chapters (26%) explicitly refer to the complementary roles and approaches of national and international actors.
- No Protection Chapters note the proportion of response that will be delivered by local actors

### Capacity to implement

In 2017, the Protection Cluster, including the Child Protection and GBV Sub-Clusters, comprised some 26 UN, international and national NGOs, actively reporting in the 3W, as well as other national and local NGOs contributing through their civil society networks and technical and local expertise. Protection Cluster requirements for 2018 anticipate increases in both international and national partners delivering protection and assistance in line with the Protection Cluster Strategy, revised in September 2017. With increased targets in 2018, a scale up is required and planned, particularly in the field hubs of Ibb, Hudaydah and Sa'ada, in addition to a modest increase in the number of international NGOs and more sustained funding for national NGOs to program for year-long activities. Meanwhile, a robust capacity-building strategy, involving coaching and placement of specialists in local partners, is planned for 2018. UN agencies have and will continue critical activities according to their mandates in, among others, human rights, IDP protection, monitoring and reporting mechanisms, together in partnership with international and national NGOs. At the same time, direct protection assistance and services through international and national partners have been prioritized based on available funding. Community-based responses across the Protection Cluster (including its Child Protection and GBV sub-clusters) require significant strengthening in order to reach the vast scope of acute needs and result in sustainable protection outcomes.

Yemen HRP 2018 (p.38)

NATIONAL NGO PARTICIPATION INCREASED IN 2018 HRP



Palestine HRP 2018 (p.18)

## Partnerships in HRPs

- **11 (48%)** “Operational Capacity” sections reference the importance of partnerships with local actors
- **5 (22%)** “Operational Capacity” sections explicitly reference at least one strategy or approach to partnership with local actors

single largest source of funding for national and local partners, has allocated 37 per cent of its funds to local and national NGOs by November 2017 and the SHF Advisory Board has recommended that this approach continues in 2018. This is above the global target of 25 per cent, to be achieved by 2020, on humanitarian funding to be allocated to local and national responders as directly as possible, as per the Grand Bargain commitment.<sup>34</sup> The pool of SHF partners has expanded to more than 100, of which more than two-thirds are national or local partners. Overall, some 231 humanitarian partners are providing life-saving assistance across the country, of whom 159 are national NGOs. Challenges, however, remain. National actors continue to have limited access to funding and investment in their capacity, which affects the sustainability of their operations. To address such challenges and advance the aid localization agenda in Somalia, international actors, Somali Government, private sector, and local NGOs and youth initiatives have continued to address these challenges. During two localization workshops convened in 2017, strengthening partnerships in support of the localization of aid agenda was discussed, resulting in concrete commitments by stakeholders that should ultimately lead to further improvement in the delivery of assistance in Somalia.

Somalia HRP 2018 (p.17)

### Promote the localisation of the humanitarian response in north-east Nigeria:

Building on the positive experiences of 2017, which saw a rise in partnerships between international and local/national responders (including through financing mechanisms such as the Nigeria Humanitarian Fund), partners will continue to increase investments in the institutional capacities of local and national responders.

Specifically, this will include support to national coordination mechanisms, and the identification and removal of barriers that prevent local and national responders from partnering with international organisations and donors. It will also include the targeted participation and inclusion of women. Given Nigeria’s status as a lower middle-income country, with a skilled and educated workforce, there are significant opportunities for harnessing the potential of existing capacities, and ensuring that all phases of humanitarian response take place with the full participation of Nigerians.

Nigeria HRP 2018 (p.18)

## Partnerships in the HRP

- **8 (35%)** Protection Chapters reference the importance of partnerships with local actors
- **5 (22%)** Protection Chapters explicitly reference at least one strategy or approach to partnership with local actors

As local as possible, as international as necessary: all programmes will aim to find the balance between local and international and to give effect to the commitments made in the World Humanitarian Summit and through the Grand Bargain. These commitments aim to galvanise new and strengthened partnerships and collaboration between international and national actors, including government institutions, place an emphasis on enhancing local capacities and expanding access to funding channels and mechanisms for local actors.

Nigeria HRP 2018, p.26

### Capacity to implement

In 2017, the Protection Cluster, including the Child Protection and GBV Sub-Clusters, comprised some 26 UN, international and national NGOs, actively reporting in the 3W, as well as other national and local NGOs contributing through their civil society networks and technical and local expertise. Protection Cluster requirements for 2018 anticipate increases in both international and national partners delivering protection and assistance in line with the Protection Cluster Strategy, revised in September 2017. With increased targets in 2018, a scale up is required and planned, particularly in the field hubs of Ibb, Hudaydah and Sa’ada, in addition to a modest increase in the number of international NGOs and more sustained funding for national NGOs to program for year-long activities.

Meanwhile, a robust capacity-building strategy, involving training and placement of specialists in local partners, is planned for 2018. UN agencies have and will continue critical activities according to their mandates in, among others, human rights, IDP protection, monitoring and reporting mechanisms, together in partnership with international and national NGOs. At the same time, direct protection assistance and services through international and national partners have been prioritized based on available funding. Community-based responses across the Protection Cluster (including its Child Protection and GBV sub-clusters) require significant strengthening in order to reach the vast scope of acute needs and result in sustainable protection outcomes.

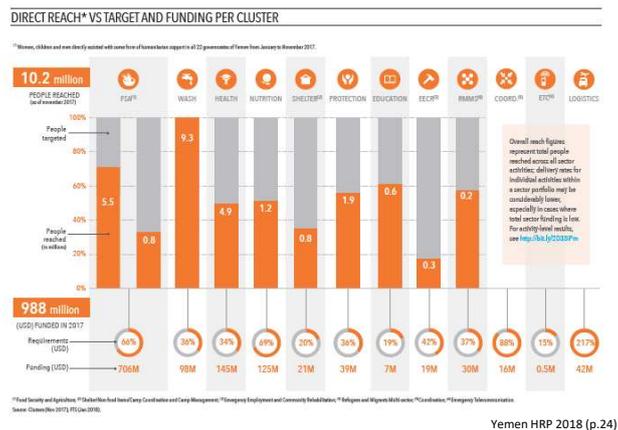
Yemen HRP 2018 (p.38)

## Funding

- Funding levels also have a direct impact on coverage and quality. It is therefore important to understand how general funding trends may impact a child protection response.
- It is also important to be able to track whether the limited resources are proportionately invested, given the vulnerability of girls and boys.
- The Grand Bargain commits more direct funding to local partners and so it becomes important to track whether this is happening (and if not, what may need to be done in future responses to facilitate it).

## Funding in HNOs

- **42%** (n=10) of HNOs refer to previous funding trends
- **None** of these, however, disaggregated the funding trends by type of partner.



## Funding in the HRP

- **No** lists of partners differentiate the local and international actors.
- **1** (4%) of HRPs indicate the proportion of the overall funding ask directly linked to child protection outcomes.
- **No** HRPs indicate the proportion of the child protection resources for local actors.



## Institutional Capacity for Local Partners

- Most HNOs identify a larger number of people in need, than can be addressed in the subsequent HRP, which subsequently note the need to continue to scale up services.
- In most contexts, whilst there is a recognized need for contributions from the international community, local actors are identified as the partners who would benefit from capacity strengthening – although the type of capacity strengthening (and effective methodologies) are not routinely discussed.
- There is limited analysis of the institutional/organizational capacity of local partners and there is subsequently little reference to this in HRPs.

## Institutional Capacity (General) in HNOs

- **38%** mention the institutional capacity of local actors in the Overview of Needs (n=9)

While there are now a significant number of national NGOs present, many are new to Cox's Bazar and to large scale refugee relief operations, and UN agencies and international NGOs have tended to use a small set of national implementing partners who have become over-stretched. Two-way capacity building is required. National NGOs have the knowledge and understanding of Bangladeshi communities and wider Bangladeshi systems and approaches, while the international community can provide expertise and training in technical aspects of refugee operations as well as support in administration and management for smaller national NGOs. There is an urgent need for trust building and diversification of partnerships to expand implementation capacity.

Bangladesh JRP 2018, p.20

The limited capacity of local partners on the ground, particularly in Borno State, restricts the delivery of specialised services.

Nigeria HNO 2018, p.20

## Institutional Capacity (General) in HRPs

- 10 (43%) “Operational Capacity” sections reference the importance of institutional strengthening of local actors
- 5 (22%) “Operational Capacity” sections explicitly reference at least one strategy or approach to institutional strengthening of local actors

in 2017, mainly through dedicated and brave national staff and implementing partners in country, as well as through remote support. Local implementing partners played a key role in coordinating the direct delivery of humanitarian assistance at grassroots levels and in hard-to-reach areas. However, the number of Libyan NGOs with adequate capacity remains limited and their absorption capacity is stretched. The fragmentation of national and local institutions, as well as the administrative restrictions faced by international NGOs operating inside Libya further constrain the operational capacity. This is further compounded by the limited security and other humanitarian space restrictions such as the bureaucratic and varying procedures imposed on the movement of humanitarian organisations which are restricting access and are likely to increase. Optimising operational capacity in a complex and insecure operating environment like Libya will require renewed efforts towards strengthened inter-sectoral and sectoral coordination at strategic and operational levels. There will also be a need to continue to raise awareness of humanitarian action and humanitarian principles with the authorities and other groups to preserve and increase humanitarian space.

Libya HRP 2018 (p.17)

## Institutional Capacity (in CP) in HNOs

- **No** HNO mention the institutional capacity of local actors in the Protection Chapter
- Some chapters do refer to capacity more broadly.



La recrudescence des activités des groupes armés résultant notamment de la dispersion des éléments de certains groupes a entraîné des violences dans plusieurs préfectures qui étaient jusque-là stables, notamment les préfectures de la Basse-Kotto, de la Haute-Kotto, du Mbomou et du Haut-Mbomou.

Cette détérioration est observée dans un contexte où les autorités locales (administratives, judiciaires, sécuritaires) sont soit absentes soit avec des capacités très limitées pour répondre aux besoins de protection de la population dans plusieurs localités affectées. Ainsi les incidents sécuritaires et la pauvreté chronique rendent les populations affectées par les déplacements et les communautés d'accueil encore plus vulnérables, tout en limitant leur accès aux services essentiels.

CAR HRP 2018 (p.31)

Les crises prolongées dans les régions de l'Extrême-Nord, de l'Est et de l'Adamaoua continuent d'avoir un impact majeur sur les enfants et adolescents en les exposant aux atteintes graves de leurs droits, de leur sécurité ainsi que de leur bien-être physique et psychosocial. A l'Extrême-Nord, la récurrence des attaques terroristes et l'insécurité ont conduit à l'accroissement des besoins humanitaires suite à l'augmentation du nombre d'enfants déplacés internes, retournés, réfugiés hors camp et dans le camp de Minawao. La pauvreté structurelle, le faible taux de scolarisation, l'absence de documentation d'état civil, la violence, les séparations familiales sont des facteurs favorisant l'utilisation d'enfants par les groupes armés notamment pour des attentats suicides. Les enfants suspectés d'association aux groupes armés sont toujours à risque de détention en attendant la signature du Protocole d'accord entre le SNU et le Gouvernement Camerounais pour la remise de ces enfants aux services sociaux. A l'Est, les enfants réfugiés centrafricains sont au nombre de 84 306. En 2017, le département du Mayo-Rey a accueilli plus de 7 100 nouveaux réfugiés, dont près de 4 300 enfants pour la plupart déscolarisés et sans actes de naissance. Une majeure partie des réfugiés centrafricains est installée dans les communautés hôtes où les services sociaux et communautaires ont des capacités limitées pour répondre aux besoins spécifiques des enfants réfugiés exposés au mariage d'enfant, et à l'exploitation économique et sexuelle.

Cameroon HNO 2018 (p.23)

## Institutional Capacity (in CP) in HRPs

- 4 (17%) Protection Chapters reference the importance of institutional strengthening of local actors
- 1 (4%) Protection Cluster section explicitly reference at least one strategy or approach to institutional strengthening of local actors.

Localisation strategy: national actors are instrumental to ensure effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and sustainability of humanitarian results, as they are in place before, during and after crises, and are usually the first to respond when crisis hits. Institutional capacity-building approaches, particularly those which draw on coaching, mentoring and accompaniment will be promoted and international partners will be encouraged to invest in institutional capacity-building of local partners as an integral part of any broader programme partnership.

Nigeria HRP 2018 (p. 30)

The Protection Cluster will adopt a multi-year approach which seeks to build on rather than replicate past successes, and which ensures that internally displaced persons are kept at the centre of decisions which affect their lives. Emergency protective services will be complemented by efforts to build the capacity of Government officials to address needs directly, at each of the Federal, Regional and Local levels. Ratification of the Kampala Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced persons is a key component of the protective response. The cumulative effect of drought and conflict has exacerbated the vulnerability of affected population.

Ethiopia HRDP 2018 (p.39)



## 8. Estimated budget for institutional capacity strengthening for 10 local actors

Certified online training courses organizations with some level of institutional capacity	100
Certified online training courses for individual organizations with little or no institutional capacity	200
Shorter training for organizations with some level of institutional capacities (Mentoring and Coaching)	10,000
Longer training and establishment of systems for organizations with little or no institutional capacity (Mentoring and Coaching)	20,000
Costs related to IT for organizations with some level of IT capacity	9,000
Costs related to IT for organizations with very little IT capacity	25,000
Implementing partners	18,000
Overhead costs for implementing partners (7%)	5,761
<b>Total</b>	<b>88,061</b>



## 9. Presentation on Localization in Cluster Coordination (PowerPoint)

# Localization in Cluster Coordination



## Learning Objectives

*By the End of this Session, you will:*

- Have an understanding of what localization means for the humanitarian sector
- Learn about the Conceptual Framework, identify some key indicators, and examples of localization activities around the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC)
- Be able to draw linkages between Institutional Capacity Strengthening (ICS) and Localization



## Facilitator's Profile

- Current Job Title, Organization, Location
- Formal Education
- Experiences in the humanitarian area
- Etc...

*Insert PICTURE*



## SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION



## Localization in Humanitarian Coordination

### Question:

What does “localisation” mean to you?

*>Please use the link in the chat box to submit your responses<*



*“As local as possible, as international as necessary”*

- The Grand Bargain Core Commitments (2016):  
[https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/grand\\_bargain\\_final\\_22\\_may\\_final-2\\_0.pdf](https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/grand_bargain_final_22_may_final-2_0.pdf)
- For more on Grand Bargain:  
<http://www.agendaforhumanity.org/initiatives/3861>



*Localization is about...*

- Finding *right configuration* of local and international contributions
- Obligation to build local capacities

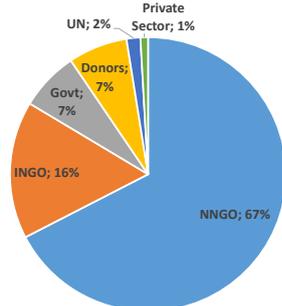
***“reinforce, not replace local systems”***

- HRP’s and Cluster Strategies should reflect local actors’ participation and influence



## Why Localisation is a Priority for the Clusters?

Education Cluster Membership, Global



- A majority of membership is National/Local NGOs
- Majority of Services are delivered by local actors
- National Actors are first responders
- Covid-19 highlighted (again) local actors’ role in sustainable and uninterrupted services



Education Cluster Membership, Global, as of 2019 December

## Role of the Clusters in Localization

- Obligation to build national capacities and strengthen principled partnerships
- Opportunity to scale up the response and reach coverage and quality targets
- The coordination system can support agencies and networks to:
  - Amplify localisation efforts
  - Take successful pilots to scale
  - Influence internal structural changes



## Activity 2: Who is a local actor?



- Individually, discuss who do you consider as a “local actor”?



## SESSION 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

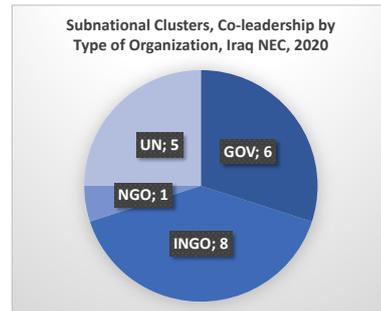


### Conceptual Framework – Localisation in Coordination



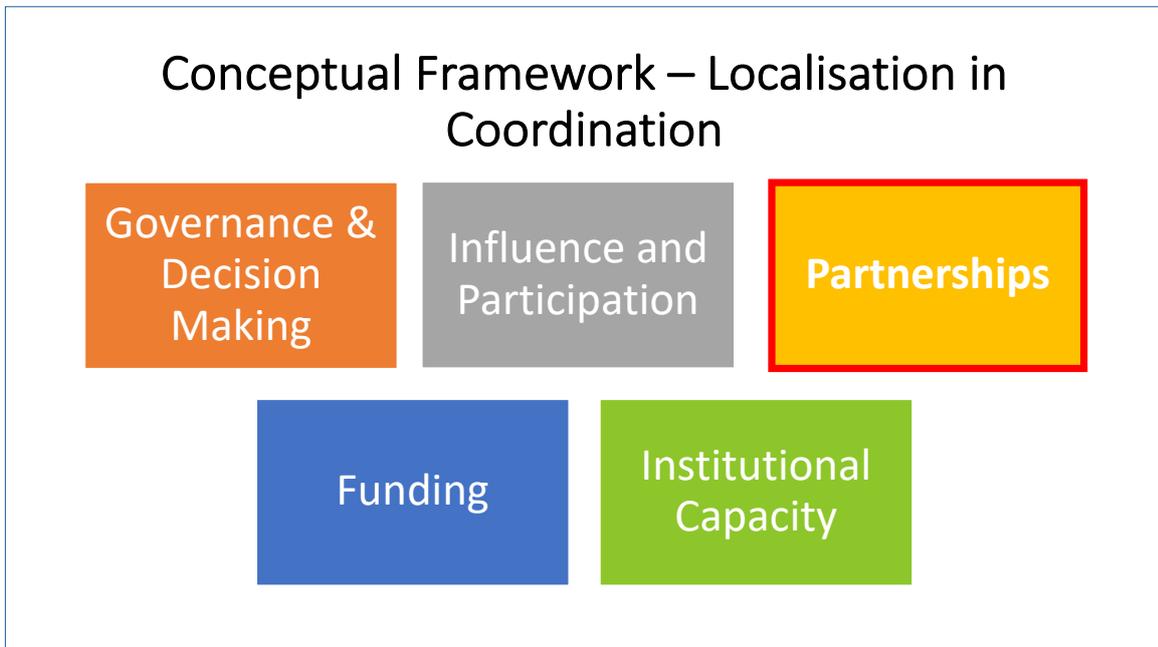
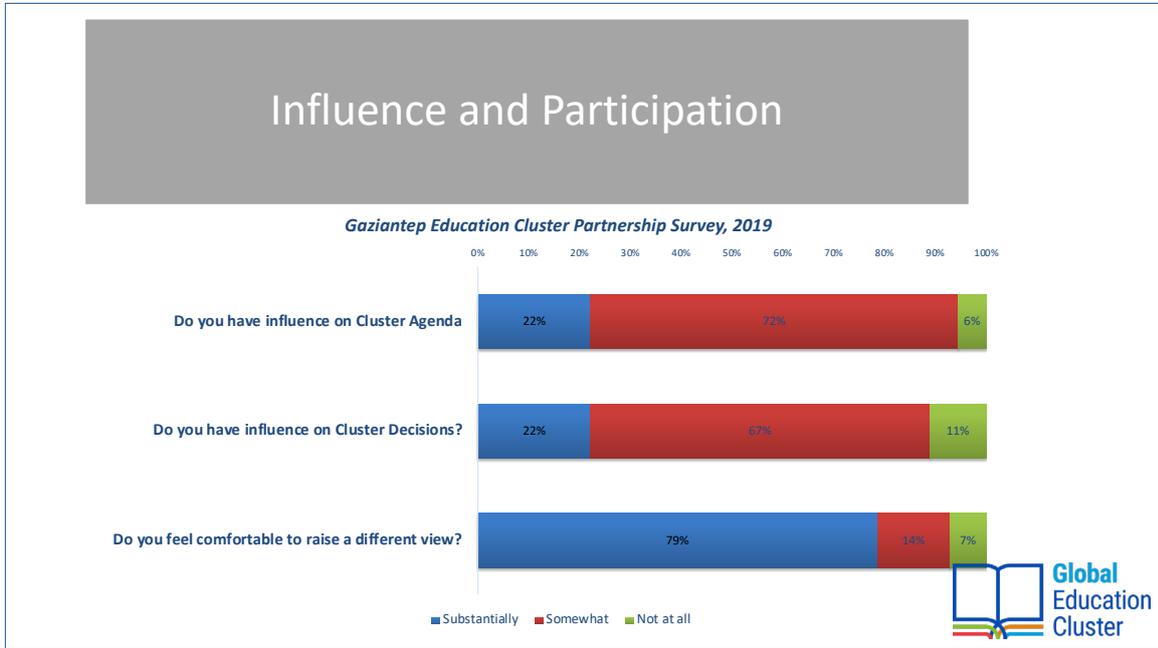
## Governance & Decision Making

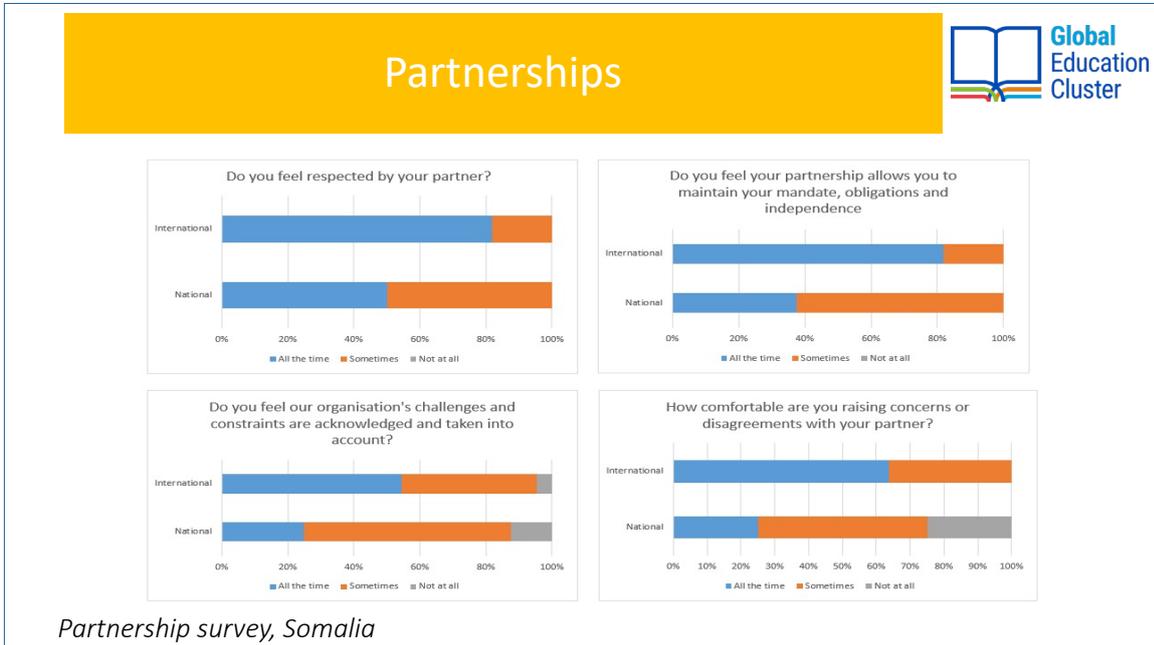
- Leads and co-leads of clusters.
- Membership to Strategic Advisory Groups and other decision making forums.



## Conceptual Framework – Localisation in Coordination







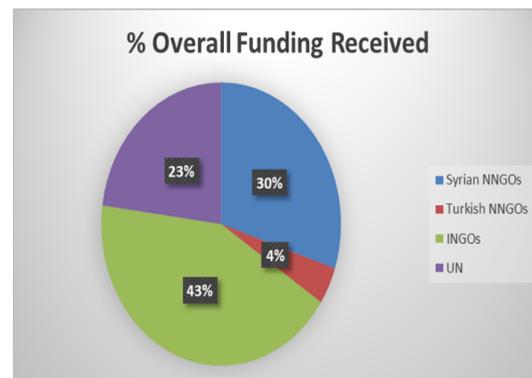
- ## Analysis of Partnership Agreements *(Gaziantep Education Cluster, 2019 n=7)*
1. The dominant **partnership model** is **Sub-grant agreement/sub-contracting**
  2. There is **no institutional capacity-building** assessment or recommendations
  3. **Reporting** is always **one-way**, from the sub-contractor partner to the contractor partner, even when the partnership is between two local NGOs
  4. There are **no flexible budget lines** for overhead costs
- 

## Conceptual Framework – Localisation in Coordination



## Funding

- *Who receives a majority of the funding for our sector? How does this match with who is delivering a majority of the services?*



Gaziantep Education Cluster, 2019

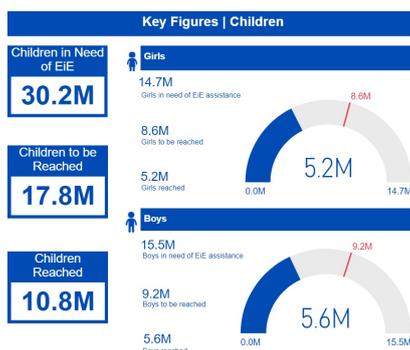


## Conceptual Framework – Localisation in Coordination



## Institutional Capacity

## Why the focus on Institutional Capacity Strengthening?

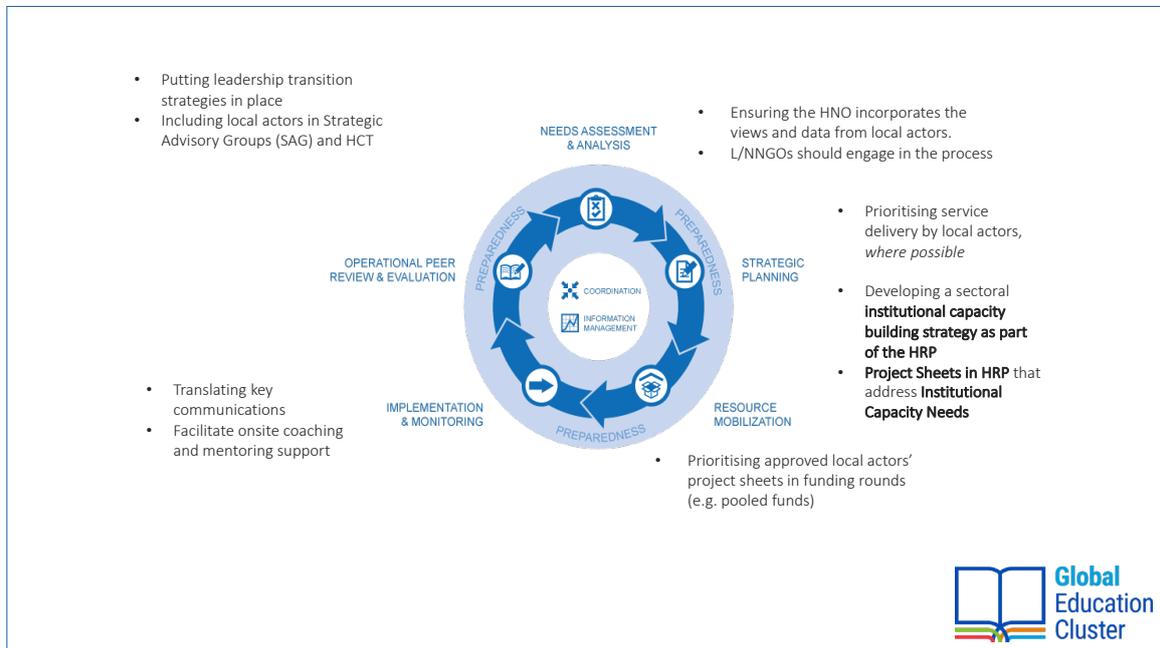


Average humanitarian crisis in which there is a UN-coordinated response now lasts more than **nine years**.

We are **not reaching global targets**. This is partly because of limited funding. But it is also local partners – who deliver a majority of services – **cannot scale up with money alone**.

They **need institutional capacities** to open new offices, manage larger resources, improve their supply and procurement and HR etc.





## SESSION 3: CURRENT SITUATION

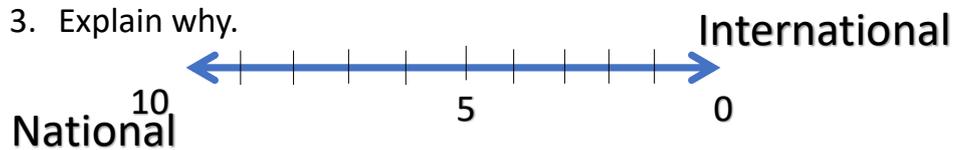
Below is a continuum scale: National vs International.

0 = Totally International

10 = Totally National

Think about your own context, against the Conceptual Framework.

1. Individually, indicate where the humanitarian response is now
2. Where it can be to satisfy the phrase: “as national as possible, as international as necessary.”
3. Explain why.



## SESSION 4: ACTION PLANNING



## SESSION 4: Group Work

 15 minutes

- In groups of 4, draft a brief action plan to your organization’s senior management explaining how your organization can follow a more localized EiE response at the Education Cluster/EiE Working Group.
- In the plan, reference the conceptual framework, including :
  - Sample activities/priorities (*you may consider activities from the last section*) **Only 2**
  - *Specify* how can these activities be **integrated into upcoming HRP?**
  - Identify **only 1 indicator** for each activity so it can be monitored.



## Examples from ESA region: Somalia

## South Sudan



### Supporting Effective Humanitarian Partnerships: Local Humanitarian Capacity Strengthening

#### Education Cluster Localization Action Plan 2020

15<sup>th</sup> March 2020

In line with the Grand Bargain commitments, the Education Cluster is enhancing the Localization of its leadership and operation. The following Localization Action Plan 2020 is based on the 2019 Localization Action Plan and builds on its positive result. The Localization Action Plan 2020 was endorsed by the SAG in March 2020. The Action Plan focuses on strengthening participation and decision making of the Ministry of Education in the Education Cluster leadership and operation; enhancing participation for national NGOs; and enhancing participation and decision making by regional cluster focal points and regional MoE colleagues<sup>1</sup>. Monitoring of the Action Plan will be done on a quarterly basis by the SAG.

Priority actions for 2020			
Action	Purpose	Target group	Indicator
1 Hold national cluster meetings in Mogadishu and co-chair meetings with FGS Head of EE Unit	Enhanced participation, influence and decision making, and localization of cluster governance	MoE colleagues and national partners	11 national cluster meetings are held in Mogadishu
2 Agendas for national cluster meetings are shared with MoE for inputs	Enhanced participation, influence and decision making, and localization of cluster governance	FGS MoE Head of EE Unit	11 agendas are shared with FGS MoE Head of EE Unit prior to national cluster meetings
3 Hold regular SAG meetings inside Somalia/Somaliland (rotational between Mogadishu, Hargeisa and Garowe)	Enhanced participation, influence and decision making, and localization of cluster governance	DGs and MoE EE focal points	3 quarterly SAG meetings held inside Somalia/Somaliland
4 Hold remote ad hoc meetings as needed	Enhanced participation, influence and decision making, and localization of cluster governance	DGs and MoE EE focal points	As needed



## Examples from Iraq Education Cluster

Activity	Focal Points	Tracking Indicator	Estimated Cost (annual)
Roll out a phased programme coordinated by the cluster and in partnership with donors, UN, and INGOs for addressing Institutional Capacity Gaps of LNNGO's (and where relevant, MoE's) through mentoring, coaching, online and offline courses, and secondments. CP AoR and GEC's <a href="#">Framework for ICS</a> will be used to assess gaps, implement the response, and monitor the outcomes. A sample project sheet is also accessible <a href="#">online</a> .	Coordinators , INGO partners, SAG, LNNGO's of the cluster	# of Organizations Assessed # of ICD Plans Developed # of Organizations Completing ICS Plans # of Policies Produced, Improved, or Adapted # of L/NGO Staff trained	880,000 USD (for 10 organizations)  Cost: 88,000 per organization
Advocate with donors and pooled funds management to include budget for ICS.	Cluster Coordinators	# of projects with costed ICS activities	N/A



## Q&A



## Recap: Learning Objectives

*By the End of this Session, you will:*

- Have an understanding of what localization means for the humanitarian sector
- Learn about the Conceptual Framework, identify some key indicators, and examples of localization activities around the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC)
- Be able to draw linkages between Institutional Capacity Strengthening (ICS) and Localization



## Further Reading:

- **Tips for Integrating Localization in the COVID-19 HNO and HRP**  
<https://educationcluster.box.com/s/ksj7mek1soqok5og946ha22328ndt74d>
- **Localisation in Coordination Guidance**  
Note: <https://educationcluster.box.com/v/localisationcoordination>
- **Localisation Checklist** (From the Global Education Cluster Strategy Development Guide): <https://educationcluster.box.com/v/localisationchecklist>



END OF THE SESSION





## 10. Sample: Terms of Reference for GBV national coordination group

### Annex 22: Sample ToRs for GBV national coordination group



#### TERMS OF REFERENCE National GBV Sub-Cluster ENDORSED XX JUNE 20XX

##### I. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The aim of the Cluster Approach in humanitarian settings is to ensure coherent and effective response through the mobilization of government agencies, international organizations, UN Agencies, Programmes and Funds, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to respond in a strategic manner that closes gaps, increases predictability and strengthens the capacity of humanitarian actors across all key areas of activity in an emergency. GBV has been designated as one of the five Areas of Responsibility under the Protection Cluster. The GBV sub-cluster aims to consider all types of gender based violence in its coordination, planning, and advocacy activities, and will give special emphasis to increasing access to holistic services and support to survivors of GBV at all geographical levels.

Key reference documents are:

- Handbook for Coordinating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Emergencies (GBV AoR, 2019)
- Inter-agency Minimum Standards for Prevention and Response to GBV in Emergencies (GBV AoR, forthcoming 2019/2020)
- Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action: Reducing risk, promoting resilience and aiding recovery (IASC, 2015)

##### II. OBJECTIVES OF GBV SUB-CLUSTER

The GBV sub-cluster in XX country aims, in collaboration with and in support of the relevant government ministries, UN agencies, and local and international NGOs to consolidate, coordinate, improve support and develop activities of all relevant stakeholders in the prevention of and response to GBV within the context of humanitarian action in XX country.

##### III. GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND APPROACHES

All members of the GBV SC participating in coordination understand the core principles and key approaches that guarantee ethical, safe and effective programming on human rights-based, survivor-centred and community-based design and delivery of GBV interventions.

The work of the GBV SC will be guided by the following principles:

- **Safety:** The safety and security of the survivor and others, such as her/his children and people who have assisted her/him, must be the number one priority for all actors.
- **Confidentiality:** People have the right to choose to whom they will, or will not, tell their story. Maintaining confidentiality ensures the survivors, witnesses and information sources are protected, and informed consent is obtained before action is taken.
- **Respect:** All actions taken should be guided by respect for the choices, wishes, rights and dignity of the survivor, and be guided by the best interests of the child.
- **Non-discrimination:** Survivors of violence should receive equal and fair treatment regardless of their age, gender, race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation or any other characteristic.

#### IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE GBV SUB-CLUSTER

In line with the objectives the objectives of the GBV SC include, but are not limited to the following:

##### 1. General Objectives

- Create a forum for sharing information on activities, gaps and immediate needs identified by partners in PoC and non-PoC settings
- Coordinate and support training, capacity building, and technical support with regards to prevention and response to GBV.

Liaise and advocate with all relevant cluster and coordination groups to mainstream gender and GBV concerns across key sectors and humanitarian interventions. Ensuring that GBV indicators are mainstreamed in all inter-sectorial assessments, and assist in the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data.

##### 2. Prevention

- Coordinate awareness-raising activities on GBV for IDPs, refugees and host communities in both PoC and non-PoC settings.
- Advocate for safe and ethical collection, management and dissemination of case management data according to global GBV information management standards.
- Promote and advocate for community-based approaches.
- Map and update relevant GBV prevention and response actors in the focus areas (5Ws).
- Training humanitarian actors from other clusters on how to integrate GBV in their response plans, according to the IASC GBV Guidelines in humanitarian settings.

##### 3. Response

- Support the partners to ensure referral and case management systems are in place to enable survivors to access services that address the physical, emotional, psychological needs and social, legal and protection consequences of GBV.
- Strengthen the technical capacity of field-based service providers and community-based structures in the referral and response to survivors of GBV.
- Map response capacities; develop realistic, evidence-based GBV response plans, including programmatic and advocacy activities; and support resource mobilization (e.g. fundraising) to address gaps.
- Ensure all interventions respect GBV guiding principles of confidentiality, respect, non-discrimination, and safety and are in line with the survivor-centred approach.

##### 4. Coordination

- Coordinate and reinforce the GBV Standard Operating Procedures (at the present still pending endorsement by the Ministry of Gender) and referral pathways amongst key stakeholders to enable survivors to access services according to his/her will.
- Act as advisory body for all newly initiated and ongoing activities to ensure complementarily programming and avoid duplication.
- Provide guidance and GBV mainstreaming to the other sector working groups.
- Represent the interest of GBV actors during discussions in the Protection Cluster, other sector forums, and coordination meetings on the prioritization, resource mobilization and advocacy on GBV issues.
- Exchange information on ongoing and planned GBV-related activities by members aiming at minimizing duplication.
- Coordinate the planning of joint advocacy activities to end GBV, promote human rights, specifically women's rights and empowerment in general (International Women's Day, 16 Days of Activism, etc).

## 5. Advocacy

- Collect and raise GBV issues and trends regularly to inform the GBV sub-cluster's advocacy strategy and improve protection environment and realization of rights for women and girls.
- Advocate for designated funding for prevention and response to GBV.
- Ensuring that prevention and response to GBV are mainstreamed into resource mobilization efforts such as the Consolidated Appeals Process and Common Humanitarian Fund.

## V. GBV SC NATIONAL LEVEL STRUCTURE

### a. Leadership arrangements:

The GBV sub-cluster will have a co-leadership structure of Government and UN or UN with NGO. UNFPA as global GBV AoR lead is the responsible for supporting the GBV sub-cluster in line with the global Division of Labour in the Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) Guidelines. A Co-chair will be elected from amongst members of the GBV SC on a two-year rotational basis.

The decision to have a co-chair should be related to its strategic positioning within the Protection Cluster, its programmatic capacity, relations with other relevant GBV actors and experience addressing GBV in the country. Furthermore, each of the GBV sub-cluster co-leads must have a suitable staff member to effectively meet the co-lead requirements and with capacity for logistical support for convening meetings, circulating minutes and other communications and provide linkage with other coordination mechanisms. An evaluation of the performance of the co-chair shall be done at the end of the year to facilitate improvements in the coordination mechanism. A detailed Eligibility Criteria for NGOs applying for the GBV SC Co-chair position is included in the ToR of the GBV SC Co-chair.

### b. Secretariat:

The co-chairs will jointly serve as secretariat for the GBV SC. The co-chairs will agree on a Division of Labour in providing secretarial support and in implementation of coordination work of the GBV SC. Both UNFPA and the co-chairing organization will appoint/designate staff to undertake or support coordination of GBV SC. The secretariat will follow up on decisions of the GBV SC as well as coordinate and implement and report on the GBV SC Annual Work Plan.

### c. Membership:

Membership to GBV SC is at organizational (not individual) level. Membership is only recognized for each organization that has formally expressed interest to join the GBV SC, and has signed on and is committed to follow GBV SC Principles of Participation. Therefore, membership is open to all sectors and organizations working on prevention and response to GBV and includes:

- Government ministries, departments and agencies
- Non-governmental organizations (international, national and local)
- Development partners (multi-lateral and bi-laterals)
- Donors

National and international NGOs should actively participate and contribute to the effective functioning of the GBV SCs at state/field levels. GBV SC member should identify primary and alternate focal points who will regularly attend the GBV SC/WG meetings. All organizations willing to be part of the GBV SC or GBV WG should sign and adhere to the Principle of Participation document (annex 3).

**d. Focal Points:**

Members of the GBV SC will identify amongst its members, willing organizations to become focal points to represent interests of GBV SC in other cluster mechanisms. Each of the Focal Point will have the responsibility to appropriately present and represent interests of GBV SC and to advocate for integration of GBV issues in other clusters and sub-clusters. On monthly basis, the focal points are expected to report back to the GBV SC meetings on important updates and issues from their other clusters/sectoral.

**e. Arrangements for meetings**

The GBV sub-cluster will meet every second and fourth Thursday of the month from 10a.m-12noon. "Ad hoc" meetings may be called by the Co-Chairs, or at the request of three other members of the GBV SC, when this is considered necessary to address urgent issues.

- A draft agenda will be circulated to members of the GBV SC at least 5 days before the regular bi-weekly meeting, giving the members the opportunity to suggest additional agenda items.
- Draft minutes of GBV SC meetings will be circulated within 5 days of the meeting. The final minutes will additionally be circulated to and considered electronically approved, with any proposed changes agreed upon.

**VI. GBV SC FIELD LEVEL STRUCTURE**

There will be the GBV Working Groups at 6 Field locations in XX Country. The GBV WG is a sub-structure of the National GBV SC. It will therefore coordinate with and report to the National GBV SC.

*Abridged (for more details on field level ToRs see below)*

- Members of the field level sub-clusters will share reports of their planned work and achievements, including submission of information on key agreed indicators for purposes of cluster reporting. Members' reports will highlight issues their field counterparts are addressing, the challenges they are facing and highlight any issues that require actions by the GBV SC.
- GBV sub-clusters at state level will share minutes of their meetings with the co-chairs of the national
- GBV sub-clusters will highlight issues for which they require national-level intervention.
- The co-chairs of the GBV WG will report to the Protection Cluster at its scheduled meetings and will contribute to any and all relevant activities, initiatives, and documents supported and prioritized by the overall GBV SC.
- The Co-chairs of GBV sub-clusters at State level should collect the bi-weekly report from Implementing Partners at field level using the annex 1 Reporting **template GBVWG by CoB** on Friday.
- The Co-chairs of GBV WG should combine the received document/s in the Reporting **template for GBV SC coordinators** (annex 2) and send to the GBV IM cc GBV SC Coordinator and Co-chair CoB Monday.

**Amendments**

This TOR is a working document and may be altered to meet emerging needs of all members by agreement of the majority of the members. However, it is recommended to be reviewed every three (3) years.

## **Sous Cluster VBG Mali**

### **Termes de référence – novembre 2016**

#### **1. Contexte**

##### a) Un cadre Légal peu favorable

Malgré les engagements pris par le Gouvernement du Mali dans le cadre de la ratification des traités internationaux, sous régionaux en matière de promotion des droits de la femme (voir section 3), le Mali ne dispose pas encore d'une loi spécifique contre les violences basées sur le genre. Force est pourtant de reconnaître que l'arsenal juridique disponible se prête à la répression de certaines formes de violences faites aux femmes. On relève notamment:

- La lettre N° 0019/MSPAS-SG du 16 janvier 1999 du Ministère de la Santé interdisant l'excision en milieu médical;
- La loi N° 02-044 du 24 juin 2002 sur la santé de la reproduction par l'Assemblée Nationale du Mali dont l'excision est une des composantes;
- Le Code Pénale prévoit des sanctions variables contre les coups et blessures volontaires (articles 207 et 226), la répudiation, la pédophilie, l'abandon de foyer et d'enfant, l'enlèvement de personnes (par fraude, violence ou menaces), la traite, le gage et la servitude des personnes, le trafic d'enfants, le viol, l'esclavage sexuel, la prostitution forcée et la grossesse forcée;
- Le Code du Mariage et de la Tutelle qui punit le mariage forcé.

Des vides juridiques persistent dans la législation nationale, notamment en ce qui concerne la violence domestique, le viol conjugal, le harcèlement sexuel et l'excision. Un Comité national d'appui à l'adoption de la loi VBG a été mis en place par le Ministère de la Promotion de la Femme, de l'Enfant et de la Famille. Ce comité œuvre actuellement dans ce domaine.

Dans le cadre de la ratification du Protocole de Maputo, le Mali est tenu à prendre des mesures législatives pour interdire l'excision et d'autres pratiques et abus violant les droits de la femme africaine.

Les plus grandes difficultés des femmes survivantes de violences se situent au niveau de la dénonciation des actes de violence et de la sollicitation auprès des services juridiques par les victimes et leur environnement social. Les violences, surtout en milieu conjugal font rarement l'objet de plaintes, par méconnaissance du droit, peur d'incrimination de la survivante ou du plaignant par la société. A cela s'ajoute le cout élevé de la Justice, la pression familiale, le manque d'indépendance économique ou le manque de soutien de la famille. Seuls quelques cas sont signalés par les acteurs à travers le sous cluster VBG.

##### b) Un contexte humanitaire difficile

Selon les projections démographiques<sup>1</sup>, le Mali compterait en 2016 une population totale de 18 300 000 habitants parmi lesquels près de la moitié a moins de 15 ans (47,15%) et près d'une personne sur 5 a entre 15 et 24 ans. La population du Mali est donc très jeune.

Au Mali, l'inégalité entre les sexes est encore très répandue, d'autant que les obstacles juridiques favorisent un taux élevé de mariages précoces (l'âge légal du mariage est fixé à 16 ans aux termes du Code de la famille et peut être abaissé avec le consentement des parents). Environ 91% de femmes de 15 à 49 ans ont subi une mutilation génitale féminine (EDSM<sup>2</sup> 2012-2013).

La situation sécuritaire due à la présence des groupes armés reste encore volatile dans les régions de Gao, Kidal, Tombouctou, Mopti et une partie de la région de Ségou et se fait suivre des violations des droits humains. La peur des représailles et la stigmatisation sociale des survivant(e)s entraînent une faible déclaration des cas de VBG. Selon les estimations des besoins humanitaires de 2017, 3,7 millions de personnes seraient affectées par les conflits

et l'insécurité, parmi lesquelles 18,500 femmes et filles sont à risque de violences sexuelles. (OCHA, HNO 2016). Entre 2012 et décembre 2016, l'on a enregistré auprès des services de prise en charge, 9.943 cas de violences basées sur le genre dans les régions directement affectées par la crise sécuritaire. Il est important de noter que très peu de cas sont déclarés (et donc documentés) par peur des représailles et de la stigmatisation mais aussi du fait du faible accès aux services de prise en charge holistique. Cette situation, de même que la situation générale en matière de prise en charge des besoins sociaux et sanitaires est aggravée par les effets de la crise sur les infrastructures socio-sanitaires, les centres de santé ayant été détruits et le personnel pour la plupart ayant préféré regagné les régions du sud. Les combats et l'absence et/ou la faiblesse des services de prise en charge ont entraîné des déplacements massifs de population qui aujourd'hui sont pour la plupart retournés dans leur lieu de résidence mais avec des besoins plus grands en termes de protection.

## 2. Définition des Violences Basées sur le Genre (VBG)

Selon les directives de l'IASC<sup>3</sup>, les VBG est un terme générique définissant tout acte nuisible/préjudiciable perpétré contre le gré de quelqu'un, et qui est basé sur des différences socialement prescrites entre hommes et femmes. Les actes de GBV enfreignent/violent un certain nombre de droits humains universels protégés par les conventions et les instruments normatifs internationaux. Beaucoup — mais pas toutes — les formes de GBV sont des actes illégaux et criminels au regard des politiques et des législations nationales.

L'expression «violence basée/fondée sur le sexe/sexiste» est souvent utilisée de manière interchangeable avec l'expression «violence à l'égard des femmes ». L'expression « violence basée/fondée sur le sexe/sexiste» souligne la dimension sexospécifique de ces types d'actes ; ou en d'autres termes, la relation entre la condition de subordination des femmes dans la société et leur vulnérabilité croissante à la violence. Il importe de noter, toutefois, que les garçons et les hommes peuvent également être victimes de la violence basée sur le sexe, notamment la violence sexuelle.

Le Fonds des Nations Unies pour la population (UNFPA), l'International Rescue Committee (IRC) et le Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés (HCR) ont adopté une nouvelle approche de classification des types de VBG à travers la mise au point d'un nouvel outil de classification de la strictement destiné à permettre de standardiser la collecte des données relatives à la VBG chez l'ensemble des prestataires de services. Ainsi le Système de Gestion, d'Information sur les Violences Basées sur le Genre (BVGIMS) a adopté 6 principaux types de VBG, à savoir:

1. Viol : pénétration vaginale, anale ou buccale sans consentement (même superficielle), à l'aide du pénis ou d'une autre partie du corps. S'applique également à l'insertion d'un objet dans le vagin ou l'anus.
2. Agression sexuelle : toute forme de contact sexuel sans consentement ne débouchant pas ou ne reposant pas sur un acte de pénétration. Entre autres exemples : les tentatives de viol, ainsi que les baisers, les caresses et les attouchements non désirés aux parties génitales ou aux fesses. Les MGF/E sont un acte de violence qui lèse les organes sexuels ; elles devraient donc être classées dans la catégorie des agressions sexuelles. Ce type d'incident n'englobe pas les viols (qui consistent en un acte de pénétration).
3. Agression physique : Violence physique n'étant pas de nature sexuelle. Entre autres exemples : coups, gifles, strangulation, coupures, bousculades, brûlures, tirs ou usage d'armes, quelles qu'elles soient, attaques à l'acide ou tout autre acte occasionnant des douleurs, une gêne ou des blessures. Ce type d'incident n'englobe pas les MGF/E.
4. Mariage forcé : Mariage d'une personne contre sa volonté.
5. Déni de ressources, d'opportunités ou de services : déni de l'accès légitime à des ressources/actifs économiques ou à des opportunités de subsistance, et à des services éducatifs, sanitaires ou autres services sociaux. On parle de déni de ressources, d'opportunités et de

services, par exemple, lorsqu'on empêche une veuve de recevoir un héritage, lorsque les revenus d'une personne sont confisqués de force par son compagnon intime ou un membre de sa famille, lorsqu'une femme se voit interdire l'usage des moyens de contraception, lorsqu'on empêche une fille d'aller à l'école, etc. Les cas de pauvreté générale ne devraient pas être consignés.

6. Maltraitements psychologiques / émotionnelles : Infliction de douleurs ou de blessures mentales ou émotionnelles. Entre autres exemples : menaces de violence physique ou sexuelle, intimidation, humiliation, isolement forcé, poursuite, harcèlement verbal, attention non souhaitée, remarques, gestes ou écrits de nature sexuelle et/ou menaçants, destruction de biens précieux, etc.

### 3. Objectifs

Le sous cluster sur « Les Violences Basées sur le Genre » (VBG) vise à coordonner et à consolider les activités de toutes les parties prenantes pour améliorer la prévention et la réponse aux VBG parmi les populations affectées par la triple crise sécuritaire, alimentaire et institutionnelle que connaît le Mali.

Le Sous-Cluster GBV vise à lutter contre toutes les formes de violences Basées sur le Genre à travers la coordination, le plaidoyer, le planning des activités et en mettant un accent particulier sur les violences sexuelles.

Le Sous-Cluster GBV travaille en étroite collaboration avec le Sous-Cluster protection pour la protection de l'enfant et rend compte au Cluster Protection.

### 4. Adhésion et membres

L'adhésion est ouverte à toutes les organisations, les représentants des médias et donateurs qui interviennent dans la lutte contre les violences sexuelles et sexo-spécifiques. Les membres comprennent des représentants du gouvernement, des organisations nationales et internationales, les Agences des Nations Unies et autres organisations internationales.

### 5. Responsabilités

#### a. Rôle de l'agence de Coordination

UNFPA, comme Agence de Coordination du sous-cluster en co-lead avec la Direction Nationale de la Promotion de la femme du Ministère de la Femme, la Femme, de l'Enfant et de la Famille (MPFEF) se conformera au mandat, au rôle principal et aux responsabilités du cluster tels qu'établis dans les directives de l'IASC.

Les principaux rôles du cluster:

- Établir, conduire et maintenir des mécanismes de coordination et s'assurer que toutes les parties prenantes participent régulièrement aux réunions et aux activités du sous-cluster (Par exemple, le Ministère de la Santé, de la Justice, de la promotion de la famille, de l'enfant et de la femme, Féminine et la Police et Gendarmerie National) ;
- S'assurer qu'une évaluation rapide de la situation est conduite et que les besoins sectoriels sont connus et cohérents ;
- Mettre en place des stratégies appropriées pour identifier les lacunes (gaps) par rapport à la prévention et à la réponse aux GBV ;
- Promouvoir et diffuser les instruments juridiques nationaux, les conventions internationales ratifiées par l'État malien, le cadre normatif (Politiques, directives, protocoles) ;
- Promouvoir et diffuser les différents outils nationaux de la prise en charge des VBG ;
- Promouvoir et diffuser les directives IASC en matière de GBV ;
- Assurer la mobilisation des ressources pour répondre aux besoins en matière de GBV ;
- Organiser des formations afin de renforcer les capacités des acteurs ;

- Identifier les facteurs de risque augmentant la vulnérabilité des femmes et des filles ;
- Elaborer des indicateurs afin de permettre le suivi et l'évaluation des actions de prévention et de réponse aux VBG.

b. Rôle attendu des membres du sous cluster :

- Assister régulièrement aux réunions du sous cluster ;
- Coordonner et partager l'information sur les activités et les défis rencontrés ;
- S'engager au respect des principes d'éthique lors de la mise en oeuvre des activités de GBV;
- Se renforcer les capacités mutuellement;
- Travailler en synergie et au besoin en mettant leurs ressources (financières, techniques et logistiques) en commun sur des actions précises.

c. Confidentialité :

L'information en rapport avec les cas GBV ne sera pas révélée lors des réunions du Sous Cluster pour assurer que le droit à la confidentialité et à la sécurité du survivant (e) est respecté, en suivant l'ensemble des principes repris dans les Directives IASC sur les Interventions des Violences Basées sur le Genre dans les cadres Humanitaires.

6. Priorités:

- Coordonner les actions pour renforcer et formaliser les efforts de la prévention et de la réponse des GBV;
- Partager les informations sur les activités de programmation et de stratégies afin d'identifier des lacunes (gaps),
- Construire une coalition pour réduire la probabilité de la réplique programmatique.;
- Assurer le plaidoyer pour soutenir les activités de prévention et de la réponse sur les GBV;
- Partager les informations relatives aux ressources pour organiser les formations, les études et la recherche;
- Faciliter la collecte des données par sexe pour dégager les tendances, les leçons apprises et les meilleurs pratiques;
- S'assurer que la réponse est standardisée pour les membres du sous cluster GBV;
- Assurer le fonctionnement du GBVIMS et permettre son transfert progressif au Gouvernement
- Dynamiser les groupes de travail VBG dans toutes les régions du Mali affectées par la crise et travailler en synergie avec les autres instances dont les missions sont complémentaires avec celles du sous cluster VBG.
- Préparer et assurer le transfert des compétences du sous cluster VBG vers les services techniques de l'Etat dans l'optique du retour à la stabilité et la durabilité de la lutte contre les VBG.

7. Mode de fonctionnement

Les réunions se tiennent le dernier mardi de chaque mois au Bureau de l'UNFPA sise au Quartier ACI 2000, près de l'Assurance SONAVIE en face du monument de Kwamé Nkruma de 10 à 12 heures Et/ou au niveau du MPFEF, sise à la Cité Administrative de Bamako.

L'agenda sera partagé 72 heures avant la tenue de la rencontre. La réalisation des partenaires devra être envoyée 48 heures avant la tenue de la réunion et le compte rendu 48 heures après. Le secrétariat du sous cluster est tenu par UNFPA.

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- 1 Ministère de l'Aménagement du territoire et de la Population / Direction Nationale de la Population (2016) : Projections démographiques 2014 - 2029
- 2 Enquête Démographique et de Santé, Mali (EDSM-V) 2012-2013
- 3 Inter-Agency Standing Committee



## 11. Sample: Global Education Cluster Induction Presentation for new Cluster Coordinators and Information Managers (PowerPoint)



**Global Education Cluster  
Induction to new CCs  
and IMs**



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## Objective of the Induction:

Familiarize with GEC support available, toolkits, Helpdesk, RRT, Capacity Development options and specific GEC thematic areas



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## Responding to New Realities: 2020 Overview of RRT Support

Overview of how the GEC RRT navigated COVID-19 to ensure support to country teams was not disrupted.

## GEC Supported countries/contexts



As of April 2021, GEC supports 35 contexts:

- 27 Activated clusters: 27 officially activated IASC Education Clusters<sup>1</sup> (ipd, Whole of Syria)
- 3 WoS hubs: (NE Syria, NW Syria and Damascus) and
- 5 EIE working groups in MYRP 2021 countries (Burundi, Haiti, Pakistan, Lebanon and Uganda – for CCT only)



Countries	Leads
Afghanistan	UNICEF/SC
Bangladesh	UNICEF/SC
Burkina Faso	UNICEF/PLAN
Cameroon	UNICEF/PLAN
Central African Republic	UNICEF/NRC/ACTED
Chad	UNICEF
Colombia	UNICEF/SC/NRC
Democratic Republic of the Congo	UNICEF/SC
Ethiopia	UNICEF/SC
Honduras	UNICEF/SC
Iraq	UNICEF/SC
Libya	UNICEF/NRC
Mali	UNICEF/SC
Mozambique	UNICEF/SC
Myanmar	UNICEF/SC
Niger	UNICEF/SC
Nigeria	UNICEF/SC
Occupied Palestinian Territories	UNICEF/SC
Pacific	UNICEF/SC
Syria (WoS hub and 3 Operations: Damascus, NE, NW)	UNICEF/SC
Somalia	UNICEF/SC
South Sudan	UNICEF/SC
Sudan	UNICEF
Ukraine	UNICEF/SC
Venezuela	UNICEF/SC
Yemen	UNICEF/SC
Zimbabwe	UNICEF/SC
<b>Total Activated Clusters: 27 (including WoS)</b>	
NE Syria	SC
NW Syria	UNICEF/SC
Damascus	UNICEF
<b>Total Syria Hubs: 3</b>	



### Meet the Team

[Meet the Team | Education Cluster](#)

### GEC team members:

- 2 Global Coordinators
- 2 Deputy Coordinators
- Rapid Response Team (CCs and Ims) and thematic Specialists (Cash and Voucher Assistance, Localization, Child Safeguarding and Accountability, Attacks on Education, RRM, Cp-EIE collaboration)
- Capacity Development Specialists (also RRTs)
- Communication
- Knowledge Management



## GEC Offer of Support



E-mail: [help.edcluster@humanitarianresponse.info](mailto:help.edcluster@humanitarianresponse.info) or help.edcluster (skype)

For EIE programmatic requests refer to: [helpdesk@inee.org](mailto:helpdesk@inee.org)

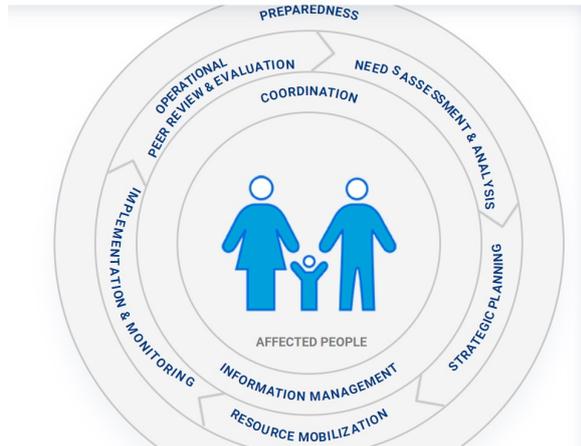


## Regular GEC Support Cluster Teams

- [Annual meeting](#) and [Cluster Team's Retreat](#)
- Start-of-the-year Support Planning Call
- Communities of Practice
- [HNO and HRP Webinars](#)
- [Thematic webinars throughout the year](#)
- [Cluster Performance Monitoring exercise](#)
- GEC satisfaction survey
- Mid-year and End-Year HRP monitoring surveys



## Education Cluster Toolkit



## Needs Assessments

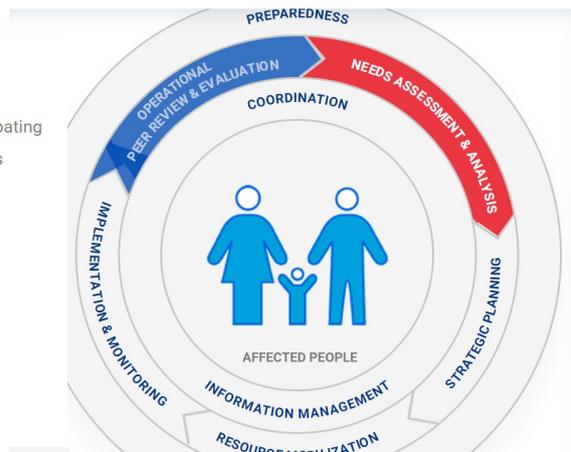
### Needs Assessment and Analysis

Key resources, tools, and guidance for conducting, coordinating and participating in secondary data reviews and joint, harmonized and/or multi-sector needs assessments.

[Education in Emergencies Needs Assessment Guide](#)

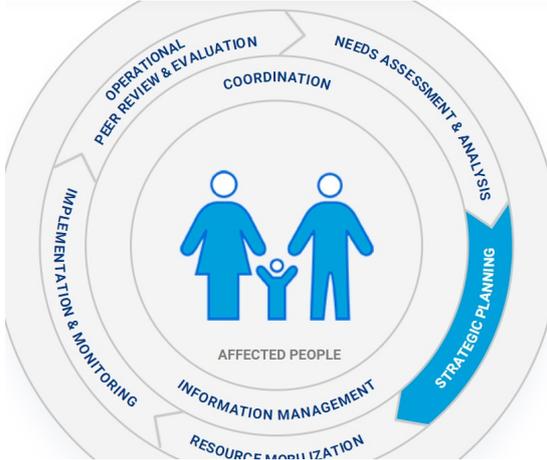
[Needs Assessment Package](#)

[Calculating People in Need Resources](#)





## Strategic Planning



### Strategic Planning

Key resources, tools, and guidance for developing and planning comprehensive strategies and EiE response.

- [Education Cluster Strategy Development Package](#) 
- [Developing Education Cluster Strategy Guide](#) 
- [Guide to Developing Education Cluster Strategy Summary](#) 
- [Education Cluster Strategy Template](#) 
- [Education Cluster Strategy Template Instructions](#) 
- [Modèle de Stratégie du Cluster \(FR Example\)](#) 
- [Calculating People in Need Resources](#) 
- [Indicator Guidance](#) 





## Capacity Development

- [Core 1 ENG](#)
- [Core 1 FR](#)
- [Core 1 SP](#)





## Thematic Workstreams



[Our Initiatives and Projects | Education Cluster](#)

- **Cash and Voucher Assistance** (For further guidance/support contact [Dana](#) and [Romana](#))
- **Localization** (For further guidance/support contact [Kemal](#))
- **CP-EIE Collaboration** (For further guidance/support contact [Mackenzie](#))
- **Child Safeguarding and Accountability to Children** (For further guidance/support contact [Serena](#))
- **GBV and Gender**
- **Disability Inclusion** (for further guidance/support contact [Anais](#))



## Strategic Priorities



**Accountability**

Accountability, both to affected populations and for the Education Cluster's results and performance.

**Partnership**

Collaborative, inclusive and meaningful engagement contributing towards realizing the Education Cluster's vision.

**Humanitarian Development Nexus**

Working together for uninterrupted education for children and youth in crisis.



**Initiative for Strengthening Education in Emergencies Coordination**



**Deepening Partnership with Education Cannot Wait**



**Global Partners Project**



**Strengthening Coordination and Rapid Response with DG ECHO**



**Any questions?**



## 12. Institutional Capacity Strengthening - Project Sheet Template

### Project Summary:

This project aims to identify the central institutional capacity needs of local and national non-governmental organizations (L/NNGOs) involved in humanitarian responses in line with the Grand Bargain and education cluster priorities. Through this process, a capacity enhancement plan can be realised where these actors' can increase their effectiveness, efficiency, overall service delivery quality and expand national level resilience to respond to humanitarian crises. The project cycle consists of an assessment and analysis of the capacity needs of the L/NNGOs, developing a capacity development plan and list of indicators<sup>1</sup> for tracking improvement in each organization based on gaps identified, implementing the capacity development initiatives, and continuous monitoring and evaluation of the activities, and results.

The target group will be L/NNGOs who are part of the cluster mechanism and have a genuine interest and determination in improving their organizational capacities and demonstrate it by applying this programme through submitting a written application.

The project will be implemented over a period of 18 months by a consortium of international and national NGOs, who are keen to develop the quality and capacity of overall humanitarian response at the country-level through developing the organizational capacities of the cluster's national and local partners. The method of delivery will be a combination of online courses and tutored learning through mentorship and coaching. The expected outcome of this initiative is increased operational capacities for local and national actors, and thus, promoting sustainability of the humanitarian action. Institutional capacity strengthening will also help National NGOs to access humanitarian funding as directly possible, building up their own resource mobilization capabilities, and leading the way to stronger community engagement and accountability through including affected populations via organizations that are set up by them.

### Needs and Justification:

Local and national NGOs (L/NNGOs) play a key role in reaching people in need of humanitarian assistance. In 2019, XX% of children in need of Education in Emergency (EiE) services were reached by L/NNGOs. With the Covid-19 pandemic obstructing the mobility and access of traditional international actors in 2020, the central role of L/NNGOs as articulated in the Grand Bargain has become more apparent as local actors can more readily access affected communities. Local actors have the advantage of closely observing and understanding the needs of the affected communities, and tailoring generic interventions to better match the needs. They can communicate in the local languages and there is a commensurate level of trust which comes from this interaction. Such advantages situate L/NNGOs in an advantageous position to provide relevant and contextualized services these communities need in contradistinction to

<sup>1</sup> Some suggestions for such indicators for tracking improvement can be: # of L/NNGOs whose capacities gaps are assessed; # of Policies (Finance, Procurement, Human Resources, etc...) Produced; # of staff trained on policies/procedures/SOPs; # of L/NNGOs that have Medium or Low risk rating in UN's HACT-assessment; Total amount of EiE funding that L/NNGOs can access directly, etc...

the internationally led, at times socio-culturally out of step, humanitarian assistance. Furthermore, local actors are usually the first responders in an emergency and present in the field when international providers leave due to security concerns, such as the Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated, or funding priorities shift.

Nevertheless, persisting gaps in institutional capacities of L/NNGOs present considerable barriers for the local and national actors to take leadership of the humanitarian community, participate and influence the decision-making mechanisms, and match the thresholds of capacity requirements that keep them from accessing humanitarian funding directly. Organizational Capacity Assessments (OCAs) of L/NNGO members of the cluster indicate gaps in areas including Finance and Accounting, Procurement, Asset Management, Human Resources, Governance, and Project Management at varying levels. While some organizations have their policies and procedures in place but their staff need further training/coaching/mentoring to ensure these policies are followed at all times, other organizations need support to develop and adopt such policies. Most partnership agreements do not involve such peer support and are rather in the form of subcontract agreements for service delivery rather than long term, strategic partnerships, which envision capacity development for observing longer term results. Strengthening organizational capacities of local actors is a key intervention for both building the local resilience and making humanitarian interventions more sustainable as well as accountable to local populations hit by the crises.

Therefore, it is critically important to develop their capacities if the end result is to scale up the humanitarian response to reach more people efficiently while also enhancing the programme quality and the accountability that humanitarian professionals and donors have for affected populations.

**Objective:** Strengthening institutional and operational capacities of Local and National NGOs engaged in Cluster or other relevant EiE coordination groups in order to scale up the overall humanitarian response and improve its quality.

### **Implementation of Activities:**

The first stage of the project will involve the purposive selection of ## L/NNGOs to participate in the programme. This process will be based on transparent criteria agreed and set by a Reference Group including Strategic Advisory Group members. The criteria will, which include being a humanitarian NGO with activities in Education and Child Protection, active engagement with the Education and Child Protection clusters, and a demonstrated interest and dedication for capacity development. Next, an assessment of the organizational capacity gaps will be carried out. The capacity assessment will be a combination of a desk-review of existing assessments previously conducted, and an external assessment to pinpoint specific capacity gaps inherent in the systems and structures of these organizations. The identified needs will be then discussed with the beneficiary organizations and key focus areas for development will be agreed upon jointly. The areas of capacity strengthening will be:

1. Financial Management
2. Human Resource Management
3. Information Technology
4. Institutional Governance
5. Management
6. Leadership
7. Resource Mobilization
8. Procurement Management System
9. Project Management
10. Risk Management
11. Supply Chain Management and Logistics

After an evaluation of the assessment results and agreement on the key areas of focus, a plan for capacity strengthening will be developed for each organization based on the focus areas above. The plan will draw upon the Institutional Capacity Strengthening Framework developed by the Child Protection Area of Responsibility and the Global Education Cluster in terms of scope of the capacity building and phasing-in the implementation of each.

The modality of capacity building activities will be in the following formats:

#### **1- Online Courses and Resources:**

Several certified online courses are available online for free or at a nominal fee on a broad range of topics. Detailed catalogue of the courses are provided as an annex to Institutional Capacity Development Framework.

This type of capacity building will be self-paced or tutored structure.

#### **2- Mentoring and Coaching Services:**

Although several online courses are available, mentoring and coaching services are critical to provide tailored and close support for organizations which have weak systems and need to invest in their staff. The main goal of such services is to provide professional, tailored, close, and continuous support for L/NNGOs to develop their organizational capacities and attain a higher level of performance. Structured evaluations will determine areas of professional development that L/NNGOs need. In order to use resources efficiently and scale up the impact of the project, the beneficiary L/NNGOs will be clustered into groups depending on their level of needs in a focus area (for ex, Finance), and will be take tailored support in that area from professional service providers.

The service providers will be as follows:

- a) Professional consultancy firms or organizations who are internationally or nationally recognized experts in their area of focus. These consultancy firms are most versatile and can provide well-tailored services to even community-based organizations and community-based networks and accompany them throughout the process and in local languages too.
- b) International or National NGO's which have more robust operational systems and structures. This can be through shadowing, on the job training, and also through staff exchanges that allow placing a local organization staff at the national NGO for some time or vice versa. The I/ NNGOs which provide these services would require additional funding for this to provide the mentoring and coaching services to local organizations.
- c) Private Sector companies, which have experience in providing these services including shadowing and on the job training at a cost or pro bono basis.

### Logframe:

Impact	Indicator	Baseline	Target
Local and National NGOs access direct funding and Donor Funding is used more efficiently	# of L/NNGOs with reduced risk ratings		
	# of L/NNGOs which are pass HACT assessment and can access HPF		
	# of children reached per 1 USD		

Activity	Indicator	Baseline	Target
Capacity Assessment and Evaluation of Needs are Conducted based on well vetted minimum standards for baselines	# of Organizations Assessed	0	3
Institutional Capacity Development Plan Developed	# of ICD Plans Finalized	0	3
Organizations Complete their ICD according to customized ICD Plan	# of Organizations Completing ICD Development Plans		
	# of Policies Produced, Improved, or Adapted		
	# of L/NNGO Staff trained		

**Budget:** (for 1 beneficiary L/NNGOs)

Total Cost: 88,610 USD

Line Items:

Certified online training courses organizations with some level of institutional capacity	100
Certified online training courses for individual organizations with little or no institutional capacity	200
Shorter training for organizations with some level of institutional capacities (Mentoring and Coaching)	10,000
Longer training and establishment of systems for organizations with little or no institutional capacity (Mentoring and Coaching)	20,000
Costs related to IT for organizations with some level of IT capacity	9,000
Costs related to IT for organizations with very little IT capacity	25,000
Implementing partners	18,000
Overhead costs for implementing partners (7%)	5,761
<b>Total</b>	<b>88,061</b>



## 13. Advocacy Strategy format - Nutrition Cluster Advocacy Toolkit

Advocacy strategies do not need to be long documents. Four to eight pages that includes all relevant information is a good length. To facilitate sharing with other colleagues and partners, it is important to use clear and accessible language. The following template is a useful guide for the development of an advocacy strategy.

### Advocacy Strategy template

**Title of the strategy: (reference to country and/or issue)** \_\_\_\_\_  
(e.g. Nutrition Cluster Advocacy Strategy to scale up nutrition programming in Afghanistan)

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Expected duration of the strategy:** \_\_\_\_\_

**01 Advocacy overall goal**

**02 Advocacy change objectives**

**03 Description of the problem and why it is important**

**04 Targets**

**05 Allies and partners**

**06 Potential risks and mitigation**

**07 Key advocacy messages**

**08 Available evidence** (reference to existing reports that can be used to support advocacy messages)

**09 Opportunities for advocacy**

**10 Key activities (timing and advocacy approaches)**

**11 Indicators of progress** (to support monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning)