LOCAL LEADERSHIP IN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE INITIATIVE

Outcomes from the Regional Shelter & Settlements Fora

Credit: Andrea Ruffini, IOM
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In response to the growing call for more locally led humanitarian response, InterAction’s Shelter and Settlements Working Group conducted extensive consultations in four regional shelter and settlements fora in 2022 and 2023. These four regional reports directly capture the voices and unique perspectives of regional shelter and settlements stakeholders.

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- These reports summarize the key findings of the consultations conducted by principal consultants Fiona Kelling, Dr. Sneha Krishnan, and Dipti Hingorani.

- This initiative was managed and guided by Juli King, with the support of Mohamed Hilmi and Madelyn Evans of InterAction. Additional guidance was provided by InterAction’s Humanitarian Policy and Practice Team and Communications Team.

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LOCAL LEADERSHIP IN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE INITIATIVE: OUTCOMES OF THE AFRICA SHELTER & SETTLEMENTS FORUM

December 2022

This report sets out the main discussion points from the first of four regional shelter and settlements fora taking place between September 2022 and February 2023. It provides insights and recommendations that will support donors and INGOs to promote local leadership and local decision making in humanitarian shelter and settlements response.

KEY MESSAGES

- **REINFORCE COMMUNITY STRUCTURES**: There is a need to identify and reinforce existing community-based response mechanisms, rather than impose international standards or re-invent existing mechanisms. Humanitarians need to work with local systems that are functional and valid, and support and strengthen them.

- **INCREASE COLLABORATION**: Increased collaboration between local and international actors is critical for localization to occur. While other barriers may require systemic change, increased collaboration between stakeholders can lead to effective change and should be prioritized.

- **MAKE PARTNERSHIPS EQUITABLE**: Many ‘exploitative’ partnerships exist that need to be overhauled for meaningful and equitable collaboration and decision making to occur. UN organizations often work through subcontracts, which can be disempowering. A significant change in how these partnerships work is required.

- **BE ACCOUNTABLE TO COMMUNITIES**: Accountability to disaster and conflict-affected communities should drive humanitarian action. This is not occurring to the extent that is always required and often forgotten in the localization dialogue.

- **ADAPT STANDARDS TO CONTEXT**: Global standards for humanitarian action should be adapted and made relevant to local context, customs, communities and be adhered to.

- **INCREASE SUSTAINABLE FUNDING**: Current cycles of humanitarian funding create a barrier in advancing and maintaining local capacity and leadership. In addition, local funding targets committed in the Grand Bargain have not been met (only 3% of 25% target by 2020).

- **PROMOTE INCLUSIVE DECISION MAKING**: Donor requirements can ensure local leadership is integrated into programs, ensuring all the actors and structures that are part of the local communities are involved in the decision-making process from the start.

- **LEVERAGE PAST LEARNING**: The pandemic was an opportunity to appreciate local leadership, providing good examples of how it might be achieved. This learning opportunity needs to be leveraged.

The Africa Shelter Forum took place in Dakar, Senegal on 6 and 7 September 2022. It provided an initial opportunity to contribute to the objectives of the InterAction initiative on Local Leadership in Humanitarian Response. Participants explored the current regional challenges to strengthen local leadership and decision making in humanitarian response within the shelter and settlements sector and opportunities to overcome those challenges. InterAction will use the information from the sessions to support shelter and settlement stakeholders to understand and overcome localization challenges and ensure the ongoing research is rooted in local perspectives.

Details of the objectives, structure, and content of the forum is in Annex 1.
‘Localization’ and ‘Local Actors’ are terms that are not clearly defined or consistently understood

The forum explored various definitions of ‘localization.’ The lack of consensus presents a challenge for operationalizing the concept and holding certain groups accountable for achieving it. ‘Localization’ has generally been framed as increasing local actors’ access to international humanitarian funding, partnerships, coordination spaces, and capacity building. However, the term has always served as an umbrella term for nearly any kind of humanitarian reform involving local actors.

The forum also explored what ‘local actor’ means, beyond a simple binary distinction between international and local. Participants emphasized the need to recognize, understand, and engage intentionally with diverse actors, particularly informal ones that may often be excluded, as part of an equitable approach to localization (see Annex 2 for presentation).

Different perspectives highlighted different localization issues

Four speakers – two from local African organizations and two from the UN – reflected on localization in their own work.

**UrbanSen**, a local Senegalese association, brings together professionals around urban issues specific to precarious neighborhoods in Dakar. They apply a grass-roots approach to participatory community engagement to promote locally led decision making for neighborhood renewal, upgrading and reconstruction. The organization works through the Senegalese Federation of Inhabitants (FSH), which brings together local CBOs made up of nearly 12,000 members, grouped into over 500 savings groups. Strengthening local leadership and decision making in humanitarian responses is a core part of their approach. This is seen in their focus on community-proposed projects, capacity building on local leadership, and their collaboration with local authorities and the FSH. Overall, this approach ensures that the community is very much at the heart of decision making on their projects (see Annex 3 for presentation).

**CEFORD** is a Ugandan NGO that focuses on capacity-development services to build the resilience of disadvantaged families to realize their rights and improve their wellbeing. For CEFORD, the strengths of being a local organization include having strong social connections, local skills, historical experience, access – including at times of conflict – and most importantly the trust and relationship built with the communities. These strengths were seen in a project supporting host and displaced communities during the COVID pandemic. The strength of the community structures that had been created from local government up to grass-roots level – the connections and relationships with local government and communities – granted them permissions for access when international agencies were unable to be present. While international organizations are more accountable to their donors, CEFORD felt that as a local organization they were more accountable to the communities they are part of as they are part of those communities. CEFORD has experienced several successful localization strategies, such as partnerships with UN agencies that have provided access to more funding opportunities, and participation in various consortiums. This contrasts with some continued challenges identified that required further commitment, such as:

- the need for more direct funding to local actors in line with the Grand Bargain commitments
- the need for more equitable and sustainable partnership arrangements as the use of subcontracting arrangements sometimes disempower local actors by denying them a voice in the decision-making process
UN-Habitat, headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, works towards a better urban future, with a mission to promote socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development and the achievement of adequate shelter for all. **Localization** has been a key priority for the organization in recent years. UN-Habitat has consistently ensured that localization does not remain at policy level but is grounded in the operational level, with close liaison to local organizations, local governments, and communities in its programs and projects through different agendas and frameworks. This ensures the organization meets not only development goals and targets, but also the goals and targets of the local community. Recent projects identified several challenges which the organization is learning from to improve their localization work. These include:

- lack of a common understanding or approach to implementation
- gaps in institutional and local capacity
- gaps in financial capacity
- some gaps in policy and programming.

Overall, a top-down approach that was used in the past by the organization does not work, and a more inclusive, bottom-up approach needs to be taken, which understands that families receiving benefits from the programs should be more actively integrated into localization efforts from policy to implementation level.

**UNHCR** is the UN body whose primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees. In a migration context, ‘local presence’ and ‘local involvement’ mean different things. Consequently, there is a need to understand what we mean by local leadership in localized efforts. In Africa there are 12 million people of concern affected by displacement, without counting the host populations, which creates a complex heterogeneous situation with communities with different vulnerabilities. UNHCR must work with institutions, especially in urban and peri-urban locations, the private sector, and diverse marginalized communities, including tribal, pastoralists and indigenous communities. This raises a lot of questions:

- How do we act locally and who do we serve when we act locally?
- What do we want to do with localization?
- Isn’t localization supposed to build local and vernacular skills and knowledge and reinforce existing systems and structures that work?
- Which systems and standards are we following?
- Are we imposing international standards or are we working with local systems that we can support in a more equitable way?

UNHCR has committed to sending 50% of funding to local organizations and has several strengths that can be applied to the localization agenda. For example, UNHCR has a strong presence in many locations, and there is cross-border understanding and communication between various operations where learning can happen. UNHCR also closely works with governments and local institutions. However, the organization has an opportunity to work more closely with civil society, municipalities and communities. UNHCR’s focus has always been on addressing individual needs, but this needs to shift to work on collective vulnerabilities, which the organization is well placed to do. Continued dialogue with local actors needs to be institutionalized rather than sporadic, as it is with most institutions. There needs to be sustained investment in local staff to engage in this dialogue.
A live online survey encouraged participants to share their perspectives

The survey had two objectives: to understand the audience and to unpack the topic and understand participants’ biggest concerns. Between 40 and 50 respondents answered each question. The audience was mainly global, although there was also a significant number of people representing African nations, of which 40% represented national organizations.

The survey revealed the diversity of ‘local actors’ to engage with

Local government, the community, and local NGOs were most frequently cited as examples of ‘local actors’. However, some respondents identified the private sector, religious organizations, spontaneous volunteer groups, social networks, and CBOs as further examples. We need to recognize, understand, and engage intentionally with this diverse set of actors, particularly informal ones that may often be excluded.

There is a need for capacity building among both international and local actors

Over 88% of respondents, including INGOs, UN agencies, donors, and local actors themselves, think that there is a capacity gap preventing local leadership. Areas most commonly cited as requiring increased capacity were accountability, coordination, and engagement. Other areas included planning and leadership, community engagement, and more inclusive decision making.

Credit: Svetlana Borozentseva

Lack of resources and reliance on international donors is a key barrier

Respondents cited the lack of resources and reliance on international donors as the biggest barrier to local leadership. Exclusion from decision making came as a close additional topic, followed by lack of trust, lack of training, and lack of mentoring.
Mutual trust and collaboration are critical

Collaboration and cooperation were ranked as the most critical area to focus on to increase local leadership. Participants see this as being closely linked to the lack of trust of international organizations in local actors and lack of opportunities for local actors to be the decision makers.

Other considerations that respondents highlighted included the need to have confidence in the local community and an understanding of local realities. The latter includes the need to identify and reinforce existing community-based response mechanisms, as opposed to trying to reinvent them. Respondents also referred to the need to ensure flexible processes to adapt to continuous political, economic, social, and ecological transformations, as well as the need to promote localization at all levels, from donors to the community.

The full survey results are available in Annex 4.

An actor mapping exercise highlighted power imbalances

An actor-mapping exercise explored the stakeholders involved and power dynamics between different local and international actors during humanitarian responses. Participants worked in small groups to plot various actors on a matrix to indicate the actors’ interest/importance relative to their influence.

![Example of a completed matrix](image)

Most groups highlighted the strong influence of donors on shelter responses due to their control over funding, as well as national and local governments, international organizations, and the UN, whose tools and structures influence the humanitarian space in which operations are carried out. The communities, civil societies, and local governments were highlighted as most important, but with relatively less influence over the way responses are designed and led.
A visioning exercise identified future potential and challenges to achieving locally led response

A visioning exercise used three questions to prompt subgroups to define what a locally led response does or could look like:

**TOPIC 1: CAPACITY (PRE-CONDITIONS)**

What capacity exchange needs to be in place for meaningful localization?

Mutual capacity enhancement between local and international actors was presented as critical. Often, capacity building is considered necessary only for the local organizations, but international actors need to learn too. Communities require simple and practical tools to better understand the humanitarian system, structure, and processes. Building trust is a critical starting point, followed by the need to adapt to local learning styles and practices. That will allow the target population to participate in developing context-specific strategies and learning mechanisms so knowledge is retained.

International agencies require tools and techniques to effectively assess and analyze local capacity. The group queried how large international agencies such as the UN analyze local capacity and how effective their analysis is. They felt that international agencies should start by asking themselves, ‘Does the agency have the capacity to analyze the local context and capacity effectively, to understand it, and consequently to build upon it, taking into consideration resources, time, accessibility, security, and governance within the agency?’ Participants emphasized that sometimes a lack of capacity within international organizations to analyze a local context and engage with local communities can reduce or prevent the inclusion of the target population, and this needs to be addressed.

**TOPIC 2: PARTNERSHIP (PROCESS):**

What does a successful partnership look like?

The group concluded that the key element for effective partnerships is long-term partnership commitments, established before a disaster occurs. It is important to have common goals and objectives within those partnerships and to co-create and envision positive collective impacts. Understanding each partner’s roles and responsibility is important, as is the sincere will to engage and work for quality outcomes in a collaborative and cooperative manner. The top-line summary was that the less transactional the partnerships are, the more equitable they are.

**TOPIC 3: DECISION MAKING (PROCESS):**

What does effective decision-making look like?

This discussion built on the stakeholder mapping exercise carried out earlier in the session that showed that donors, the UN, international agencies, and local governments have the most power and influence as they are in charge of the resources. Often it is difficult for local organizations to make decisions as even if they are invited to participate, they do not have the ability to influence these decision-making processes. In an ideal situation, for effective decision making to occur, it was suggested that maybe we need to change who is involved in the process so that donors, local authorities, and local communities come together to discuss and negotiate decisions, while the international actors serve as a facilitator in a supporting, enabling role. INGOs and the UN have the structure, experience, and capacity for decision making and therefore are key for the discussion. However, effective decision making requires participation by and a synergy between all the different actors. Meaningful participation of local actors at the ground level will ensure that decision making and recommendations reflect the needs of the affected population.
Funding requirements from donors can also become a good opportunity to ensure local leadership is integrated as an approach, ensuring all the bodies and structures that are part of the local communities are involved in the decision-making process from the start.

See Annex 5 for details of the exercises.

The Africa forum provides important lessons for future fora

- Participants in the Africa forum were mostly internationals or African nationals working for INGOs and therefore it was a challenge to incorporate more local voices in the discussions. Local organizations are not necessarily aware of the humanitarian architecture and are not generally involved in these events. Future fora should ensure dissemination of forum information to local actors in the region in a more pro-active manner and support, if possible, the in-person participation of national and local organization staff by providing direct invitations.
• In the stakeholder exercise, some participants found it difficult to simultaneously consider the current situation and an aspirational scenario and to understand the changes required. Future forums should carry this exercise out in two parts; one to describe the actual situation and another to describe an aspirational scenario.

• The group work was very successful and sparked enthusiasm and engagement, as well as interesting debate and discussions. However, the time was too short to build on the discussions. Also, valuable knowledge may not have been captured as no note taker was assigned. Future forums should ensure that each group has a facilitator who will feed back to plenary as well as a note taker, to maximize information capture. It could be valuable to disseminate a one-page summary of the research project ahead of the forum, including a brief description of the exercises; this could prepare people in advance and cut down on the amount of time required for explanation.

• The forum identified engaged advocates of localization and practical examples for follow up. Future forums should be used as an opportunity to identify people interested in further engagement, potentially in an online format.

Annex 1: Session Plan
Annex 2: PowerPoint Presentation Day 1
Annex 3: PowerPoint Presentation from UrbanSen
Annex 4: Menti Survey Questionnaire Results
Annex 5: PowerPoint Presentation Day 2
ANNEX 1: SESSION PLAN

Africa Shelter Forum 6-7th September 2022

This session will explore the current regional challenges to strengthen local leadership and decision making in humanitarian response within the sector. The session invites national participants to identify challenges and opportunities to strengthen capacities in the region. The information will be used to develop a roadmap for the sector that is rooted in local perspectives. The second part will continue on Day 2 with further exercises and discussions.

Session Objectives: To introduce ‘Localisation’ to the audience - presenting what research has shown thus far and inviting reflections from the audience to understand current regional challenges and opportunities to strengthen local leadership and decision-making in humanitarian response.

SESSION OBJECTIVES
- stimulate thought on different meanings of localization and challenges to this broad heading (intro)
- present examples that introduce key themes or questions around locally-led response, decision-making, partnership and capacity (panel)
- understand who is in the room and what their biggest concerns are (menti/plenary)
- stimulate thought on what they could input next day (wrap up)

OUTLINE
5 mins Introduction
30 mins Panel presentation
10 mins Menti poll
15 mins Discussion and wrap-up/intro to session 2

Introduction – 5 mins
Using PowerPoint slides, briefly introduce InterAction Local Leadership in Humanitarian Response initiative, outline what has already occurred and how the session will contribute to the ongoing research

SLIDE 1: Defining Localisation
- There are many different ways of defining or interpreting localisation. Includes examples of a few on the slides.

SLIDE 2: What do we mean by a local actor?
- There are also many ways of defining or understanding who is a local actor. Include examples of a few common meanings on the slides.
- Add a few less commonly considered actors e.g., fully nationally staffed and headed NGO? A foreigner who has spent 30 years living in a place? The diaspora community? Refugee returnees? Refugees themselves (i.e. Rohingya in Bangladesh)?
- We need to think about a number of different dynamics and how they relate to different contexts. A tendency to paint broad brushstrokes does a dis-service to a more nuanced reality.
SLIDE 3: Local Leadership in Humanitarian Response initiative

- Research project by InterAction. Focussing on the issue of local leadership and decision-making, specifically how this relates or is seen in the shelter sector.
- A number of consultations already carried out and pilot survey results presented at Shelter Meeting 22 in Geneva. Share link. Looking to get your inputs from this session.
- If you are representing what you consider to be a local organisation or institution, please come and speak to me afterwards (or DM if online).

Panel Presentations - 30 mins

10 mins x 3 speakers from a diverse range of organisations – one local, one international, one Red Cross. Define a set of questions to inspire reflections on localization from the perspective of each organisation.

Possible questions to inspire the presentations:

ORGANISATION 1 - Local NGO: Could you provide an example of a successful program that you have implemented? Why was it successful? And what, if any, could have been the advantages and disadvantages had the response not been truly locally-led?

ORGANISATION 2 - UNHCR: As a large organisation with access to a large amount of international funding, please describe a successful partnership with a local partner? Why do you consider it successful? What was the added value of working through this approach? How much do you consider the local actor was truly able to lead in decision-making in the project and what was put in place to allow a more participatory and inclusive partnership? What could have been better?

ORGANISATION 3 - Senegalese Red Cross - As a local organisation affiliated in an international network, we understand that you have been implementing a range of projects - some truly locally-led, and others PNS or IFRC managed. Could you share some insights into the advantages and disadvantages of working within these two approaches? What learnings and recommendations could you share so as to make humanitarian responses as local as possible and as international as necessary?

Menti Questionnaire - 10 mins

Use online interactive polls to stimulate interaction from audience as well as understand who is contributing and what their concerns are.

Link: https://www.menti.com/m1fyjzdigs

Understanding the audience:

1. What country are you working in? (Word cloud, up to 5 inputs)
2. What type of organisation do you represent? (Multiple choice: UN, RCRC, INGO, NNGO, Local NGO/CBO, National Government, Local Government, Academic or research institution, Donor, Private sector, Other)
3. What is your nationality/ies? (Word cloud, up to 3 inputs)
4. Are you considered local/national or international in your organisation? (Multiple choice: National, International)
Unpacking the topic:

5. Who do you consider a local actor? (Word cloud, up to 10 inputs)
6. Is there a capacity gap that is preventing local leadership? Multiple choice: Yes, no, don't know)
7. What area/topic does capacity need to be built in? (Word cloud, up to 5 inputs)
8. From your experience, to what extent do you agree each of these are barriers to increased local leadership? (Scales: Lack of trust, lack of resources, excluded from decision making, lack of access, lack of training or mentorship, reliance on international donors, language)
9. Which of these is most important to focus on in order to increase local leadership and decision-making? (Ranking: support from UN agencies, training and education, resource provision, communication, collaboration and cooperation, other)
10. What else should be considered? Any other comments/inputs/questions?

Plenary Discussion and Reflections - 15 mins

Leave the last menti question on the screen and use as the basis for further discussion, if something interesting comes up. Think of some specific questions as a back-up to understand what the audience thinks and help them expand on their menti answers. Seek out examples of where it (i.e. local leadership or decision-making, good partnership or capacity building) has worked well.

Wrap-up

Introduce questions for the next day... Ask them to think about examples they can bring from their experience that either show how there is capacity but it is overlooked, or where there was a capacity gap. Examples of where partnership worked well, what enabled that? Think about what a locally led response looks like and what the outcomes are and for whom. How would a response operate if the barriers that currently exist didn’t? Who would be making the decisions? What difference would this make? - All just food for thought that you can mull over and come prepared to contribute tomorrow.
SESSION OBJECTIVES
- gather inputs/examples from participants from the region
- gain understanding of actors involved and influence/importance of different stakeholders through examples from local contexts
- understand more about the required resources (capacity), process (partnership/decision making) and outcomes (locally-led) of increased local leadership and decision-making, using the Kabeer Framework

OUTLINE
10 mins Introduction and overview of session
15 mins Actor mapping
20 mins Group discussion
10 mins Feedback to Plenary
5 mins Summary/close

Introduction - 10 minutes
Recap of key points from Session 1 and overview of this session
Introduce and explain Actor Mapping exercise

Actor mapping - 15 mins
Break the room 5-6 smaller groups around tables. Using post-it notes already on the tables:
1. Identify different actors/stakeholders in the response and write each one separately on a post-it notes. Use one colour of notes for ‘local’ and a different colour for ‘international’ (could also provide a 3rd colour for unsure?)
2. Place post-it notes on matrix according to their level of interest/importance and influence (the two axes).
3. Draw a line using a marker to where you think they would be on the matrix in a locally-led response.
After 15 mins gather up the flip chart pages and analyse while the discussion groups are happening

Discussion groups – 20 mins
Introduce as a ‘visioning’ exercise where we are asking them to illustrate what a locally-led response looks like. Participants should ‘draw’ in whatever way they feel comfortable (diagram, linked circles, varying sizes, cartoon, story) wherever possible referring to real examples. Give an example of what that can mean - painting a picture with words, word cloud, diagram, venn, cartoon, narrative etc

Overarching question: what does a locally-led response look like?

Topic 1: Capacity (Resources) - What capacity exchange needs to be in place?
What are the capacity constraints that make it more difficult to enable more locally-led humanitarian action? What needs to be in place for all stakeholders in terms of capacity exchange? If international agencies have been fundraising for capacity strengthening for decades so and there is still what seems to be identified as a capacity deficit, what needs to change?
This topic might also touch of funding constraints.
Topic 2: Partnership (Process): *What does good partnership look like?*
Can you provide examples of successful partnership with a local partner? Why do you consider it successful? What was the added value of working through this approach? How much do you consider the local actor was truly able to lead in decision-making in the project and what was put in place to allow a more participatory and inclusive partnership? What could have been better?

Topic 3: Decision-making (Process): *What does effective decision-making look like?*
Who is at the table? Who makes the decisions? What are the roles? What learnings and recommendations could you share so as to make humanitarian responses as local as possible and as international as necessary?

Topic 4: Locally-led (Outcomes): *What does locally-led look like?*
What makes something locally led? What will it achieve/what are the outcomes? For whom? Could you provide an example of a successful program? Who was involved? Why was it successful? What were the advantages or disadvantages of the response being locally-led?

Feedback to Plenary - 10 mins
Each table provides a quick two-minute summary of key points discussed or two examples/locations where an aspect of their discussion was displayed.

Summary/close – 5 mins
Summarize any keys points, thank participants for their contributions and reiterate call for further contributions to the research if they are/have links with local organisations.
Local Leadership in Shelter & Settlements Programming

Dipti Hingorani
Shelter & Settlements Advisor

Session Objectives

The session will explore the current regional challenges to strengthen local leadership and decision making in humanitarian response within the sector.

We aim to have participants to identify challenges and opportunities to strengthen capacities in the region. The information will be used to develop a roadmap for the sector that is rooted in local perspectives.
What do we mean by Localisation or Locally-Led?

- The “international humanitarian system” has long been criticized for excluding groups from countries experiencing humanitarian crises, known as “local actors.” "Localization" is a loosely defined agenda meant to correct that exclusion.

- The localization agenda gained significant traction during the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, particularly through Grand Bargain commitments.

- The localization agenda is generally framed as focusing on increasing local actors’ access to international humanitarian funding, partnerships, coordination spaces, and capacity building.

- Recently, there has also been increased attention to local leadership and influence in policy spaces.

Defining Localisation?

- There are different definitions of localization and a lack of consensus on what it means in practice - has always served as an umbrella term for nearly any kind of humanitarian reform involving local actors.

- Many actors do not like the term localization, or the term has little to no meaning for them. Is it about making international systems more inclusive or requires a fundamental transformation to adapt to local diversities?

- This lack of consensus presents challenges for operationalizing the agenda and holding certain groups accountable.

- Some actors believe localization should have different definitions depending on the context and that discussion about localization should not get lost in semantics.

Some Common Definitions?

- Grand Bargain: “Making principled humanitarian action as local as possible and as international as necessary” (WHS Secretariat, 2016).

- The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD): “A process of recognizing, respecting and strengthening the leadership by local authorities and the capacity of local civil society in humanitarian action, in order to better address the needs of affected populations and to prepare national actors for future humanitarian responses” (Cyprien Fabre and Meru Gupta, 2017)

- Pacific Island Association of NGOs (PIANGO) and the ARC: “A process of recognizing, 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” (Australian Red Cross, 2017).
Some Common Definitions?

- Localization is the meaningful engagement of local actors in the whole project cycle, from agenda setting to implementation to accountability.”
  Researcher from a policy group in the Global South

- Localising aid should be about more than just allocating money to local humanitarian responders. Instead, supporting local humanitarian responders should lead to change about how crises are managed, optimising existing partnerships and strengthening the voice of affected populations.
  
- Localisation is about shifting power to local actors

  “Are we localizing international assistance, or are we internationalizing local actors?”

Defining ‘Local Actors’?

- The term “local” is relative and goes beyond a simple binary definition of international/local.
  
  • Not all local groups responding to a crisis identify themselves as “humanitarian.”

- In practice, the use of the word “actor” tends to prioritize governments and formal NGOs in the affected country; this may exclude other kinds of groups (particularly informal ones) that may be more representative of marginalized populations.

- Recognizing, understanding, and engaging intentionally with a diverse set of actors is important for an equitable approach to localization.
Who do we mean by ‘Local Actors’?

“Local Actors” besides Local Government and Formal L/NGOs (non-exhaustive list of Examples)

- Grassroots groups, community-based organizations, and informal associations
- Cooperatives, livelihoods groups, professional associations, and trade unions
- Faith communities and religious institutions
- Private sector
- Journalists and media organizations
- Schools and universities
- Formal and informal health actors
- Traditional and customary authorities
- Spontaneous volunteer groups
- Individuals, social networks, and diasporas based on geography, identity, religion, politics, and mutual assistance

Who do we mean by ‘Local Actors’?

But what about less commonly considered actors, for example?

- A fully nationally staffed and headed NGO?
- A foreigner who has spent 30 years living in a place?
- The diaspora community? Refugee returnees?
- Refugees themselves (i.e. Rohingya in Bangladesh)?

Who else?

We need to think about a number of different dynamics and how they relate to different contexts. A tendency to paint broad brushstrokes does a dis-service to a more nuanced reality.

Interaction Research Initiative

- InterAction’s Shelter & Settlements (S&S) team is undertaking an initiative highlighting the importance of enabling local stakeholders to lead as the decision-makers and implementers during humanitarian response, specifically how this related to or is seen in the shelter and settlements sector

- A number of consultations already carried out and pilot survey results presented at Shelter Meeting in Geneva. Results of the Survey are available [here](#).

- Research Ongoing throughout 2022-23.
Menti Questionnaire

Go to www.menti.com and use the code 8213 3398

or

https://www.menti.com/m1fyjzdigs

Plenary Discussion

• What questions do we need to be asking?
• What are the specific challenges in the S&S sector?

JOIN US FOR SESSION 2 TOMORROW

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Des professionnels et des habitants réunis autour des problématiques urbaines

I.- PRESENTATION DE L'ONG UrbASEN

II.- PRESENTATION DU PROGRAMME DE RELEVEMENT POST-CATASTROPHE DANS LES QUARTIERS VULNERABLES DE LA BANLIEUE DE DAKAR

urbaSEN c’est quoi?

Une ONG sénégalaise composée de professionnels de l’urban engagée créée en 2007 et formulée en 2009 pour lutter contre les problématiques d’insalubrité. La structure mise en place a permis de réactualiser et améliorer le paysage urbain, soutenir les initiatives et renforcer l’accès des organisations communautaires de bases dans les quartiers de Daka, les régions de Thies, Louga et de Ziguinchor.

Urban a mis en place une structure faîtière dénommée Fédération Sénégalaise de Habitants (FSH). Elle organise, accompagne et appuie la FSH dans son développement, sa structuration et son rayonnement.

La FSH est le principal partenaire de urbaSEN pour la mise en œuvre des programmes et projets
La Fédération Sénégalaise des Habitants (FSH) est une fédération créée en 2014 réunissant des Organisations Communautaires de Base composée de près de 12 000 membres regroupés en 570 groupes d’épargne qui gère un fonds rotatif pour financer la reconstruction. Ses membres sont présents dans les régions de Dakar, Thies, Louga et Ziguinchor. Depuis sa création, la Fédération est membre du réseau SIDI (Slum Dwellers International).

Elle est fortement liée à urbaSEN dont elle constitue le bras communautaire.

LES BAILLEURS DE URBASEN ET DE LA FSH

LES PARTENAIRES DE URBASEN ET DE LA FSH
Programmation d’appui à la reconstruction dans les quartiers précaires - régions Dakar, Thiès, Louga

Durée du programme : 2009-2021
Résultats :
- 750 maisons reconstruites
- 400 assistants répertoriés et formés
- 14 conventions signées

Bailleurs :
- Fondation Abbé Pierre (FAP)
- Fédération Genevoise de Coopération (FGC)
- Fédération Vaudoise de Coopération (Fédervac)

Partenaires : urbaMonde, collectivités locales

Projet : Réalisation de capacités techniques par l’organisation de formations qualifiantes : atelier de la construction solidaire sur la valorisation et l’utilisation des matériaux locaux ; dans le cadre de la réalisation d’une villa éco-socioprofessionnelle

Durée du programme : Nov 2021 - Juin 2024
Bailleurs :
- GIZ Coopération Allemande

Partenaires : collectivités territoriales, FSH

Résultats :
- 60 artisans (maçons) maîtrisent les techniques de construction en matériaux locaux
- 60 artisans formés sur la chaîne de transformation du Typha (coup, sciage, tronçonneuse, batte, confection briques adobes, brique à brique) et la production de briques en terre cuite (BTC)
- 145 femmes formées sur des AGR, préparant au compte des matières locales (bicharbonates de Typha, fabrication de béton, fabrication de briques)
- création, formalisation et structuration de 3 PME

Partenaires : renforcement de l’équipement technologique, formation, pratique BTC opérationnelle et création d’emplois à terme

Projet : Réhabilitation/Utilisation d’un puits dans le village de Ziguinchor, commune de Ngayes, région de Ziguinchor

Durée du programme : Déc 2021 - Sept 2022
Bailleurs :
- FAO

Partenaires : collectivités territoriales, FSH

Résultats :
- un puits réhabilité
- Organisation des femmes transformatrices de poissons en groupements d’épargne
- Formation des 70 femmes en gestion administrative et financière

Projet de construction de 150 logements dans un futur écoquartier de 4 hectares à Diender

Durée du programme : 2021 - 2024
Bailleurs :
- Fondation Abbé Pierre (FAP)
- Fédération Genevoise de Coopération (FGC)
- Fédération Vaudoise de Coopération (Fédervac)
- Ministre de la Cohésion et des territoires Français
- International Budget Partnership

Partenaires : urbaMonde
ONG urbaSEN

Programme « vers un mouvement citoyen des quartiers précaires de la banlieue de Dakar »

Date du programme : 2017 - 2019

Résultats : 81 microprojets réalisés
- 58 maisons semi-collectives
- 70 toilettes familiales
- 33 blocs sanitaires pour les établissements scolaires
- 3 850 poulaillers réglementaires
- 27 espaces publics aménagés (aires de jeux, espaces de détente, terrains multisports)

Bailleurs : Union Européenne , Plan Danemark
Partenaires : Plan International, collectivités locales

ONG urbaSEN

Programme Pikine Irregular Nord-Guédiawaye Gestion Intégrée des Risques d’Inondations (PING GIRI)

Date du programme : 2018-2022

Chantiers de réhabilitation de l’habitat (à la parcelle) inscrits dans la communauté du programme d’appui à la reconstruction (seulement 5 communes du projet)

Chantiers d’ouvrages communautaires (à l’échelle du quartier) planifiés à partir de diagnostics participatifs de planification urbaine permettant d’offrir un document de planification global et de définir des outils à mettre en œuvre et cofinancés par le projet, les communes et les habitants

Bailleurs : AFD (Agence Française de Développement), Métropole de Lyon, collectivités locales, FMI
Partenaire : urbsMondiale et collectivités locales

Activités fortes du programme :
- Renforcement des capacités de coordination des maires d’arrondissement, dynamisation des Comités Locaux de Gestion des Inondations (COLGEIP), collectes de concentration, coordination des maires d’arrondissement, Systèmes d’alertes ANACIM

Plateforme inondations Dakar :

InterAction
**ONG urbaSEN**

**Programme Pépinière Urbaine de Dakar**

**Durée du programme : 2020-2022**

**Objectif :** réalisation de 5 aménagements d’espaces publics associés aux grands projets de transports publics de Dakar

**Achats :**
- 2 chantiers magasins : Hôtel l’Opéra (Birak), Hôtel FSN/Rafleurer (Ouak)
- Optimisation du partage du temps entre le quartier et le centre-ville
- Accompagnement à la mise en œuvre de chantiers de petit à moyen montant

**Réalisateurs :**
- Réalisateurs architectes et plasticiens
- Réalisateurs de conception et réalisation

**Programme d’Animation des Pépinières**

**Date de début :** 2020-2024

**Objectif :** le programme vise à développer un réseau international de partenaires engagés dans des démarches d’innovation urbaine dans les habitats ce qui favorise la transformation urbaine. Les enjeux du programme sont :

- De développer en vue d’interventions sur les territoires urbains solidaire des démarches participatives, de reconstruction et d’actions rapides et efficaces aux gratte-ciel urbains
- De mobiliser les services sociaux et la société civile vers des initiatives de mise en œuvre et de mise en valeur de l’espace urbain adapté au contexte (sud et ses alentours des habitats urbains). Les enjeux du programme sont :

**Partenaires :** Coopératives locales, ONG, Collectivités territoriales
ONG urbaSEN
Programme multipays pour l’amélioration des quartiers précaires à Canchungo, Boassa, Dakar

Durée du programme : 2019-2022

Objectifs : Les acteurs du secteur multipays mobilisés autour des conflits méthodes développés dans leurs projets de développement urbain, de fait, chacun peut améliorer ses pratiques grâce aux expériences acquises par les autres ou qui existent leur législation pour promouvoir l’approche dans la sous-région

Activités :
- Échange stratégiques internationaux entre partenaires et rédaction habitants
- Propagation nationale de compétences entre-structures

Bailleur : AFD (Agence Française de Développement)

Partenaires : Comite, Cred, Yame Sakiaré

II- PRESENTATION DU PROGRAMME DE RELEVEMENT POST-CATASTROPHE DANS LES QUARTIERS VULNÉRABLES DE LA BANLIEUE DE DAKAR

- UrbaDTK 1 ou phase 1
- UrbaDTK2 ou phase 2
- Phase 3
- Phase 4

UrbaDTK 1 ou Phase 1

- la restructuration urbaine,
- la régularisation foncière,
- la lutte contre les inondations,
- la reconstruction de l’habitat en milieu défavorisé,
- l’organisation et l’autonomisation de groupes
**ONG urbaSEN**

**UrbaDTK 2 ou Phase 2**
- Reconstruction modeste et durable de l’habitat par les habitants eux-mêmes.
- Renforcer la compétence des artisans locaux.
- D’instaurer un modèle de financement durable.

**Phase 3**
- Renforcer
- Pérenniser les innovations sociales, financières et technologiques expérimentées.
- Contribuer également au changement d’échelle.

- 750 maisons reconstruites
- 490 artisans répertoriés et formés
- 14 conventions signées

**Phase 4**
- Renforcer
- Pérenniser et diffuser les innovations sociales, financières et technologiques expérimentées.
- Contribuer également au changement d’échelle.
- Nouvelle dynamique et de vision de l’habitat avec une construction à neuf (CITE FSH)

**Renforcement du leadership local et la prise de décision dans la réponse humanitaire**
Proposition de projets types par les bénéficiaires
Formation en leadership
Présence des membres de FSH au sein des collectivités
Orientation des autorités locales sur le modèle de UrbaSEN

« MBOOLO MOY DOOLE »: L’UNION FAIT LA FORCE

MERCI
ANNEX 4: MENTI SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

What country are you working in?

What type of organization do you represent?

What is your nationality/ies?
Are you considered local/national or international in your current role?

Who do you consider to be a 'local actor'?

Do you think there is a capacity gap that is preventing local leadership?
In what area/topic does capacity need to be increased?

From your experience, to what extent do you agree each of these are barriers to local leadership in humanitarian response?

Which of these is most important to focus on in order to increase local leadership and decision making?
### What else should be considered? Plus any other additional comments, clarifications or questions...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conductance-delay to locate</th>
<th>Work on all the above and we shall achieve local leadership</th>
<th>Long-term partnership/Governance: Neutral/Non-commercial imperative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>Capacity building and mentoring</td>
<td>Non-dependency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Change and political will towards decentralisation</td>
<td>Intermittent engagement/training for local responders in known high-risk high-vulnerability areas</td>
<td>Rotating local leadership to avoid participation bias</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### What else should be considered? Plus any other additional comments, clarifications or questions...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nex</th>
<th>Local skills available...</th>
<th>Perspectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RAS</td>
<td>Move HIF to WFD 1</td>
<td>How can we make up great models of impactful work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>permitting localization process</td>
<td>Corruption</td>
<td>Confidence of the resolution on their capacity to make a change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### What else should be considered? Plus any other additional comments, clarifications or questions...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>non</th>
<th>check and accountability</th>
<th>Identifying existing community-based response mechanisms and reinforcing them as opposed to trying to reinvent them.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thinking about projects differently: Self-recovery perspective</td>
<td>Government involvement can also be seen as a burden</td>
<td>Flexible processes to adapt to continuously shifting political, economic, social and environmental transformations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>encourager les acteurs locaux à prendre des responsabilités dans le cadre de coordination/medicalisation</td>
<td>Formation des acteurs sur le terrain transfert de compétence</td>
<td>Use of locally available resources</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What else should be considered? Plus any other additional comments, clarifications or questions...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>L'aide confiante aux partenaires, leurs soutiens dans l'innovation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contextualisation of S&amp;D interventions</td>
<td>RAS</td>
<td>Building local capacity, increase in funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>promoting localization at all levels from the donor to the beneficiaries</td>
<td>Technical capacity</td>
<td>check and balances</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| RAS | contributively | Coordination and facilitation is much interesting. The term localization needs to be integrated in all humanitarian development approaches |
| Implication des acteurs gouvernementaux | | |
| Do you have a plan to cascade this term in to actors? | | No additional comment rather asking you to be pioneer in localization. |
Local Leadership in Shelter & Settlements Programming

Dipti Hingorani
Shelter & Settlements Advisor

Session Objectives

The session will continue to explore the current regional challenges to strengthen local leadership and decision making in humanitarian response within the sector.

- Recap from DAY 1

- **ACTOR MAPPING Exercise**
  Explore who are the different actors involved in humanitarian responses and understand the level of importance vs influence they have in leading a response

- **VISIONING Exercise**
  Explore the key operational areas looking at resources, process and outcomes
Recap from DAY 1
7/8/2022 INTERACTION.ORG 2

• WHAT IS LOCALISATION?
• WHO ARE THE LOCAL ACTORS?
• WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS TO MEANINGFUL LOCALISATION OCCURRING?
• WHAT DOES THE AUDIENCE SEE AS THE KEY AREAS TO FOCUS ON?

Who do you consider to be a 'local actor'?

Who do we mean by ‘Local Actors’?

“Local Actors” besides Local Government and Formal L/NNGOs (non-exhaustive list of Examples)

- Grassroots groups, community-based organizations, and informal associations
- Cooperatives, livelihoods groups, professional associations, and trade unions
- Faith communities and religious institutions
- Private sector
- Journalists and media organizations
- Schools and universities
- Formal and informal health actors
- Traditional and customary authorities
- Spontaneous volunteer groups
- Individuals, social networks, and diasporas based on geography, identity, religion, politics, and mutual assistance
Who do we mean by ‘Local Actors’?

But what about less commonly considered actors, for example?

- A fully nationally staffed and headed NGO?
- A foreigner who has spent 30 years living in a place?
- The diaspora community? Refugee returnees?
- Refugees themselves (i.e. Rohingya in Bangladesh)?

Who else?

We need to think about a number of different dynamics and how they relate to different contexts. A tendency to paint broad brushstrokes does a dis-service to a more nuanced reality.

---

Do you think there is a capacity gap that is preventing local leadership?

![Bar chart showing responses to the question about capacity gap]

- Yes: 50
- No: 7
- Don't know: 0

---

In what area/topic does capacity need to be increased?

[Word cloud with various topics like accountability, coordination, planning, leadership, etc.]
From your experience, to what extent do you agree each of these are barriers to local leadership in humanitarian response?

- Lack of trust
- Lack of resources
- Excluded from decision-making
- Lack of access
- Lack of training or mentorship
- Reliance on international donors
- Language

Which of these is most important to focus on in order to increase local leadership and decision making?

1. Collaboration and cooperation
2. Training and education
3. Resource provision
4. Communication
5. Support from UN agencies
6. Other

What else should be considered? Plus any other additional comments, clarifications or questions...

- Connaissance des réalités locales
- FUNDRAISING
- Policy Change and political will towards decentralisation
- Confidence of the population on their capacity to make a change
- Long term partnership; Governance; Neutrality;Humanitarian imperative
- Non dependancy
- Rotating local leadership to avoid participatory elite
- Work on all the above and we shall achieve local leadership
- Capacity building and mentoring
- Improve preemptive engagement/training for local responders in known high risk/vulnerability areas
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>promoting localization at all level from the donor to the beneficiaries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation for the local actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepting local practice and developing them with 100% involvement of the locals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Including local females too in the program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Actor Mapping Exercise - 15 mins**

1. Identify different actors/stakeholders in the response and write each one separately on a post-it note.

2. Use one colour of notes for ‘local’ and a different colour for ‘international’ - you can also use a 3rd colour for unsure if it is not clear.

3. Place post-it notes on matrix according to what we consider as stakeholders’ level of interest/importance and influence/power in the two different axes.

4. Draw a line using a marker to where you think they would be on the matrix in a locally-led response.

---

**Visioning Exercise - 20 mins**

- This visioning’ exercise is focussed around what a locally-led response looks like or should look like or can look like.

  *We are keen to understand: RESOURCES, PROCESSES & OUTCOMES*

- Use a flip-chart paper to ‘draw’ in whatever way you like to describe the question you have been provided to look into – the idea is to paint a picture with words, word cloud, diagrams eg. Venn diagram, cartoon, narrative etc - you can use linked circles, varying sizes, charts or any format you like.

- Wherever possible refer to any real examples
**Visioning Exercise - 20 mins**

**Topic 1: Capacity (Resources)**

What capacity exchange needs to be in place for meaningful localisation?

What are the capacity constraints that make it more difficult to enable more locally-led humanitarian action? Who builds whose capacity and whose capacity matters?

What needs to be in place for all stakeholders in terms of capacity exchange? If international agencies have been fundraising for capacity strengthening for decades so and there is still what seems to be identified as a capacity deficit, what needs to change?

This topic might also touch of funding constraints.

---

**Visioning Exercise - 20 mins**

**Topic 2: Partnership (Process):**

What does successful partnership look like?

What does an equitable and meaningful partnership between a local and international actor look like? Can you refer to examples of successful partnership with a local partner? Why was the partnership considered successful? What was the added value of working through this approach? How much do you consider all stakeholders were involved in decision-making in the project and what was put in place to allow a more participatory and inclusive partnership? What could have been better?

---

**Visioning Exercise - 20 mins**

**Topic 3: Decision-making (Process):**

What does effective decision-making look like?

Who is at the table? What are the different roles of the different stakeholders? Why if even if you are at the table, is it difficult to influence decision-making? Who makes the decisions? What affects the power dynamics and how we have more equity and accountability? What learnings and recommendations could you share from your experience where decision-making was more equitable? What needs to change?
Visioning Exercise - 20 mins

Topic 4: Locally-led (Outcomes):
What does locally-led look like?

What makes something locally led? And why do we want locally led responses? What will it achieve/what are the outcomes? For whom do we want to have locally led responses? Could you provide an example of a successful program? Who was involved? Why was it successful? What was different? What were the advantages or disadvantages of the response being locally-led?

Plenary Discussion

• What questions do we need to be asking?
• What are the specific challenges in the S&S sector?
• How can we move forward to see concrete change?

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