



LOCAL LEADERSHIP IN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE INITIATIVE

Outcomes from the Regional Shelter & Settlements Fora

Credit: Olivia Headon, 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 MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA SHELTER & SETTLEMENTS FORUM

MAY 2023

This report sets out the main discussion points from the last of four regional shelter and settlements fora held 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

- **START WITH CAPABILITIES:** Take time to identify local actors and their existing capacity, and focus on what is possible rather than on gaps. Partnerships between local and international organizations that work to strengths can recognize and maximize advantages while improving required knowledge, skills, or processes.
- **RECOGNIZE THE INFLUENCE OF POLITICS:** The reality or potential for local leadership is heavily influenced by the government, particularly in whether it creates an enabling environment for civil society. Response in protracted conflict situations is often shaped by political factors, such as legal recognition or status of an organization and/or the people they are trying to serve, which can complicate locally led response.
- **BALANCE COMPLIANCE, TRUST, AND ACCOUNTABILITY:** There is a need to bridge the gap between donor requirements and local capacity by creating systems to enhance transparency, accountability, and financial management, while extending greater trust in planning and implementation.
- **STEP BACK WHERE ACCOUNTABILITY EXISTS:** Direct access to funding has encouraged and demonstrated local capacity in some contexts. INGOs should develop exit strategies where possible, including facilitating direct links between local organizations and donors.
- **BE INCLUSIVE:** Marginalized groups such as women, disabled, or older people may be left out of rehabilitation or other policy benefits and compensations. Ensure that locally led response includes vulnerable or marginalized groups.
- **INVOLVE DIVERSE STAKEHOLDERS:** Identify context-specific leaders or community representatives. Recognize the valuable role that other stakeholders such as academic partners can play as neutral intermediaries or conveners in bringing together diverse interests.
- **SET COMMON GOALS AND MEASURE PROGRESS:** More attention is required on defining aims and how to achieve them, with measurable indicators of progress toward the localization objectives.
- **APPRECIATE LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY:** Considering diverse voices and implicit meanings when translating between languages helps shift a presumed or narrow interpretation of localization. The myriad ways of understanding and promoting localization highlight that there is no one-size-fits-all approach.

The Middle East and Northern Africa (MENA) Shelter Forum took place in Amman, Jordan on 22 and 23 February 2023. This forum contributed to the objectives of the ongoing InterAction initiative on Local Leadership in Humanitarian Response within the Shelter and Settlements sector. An interactive session explored current and regional understandings of local leadership, regional examples, and what increased local leadership could achieve. The information from the session supplements the contributions gathered at regional Shelter and Settlements fora held in Africa in September 2022, Asia in November 2022, and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) in February 2023.

Details of the objectives, structure, and content of the session is in Annex 1.

‘Localization’ is understood and implemented in a variety of ways across the region

As in other regional consultations, an online interactive survey explored participants’ understanding of who is ‘local’ and what is needed for increased local leadership. The various countries and contexts in the region brought together different examples of localization and a range of considerations as to how local leadership can be implemented.

Around 60 participants answered each question. The participants primarily represented INGOs (47%), UN agencies (22%) and Red Cross Red Crescent societies (10%). Only 8% were from local or national organizations, with a further 8% from academic institutions and 5% from the donor and private sector. However, 61% identified as working in a local/national role and 77% represented countries in the MENA region (with 18% from Europe and US, 5% from Africa and LAC). There was a slight majority of male participants (56% to 43% female). There was a range of experience, with a majority (41%) having worked for between 5 and 10 years in humanitarian response, 26% for less than 5 years, and 33% for more than 10 years). Just over half the participants had more than 5 years’ experience in the Shelter and Settlements sector.

‘Local’ depends on your perspective

In defining ‘local leaders,’ participants listed various local authority bodies (including municipality or local government) and civil society (including local organizations, NGOs, committees, or demographic population groups such as women and youth). Responses included community leaders such as community representatives, religious figures, tribal leaders, respected elders, and influential families. They also listed particular expressions of those who make up a community, including host, affected people, inhabitants, residents, beneficiaries, participants, and – notably – refugees and internally displaced people.

Participants mentioned ‘local partners’ and ‘national staff.’ A few responses also included the national government, the private sector (including contractors or suppliers), and academic institutions such as universities and schools. A number of participants also cited proximity as a defining factor, such as ‘feet on the ground,’ ‘first to respond,’ or ‘nearest actors,’ which recognizes geographical presence over distinctions based on origin.

Increased funding, knowledge, and leadership would build capacity

Most (75%) participants felt there was a gap in capacity (18% no, 7% don’t know). The responses did not show any differentiation between nationalities, national/international roles, or gender.

The most cited area requiring additional capacity related to funding and donor relations (including access, donor regulations, proposals, grant management, and reporting). Additional topics included leadership and response coordination, as well as knowledge of the humanitarian system and principles, and multi-sectoral or integrated programming. The need for additional capacity in governance, and transparency also featured prominently. Specific technical skills were also mentioned, including project management, participation, infrastructure and urban development, accountability, communication, safeguarding, and technology.

Several barriers inhibit local leadership

Participants identified funding (or donors) as a significant barrier to increasing local leadership. However, this was almost equally matched with mentions of corruption or fraud, highlighting a tension between the need for donor requirements intended to overcome these risks and a desire for decreased restrictions to enable more direct local funding.

Responses also indicated trust was a barrier. This could refer to lack of trust in local organizations by donors, the government, or communities themselves, where corruption is perceived to be a high risk. Related contributions included ignorance, lack of awareness, attitude, and bias that - regardless of actor or topic of concern - inhibit local leadership.

Other barriers included capacity gaps in technical skills or knowledge. The operational context was also identified as a barrier to local leadership, with protracted crises, extensive needs of affected populations, politics, government policy, language, and culture all contributing.

Efforts should focus on capacity building and community engagement

Participants highlighted that capacity building and engagement with local leaders and communities should be priorities. This encompasses sharing knowledge and information about tools and processes, developing leadership skills, increasing knowledge and understanding of transparent grant management, and accessing international funding. Participants also mentioned advocacy, reducing donor requirements, providing direct funding to local actors, and pursuing autonomous financing as areas requiring more attention.

Participants also highlighted a need to focus on governments, including addressing the pay disparity between INGOs and many government salaries, which is a disincentive for local staff to assume responsibility. The potential for fruitful partnerships with universities was also mentioned.

The full survey results are available in Annex 2.



Credit: Jomari Guillermo, CRS

Discussions further explored key understandings and considerations for increasing local leadership

Break-out group discussions further explored what local leadership looks like, outcomes and tensions of locally led response, and proposed actions to enable local leadership. Two group discussions (one English and one Arabic) were held online and four (three English, one Arabic) were held in person. Each group, consisting of eight to ten people, discussed the same questions while group facilitators took notes.

TOPIC 1: UNDERSTANDING OF LOCAL LEADERSHIP

What do you understand by the term 'local leadership'? Share an example.

The Arabic-speaking group identified that the word 'leadership' in Arabic implies formal authority (for example, state institutions). This was reflected in many of the discussions relating to how to engage with government and local authorities. In addition, discussions captured differences in familiarity with and understanding of 'localization' across the MENA region.

Participant examples highlighted the work of INGO and NGO/CSO forums in countries such as Yemen and Jordan, which have actively been pursuing localization and have a baseline survey or localization framework against which to measure progress. Participants mentioned various examples focusing on the role of the affected population. In Jordan, camp upgrading was facilitated by The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) through research 'with, not on' refugees. Another example described local organizations receiving direct funding and leading the response in Yemen. In Lebanon and Palestine, the key role of the Red Crescent National Society was highlighted as well as INGOs that are actively seeking to build capacity in local partners. In other countries, such as Algeria, the concept of localization is relatively new and possibilities within the current context were perceived to be limited.

Despite being often referred to as playing a key role, the municipality or government was not framed as an example of local leadership. More often, participants highlighted the need to ensure engagement to gain acceptance, request access or permission, and avoid suspicion. This level of permission or control – including through the policy environment – was seen to stifle or limit the role of civil society in some contexts but enabled it in others.

Contributors also highlighted that each country's power structures differ and are dynamic, especially depending on the conflict situation. That can influence the potential for, or the leadership of, a locally led response and the dependence on external assistance. For example, the role of local organizations in Yemen differs greatly from in Jordan, where more international organizations are present, leaving limited space for local organizations. The political context and role of communities themselves also elicited debate. For example, where donors desired to empower refugee committees to lead delivery or implementation of assistance, practical limitations prevented such groups from managing funds themselves, often due to their political status.

More broadly, 'local leadership' was understood to require being more than implementers or subcontractors. Rather, it required local leaders to be decision makers during program design and to influence the direction of the response. Some groups emphasized the continued presence of local leaders, whom they believed should be accountable, transparent and trustworthy. One example from Lebanon saw potential for local business owners or other people in positions of respect in the community, not only those in official roles, to be local leaders.

Some participants highlighted that leadership can be confused with influence, particularly the role that individuals who have capital can play. Others mentioned the challenges of localization in tribal contexts, where increasing the authority of one group could fuel tensions with others, or there is mistrust when assistance comes from an ‘outsider.’ More than one group remarked on potential differences in local leadership in times of conflict due to changes in the social fabric. The discussions highlighted the need to map each context to identify who is considered a local leader in a particular time and place.

TOPIC 2: OUTCOMES OF LOCALLY LED RESPONSE

What do you think increased local leadership or locally led response would achieve?

Participants consider that the likely outcomes of a locally led response will primarily focus around cultural and contextual understanding. They perceived a locally led response as being more flexible, sustainable, and potentially cheaper than an external response, as a result of better communication and connections to other relevant stakeholders. Locally led solutions would entail local people being part of the solution, making them more likely to adopt or accept those solutions. Local and smaller organizations were perceived to be more agile and able to respond quicker, such as in the recent Turkey/NW Syria earthquake response. They were also potentially regarded as more credible and as having better community engagement. Almost all groups recognized the key role played by local actors in understanding context, acceptable ways of working, and cultural appropriateness of a response. Participants nonetheless recognized that outcomes of a response depended on the capability of the leadership itself. Specific to shelter, they also highlighted the importance of involving occupants to ensure appropriate design.

A common perception of more locally led response, particularly in regard to finances, was the risk of misuse of funds if a larger NGO were not overseeing or monitoring implementation. An example was provided where transaction costs were deducted from beneficiaries. It is unclear to what extent actions like these imply intentional deception, corrupt practices, or lack of understanding of humanitarian principles and processes. Nevertheless, larger INGOs were perceived to have more accountability, although this likely refers more to upwards accountability to donors than to the community, in light of other comments on the advantages of local NGOs and community engagement. The issue of corruption also arose in relation to the status of local leaders. Participants questioned the validity of those sometimes identified as local leaders, raising the point that some ‘leaders’ attain their position through connections or corruption rather than being the legitimate representatives of the community.

Discussion also highlighted the political nature of many considerations in a conflict or refugee context. Participants highlighted the need to consider the host community in refugee responses and that in some contexts a focus on a particular nationality or politically recognized group was to the detriment of other populations in need. They also noted that any growth in power or authority of a particular group can be a driver of further conflict.

TOPIC 3: ENABLING LOCAL LEADERSHIP

What steps or actions are required that would enable a locally led response?

Participants mentioned the need for greater engagement with local government, including an increased focus on preparedness and advocacy on policies and practices. Some participants expressed the need to build capacity in local authorities. One group highlighted the common disparity between government and NGO salaries as a disincentive to local authority involvement or ownership. Experienced national staff were highlighted as a key strength. They can highlight the needs of local communities and the benefits of engaging them.

Participants also discussed funding as an enabling factor, such as including community representatives in budget distribution and tapping into remittances or crowdsourcing to support technical skills. As remittances are often on an individual basis, focusing external funding at the communal level could also push greater collaboration with and understanding of local development plans, needs, or priorities. Longer term or more predictable funding in protracted crises was also recommended to enable more stable partnerships and investment in capacity.

Steps aimed at INGOs included more mentoring, encouragement, and development of local partners through implementation with supervision and on-the-job training. INGOs should develop shared goals with local partners and facilitate direct connections between those partners and donors. This requires developing structures that allow local leaders to emerge, working with them to remove barriers faced by local actors and stepping back when possible. Some participants thought that INGOs need a defined exit strategy that includes a clear transfer of capacity and decision-making processes to local actors. Others highlighted the need to commit to a local partner and take a step-by-step approach.

Participants considered the existing model of direct implementation through local organizations – with supervision and support from INGOs – to be appropriate in some contexts. They preferred a collaborative relationship that maximizes strengths and avoids shortcomings in both parties rather than a sub-contracting approach. A collaborative approach was perceived to create a balance and build input from all parties, while avoiding the accumulation of power with one actor alone. Participants also emphasized the need for neutral entities, such as academics or volunteers, who can bring different parties together to work toward localization efforts. In some contexts, partnerships between local and international actors can overcome government distrust of local organizations, while ensuring local knowledge and participation.

One group identified that stipulations to include local partners and funding from pooled funds have enabled greater involvement of local NGOs in some countries. However, there is a need to measure progress and to identify if money is wasted by being passed down through agencies. Efforts to increase local leadership underscore that there is no one-size-fits-all approach.

See Annex 3 for the session presentation.



Credit: Partha Chakraborty

The fora made valuable contributions to local leadership in shelter response

- The sessions held at each Shelter and Settlement forum gathered useful contributions to the research and provided insights into differences between, as well as within, the regions.
- Findings from each forum should be shared with national consultants to contribute to case study exploration.
- Key informants identified should be followed up for further in-depth or contextual understanding.
- Further exploration is required on the role of the Global Shelter Cluster in promoting and operationalizing localization at a coordination level in the Shelter and Settlements sector.

Annex 1: Session Plan

Annex 2: Menti Survey Questionnaire Results

Annex 3: PowerPoint Presentation

ANNEX 1: SESSION PLAN

**MENA Shelter Forum
22nd-23rd February 2023 – Amman,
Jordan**

This session will explore the current regional trends to strengthen local leadership and decision making in humanitarian response within the shelter and settlements sector. It invites participants in the LAC Shelter Forum to reflect on their experiences and identify tensions, challenges and opportunities to strengthen local leadership in the region. The session will contribute to the ongoing research on localization in the shelter and settlements sector under InterAction's Local Leadership in Humanitarian Response Initiative.

Consultation Objectives:

- Explore the different understandings of local leadership in the shelter and settlements sector by the various stakeholders involved in shelter and settlement responses
- Identify examples of where localization is happening or specific efforts being made by organizations
- Gather contributions and reflections from the participants on how current practices or efforts to support locally led response are being experienced
- Identify people to participate in FGD or further interviews for the research project

Methods:

- Introduce research project to the participants and invite them to contribute further
- Share good practice examples from the region
- Use a short poll (using menti) to understand who is contributing from the region and capture high-level inputs
- Small group/plenary discussions to further explore understandings, outcomes, tensions and opportunities identified by participants and identify potential key informants

OUTLINE

10 mins	Introduction to research initiative and overview of session
25 mins	Menti poll
45 mins	Small group discussions - in person and online breakout rooms
10 mins	Feedback to plenary on common themes/key points & wrap up

Introduction - 10 mins

Presentation to introduce the session objectives and outline. Provide a brief overview of the localization concept – advances and challenges. Provide a very brief summary of the InterAction Local Leadership in Humanitarian Response initiative and research outline and how information gathered (in session, through individual conversations and survey) from the MENA SF will contribute to the ongoing research.

Menti Survey - 25 mins

Mentimeter poll to understand who is in the room and key priorities. Code: **1285 6182**

Questions:

1. What country are you working in?
2. What type of organisation do you work for?
3. What is your nationality/ies?
4. What is your gender?
5. Are you considered local/national or international in your current role?
6. How many years have you worked in humanitarian response?
7. How many years have you worked in the S&S sector?
8. Who do you consider to be a 'local actor'?
9. Do you think there is a capacity gap that is preventing local leadership?
10. In what area/topic does capacity need to be increased?
11. What are the main barriers to increased local leadership in humanitarian response?
12. Where should efforts be focused to enhance and improve locally-led response?
13. What else should be considered? Or any other comments, clarifications or questions

Small group or plenary discussion - 45 mins

Guide virtual and in-person discussions in small groups. Assign a facilitator and note taker per group.

Pose the question, ask participants to provide examples to demonstrate their contribution.

In-person facilitators

- English in person (3 groups): Fiona, Sneha, Maddy
- Arabic in person (1 groups): Layla/Shada

Virtual Facilitators

- English online (1 groups): Jill
- Arabic online (1 group): Bassam

Discussion Questions: -

Facilitate each breakout group to discuss the three questions below:

1. What do you understand by the term 'local leadership'? Share an example...
2. What do you think increased local leadership or locally-led response would achieve?
3. What steps or actions would support or enable locally-led response?

The facilitator should allocate approximately 15 mins per question to allow sufficient time for the discussion. It is key to ensure receiving good notes and a summary of what is said and focusing on real-life examples. Direct the conversation to try and get people to talk in specifics rather than generals. Option of using a jamboard to capture inputs from more people.

Feedback to Plenary - 10 mins

If timing allows, one person provides a quick two-minute summary of key points discussed and any case study examples of where aspects of their discussion was displayed.

Summary/close - 5 mins

Otherwise, summarize any key points, thank participants for their contributions and reiterate call for further contributions to the research especially if they are/have links with local organizations

ANNEX 2: MENTI SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Instructions



Go to
www.menti.com
Enter the code



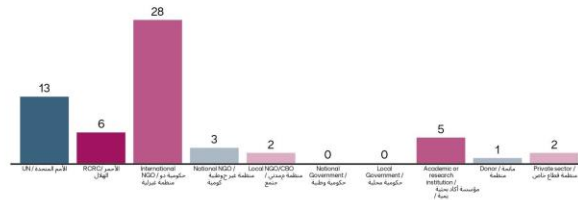
Or use QR code



What country are you working in? // في أي بلد تعمل؟



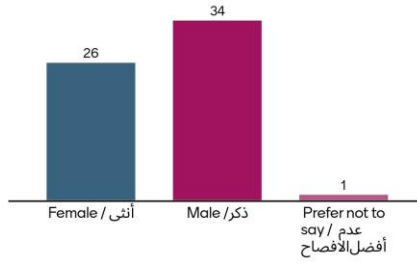
What type of organization do you represent here today? // ما نوع المنظمة التي تعمل بها؟



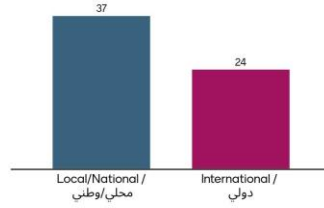
What is your nationality/ies? // ما هي جنسيتك؟



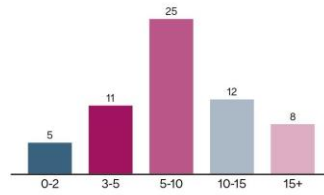
What is your gender? // النوع الاجتماعي؟



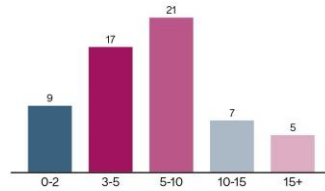
Are you considered local/national or international in your current role? // هل يتم اعتبار دورك الحالي محلي / وطني أم دولي؟



How many years have you worked in humanitarian response? // كم عدد سنوات خبرتك في مجال الاستجابة الانسانية؟



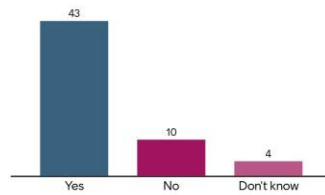
How many years have you worked in the shelter & settlements sector? // كم عدد سنوات خبرتك في مجال المأوى والمسكن؟



Who do you consider to be a 'local actor'? // من برأيك هو "الممثل المحلي"؟



Do you think there is a capacity gap that is preventing local leadership? // هل تعتقد أن هناك فجوة في القدرات تمنع القيادة محلية؟



In what area/topic does capacity need to be increased? // ما هي الجوانب / المواضيع التي تعتقد بأنها بحاجة للتطوير؟



Where should efforts be focused to enhance locally-led response? // أين ينبغي تركيز الجهود لتعزيز وتحسين الاستجابة؟ بقيادة محلية؟



Donors, government regulations and policies, influence and enhance best practices	Education and practice actions	Accountability system
Governments and decision makers	Leadership	Bottom up approaches
Local partners	Universities and government	Interagency programming and the coordination



Where should efforts be focused to enhance locally-led response? // أين ينبغي تركيز الجهود لتعزيز وتحسين الاستجابة؟ بقيادة محلية؟



Build capacity of local authorities	There is a cognitive gap between international agencies and local actors. They are talking about the same issues but from inflexible perspectives	Transparency
Access to international funding directly	Program concepts	override the UN
Building systems	Leadership training	Funding management



Where should efforts be focused to enhance locally-led response? // أين ينبغي تركيز الجهود لتعزيز وتحسين الاستجابة؟ بقيادة محلية؟



Grant management	Coordinate with local actors, ensure their participation and held being account for IDPs and targeted groups	Universities
Information sharing	Knowledge sharing	Knowledge sharing
Universities	Empower/sensitize/incentivise all levels of government	Support local led in having clear guidelines, internal structure, and operating procedures and to have a proper exit strategies with a full and clear hand over process



Where should efforts be focused to enhance locally-led response? // أين ينبغي تركيز الجهود لتعزيز وتحسين الاستجابة؟ بقيادة محلية؟



Capacity building on systems and processes to enhance transparency & accountability. Also on donor engagement/fundraising	Reduce the funding requirements	Capacity building through pairing with an established INGO
Trainings to local teams, developing guidance and tools to be used locally	Empower law	Efforts should be focused on Capacity building, awareness raising, and Fundraising.
No middle-man!	Bridging the gap between donor requirements and local capacities, giving the space for local actors to act, and trusting the local actors plans and directions	Paying attention to training local cadres, investing local youth energies, providing them with facilities, technical and material support, and financing development projects.



Where should efforts be focused to enhance locally-led response? // أين ينبغي تركيز الجهود لتعزيز وتحسين الاستجابة // بقيادة محلية؟



Raising their awareness of the importance of their role in facilitating humanitarian works. They also need for training in leadership and management.	بناء القدرات ونشر النماذج الفعال إلى مكافحة الفساد وعدم الاتجار وتعزيز الاستقلالية	Capacity Building Advocacy
Listening	Support youth	Paying attention to training local cadres, investing local youth energies, technical and material support, and financing development projects.
rangements	mobilization	Capacity building, planning, funding, supporting, find buptic areas for IDPs, plans to emergency response.



What else should be considered? Any comments, clarifications or questions... // ما الجوانب الأخرى التي يجب مراعاتها؟ هل هناك أي تعليقات أخرى



Given the local actor more resources are be countable for the outcome	How politics is preventing localizations	the gender
More diverse from local people should be more change to better	NA	gender palence
women work	no	Support



What else should be considered? Any comments, clarifications or questions... // ما الجوانب الأخرى التي يجب مراعاتها؟ هل هناك أي تعليقات أخرى



Localization is important for effective response.	It help full to have the diversified business in solution	.more training
Thanks	>>	Gender issue
Local actors needs more capacity building	No thanks	Women and girl empowerment



What else should be considered? Any comments, clarifications or questions... // ما الجوانب الأخرى التي يجب مراعاتها؟ هل هناك أي تعليقات أخرى



Capacity building	n/a	No comment
Knowledge sharing	Community acceptance	Social integration
Local capacities	No	Collaboration between academics and practitioners



What else should be considered? Any comments, clarifications or questions... // ما الجوانب الأخرى التي يجب مراعاتها؟ هل هناك أي تعليقات أخرى



NA	Protection and Fraud	Accountability
.	.	Female
Burden of funder conditions	No	The term capacity building is biased as 'we' assume the capacity is low and we need to fill the Gap



What else should be considered? Any comments, clarifications or questions... // ما الجوانب الأخرى التي يجب مراعاتها؟ هل هناك أي تعليقات أخرى



Donor risk attitude to funding local entities without standard compliance structures in place	إعادة التأهيل و الرقابة على الجودة الشاملة	We have to empower local authority, even if they weak
community capabilities, and government capabilities.	N	



ANNEX 3: POWERPOINT PRESENTATION



Session objectives

This session will explore the current regional challenges to locally-led response and decision-making in humanitarian response within the shelter and settlements sector

We invite forum participants to reflect on their experiences and identify tensions, challenges, and opportunities to strengthen local leadership in the region

Session plan

5 mins	Introduction
20 mins	Menti survey
40 mins	Small group discussions
10 mins	Summary and close

Session objectives

The session will contribute to ongoing research on localisation in the shelter and settlements sector as part of InterAction's **Local Leadership in Humanitarian Response** Initiative

- Explore the different understandings of local leadership in the shelter and settlements sector by the various stakeholders involved in shelter and settlement responses
- Identify examples of where localization is happening or specific efforts being made by organizations
- Gather contributions and reflections from the participants on how current practices or efforts to support locally led response are being experienced
- Identify people to participate in FGD or further interviews for the research project

Local Leadership Initiative

- A research initiative to explore the role local actors play in decision-making and interventions in humanitarian shelter and settlements response
- Research conducted 2022-23 by InterAction in collaboration with global- and national-level consultants
- Several consultations already carried out - pilot survey presented at the GSC meeting in Geneva (July 2022); sessions at the Africa, Asia and LAC Shelter Fora

What do we mean by 'localization'?

- The essential role of local and national actors was highlighted at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit
- Humanitarian response has been criticized for excluding 'local actors' from leading action
- "Localization" is a loosely-defined concept intended to address and overcome this but how it is operationalized remains unclear
- The localization agenda is generally focused on: increasing the access of local actors to international humanitarian funding, partnerships, coordination, and capacity building.

Defining 'localization'

- There is a lack of consensus on what 'localization' means in practice: a catch-all term for almost any type of humanitarian reform involving local actors
- Is it about making international systems more inclusive or does it require a fundamental transformation to the modus operandi?
- This lack of consensus presents challenges in operationalizing the agenda and holding relevant stakeholders to account
- Risk of localization discussion getting lost in semantics

Defining 'local actors'

- The term "local" is relative and goes beyond a simple binary definition of international/local
- In practice, the use of the word "actor" tends to prioritize governments and formal NGOs in the affected country; this may exclude other types of groups (particularly informal ones) that may be more representative of marginalized populations
- Recognizing, understanding, and intentionally engaging with a diverse set of stakeholders is important to an equitable approach to localization

Menti survey

Open www.menti.com and enter the code

3971 8589

Discussion groups

Discuss the following questions using examples from your experience:

1. What do you understand by the term 'local leadership'? Share an example...
2. What do you think increased local leadership or locally-led response would achieve?
3. What steps or actions would support or enable locally-led response?

Discussion groups

كبريتتم ةللم ادختساب ةيلا ةلير لشقان

1) (خلصور سفيك «ةيلحملا دايلا» ةنم اطع كنگول ؟

2) ةدايقلا دايخنگن ارهبي ام ؟ ةيلحملا اجتسلا

3) ةدايقلا حدتتي لاءا ار جلاهي ام ؟ ةيلحملا اجتسلا

CONTACT US



Juli King
Program Associate
jking@interaction.org

Fiona Kelling
Lead Consultant
fionakelling@gmail.com

