Africa Regional Conference on Localisation of Aid

DAY 2: SETTING KEY OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITY INITIATIVES 2019 - 2020

Three sub-regional groups held planning discussions, setting key objectives and priority initiatives for the coming two years. The results below were presented and discussed in a plenary session.

GROUP 1:
Countries represented: Cameroon, Chad, Gambia, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone

PRIORITY 1:

WOMEN LEADERSHIP / GENDER:

WHERE ARE WE?
- Gender policies available at the national level but implementation has not yet fully begun
- No comprehensive data on women-led NGOs
- No data to show women representation in the Humanitarian Coordination structures (HCTs, clusters, cam coordination etc)

WHERE WE WANT TO BE IN 2 YEARS:
- Do a comprehensive mapping and have a database of women-led NGOs in all countries
- Advocate for the full implementation of the gender policies in all countries
- Mainstream gender in all our policies, programs, projects and response, and set up tools that inform progress made
- Localisation should take the face of a woman

PRIORITY 2:

UNDERSTANDING GRAND BARGAIN AND LOCALISATION AT ALL LEVELS (ESP. AT NATIONAL LEVEL):

WHERE ARE WE?
- Limited knowledge of localisation and the Grand Bargain at the signatory level and at the national level

WHERE WE WANT TO BE IN 2 YEARS:
- Create more awareness about localisation and the Grand Bargain at all levels
- Create a localisation platform in each country
- Local actors to have 100% knowledge of localisation and the Grand Bargain, and be able to hold signatories to account
- All INGOs that are signatories to the Grand Bargain should create a proactive disclosure / awareness at the national level offices about the commitment to the Grand Bargain

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GROUP 2:
Countries represented: Ethiopia, South Sudan

PRIORITY 1:

WOMEN LEADERSHIP:

WHERE ARE WE?
- Increasing number of women-led local actors is a good opportunity
- Good participation of women in the political space (Ethiopia) to be cascaded to the development sector
- How many women leaders of local actors there are in the humanitarian structure is not clear
- There are still gaps in perception towards women leadership in general

WHERE WE WANT TO BE IN 2 YEARS:
- We need to do more
- Invest in women leadership development programs, particularly in the humanitarian and emergency context

PRIORITY 2:

LONG-TERM) FUNDING:

WHERE ARE WE?
- Over reliance on donor funding while struggling with emerging humanitarian issues
- No trust between local actors and donors
- Still, no direct access to humanitarian funding for local actors
- Most humanitarian funds are short term (3-9 months)

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/ WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
- Local / domestic resource mobilisation to diversify funding
- Build trust between local and international actors
- Support local actors to access humanitarian funding, e.g. RRF, ERM (ECHO), EHF (UN OCHA)
- Design demand-driven humanitarian programs as opposed to donor-driven ones
- Advocacy to influence donors

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PRIORITY 3:

CAPACITY STRENGTHENING:

WHERE ARE WE?
- Current capacity strengthening approaches need to be revisited and coordinated
- SHIFT THE POWER is a good initiative that can be scaled up and shared
- Mostly, we see capacity building from outside (e.g. donors) not working well, hence the need to design programs within
- INGOs and intermediaries are not coordinated in managing capacity strengthening

WHERE WE WANT TO BE IN 2 YEARS:
- Adopt long term, incremental capacity strengthening approaches
- Scale up what is working from SHIFT THE POWER
- Focus on local actor led capacity strengthening approaches as good practice

PRIORITY 4:

PARTNERSHIP:

WHERE ARE WE?
- Decision-making and power imbalance (national actors are not making decisions)
- Lack of trust between INGOs, donors and L/NNGOs
- No institutionalised partnership approaches

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO?
- Decentralise decision making / share power
- Build trust and mutual accountability
- Invest in institutionalised partnership approaches

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GROUP 3:
Countries represented: Uganda, Kenya, Somalia, Somaliland, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Burundi

PRIORITY 1:

COORDINATION:

SITUATION:
- Presence of interagency coordination structures, e.g. HCT, CRRF, Humanitarian Platform for L/NGOs at national and grassroots level, some with representation of national NGOs and local actors
- Presence of regional platforms and structures such as AU, ICGRL, IGAD, EAC

CHALLENGE:
- Local representatives are not voicing their concerns during meetings
- Some decisions are not made during meetings - meetings are used to formalise decisions
- Pool fund is headed by OCHA, hence no proper NGO representation at decision-making level
- L/NNGOs have limited faith and trust in coordination structures

RECOMMENDATIONS:
- Diversify representation in fora as much as possible so that local actors are not only talking among themselves
- Meaningful engagement with regional bodies to support localisation
- Local actors should be supported to be influential within the coordination mechanisms
- Standardised representation of local actors in all UN-led humanitarian coordination mechanisms; representation should include taking leadership roles

PRIORITY 2:

ROLE OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS IN THE LOCALISATION AGENDA:

SITUATION:
- Government is taking lead in coordination for humanitarian action
- Open door policy to refugee management and provision for rights and freedoms in some countries

CHALLENGES?
- Governments do not receive the funding require to be able to fulfil their mandate
- Pressure on government services during a crisis
- Constrained space for NGO operations by governments
- No legal framework for localisation

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RECOMMENDATIONS:
- Government provide conducive policy environment for localisation
- Engage the regional bodies to lobby and support member states to achieve localisation
- Strengthen the role of governments in capacity development of local actors and communities in crisis