

Accelerating Localisation through Partnerships

Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on Localisation of Humanitarian Leadership

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“Only local people understand the local context. You cannot bring the international tools and systems and use it here. It is top down and not relevant for the context. It won’t work.”

Local NGO staff

Myanmar



Funded by
European Union
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Humanitarian Aid

Summary / introduction



Background

The consortium have worked together since 2012 through DFID-funded programmes looking at the case for strengthening national and local partnership-based humanitarian responses:

- **Missed Opportunities** (2013): DRC crisis, Horn of Africa food crisis, Haiti earthquake, Pakistan floods.
- **Missed Again** (2014): Typhoon Haiyan response in the Philippines.
- **Missed Out** (2016): Conflict response in South Sudan.
- **Opportunity Knocks** (2016) Earthquake response in Nepal.



Accelerating Localisation through Partnerships

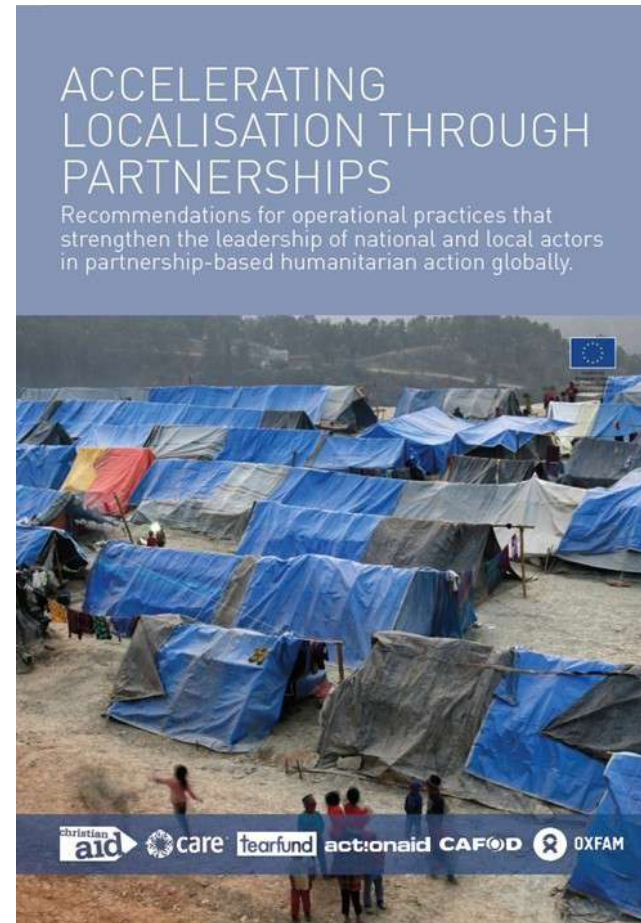
- **Date:** 1st November 2017 – 31st October 2019 (2 years)
- **Countries:** Nepal, Nigeria, Myanmar and South Sudan
- **Consortium:** ActionAid, CAFOD, CARE, Christian Aid (lead), Oxfam and Tearfund + local/national NGOs (L/NNGOs) in steering committees
- **Donor:** European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid operations (ECHO)
- **Number of beneficiaries:** 80 organisations (target)
- **Budget:** almost 650,000 EUR
- **Specific objective:** Enable local and national actors to progress the localisation of humanitarian response at both national and global level.

Key lessons learned: research findings



Research summary

- Mixed methods research
- >350 NGOs consulted
- 86% represented local/national agencies
- Research validation workshops conducted
- Partnerships practices which are most and least conducive to localisation were identified
- 4 national reports; 1 global report.



Research findings: partnerships

- Partnerships were only perceived as **genuine partnerships** by 26% of survey respondents.
- However, 80% of survey respondents believed these same partnerships to be ‘very’ or ‘moderately’ instrumental in **meeting the needs** of crisis-affected people in disaster response operations.
- 1/3 of survey respondents believe there is a **better pathway** to strengthen national and local NGO leadership in humanitarian action than through partnerships; the majority highlighted **capacity building as an alternative approach**.

Research findings: partnership practices conducive to localisation

1. Genuine partnership not sub-contracting.
2. Local partners lead project design or co-design with technical support from INGO.
3. Joint monitoring visits to communities → joint reflection. Local partners hold the key relationships with communities.
4. INGOs are responsive to findings from L/NNGO monitoring → flexibility to adapt programmes and budgets in response to changing needs and community feedback.
5. Project budgets should be transparent and include funds for local partners for indirect and overhead costs, key assets and organisational strengthening.

Research findings: partnership practices conducive to localisation

6. International actors and donors support local actors to ensure their financial sustainability (inc. retention of key staff). Multi-year funding is key.
7. International actors follow ethical recruitment practices and make attempts to keep salaries and benefits within as close a range as possible to local actors.
8. International actors provide comprehensive, mixed-method capacity building support on topics requested by local partners which are neither solely based on project needs nor only intended for project staff.
9. The role of L/NGOs is credited and promoted.
10. International agencies show a clear intention to adopt an advisory, backstopping or secondary role once adequate capacity exists.

Imperatives for change: research recommendations



Research recommendations

1. Jointly review research findings and recommendations
2. Identify external factors restricting localisation through partnerships
3. Review partnership agreements
4. Assess capacity strengthening needs of local and national actors
5. Assess capacity building skills of international actors
6. Support organisational / policy development

Research recommendations

6. Hold discussions around understanding of humanitarian principles
7. Invest in disaster preparedness and risk reduction
8. Hold frank discussions on direct access to funding
9. Support linkages and understanding between local actors and donor agencies
10. Support local and national organisations to be financially sustainable.

Country Programme Overview – Nepal & Myanmar



NSC set up, research, surveys, piloting, advocacy, campaigning, coordination, outreach, real-time assessments, capacity assessments, localization framework development etc.

Key learning from Nepal & Myanmar

- Nepal's unique context
- Fostering common understanding of localization
- Multi-stakeholder approach
- On-boarding governments
- Replicating learning among wider humanitarian community
- Keeping the momentum going
- Capacity issue of L/NNGOs – donors perspective
- Institutional vs. technical capacities
- Pooled fund as an alternative
- Cluster coordination
- Real time response and learning

Priority challenges

1. Identifying the most **complementary way of working** (recognising a new role for INGOs / UN and addressing capacity gaps) →
2. **Letting go of power** to allow local actors to take a lead.
3. A **humanitarian coordination mechanism** which is still largely led by international actors.
4. **Financial and fiduciary risks.**
5. **Restrictive donor policies** (e.g. due diligence, compliance and lack of funding to local actors).

“It’s important how we disseminate messages on Grand Bargain across people, how we connect communities etc. Else, it’s like another jargon imposed by the international community.”

**National Steering Committee member
Nepal**



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Thank you

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<http://caid.org.uk/54>



Additional detail if questions



Pilot phase

- Consortium members and their local partners reviewed the findings and recommendations together
- Each made a pilot action plan to identify how to pilot the findings
- Recommendations fit into 3 categories:
 1. We are already doing this.
 2. We will pilot it.
 3. This is outside our control.
- Two pilot review workshops are planned in each country to review progress, identify challenges, and highlight learning.

Next steps

- Continue to share learning and recommendations with Grand Bargain signatories.
- Coordinate capacity self-assessment of local and national NGOs to lead humanitarian response.
- Support local and national NGOs to participate in humanitarian coordination meetings.
- Facilitate local and national NGOs to develop national localisation frameworks, informed by: research findings and recommendations, learning from pilot phase, results of capacity self-assessment.
- Develop global 'Pathways to Localisation' and disseminate widely with Grand Bargain signatories.

Timeline

