



Inter-Agency Toolkit on Localisation in Humanitarian Coordination



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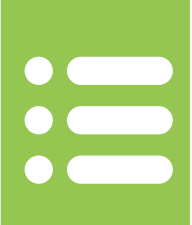
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Introduction

1. ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

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

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

The specific aims of the toolkit are:

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

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

What are the key takeaways from this toolkit?

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

- local and national actors contribute contextual understanding of local challenges and solutions
- local and national actors have the trust of, and access to, affected populations, and can mobilise their networks locally,
- when properly funded and supported, national and local actors render the humanitarian response more effective, efficient and sustainable¹.

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

Moreover, cluster co-leadership between international and local and national actors produces stronger engagement and representation of a diversity of actors², and ultimately better coordination outcomes. Given that in many coordination groups, more than 50% of the membership is made up of local and national actors, clusters are well-placed to take the lead on advancing localisation. Cluster coordinators have a responsibility to promote, model and monitor principled partnerships (i.e. partnerships that are equal, transparent, results-oriented, responsible, complementary, and long-term) amongst local/national and international actors.

It is also key that international organisations and the international humanitarian system commit to addressing both biased attitudes and mindsets that stand in the way of localisation, and reviewing their operational practices and organisational preparedness³.

How was this toolkit developed?

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

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

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

² These include UN agencies, NGOs, IOs and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement (Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at Country-Level, 2015, https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/cluster_coordination_reference_module_2015_final.pdf, p. 21)

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

What is the scope of the toolkit?

This toolkit focuses on humanitarian crises and its in-country coordination mechanisms (the cluster system and other humanitarian coordination structures), rather than development coordination, or refugee and/or migrant coordination⁴. However, much of the guidance will be applicable to, and may be useful for, other coordination structures, given the intersection between these in practice. Moreover, while the toolkit may be of use for government actors, who are important local and national partners in coordination in many contexts, it was not possible to engage governments in the development of this toolkit, thus far. The toolkit piloting and any future revisions will aim to engage government actors to address this limitation.

Conceptually, this toolkit draws on the Seven Dimensions Framework for Localisation⁵, the pillars of which are:



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

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

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

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

1. **The coverage and quality** of humanitarian response is improved through localisation, because local and national actors can ensure an early response, facilitate access and secure acceptance, deliver cost effectiveness, and reduce the impact of future crises.
2. Cluster Coordinators have a responsibility⁶ to promote, model and monitor principled **partnerships** (i.e. equal, transparent, results-oriented, responsible, complementary, and long-term⁷) **between local/national and international actors**.
3. Existing leadership of clusters, coordination groups and Humanitarian Country Teams must invest time and resources to create an enabling environment to ensure local/ national actors' **meaningful participation**, and decision-making in coordination processes and joint actions.
4. **Co-leadership⁸ with local/national actors** produces stronger engagement of a diversity of actors⁹ and better coordination outcomes¹⁰.
5. **Capacity exchange** between local/national and international actors should be reciprocal and focus on **complementarity**.
6. **Structural discrimination, power imbalances and (unconscious) bias within** international organizations and the international humanitarian system are key barriers to localisation.
7. **Local and national actors are a diverse group**, and representation must be sought from a range of organisations to ensure the inclusion of actors that are led by and represent diverse genders, races/ethnicities, ages, disabilities, and sexual orientations and gender identities.
8. Local and national actors can contribute an understanding of local challenges and solutions, can mobilise networks locally and have access to affected populations. As a result, they render the humanitarian response more effective, efficient and sustainable and enhance **accountability to affected populations¹¹**.
9. Local and national actors can support affected communities in preparedness, response, recovery and after the withdrawal of international actors, by **working across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus¹²**.

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

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

⁸ Co-leadership" in this toolkit refers to shared leadership between UN agencies, governments, international organizations (INGOs) and local/national actors. It should be noted that shared leadership does not displace the core responsibilities and accountability of the designated in-country Cluster Lead Agency, including its role as Provider of Last Resort. It should also be noted that the understanding of the term "co-leadership" varies across clusters. For the Global Education Cluster's approach, please see "<https://educationcluster.app.box.com/s/td6brep7ga0qj407iwxdxqhi8h3wbp71>" For the Global Nutrition Cluster's approach, please see https://www.nutritioncluster.net/sites/nutritioncluster.com/files/2021-11/Guidance%20Note_Contribution%20of%20NGOs%20to%20Cluster%20Leadership%20at%20National%20%26%20Sub-national%20level.pdf

⁹ These include UN agencies, NGOs, IOs and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement (Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at Country-Level, 2015, https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/cluster_coordination_reference_module_2015_final.pdf, p. 21)

¹⁰ Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at Country-Level, 2015, https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/cluster_coordination_reference_module_2015_final.pdf

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

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

3. List of acronyms relevant to humanitarian coordination

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

4. Glossary

Capacity strengthening: the strengthening of knowledge, ability, skills and resources to help individuals, communities or organisations to achieve agreed goals¹³.

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

Complementarity: balancing local and international action in order to maximise the comparative advantages of both, and increase effectiveness of the humanitarian response in a given context¹⁴.

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

Grand Bargain: an agreement between the biggest donors and aid organisations made in 2016 that aims to get more means into the hands of people in need. It is essentially a 'Grand Bargain on efficiency' between donors and humanitarian organisations to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action¹⁵.

Humanitarian advocacy: when humanitarian actors try to influence the policies and actions of local, national, regional and international institutions and actors so that they better address the needs of affected populations. The term encompasses not only advocacy in emergencies, but also advocacy conducted before and after crises and in situations of protracted vulnerability, suffering or conflict¹⁶.

Humanitarian coordination: developing common strategies with partners both within and outside the UN system, identifying overall humanitarian needs, developing a realistic plan of action, monitoring progress and adjusting programmes as necessary, convening coordination forums, mobilizing resources, addressing common problems to humanitarian actors, and administering coordination mechanisms and tools¹⁷.

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

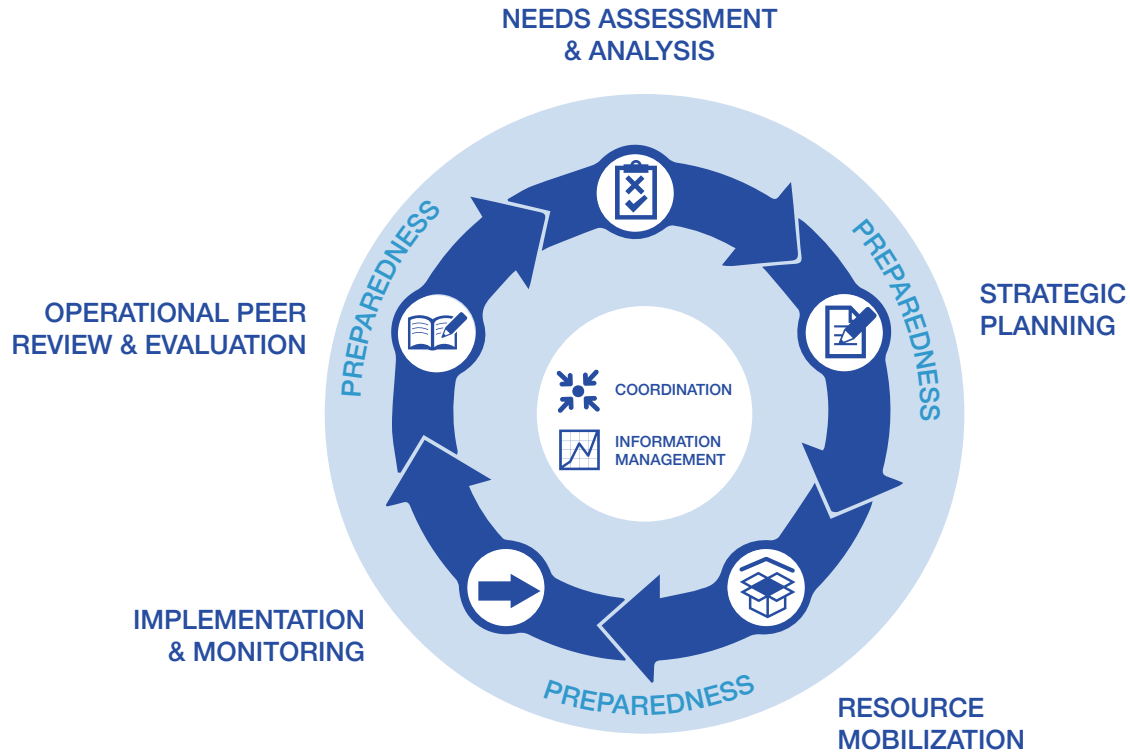
¹⁴ International Federation of the Red Cross, 'Localization: what it means and how to achieve it', <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/ifrc-policy-brief-localization-what-it-means-and-how-achieve-it>, May 2018, p. 1

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

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

¹⁷ ReliefWeb, 'Glossary of Humanitarian Terms', 2008, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/4F99A3C28EC37D0EC12574A4002E89B4-reliefweb_aug2008.pdf, p. 29

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



Institutional capacity strengthening: working at the organizational systems building level to ensure multiple competencies are strengthened, by e.g. improving personnel skills, upgrading or establishing efficient governance, financial and human resource systems and procedures¹⁸.

Localisation: a process of recognising, respecting and strengthening the independence of leadership and decision making by local and national actors in humanitarian action, in order to better address the needs of affected populations¹⁹. This toolkit makes use of the *Seven Dimensions of Localisation*²⁰ as its framework, which includes the following elements: relationship quality; participation revolution; funding and financing; capacity; coordination; visibility; and policy.

¹⁸ Global Education Cluster and Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility, 'Framework for Strengthening Institutional Capacity of Local and National Actors', https://www.cpaor.net/Institutional_Capacity_Strengthening_with_Local_Actors

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

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

5. Resource centre for localisation

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

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

<https://reliefweb.int/topics/iasc-result-group-1-sub-group-localization-online-repository>

[IFRC Localisation Workstream Resources](#)

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

https://gblocalisation.ifrc.org/grand-bargain-localisation-workstream-2/resources/?et_fb=1

[Localisation Workstream YouTube channel](#)

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

<https://gblocalisation.ifrc.org/grand-bargain-localisation-workstream-2/>

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

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

<https://www.cpaor.net/node/666>

[The Grand Bargain official website](#)

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

<https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain>

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

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

<https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/keywords/localisation/>

[Humanitarian Advisory Group – Localisation research](#)

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

<https://humanitarianadvisorygroup.org/humanitarian-horizons/localised-humanitarian-action/>

[Local Humanitarian Assistance Literature](#)

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

<https://lha.nutrition.tufts.edu/resources>

[Global Education Cluster Localisation page](#)

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

<https://www.educationcluster.net/node/746>

[Global Protection Cluster Localisation page](#)

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

<https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/themes/localisation/>

[START Network – Resource Centre](#)

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

<https://startnetwork.org/resources>

[NEAR Network](#)

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

<https://www.near.ngo/ressources>

6. Acknowledgments

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

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

Advisory group members:

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

Organisations who participated in consultations:

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

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A. Priority actions to advance localisation in humanitarian coordination¹



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



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



3. Provide all new coordination group members with an **induction session**².



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



5. **Share leadership** roles³ between local/national and international actors.

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

² See e.g. 'Humanitarian Coordination and the Cluster Approach: A quick guide for local and national organizations' by the Global Education Cluster, available here: <https://educationcluster.app.box.com/s/3xt0yu68yiryg2k2b2k6t0up6xyjpr01>

³ Co-leadership" in this toolkit refers to shared leadership between UN agencies, governments, international organizations (INGOs) and local/national actors. It should be noted that shared leadership does not displace the core responsibilities and accountability of the designated in-country Cluster Lead Agency, including its role as Provider of Last Resort. It should also be noted that the understanding of the term "co-leadership" varies across clusters. For the Global Education Cluster's approach, please see "<https://educationcluster.app.box.com/s/td6brep7ga0qj407iwxqxqi8h3wbp71>" Guidance Education Cluster Co-leadership. For the Global Nutrition Cluster's approach, please see <https://www.nutritioncluster.net/sites/nutritioncluster.com/files/2021-11/Guidance%20Note%20Contribution%20of%20NGOs%20to%20Cluster%20Leadership%20at%20National%20%26%20Sub-national%20level.pdf> for the Global Nutrition Cluster's approach.



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



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



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



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



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



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

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



B. Tools for all users



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

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



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

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



3. Localization – what it means and how to achieve it

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



4. Conceptual Framework for Localization in Humanitarian Coordination

This table lists five key dimensions of localisation and offers explanations of how they should be applied in coordination work. The table outlines key elements of localisation in coordination and gives brief examples of how to put these into practice. The table is intended to give a quick overview of key

areas of work, and be consulted together with other tools such as the [IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms](#) (20 pages).



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

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



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

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



7. Institutional Capacity Strengthening Steps

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

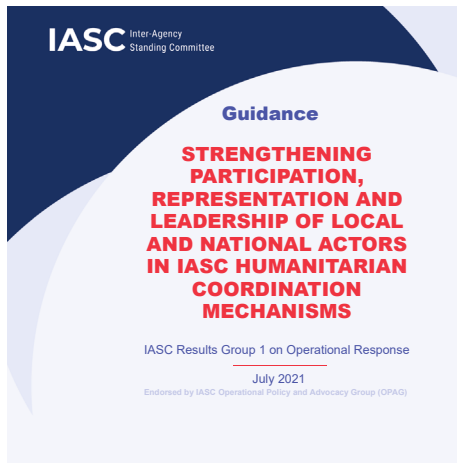


8. Competency Frameworks for technical capacity strengthening

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



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



Access: https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2021-07/IASC%20Guidance%20on%20Strengthening%20Participation%20Representation%20and%20Leadership%20of%20Local%20and%20National%20Actors%20in%20IASC%20Humanitarian%20Coordination%20Mechanisms_2.pdf



2. Working in Partnerships (online training course)

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English | Español | Français | عربي humanitarian leadership academy **h**

Working in Partnerships

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

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

Topic: Humanitarian Essentials, Management Essentials
Provider: Humanitarian Leadership Academy
Region: Global
Compatibility: Offline, Tablet, Smartphone

Join course

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



3. Localization – what it means and how to achieve it

Local humanitarian action already has an enormous life-saving impact around the world. It could do even more – in particular, it could be the key to bridging the growing gap (currently over \$15 billion) between humanitarian needs and available funds – if the international community began to really invest in it.

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

1. What is Localization?

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

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

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

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

Access: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Localization-external-policy-brief-4-April.pdf>



4. Conceptual Framework for Localization in Humanitarian Coordination

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



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

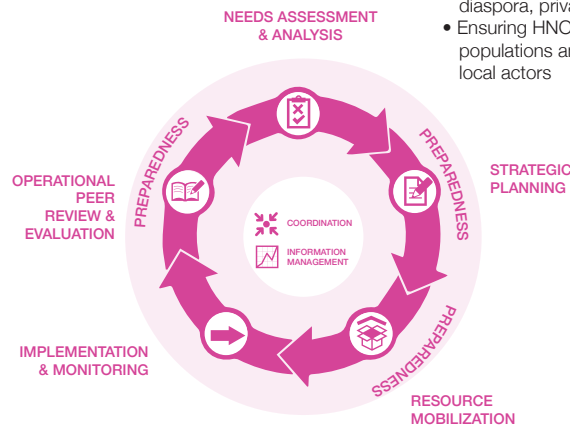


Access: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Accessible%20humanitarian%20coordination%20guidance%20-%20FINAL%20EN.pdf>



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

- Supporting local agencies for Lead/Co-Lead positions or putting leadership transition strategies in place
- Including local actors in Strategic Advisory Groups (SAG) and HCT
- Modelling and monitoring a culture of principled partnerships in Clusters
- Constantly reviewing service delivery and funding arrangements (such as localisation dashboards) with the SAG and AoR members and using recommendations to inform strategy and response.
- Ensure that Cluster membership accurately reflects the diversity of the humanitarian community – including diaspora, private sector, academia, etc.
- Translating key communications into local languages
- Facilitate onsite coaching and mentoring support from international partners
- Share good practices and promote these in future response plans
- Adapt the 5Ws to allow for disaggregation by implementing and funding agency
- Produce and share dashboards that provide analyses disaggregated by local/international implementing agencies
- Continuously identify and advocate for local actors to be supported for service provision and capacity building opportunities



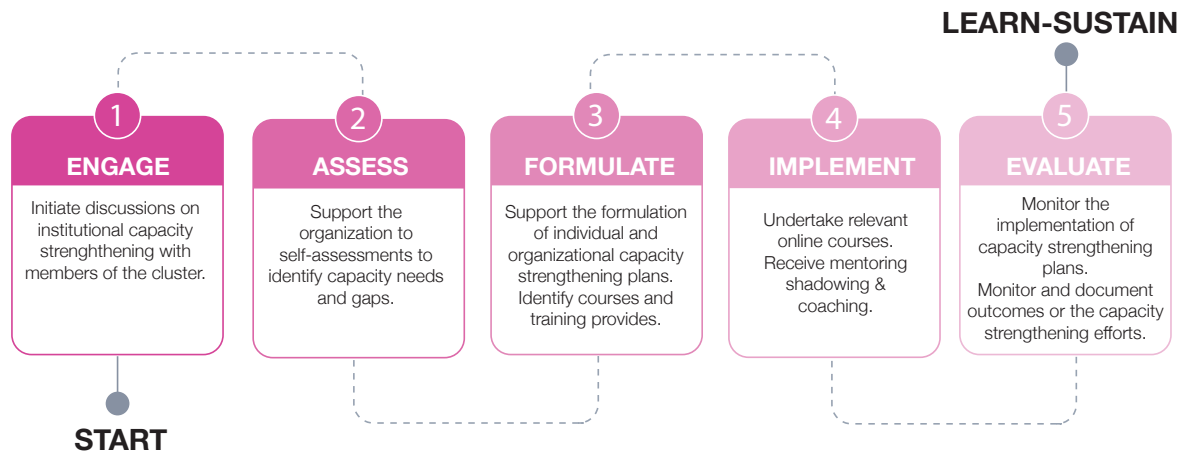
- Ensuring the HNO incorporates the views and data from local actors. This could also include academia, diaspora, private sector, in addition to civil society
- Ensuring HNO includes both needs of affected populations and the institutional capacity needs of local actors

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

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

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

7. Institutional Capacity Strengthening Steps



8. Competency Frameworks for technical capacity strengthening

Nutrition Competency Framework for Cluster Coordination



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

https://www.nutritioncluster.net/resource_Compentency_Framework_for_Cluster_Coordination

Child Protection Competency Framework for Cluster Coordination



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

https://www.cpaor.net/sites/default/files/2021-01/ENG_Child_Protection_Compentency_Framework_CC_2020.pdf



Education Competency Framework For Cluster Coordination

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

<https://educationcluster.app.box.com/s/i4s8fcx9m9y94y4f1l661su6a-01gaw65>



Global Education Cluster Competency Framework for Information Management

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

<https://educationcluster.box.com/s/m5ixqyute1qmwriifg5xo5p63sz05se6>



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



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

This tool gives an introduction to humanitarian advocacy and gives a quick overview of how to develop an advocacy strategy, linking to more extensive guidance. The tool has been compiled primarily from the Save the Children resource Humanitarian Advocacy (<https://www.open.edu/openlearncreate/mod/resource/view.php?id=53750>) It is intended to introduce local and national actors to the basics of humanitarian advocacy, including key issues, suggested targets, and effective approaches, and provides resources for further reading as well as training.



2. Know your rights: for local/national actors in partnerships for humanitarian coordination

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



3. Proposal Writing Guide

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



4. Tip Sheet on Capacity and Complementarity between Local/National and International Actors in Humanitarian Coordination

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



5. Frequently Asked Questions on the Humanitarian Program Cycle

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



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

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



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

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



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

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



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

This tool gives an introduction to humanitarian advocacy, outlines key issues and explains how to develop an advocacy strategy. The tool has been compiled from the Save the Children resource Humanitarian Advocacy (<https://www.open.edu/openlearncreate/mod/resource/view.php?id=53750>)¹, with additions from the Nutrition Cluster Advocacy Framework (<https://www.nutritioncluster.net/sites/nutritioncluster.com/files/2020-04/Nutrition-Cluster-toolkit-low-res.pdf>).

1. What is humanitarian advocacy?

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

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

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

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

These may include:

(a) humanitarian access and principles

(b) protection

(c) coordination

(d) funding

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The humanitarian response meets internationally agreed standards (e.g. SPHERE, Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (<https://alliancecpha.org/en/cpms>), INEE Minimum Standards for education in emergencies (<http://www.ineesite.org/en/minimum-standards/handbook>))

(d) Ensure adequate funding for the humanitarian response:

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

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

An advocacy strategy seeks to answer three main questions: what change we seek to achieve; who can make change happen; how we can best influence decision-making². Given the rapid pace and great volatility of most humanitarian contexts, you will often need to move quickly and flexibly and be targeted in your prioritization.

(a) Keep in mind:

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

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

Power mapping (<https://commonslibrary.org/guide-power-mapping-and-analysis/>) is a useful visual tool for identifying targets and allies. Power mapping means identifying which actors hold power and how they are interrelated. In humanitarian contexts, the following stakeholders can be considered:

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

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

- International donors. *Think outside the box! Are there donors other than the traditional ones? Can you partner up with international actors with direct access to donors?*
- Governments represented on the UN Security Council (UNSC). There are five Permanent Members of the UNSC, also called the ‘P5’ (USA, France, UK, China and Russia), as well as 10 elected members³ that serve two-year terms on a staggered basis.
- **Regional institutions or groupings of governments:** e.g. European Union (EU), African Union (AU), League of Arab States (LAS), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).
- **United Nations:**
 - UN Secretariat: UN Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General and their offices.
 - Humanitarian agencies: OCHA, UNICEF, UNHCR, WHO, WFP, etc. *At which level? Where could contacts in your country help you to reach global level influencers? Are there places where partnerships with iNGOs might help you to influence these agencies?*
 - UN structures in the field (clusters, UN Country Teams, Humanitarian Country teams (HCTs), Humanitarian Coordinators) and international level (e.g. the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), Emergency Directors group).
- **Civil society:** e.g. local or international NGOs, religious actors, prominent ‘Elders’.
- **Private sector actors:** e.g. companies active in the affected area.

(c) What are the main steps to follow in developing an advocacy strategy⁴?

The [Nutrition Cluster Advocacy Framework](https://www.nutritioncluster.net/sites/nutritioncluster.com/files/2020-04/Nutrition-Cluster-toolkit-low-res.pdf) (<https://www.nutritioncluster.net/sites/nutritioncluster.com/files/2020-04/Nutrition-Cluster-toolkit-low-res.pdf>) outlines six steps:



³ See <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/current-members> for the current members of the UN Security Council
⁴ See this Toolkit’s sample documents for an example of an advocacy strategy template from <https://www.nutritioncluster.net/sites/nutritioncluster.com/files/2020-04/Nutrition-Cluster-toolkit-low-res.pdf>

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

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

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

Key messages should be:

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

(b) Nurture relationships creatively

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

(c) Invest time in humanitarian coordination meetings

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

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

(d) Produce new material

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

(e) Build coalitions

Coalitions can take time and resources to coordinate, but in many humanitarian contexts other humanitarian actors are likely to have similar objectives or messages, and a collective voice can often be much more powerful than a large number of disparate voices. In situations where speaking out as one organization can put staff and programs under a spotlight, working together in coalition with a group of partners, or channelling information to other actors, can also help mitigate risks. There are often NGO coordination forums in the field that can be useful vehicles for advocacy, although sometimes some effort is required to get them to think and function strategically and to link up effectively with actors and groups at the national, regional and international levels. At the international level, there are a number of standing coalitions and groupings that are mandated to work on humanitarian advocacy and that can be useful allies⁵.

(f) Share information

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

⁵ These include:

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

(g) Strengthen advocacy capacity

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

<p>Nutrition Cluster Advocacy Framework https://www.nutritioncluster.net/sites/nutritioncluster.com/files/2020-04/Nutrition-Cluster-toolkit-low-res.pdf</p> 	<p>UNICEF Advocacy Toolkit https://www.unicef.org/wca/media/6451/file/UNICEF-KRC3-KRC4-Toolkit.pdf</p> 
<p>Introduction to Advocacy by UNICEF https://kayaconnect.org/course/info.php?id=244</p> 	<p>Advocacy in Humanitarian Settings https://kayaconnect.org/course/info.php?id=244</p> 
<p>Course: Save the Children – Advocacy and Campaigning https://www.open.edu/openlearncreate/course/view.php?id=1690</p> 	



2. Know your rights: for local/national actors in partnerships for humanitarian coordination¹

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



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

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

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



2. As a local/national actor, you have the right to access opportunities for leadership and co-leadership² roles at national and sub-national levels.

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

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

¹ This tool has been compiled from the following documents: Conceptual Framework for Localisation in Humanitarian Coordination; Charter for Change; https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2021-07/IASC_Guidance_on_Strengthening_Participation%2C_Representation_and_Leadership_of_Local_and_National_Actors_in_IASC_Humanitarian_Coordination_Mechanisms_2.pdf

² Co-leadership” in this toolkit refers to shared leadership between UN agencies, governments, international organizations (INGOs) and local/national actors. It should be noted that shared leadership does not displace the core responsibilities and accountability of the designated in-country Cluster Lead Agency, including its role as Provider of Last Resort. It should also be noted that the understanding of the term “co-leadership” varies across clusters. For the Global Education Cluster’s approach, please see <https://educationcluster.app.box.com/s/td6brep7ga0qj407iwxdxqhi8h3wbp71> For the Global Nutrition Cluster’s approach, please see https://www.nutritioncluster.net/sites/nutritioncluster.com/files/2021-11/Guidance%20Note_Contribution%20of%20NGOs%20to%20Cluster%20Leadership%20at%20National%20%26%20Sub-national%20level.pdf



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

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

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

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



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

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

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



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

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

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

As a local/national actor, you have the right to participate in humanitarian coordination structures where relations among organizations are based on mutual respect, trust and the Principles of Partnership. <https://www.icvanetwork.org/principles-partnership-statement-commitment>

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

How to take action: for example, request that coordination leadership conduct a <https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/wp-content/uploads/3.-CP-AoR-Principles-of-Partnership-Cluster-Review.pdf> on a regular basis, to assess how all members experience the coordination group environment.



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

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

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

How to take action: for example, request that coordination leadership regularly conduct awareness-raising and sensitisation exercises on diversity inclusion. Also, encourage coordination leadership to develop a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination on the basis of race, gender, or other diversity factor.



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

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

How to take action: for example, consider what the priority areas for both technical and institutional³ capacity strengthening might be for your organization, and approach other coordination group members to develop partnership agreements which include commitments to capacity strengthening.



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

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

How to take action: suggest that coordination group members engage in reciprocal capacity assessments⁴ to understand where local/national and international actors can learn from each other, and request the commitment of international actors to invest in addressing the identified gaps.

Want to know more?

For more details on what local/national actors should expect from international humanitarian coordination mechanisms as a local/national actor, see the https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2021-07/IASC_Guidance_on_Strengthening_Participation%2C_Representation_and_Leadership_of_Local_and_National_Actors_in_IASC_Humanitarian_Coordination_Mechanisms_2.pdf

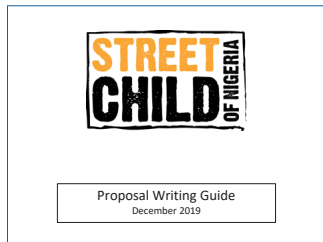
You may also wish to visit www.humanitarianresponse.info to find cluster contact information and details on how to subscribe to the relevant mailing lists, by clicking on your country.

³ See e.g. page 18 of the https://www.cpaor.net/Institutional_Capacity_Strengthening_with_Local_Actors

⁴ See e.g. the <https://usaidealarninglab.org/library/organizational-capacity-assessment>, a structured tool for facilitated self-assessment of an organization's capacity followed by action planning for capacity improvements.



3. Proposal Writing Guide



Access: https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/C3.-Proposal-Writing-Guide_FINAL-.pdf



4. Tip Sheet on Capacity and Complementarity between Local/National and International Actors in Humanitarian Coordination¹

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

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



- 1. Engage in reciprocal capacity assessments² with international actors:** capacity exchange, by definition, must be reciprocal between local/national and international actors, and focus on complementarity, and should ideally be outlined in a partnership agreement between the two (or more) agencies, where possible. Capacity assessments simply seek to answer questions such as: What is each actor's comparative advantage? Where can you learn from each other? What are the capacity gaps of both international and local/national actors? What can be done to address these gaps?

¹ This tool has been compiled from the CP AoR/GEC https://www.cpaor.net/Institutional_Capacity_Strengthening_with_Local_Actors;https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/12957.pdf

² See e.g. the <https://usaidlearninglab.org/library/organizational-capacity-assessment>, a structured tool for facilitated self-assessment of an organization's capacity followed by action planning for capacity improvements.



2. Think beyond the technical skills: capacity strengthening for local/national partners in coordination groups is commonly focused on short-term or one-off learning events that improve the technical skills of the thematic focus area. However, long-term mentoring and a focus on *institutional* capacity-building is also needed for effective coordination. One of the goals of institutional capacity strengthening is that local agencies are invested with the skills to respond in a long-term manner³.

Consider the following priority areas⁴ for institutional capacity strengthening for your organization:



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



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



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



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



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



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

³ https://www.cpaor.net/Institutional_Capacity_Strengthening_with_Local_Actors

⁴ To learn more about these areas of institutional capacity strengthening, see page 18 of the https://www.cpaor.net/Institutional_Capacity_Strengthening_with_Local_Actors



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



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



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



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



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



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



- 4. Advocate for long-term mentoring and a focus on institutional capacity-building:** seek support for opportunities for mentorship, coaching, shadowing and peer-to-peer support, rather than one-off capacity building workshops. Argue also that this is required to meet Cluster and IASC localization commitments⁵. For example, local/national actors with weak operational capacity and a lack of internal controls should be supported in the long term to overcome the challenges relating to financial accountability required by international donors.



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



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



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

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

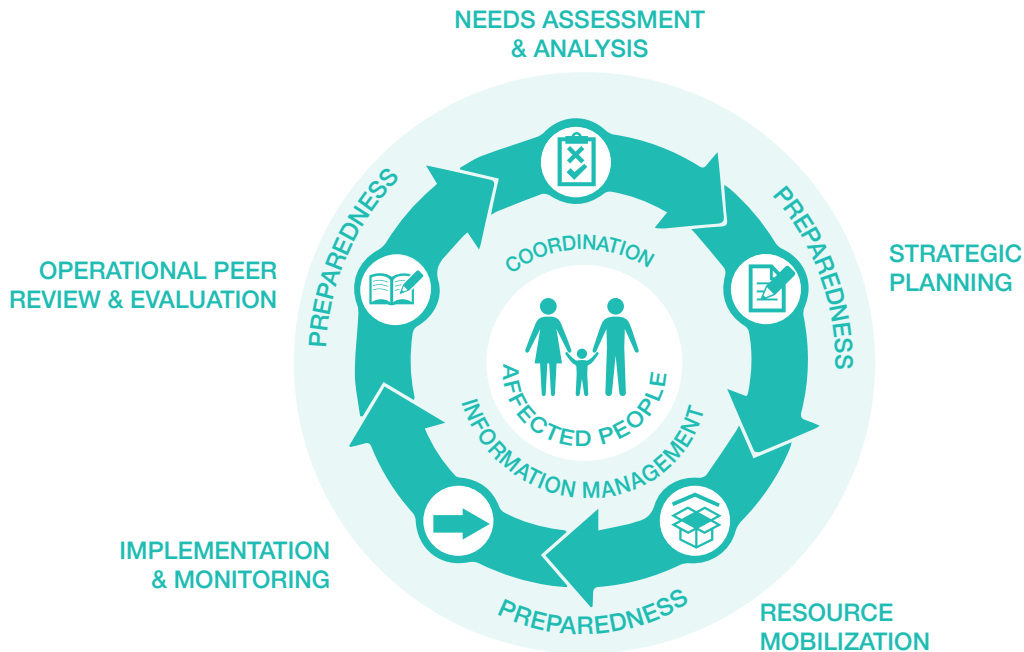
⁶ Grand Bargain commitments, available at <https://gblocalisation.ifrc.org/grand-bargain-localisation-workstream-2/>

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

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



5. Frequently Asked Questions on the Humanitarian Program Cycle¹



1. What are clusters?

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

There are 11 clusters globally. The same clusters can be activated at a national level and sometimes at a subnational level in response to a particular emergency. Each global

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

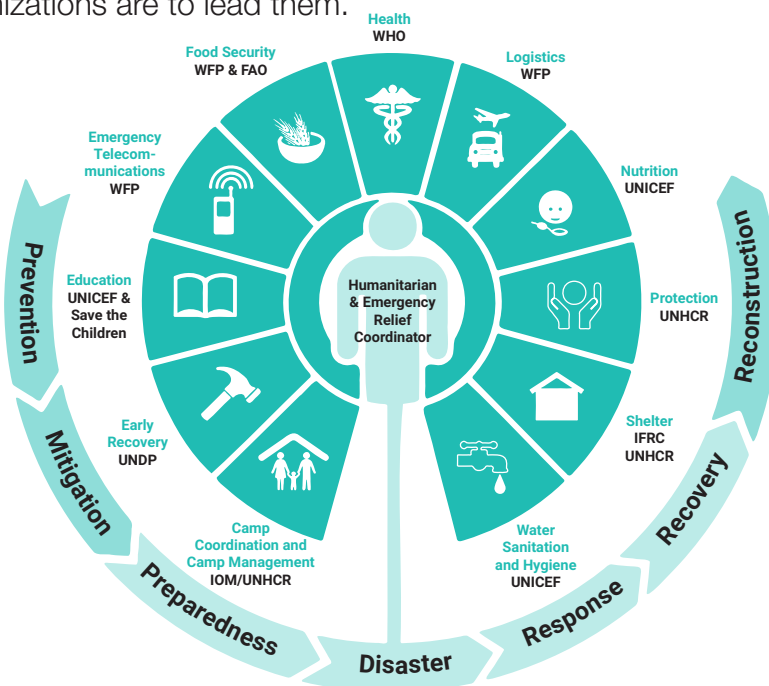
cluster is led by one or two United Nations agencies or a United Nations agency and an international NGO. At the country level, clusters are usually co-led² by a United Nations agency and an NGO. The cluster leads must be ready to provide services to affected people where other organizations cannot.

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

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

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

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



² Co-leadership” in this toolkit refers to shared leadership between UN agencies, governments, international organizations (INGOs) and local/national actors. It should be noted that shared leadership does not displace the core responsibilities and accountability of the designated in-country Cluster Lead Agency, including its role as Provider of Last Resort. It should also be noted that the understanding of the term “co-leadership” varies across clusters. For the Global Education Cluster’s approach, please see <https://educationcluster.app.box.com/s/td6brep7ga0qj407iwxdxghi8h3wbp71> For the Global Nutrition Cluster’s approach, please see https://www.nutritioncluster.net/sites/nutritioncluster.com/files/2021-11/Guidance%20Note_Contribution%20of%20NGOs%20to%20Cluster%20Leadership%20at%20National%20%26%20Sub-national%20level.pdf

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

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

For more information on who does what within humanitarian coordination architecture, follow: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/coordination/clusters/who-does-what>

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

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

4. What are the five elements of the HPC?

The HPC elements are:



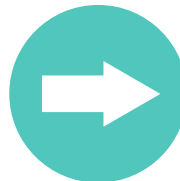
**1. Needs
Assessment
and Analysis**



**2. Strategic
Response
Planning**



**3. Resource
Mobilization**



**4. Implementation
and Monitoring**



**5. Operational
Review and
Evaluation**

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

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



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

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

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

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

(b) What is a Multi-Cluster Needs Assessment³?

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

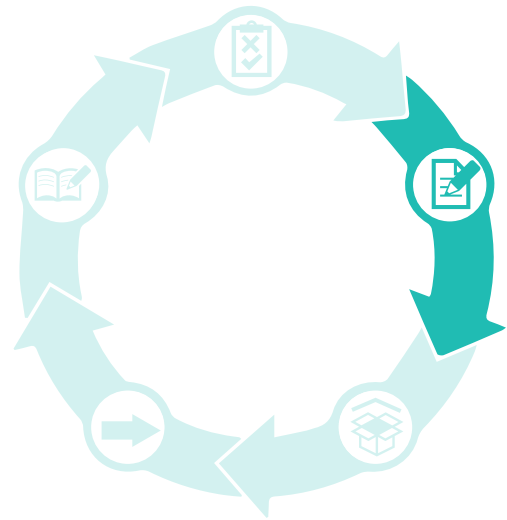
³ See e.g. the MCNA for Iraq from December 2020: <https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/iraq-multi-cluster-needs-assessment-mcna-round-viii-december-2020>

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

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

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

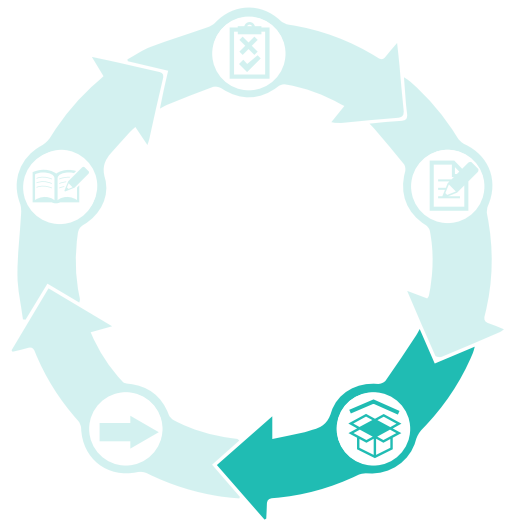
Humanitarian response plans are primarily management tools for the humanitarian coordinator (HC) and HCT. In addition, they can be used to communicate the scope of the response to an emergency to donors and the public, and thus serve a secondary purpose for **resource mobilization**.



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

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

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



8. What is Response Monitoring?

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

Response monitoring has two purposes:

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



9. What is the Global Humanitarian Overview?

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

10. What is Emergency Preparedness?

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

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

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

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

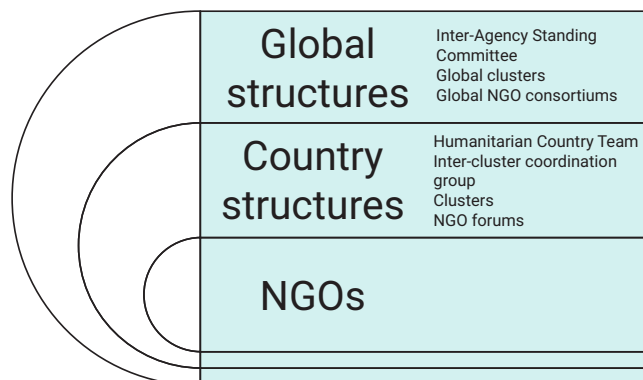
Further, local and national actors can be involved in joint intersectoral analysis, including the development of objectives and expected outcomes. Clusters should capitalize on their knowledge of local context and work with them to validate conclusions from analyses and assessments. Data from local and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

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

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

This podcast (https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iHWNUlt1TCCi7KeYN_zh9a3d3mTy4B8l/view) gives a helpful explanation of how to ensure the participation and inclusion of local and national actors in the HRP/HNO processes.

If local/national actors are not included in the HPC process, they have the right to advocate with the OCHA to become involved. The diagram on the right⁴ shows the key coordination structures at the different levels with which local and national actors can engage:



Further recommended resources:

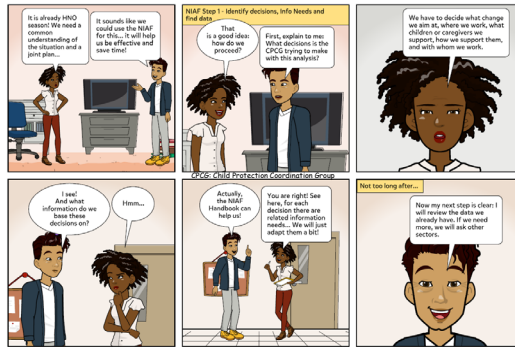
How to ensure the participation and inclusion of local and national actors in the HNO and HRP process (https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iHWNUlt1TCCi7KeYN_zh9a3d3mTy4B8l/view)

Humanitarian coordination and the cluster approach: a quick guide for local and national organizations (<https://reliefweb.int/report/world/humanitarian-coordination-and-cluster-approach-quick-guide-local-and-national>)

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



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

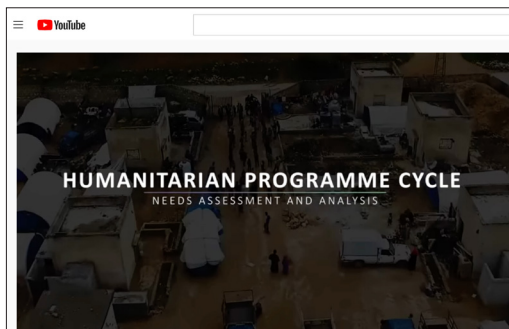


Link to the comic series:

<https://www.cpaor.net/Needs-Identification-and-Analysis-Framework>



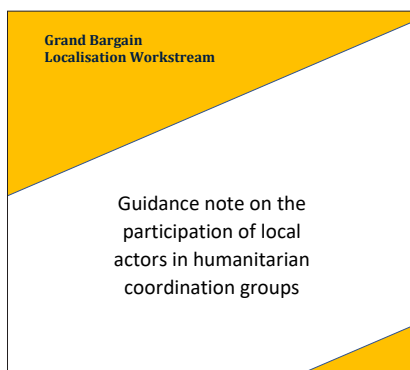
7. HPC Needs Assessment and Analysis (video)



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



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



Access: <https://interagency-standingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-05/Guidance%20note%20on%20coordination%20May%202020.pdf>



D. Tools for Cluster coordination leadership and Humanitarian Country Teams



1. Evidence-based arguments for localisation in humanitarian coordination

This tool is intended to support Cluster coordination leadership in ‘making the case’ for localisation in humanitarian coordination. It outlines key arguments for funding and prioritizing localisation which are rooted in recent evidence, which may be useful in advocating before Humanitarian Country Teams, donors, and other key stakeholders. It draws primarily from the reports *Localisation in Practice – Emerging Indicators and Practical Recommendations* (<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Localisation-In-Practice-Full-Report-v4.pdf>) and *Country-Level Financing Solutions for Local Actors*. (<https://gblocalisation.ifrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Humanitarian-Financing-for-Local-Actors-IFRC-Research-Report-Final.pdf>)



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

This resource is intended to give Cluster coordination leadership information, arguments and suggested actions to promote and advocate for direct, quality and multi-year funding for local/national actors, for use within coordination mechanisms, as well as with e.g. donors and international organizations. It draws primarily from the reports *Country-Level Financing Solutions for Local Actors*. (<https://gblocalisation.ifrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Humanitarian-Financing-for-Local-Actors-IFRC-Research-Report-Final.pdf>) and *Localisation in Practice – Emerging Indicators and Practical Recommendations* (<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Localisation-In-Practice-Full-Report-v4.pdf>)



3. Tip Sheet on Promoting Principled Partnerships for Humanitarian Coordination

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



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

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



5. Tip Sheet on Capacity Exchange and Complementarity between local/national actors and international organizations

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



6. Tip Sheet to Integrate Localisation in the Humanitarian Response Plan and Humanitarian Needs Overview

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



7. Checklist for Localisation in Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms

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



8. Supporting Principled Local Action in Humanitarian Response: Practical steps for Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams

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



9. Checklist for induction and onboarding of new coordination group members

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



10. Opportunities for collaboration - Coordination groups and Diaspora

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



1. Evidence-based arguments for localisation in humanitarian coordination

This tool is intended to support Cluster coordination leadership in ‘making the case’ for localisation in humanitarian coordination. It outlines key arguments for funding and prioritizing localisation which are rooted in recent evidence, which may be useful in advocating before Humanitarian Country Teams, donors, and other key stakeholders. It draws primarily from the reports *Localisation in Practice – Emerging Indicators and Practical Recommendations* (<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Localisation-In-Practice-Full-Report-v4.pdf>) and *Country-Level Financing Solutions for Local Actors*. (<https://glocalisation.ifrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Humanitarian-Financing-for-Local-Actors-IFRC-Research-Report-Final.pdf>) Given that, in many cases, 50% or more of the membership of coordination groups is made up of local and national actors, clusters have a key role in advancing localisation.



The programmatic arguments

1. **Local and national actors are from the affected populations**, and their physical, social and linguistic proximity positions them as indispensable participants, partners and leaders in humanitarian responses. They have better acceptance, access and deeper relationships with the population – and a far more nuanced understanding of the history and politics of local areas affected by crises. When strengthened, national and sub-national systems can expedite preparedness, respond faster, be cost-effective and learn from doing with regard to future crises¹.
2. **International actors should not treat local and national actors like subordinates**. Local and national actors make necessary and valuable contributions to the collective effort, and often do significant parts of the work, sometimes at high risk. Local and national organizations arguing for more equitable partnerships typically do this on the grounds of principle².



The strategic arguments

3. **The strategic objective of all international cooperation in situations of crisis or ‘development’ should be to support and enhance the capacities of those receiving the international assistance**, in order to enable them to increase their resilience. This is in the medium-term financial interest of the donors; Deploying large international resources every time there is a crisis is not in the best interest of the affected populations nor in the interests of taxpayers from donor countries³.
4. **Where an affected population and/or local/national actors have the capacity to respond, the international community should support and reinforce, rather than replace national capacity,**

¹ CP AoR/GEC https://www.cpaor.net/Institutional_Capacity_Strengthening_with_Local_Actors

² <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Localisation-In-Practice-Full-Report-v4.pdf> p. 16

³ *Localisation in Practice – Emerging Indicators and Practical Recommendations* p. 16

in order to promote long-term sustainability. The presence and attitudes of international agencies may be important obstacles to national leadership and to building strong and sustained national capacities. This obstacle will continue until international organizations are prepared to share at least part of the global purse for humanitarian financing. Coordination groups provide an essential forum for the capacity strengthening and leadership development of local/national actors, and for shifting power imbalances.

5. **In order to ensure accountability to affected populations and to be certain that the humanitarian response is relevant, timely, effective and efficient,** national and local actors, including affected populations and communities, must be included in coordination and response as decision-makers. To facilitate this, international actors must provide accessible information, ensure that an effective process for participation and feedback is in place, and that design and management decisions are responsive to the views of affected communities and people⁴.
6. **Local and national actors are able to react and mobilize quickly,** and they are well-placed to identify humanitarian needs, for which reason they are key to effective coordination.



The financial arguments

7. **Localization is needed because it is more cost-effective.** Local and national actors are more cost-effective than international ones, and funding them directly, or providing cash to crisis-affected people, reduces transaction costs. This financial justification is strong in the Grand Bargain (<https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/more-support-and-funding-tools-for-local-and-national-responders>), which is strongly grounded in the earlier report by the High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing ([https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/%5BHLP Report%5D Too important to fail%E2%80%94addressing the humanitarian financing gap.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/%5BHLP%20Report%20Too%20important%20to%20fail%20addressing%20the%20humanitarian%20financing%20gap.pdf)). This report drew attention to the growing financing gap between global humanitarian needs and available humanitarian funding⁵. Moreover, research on humanitarian surge has shown that it costs two thirds less to deploy national rather than global staff⁶.
8. **When local/national actors are able to access direct (and multi-year) funding from donors without an intermediary, this builds mutual trust and respect,** redresses power imbalances, and is cost-effective. This type of funding deserves to be increased and encouraged, possibly learning from other sectors/areas such as development and institutional building. Compliance and administrative burdens can be mitigated⁷.

⁴ Adapted from the <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/a-participation-revolution-include-people-receiving-aid-in-making-the-decisions-which-affect-their-lives>

⁵ <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Localisation-In-Practice-Full-Report-v4.pdf> p. 16

⁶ Start Network (2018). The Future of Humanitarian Surge, p. 26: <https://start-network.app.box.com/s/xzdmk32biai93cm4izu5n9v-jwi59fmm>

⁷ See the https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/17594/pdf/guidance_note_on_financing_may_2020.pdf to the report <https://gblocalisation.ifrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Humanitarian-Financing-for-Local-Actors-IFRC-Research-Report-Final.pdf> for suggested mitigating actions.



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

This resource is intended to give Cluster coordination leadership information, arguments and suggested actions to promote and advocate for direct, quality and multi-year funding for local/national actors, for use within coordination mechanisms, as well as with e.g. donors and international organizations. It draws primarily from the reports Country-Level Financing Solutions for Local Actors (<https://glocalisation.ifrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Humanitarian-Financing-for-Local-Actors-IFRC-Research-Report-Final.pdf>) and Localisation in Practice – Emerging Indicators and Practical Recommendations (<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Localisation-In-Practice-Full-Report-v4.pdf>)



1. What is direct funding?

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



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

The advantages of directly funding local/national actors include:

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



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

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

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



4. What is quality funding?

Quality funding is funding that is predictable, multi-year and flexible. This includes for example unearmarked funding, funding for overhead costs, and funding for capacity strengthening, in particular institutional capacity. For more information, follow <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/Quality-funding>



5. What actions can members of humanitarian coordination mechanisms take to promote direct, quality, and multi-year funding for local/national actors, including mitigating the associated risks¹?

Cluster leadership should:

- Increase the visibility of local/national actors by inviting them to meetings with donors, to join donor briefings, or take steps to introduce them to individual donors.
- Invest in, develop and deliver capacity strengthening² initiatives for local/national actors, in particular the strengthening of institutional capacity which will help

¹ For an overview of perceived risks, see page 22 of <https://gblocalisation.ifrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Humanitarian-Financing-for-Local-Actors-IFRC-Research-Report-Final.pdf>

² See pages 35-36 of <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Localisation-In-Practice-Full-Report-v4.pdf>

in meeting the due diligence requirements of donors. Funding for institutional capacity strengthening should thus be included in partnership agreements³.

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

International actors should:

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

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

Local/national actors should:

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



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

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

Further reading:

<https://glocalisation.ifrc.org/https://glocalisation.ifrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Humanitarian-Financing-for-Local-Actors-IFRC-Case-Studies-Final.pdf>

<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Localisation-In-Practice-Full-Report-v4.pdf>

[https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-05/Guidance note on financing May 2020.pdf](https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-05/Guidance%20note%20on%20financing%20May%202020.pdf)



3. Tip Sheet on Promoting Principled Partnerships for Humanitarian Coordination¹

Cluster Coordinators have a responsibility² to promote, model and monitor principled partnerships between local/national and international actors which are equal, transparent, results-oriented, responsible, complementary, and long-term³, according to the Principles of Partnership (<https://www.icvanetwork.org/principles-partnership-statement-commitment>). The equal participation of local/national actors is key in order to strengthen accountability to affected populations, and to ensure the relevance of assistance and protection interventions.

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

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

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

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

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

¹ This tool has been compiled from the following resources: IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms + <https://fscluster.org/sites/default/files/documents/localizationtipsandgoodpracticesfinal.pdf> + https://www.icvanetwork.org/system/files/versions/10_Ways_to_implement_the_Principles_of_Partnership.pdf + https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-05/Guidance_note_on_partnership_practices_May_2020.pdf + <https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/12957.pdf> + <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Localisation-In-Practice-Full-Report-v4.pdf>

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

³ https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2021-07/IASC_Guidance_on_Strengthening_Participation%2C_Representation_and_Leadership_of_Local_and_National_Actors_in_IASC_Humanitarian_Coordination_Mechanisms_2.pdf p.5

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



Cluster leadership teams should ensure the Principles of Partnership are included in the **Terms of Reference (ToR)** of the coordination groups/cluster. ToRs should also include a method for monitoring principled partnerships.



Cluster leadership teams should explore the possibility of **co-leadership with national actors**, given its potential to strengthen the engagement of coordination group members and improve coordination⁴.



Partnership agreements should outline the roles and responsibilities of both the local/national and the international actors. Such agreements should specify that risks are shared, and mitigation measures are mutually agreed (including to ensure safeguarding measures are in place). All humanitarian actors should **identify their added value** in any partnership, and work on the basis of complementarity.



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

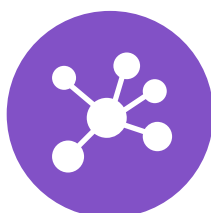
supply) and ideally through longer-term strategic partnerships tailored to partner needs, or in accordance with the partner's wishes. This should include areas of institutional or technical capacity strengthening, with complementarity identified before crises.



Coordination groups should commit to **evaluating and reporting** annually on how the Principles of Partnership are being put into practice, using e.g. the Principles of Partnership Cluster Review as a point of departure.



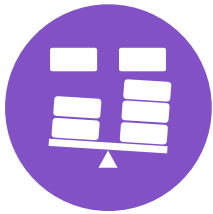
Cluster leadership should regularly **seek and act on feedback** from coordination group members on their experience of cluster partnerships, and offer anonymized ways to submit such feedback.



Cluster leadership should allocate time and resources for the creation of an **enabling environment** to promote active participation by local/national actors. For example, cluster coordinators should support **relationship building, networking and forming alliances** amongst members, where local/national actors

⁴ For more information on NGO co-leadership, see http://unicefintercluster.net/cpaor/sites/default/files/cp/NGO%20Co-leadership_Guidance%20and%20tools%202016.pdf

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



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

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

- the use of rapid and variably accented English
- the use of acronyms and references part of international relief discourse
- the use of speaking and decision-making styles and rhythms that are different from local ones⁵
- the use of technical terminology which is not explained
- not allocating enough time for adequate interpretation or multilingual communication
- disseminating long written documents that local/national actors may not have the time or resources to engage with, thereby reducing their ability to input



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



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



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

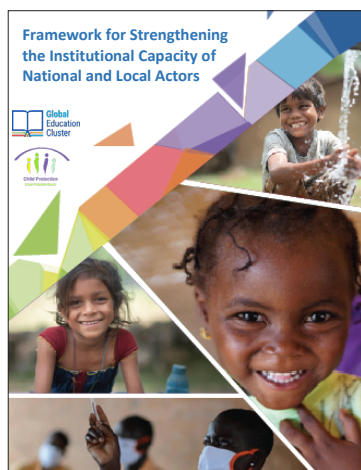


Local actors should be supported to better recognise and constructively challenge **perceived and hidden power dynamics** in the humanitarian system, including at the partnership level. This could be through international actors using their power to give a space and voice to local actors more globally,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

⁵ Localisation in Practice – Emerging Indicators and Practical Recommendations, p. 4



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



Access: https://www.cpaor.net/Institutional_Capacity_Strengthening_with_Local_Actors



5. Tip Sheet on Capacity Exchange and Complementarity between local/national actors and international organizations¹



Key considerations

- Capacity does not flow one way – from international actors to local actors – rather, capacity exchange is **a reciprocal process²** where capacity gaps are identified on both sides, which leads to different ways to collaborate and partner.
- Institutional capacity strengthening for local partners is part of the response strategy – as **a way to achieve coverage and quality** – not just a support cost.
- Local and national actors are not a homogenous group and include a diverse range of actors (e.g. women-led organizations, youth-led organizations, older persons' organizations, community-based organizations, indigenous-led organizations, and organizations of persons with disabilities) with different **experiences and skill sets**.

¹ This tip sheet has been developed in full from the reports <https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/12957.pdf>, Humanitarian Policy Group, December 2019, https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-05/Guidance_note_on_partnership_practices_May_2020.pdf, https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2021-07/IASC_Guidance_on_Strengthening_Participation%2C_Representation_and_Leadership_of_Local_and_National_Actors_in_IASC_Humanitarian_Coordination_Mechanisms_2.pdf, https://www.cpaor.net/Institutional_Capacity_Strengthening_with_Local_Actors

² See e.g. <https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/12957.pdf>, p. 21 and IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms, p. 12

- Local and national actors have skills related to managing and maintaining **access, understanding local contexts and relationships with communities**, among many others, **including technical skills**.



Defining capacity

- Define capacity needed for each actor to deliver the humanitarian response **in relation to each specific context** and each specific crisis, rather than assuming what the strengths and weaknesses of each actor are.
- Define the capacity needed to respond to a specific humanitarian situation through **local consultation** with a wide and diverse group of stakeholders, including **affected people**.



Assessing capacity strengths and gaps

- **Invest in efforts to analyse who is best placed to do what in each sector**, and map out existing and potential capacities.
- **Identify existing local, national and regional coordination platforms** and coalitions, and leaders within these platforms/coalitions, through regular mapping.
- **Conduct a capacity/learning needs assessment³ of all cluster partners, in order to identify both strengths and gaps.** Based on this assessment, support two-way institutional and technical capacity strengthening between local/national actors and Humanitarian Country Teams/clusters around, but not limited to, coordination, advocacy, fundraising, programme planning, mutual accountability mechanisms, risk management, gender issues, diplomacy, influencing and negotiation skills and pathways to leadership, as relevant for the particular group of partners being addressed.
- **Provide opportunities for local actors to discuss their operational capacity needs and exchange ideas** on how these needs can be met. International members of the clusters should discuss ways they can contribute to the enhancement of the local actors' operational capacities.
- **Based on the capacity/learning needs assessment**, facilitate discussions on how international actors can learn from and integrate the capacities of local and national actors relative to local knowledge and needs of affected populations.
- **Feed the outcomes of discussions on/assessments of institutional capacity of humanitarian actors into organizational Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO)/Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) processes** where this is applicable, to allow for the development of strategies to address the gaps. The outcomes of these discussions can also be fed into **partnership agreements** between international organizations and their local/national partners.

³ See e.g. <https://www.alnap.org/system/files/content/resource/files/main/calp-ocat-user-guide-2-0.pdf> and <https://usaidlearninglab.org/library/organizational-capacity-assessment>

- Where international actors require a risk assessment or capacity gap assessment (e.g. to provide funding and work in partnership), these assessments should come hand in hand with **the investment and commitment to addressing the gaps identified**. These assessments should also be reciprocal to identify capacity gaps of both international and local actors.



Strengthening capacity

- Encourage **learning exchange** through labs/applications/platforms for mutual learning among different actors, and foster/create channels of informal communication between local/national and international actors in order to strengthen mutual trust and partnership.
- **Complement traditional capacity strengthening workshops** with opportunities for two-way learning, mentorship, coaching, shadowing and peer-to-peer support.
- **Evaluate capacity strengthening initiatives⁴** in order to learn and improve going forward.
- Develop **multi-year plans to build local capacities** among members of HCTs, clusters, and other related IASC coordination groups, including steps for local/national actors to assume co-coordination and coordination roles.
- **Prioritize leadership development and structured support** for local/national actors to take on leadership roles, particularly for groups whose voice may be muted in a specific cultural context.
- Alternatively, **share leadership** to enable a phased approach to coordination whereby local/national actors assume greater responsibility of leading coordination over time.
- **Support local/national actors to demonstrate their capacity** through capacity assessments, for example by equipping them to conduct self-assessments and encouraging them to approach international actors with requests for partnership, or by identifying well-matched organisations through the assessment in order to bring them together.
- **Ensure investment in capacity strengthening builds on existing evidence of good practices⁵**: this includes strengthening capacity through partnerships as part of preparedness; strengthening capacity through providing funding for overhead costs; strengthening capacity through secondment to allow two-way learning and capacity transfers, particularly in emergency surge (secondment to local organizations to address gaps in capacity rather than deploying separate emergency surge teams); and coordinating capacity strengthening, creating pooled resources.

⁴ See e.g. <https://odihpn.org/magazine/strengthening-local-actors-in-north-east-nigeria-a-nexus-approach/>

⁵ See e.g. <https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/12957.pdf>



Committing to capacity strengthening

- **Refrain from practices which undermine existing local capacity**, for example when international actors poach staff from local organizations, or rely on local actors for ad-hoc translation and interpretation which takes them away from their assigned roles and duties.
- Encourage for any partnership agreement to include that partners are **mutually accountable** for addressing capacity strengthening recommendations.
- **Explicitly reference** institutional capacity strengthening in HNOs, HRP sector/ cluster chapters and within cluster strategies to make connection with program outcomes and funding. Make it an eligible budget line in funding applications where it is linked to achieving greater coverage and quality.
- **Document and provide evidence** of innovative practices on partnering that leads to better complementarity. Such approaches should continue to provide evidence of how complementarity can be achieved through partnerships and the benefits of working in complementarity. The contribution and impact of partnerships should be a standard item in humanitarian evaluations.

For step-by-step instructions on how to integrate institutional capacity strengthening into the Humanitarian Program Cycle, consult [https://www.cpaor.net/Institutional Capacity Strengthening with Local Actors](https://www.cpaor.net/Institutional_Capacity_Strengthening_with_Local_Actors)



6. Tip Sheet to Integrate Localisation in the Humanitarian Response Plan and Humanitarian Needs Overview



Access: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/7.-GPC-Tip-Sheet-to-Integrate-Localisation-in-the-HNO-and-HRP-English.pdf>



7. Checklist for Localisation in Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms

This checklist is developed for the leadership of the clusters, working groups, and other humanitarian coordination mechanisms on how to pursue localisation agenda in key cluster initiatives, documents and activities. The list is not exhaustive, and can be further populated based on need.



Encouraging partnerships modalities that build local capacities:

- Incentivize partnership modalities that include coaching, mentoring, and joint-implementation, for ex. by prioritizing applications of funding by such partnerships in project review scorecards, sharing best practices at cluster meetings, encouraging two-way reporting between partners, etc...
- Encourage the inclusion of “institutional capacity needs assessments” and “capacity-building targets” in partnership agreements. Give floor to partners to share their best practices.
- Strengthen the culture of transparency and principled partnership between partners by encouraging sharing of relevant information on programmes and available funding. Introduce Principles of Partnership to cluster membership during meetings.
- Boost cooperation, coordination, and information-sharing within membership by circulating needs assessments and reports done by members



Funding opportunities for local actors:

- Advocate with donors for direct funding of the local NGOs.
- Reduce or influence for reducing minimum funding cap to a level that is manageable by smaller local partners. This amount should be determined in discussion with donors and local partners.
- Advocate for multi-year funding to give local NGOs some financial stability to retain their staff and build into their capacity
- Include funding needs for institutional capacity building of local actors in key cluster documents, including HNO and HRP, which will help local actors to raise their standards to donor due diligence requirements. Suggested wording:

“The institutional and technical capacities of local actors, including NGOs and ministry/directorate of education, need to be improved in order to achieve sustainability, cost efficiency, rapid scale-up, and expansion of areal coverage.”



Governance, Influence, and Participation

- Local actors are represented and are member of governance bodies, such as Strategic Advisory Group (SAG), and technical working groups/task forces. Wherever possible, they should lead these bodies.
- Ensure all cluster-produced documents are shared with cluster membership for review and feedback, translated when necessary.
- Ensure the local actors understand the coordination mechanism at the national and sub-national levels, and how they can be part of it. Draft Terms of Reference for Cluster SAG and Cluster Membership for more clear pathways
- Local members of the cluster take part in drafting the Cluster Strategy, HNO, and HRP, including data collection, analysis, and drafting the narrative. The cluster strategy should be updated
- Make certain feedback mechanisms are an essential part of cluster coordination and projects to collect information on quality of coordination and quality of service delivery
- Plan an exit strategy that is based on handover of the coordination to local actors, i.e. governmental bodies or local NGOs.



8. Supporting Principled Local Action in Humanitarian Response: Practical steps for Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams



Access: https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2019-01-15-P2P-Localisation-Note_FINAL.pdf



9. Checklist for induction and onboarding of new coordination group members

Cluster Coordination leadership should put in place induction sessions for any new member of a coordination group, whether local, national or international. Sessions should aim to ensure mutual responsibilities and accountabilities are agreed and understood, and appropriate support is provided to new members during the initial stages of their participation.¹

Below is a checklist of key elements for induction and onboarding of new members:



1. Introduce the member to the cluster approach

Explain what clusters are, and the implications of being a member. Draw on existing resources such as the *Humanitarian coordination and the cluster approach: a quick guide for local and national organizations* (<https://educationcluster.app.box.com/s/3xt0yu68yiryg2k2b2k6t0up6xyipr01/file/770587330455>). Please note that the guide is available in 11 languages, available at: <https://www.educationcluster.net/localization>.

Explain leadership structures within clusters (e.g. Cluster Lead Agencies, Strategic Advisory Groups, etc.), as well selection criteria and opportunities for the new local/national member to become involved in cluster leadership.



2. Explain the limitations and challenges of an IASC coordination structure to help manage expectations

Coordinators should present the challenges that are applicable for their context. For example, these may include:

- cluster lead agencies often lack impartiality
- there may be a limited representation of diverse local and national actors
- cluster coordination is a labour intensive endeavour which requires significant time and resources to be effective
- there are insufficient mechanisms in place for the promotion of accountability to affected populations

Enquire whether the new member is part of other national or sub-national coordination structures, to understand how the two might work together.

¹This tool has been compiled from the following resources: <https://educationcluster.app.box.com/s/3xt0yu68yiryg2k2b2k6t0up6xyipr01/file/770587330455>; <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain-official-website/guidance-notes-localisation-may-2020>



3. Explain meeting protocols, group dynamics and acronyms.

Share the cluster Terms of Reference (ToR) and talk about who the other members are; what happens during coordination meetings; when and where they are held; how agendas are set, what is expected of members, etc. Coordination leads should ask local/national actors the best way for them to access information and communicate; WhatsApp, Skype, Facebook or Zoom may be more suitable than slow or hard-to-navigate websites, for example. Ask the new member about potential security conditions or other local circumstances that may affect their ability to participate in meetings (e.g. night time curfews, cultural acceptability of women's mobility after certain times and childcare-related constraints).

Outline the different ways in which organizations can engage, and the benefits of participation to both the individual actor, as well as the coordination group as a whole.

For a list of key coordination acronyms, see page 6 of *Humanitarian coordination and the cluster approach: a quick guide for local and national organizations* (<https://educationcluster.app.box.com/s/3xt0yu68yiryg2k2b2k6t0up6xyipr01/file/770587330455>).



4. Explain what being a cluster member involves: mutual accountabilities and responsibilities

There are no fixed membership criteria or application processes to join a cluster. However, they may exist at the country-level, in which case these should be made available to the new member.

These are the factors new members should consider:

- (a) **Time investment for sustained engagement:** for example, ability to attend regular meetings, input to strategy development, share relevant and timely information at meetings and in tools like the 4Ws, offer technical expertise when needed
- (b) **Relevance of work:** the new member is an organisation which implements programs relevant to one or more sectors;
- (c) **Minimum commitments:** the new member organization must
 - Uphold the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence
 - Commit to cluster-specific guidance and minimum standards, and mainstream protection in all programs, including respect for principles of non-discrimination and “do no harm”
 - Be ready to participate in actions that specifically improve accountability to affected people, in line with the Commitments to Accountability to Affected Populations and the [Six Core Principles Relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/accountability-and-inclusion/translators-without-borders-twb-support-iasc-results-group) (<https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/accountability-and-inclusion/translators-without-borders-twb-support-iasc-results-group>)



5. Provide guidance that is tailored to a new member's needs or area of work, and make key documents and information available in relevant local and national languages.

Endeavour to minimize and explain the use of jargon or technical language, and establish shared definitions and understandings of shared goals. Consider making use of or developing a glossary of topic-specific terms² to ensure communication with local/national actors is accurate.

Explain that cluster meetings and documents are usually in the main official language of a country or in international languages like English and French. The minimum commitments for cluster coordination state that clusters should provide interpretation in an appropriate language (including sign language) so all cluster partners can participate, including local organizations.



6. Give examples of what the added value of being a cluster member is:

- Access to guidance and national repository of key documents
- Ability to raise concerns and influence response strategies
- Working in a complementary way with other NGOs
- Access to peer-analysis of local vulnerabilities, risks and capacities to prioritize needs
- Discuss quality issues and ways forward
- Integration of preparedness efforts into a larger inter-sector preparedness plan
- Increased chances to address your funding gaps
- Guidance to improve protection and gender in your response
- Guidance to support complaints feedback mechanisms to improve your accountability to affected population



7. Invite existing members to participate in induction briefings.

For example, members who are local/national actors can present on the local context and local coordination mechanisms. Existing members may also wish to share their perspective on the benefits and challenges of participating in coordination mechanisms.

² See e.g. Translators without Borders' glossary at <https://translatorswithoutborders.org/twb-glossaries/>

Moreover, the Cluster’s Information Management Officer should arrange an induction on the 4W database and reporting to the reporting focal points of new members.



8. Inform the new members who they can turn to for further information, support, to give feedback or to make a complaint about the coordination group.

Ensure support structures are in place and accessible, including an anonymous way to register concerns, in a language and format the member is comfortable using. Such support structures might include mentoring schemes where existing members, or Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) members, are available to answer questions and offer support.

Let new members know about plans and procedures for internal reviews where they can give feedback on the way the cluster operates, for example:

<https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/wp-content/uploads/3.-CP-AoR-Principles-of-Partnership-Cluster-Review.pdf>.



10. Opportunities for collaboration - Coordination groups and Diaspora

WORKING WITH DIASPORA
Opportunities for Collaboration - Coordination Groups and Diaspora

Against the background of numerous protracted humanitarian crises, diaspora communities in the northern hemisphere are increasingly recognized for their access, cultural and language skills, local knowledge, trust and networks with affected communities. This opens up potential spaces for engagement, closer relationships and better coordination between diaspora and 'conventional' relief and aid providers in an extended humanitarian system.

Diaspora organizations can play a central role in localization. Many can be considered frontline responders themselves, making direct and concrete contributions to emergency responses in their home countries. Many others work closely with local authorities, local organizations and community groups, providing technical and financial support, playing a role in advocacy and being in close contact with additional aspects of support. They are heterogeneous – they have different capacities, needs and objectives – and as part of a broader humanitarian community, can play a valuable role in the humanitarian response.

Because of this diversity, coordination groups will engage with each diaspora organization differently. This note provides a **toolkit** intended to support coordinators and diaspora groups to identify potential ways in which they can collaborate. Additional resources are available at www.diaspora.org/

Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage diaspora organizations in the humanitarian response • Information can be used for advocacy to donors and cultural authorities • Changing diaspora organizations' local networks and influence in local contexts (e.g. promotion of humanitarian principles, promoting local authorities)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate diaspora organizations with local partners (such as existing capacity strengthening support, including investments for technical advice and developing institutional systems, training and mentoring, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage local actors to join the response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop national project teams, particularly for local partners, and involving direct financial support (on the basis of no-strings-attached) and connecting diaspora to possible funding opportunities for local actors • Encourage diaspora to report findings to OPH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building trust and partnerships in order to identify and establish viable humanitarian needs and opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage diaspora to report findings to OPH

For more information:
 Global CP AoR of Responsibility website: www.globalcpaor.org/
 DEMAC: demac@unhcr.org

Access: <https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/wp-content/uploads/12.-CP-AoR-Diaspora-and-Coordination-Groups-Options-Final.pdf>



E. Tools for other Cluster coordination members



1. Guidance note on partnership practices for localization

This guidance note outlines priority partnership practices for localisation, in the areas of project and financial management; capacity strengthening and sharing; financing; coordination; safety and security; and advocacy. It is intended to guide all those who participate in humanitarian coordination on designing and implementing principled and equitable partnerships.

<https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-05/Guidance%20note%20on%20partnership%20practices%20May%202020.pdf>



2. Guidance note on capacity strengthening for localization

This guidance note outlines key considerations and provides specific recommendations related to capacity strengthening. It is intended to improve understanding of complementary capacities between local/national and international actors, and provide areas of action for donors and international actors, as well as local and national actors.

<https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-05/Guidance%20note%20on%20capacity%20strengthening%20May%202020.pdf>



3. Presentation on Institutional Capacity Strengthening of Local Actors

This presentation complements the Framework for Strengthening the Institutional Capacity of National and Local Actors developed by the Global Education Cluster (GEC) and the Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AoR). It explains the rationale for investing in the institutional capacity strengthening of local and national actors, outlines what the role of Cluster coordinators in doing so is, and presents a sample budget for capacity strengthening.

https://www.cpaor.net/sites/default/files/2021-11/ICS_Framework_Webinar%20Slides_19Aug2021_0.pptx



4. Localization in Coordination - Q&A

This tool provides answers to key questions related to localisation in humanitarian coordination, including what the role of coordination structures in promoting localisation is, what the evidence to support localisation looks like, and how coordination groups can monitor and measure progress in this area. The document also provides links to a number of related resources for further reading.

<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/10.-cp-aor-localisation-in-coordination-faq.pdf>



F. Case studies

Localization across contexts: Lessons learned from four case studies

A FEINSTEIN INTERNATIONAL CENTER BRIEF

Sabine Robillard, Kimberly Howe and Kajo Risantoko

The Feinstein International Center, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University and Save the Children Denmark conducted research on the localization of humanitarian action in several different contexts—Indonesia following the 2018 earthquake in Sulawesi, and the Horn of Africa, specifically humanitarian situations in Kenya, Somalia, and South Sudan. The goal was to unpack assumptions related to locally led humanitarian action and to identify the factors that lead to effective, timely, and principled responses. Research was qualitative and primarily focused on engaging with local actors in each context. While the studies were substantially different in scope and context, the brief is meant to highlight some of the key similarities and differences found across localization processes, and to begin to identify lessons learned that may reach beyond these specific emergencies.

This brief is based on two studies available in full at: <https://fic.tufts.edu/publication-item/perspectives-on-localization-subwoni-earthquake-indonesia/> and <https://fic.tufts.edu/publication-item/perspectives-on-localization-in-the-horn-of-africa/>.

Case contexts

The Indonesia study focused on a single acute natural disaster (an earthquake) in a single country context that has a strong civil society and government presence. The Horn of Africa study was a comparison of broader trends across three different countries dealing with a complex mix of conflict, displacement, and climate-related challenges like drought, each with varied degrees of government and civil society strength. The presence of international actors in these contexts varied widely as well. In Indonesia, a government directive limited international organizations to indirect participation in the response; in Kenya, there is a significant presence of international organizations, many of whom have their regional headquarters in Nairobi; and in Somalia and South Sudan,

international organizations are significantly involved in responses but tend to have a limited physical presence on the ground due to security restrictions, and they often operate through remote partnerships.

By definition, the discussions over localization and local humanitarian leadership are context specific. They require an acknowledgment of and reacting with different types of crises, types of civil society, roles of governments and international actors, and even conceptions of what the word “local” means in practice. At the same time, there is an ongoing global discussion about localization. By comparing the results from these diverse cases, we can identify sets of common and divergent themes that can contribute to the broader discourse.

* While the brief does not aim to provide a detailed overview of each case, it does not aim to be comprehensive. The authors used the term “local” to describe organizations based in the affected countries and “international” to describe organizations based outside of the affected countries. National government representatives (NGOs) international NGOs (INGOs) have been mentioned for affected organizations in the affected country, or otherwise “local” in this context.

1 Localization across contexts: Lessons learned from four case studies fic.tufts.edu

Localization across contexts - Lessons learned from four case studies

<https://fic.tufts.edu/publication-item/localization-across-contexts-lessons-learned-from-four-case-studies/>





SUPPORTING PRINCIPLED LOCAL ACTION IN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE
Practical steps for Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams

SUPPORTING PRINCIPLED NATIONAL AND LOCAL NGOs IN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Working with and meeting in local actors as equal and strategic partners is a priority for the humanitarian response and the leadership of humanitarian operations. Localization is a vital element for strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian assistance and became firmly established in the humanitarian sector in the build-up to the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016. In the context of this paper, localization is about recognizing and strengthening the role of local and national NGOs in humanitarian response strategically, institutionally and operationally.

The Peer 2-Peer Project visited Gaziantep, Turkey, to assess the integration of Syrian NGOs into the humanitarian response system with the overall goal of involving them in strategic decision-making and strengthening their engagement in a coordinated and principled humanitarian operation. Syrian NGOs in this area work as part of the cross-border response in Syria. The Peer-2-Peer mission was carried out with the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC), and on the invitation of the Deputy Regional Humanitarian Coordinator (DRHC) in Gaziantep.

COMMON CHALLENGES FOR INTEGRATING NATIONAL AND LOCAL NGOs INTO HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Local actors often have distinct advantages compared to their international counterparts in responding to a crisis as they have a nuanced knowledge of the context in which the humanitarian operation is being implemented, are geographically close to crisis affected communities, and can respond rapidly to meet the needs of people. Yet, their physical and socio-cultural proximity to communities can raise questions concerning their independence, impartiality, and neutrality. There are also concerns about the institutional and operational capacities of newly established national NGOs to deliver assistance effectively on limited budgets in a high-risk environment, and to manage operations in line with donors and/or other international partners' requirements. Finally, localization is a long-term process that requires dedicated human resources and financial investment to ensure sustainability.

BROAD CHALLENGES

- Dedicating human resources and financial investment** to ensure a sequenced and sustainable localization process. This implies the development of partnerships that do not turn national and local NGOs into sub-contractors and do ensure that they do not carry the brunt of the risks involved in delivering assistance.
- Building local and national NGO institutions and operational capacity** to ensure they are well-governed, adhere to the highest standards of professionalism and transparency and are empowered to deliver on a principled and effective humanitarian response. This includes building trust and confidence with donors so that local and national NGOs can receive direct funding.
- Integrating local and national NGOs into the strategic decision-making bodies and coordination groups** to ensure they have a voice in the strategic direction of the response and are engaged in a coordinated effort.
- Coordination among local and national NGOs** to ensure their representation in humanitarian fora is based on a transparent and inclusive process led by the local and national NGO constituency. This mitigates the potential for a few NGOs to dominate and influence the humanitarian narrative at the expense of less prominent NGOs.

*The difference between a local and national NGO relies on the geographical role of activities; a local NGO is active at local level (one sub area of a given country) while a national NGO is active in various sub areas of a given country.

Strengthening the role of national and local NGOs in the humanitarian response to parts of Syria

This is an extract from ‘Supporting Principled Local Action in Humanitarian Response: Practical steps for Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams’

Access: https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2019-01-15-P2P-Localisation-Note_FINAL.pdf



G. Sample documents



1. Principles of Partnership: Cluster Review

Are you from:

NNGO

INGO

UN Agency

Government

Donor

EQUALITY	Not at all	Somewhat	Substantially
Are meetings open to all partners ('open door policy')			
Are you able to influence which items are discussed at the Cluster meeting?			
Are you able to influence decisions that are taken by the Cluster?			
Are you treated as an equal member of the Cluster?			
Do you feel comfortable raising a different or alternative view to others during Cluster meetings?			
What could the Cluster do differently to improve equality of all members?			

COMPLEMENTARITY	Not at all	Somewhat	Substantially
Are different members' mandates and capacities taken into account when the Cluster is developing strategies or deciding how to respond to coverage gaps?			
Do local and international actors have different roles in the HRP?			

Are local NGO members able to contribute own perspectives, experience and capacities to the Cluster's work as much as international UN/NGO members?			
Is there strong collaboration between the Cluster and other Clusters (CCCM, WASH etc) where relevant, to ensure that the Cluster approach is complementary to what others are doing?			
What could the Cluster do differently to maximise the benefits of the diversity?			

TRANSPARENCY	Not at all	Somewhat	Substantially
Does the Cluster regularly share relevant information with all members?			
Do all members regularly share relevant information with the Cluster?			
Does the Cluster tell all members what resources it has available for the Cluster itself (e.g funding for staff, meetings, training etc) and how the Cluster is spending it?			
Does the Cluster create a safe environment for members to speak openly about their mistakes?			
Do all members share relevant information with the Cluster about their own funding situation?			
What else could the Cluster do differently to improve transparency?			

RESULTS ORIENTED	Not at all	Somewhat	Substantially
Does the Cluster have a strategy and work plan, which was developed jointly with all members?			
Is the Cluster Work plan and strategy regularly reviewed with all members; and updated when necessary to reflect new priority areas?			
Does the Cluster regularly provide updates on progress and facilitate discussions about how to address gaps?			
Does the Cluster discuss programme quality and encourage members to meet these standards?			
What could the Cluster do differently to improve its results?			

RESPONSIBILITY	Not at all	Somewhat	Substantially
Are members able to meet their commitments to the Cluster Workplan and Strategy			
Does the Cluster support members that are not delivering and try find alternative responses/solutions when necessary?			
Does the Cluster encourage and promote local partners to scale up, where possible?			
Does the Cluster monitor and encourage partnerships that allow actors to scale up responsibly (e.g. not too fast, with appropriate support)			
Does the Cluster encourage all agencies to have a code of conduct to prevent abuse and other human rights violations			
Does the Cluster ever discuss and promote the Principles of Partnership?			
What else could the Cluster do to make sure all members are taking their accountabilities seriously?			



2. Principles of Partnership: Partnership Review

EDUCATION SECTOR REVIEW:

Are you from: NNGO INGO Govt UN Agency Donor

Consider your largest partnership (in terms of funding) and answer the following questions:

Equality: Equality requires mutual respect between members of the partnership irrespective of size and power. The participants must respect each other’s mandates, obligations and independence and recognise each other’s constraints and commitments. Mutual respect must not preclude organisations from engaging in constructive dissent.

On a scale of 1 to 10...

Do you feel respected by your partner?

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not at all				Sometimes			All the time		

Do you feel that your partnership allows you to maintain your organisations’ mandate, obligations and independence?

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not at all				Sometimes			All the time		

Do you feel that your organisations’ constraints and challenges are acknowledged and taken into account in the partnership?

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not at all				Sometimes			All the time		

How comfortable are you raising concerns or disagreements with your partner?

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not at all				Somewhat			Completely		

Transparency: This is achieved through dialogue (on equal footing), with an emphasis on early consultations and early sharing of information. Communications and transparency, including financial transparency, increase the level of trust among organisations.

On a scale of 1 to 10...

To what extent were your ideas and views taken into account when designing the partnership?

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not at all			Somewhat				Completely		

How equal do you think the following are (between your organisation and your partners')?

Access to relevant information for programming

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not equal at all								Very equal	

Access to relevant information about each others' funding and finances

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not equal at all								Very equal	

How much do you trust your partner?

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not at all								Completely	

Results-oriented approach: Effective humanitarian action must be reality-based and action-oriented. This requires results-oriented coordination based on effective capabilities and concrete operational capacities.

On a scale of 1 to 10...

Do you agree with the programme design and strategy in your partnership?

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not at all			Somewhat				Very Much		

- Are the targets reasonable? Yes No
- Do you provide progress reports to your partner? Yes No
- Does your partner provide reports to you? Yes No

	What are your organisations' top three constraints?	What are your partners' top three constraints?
1.		
2.		
3.		

Responsibility: Humanitarian organisations have an ethical obligation to each other to accomplish their tasks responsibly, with integrity and in a relevant and appropriate way. They must make sure they commit to activities only when they have the means, competencies, skills and capacity to deliver on their commitments. Decisive and robust prevention of abuses committed by humanitarians must also be a constant effort.

On a scale of 1 to 10...

Is the budget in your partnership sufficient to meet targets and maintain minimum quality standards?

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not at all			Somewhat				Completely		

Is there a Code of Conduct for your staff? Yes No

Does your partner have a Code of Conduct? Yes No

Have the risks **to your staff** been adequately taken into account in the partnership?

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not at all			Sometimes				Completely		

Have the risks **to your partners' staff** been adequately taken into account in the partnership?

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Not at all			Sometimes				Completely		

Complementarity

The diversity of the humanitarian community is an asset if we build on our comparative advantages and complement each other's contributions. Local capacity is one of the main assets to enhance and on which to build. Whenever possible, humanitarian organisations should strive to make it an integral part in emergency response. Language and cultural barriers must be overcome. Think about your own organisation. What do you think are the unique skills, expertise, experience etc that your organisation brings to the partnership to help make it a successful partnership?

Now think about your partner. What do you think are the unique skills, expertise, experience etc that your partner brings to the partnership that helps make it a successful partnership?



3. Sample Terms of Reference for coordination group

Terms of Reference for the Tripartite Coordination Structure of the CPWG for South Kivu

The National Child Protection Working Group identifies geographic Child Protection (CP) coordination areas that have provincial representation of the working group. These coordinations are called Child Protection Working Groups.

Facilitation is done by the lead agency (UNICEF) with one or more co-facilitators (co-leads). In March 2020, the South Kivu CPWG coordination opted for a tripartite structure, with a co-lead from a civil society organization (elected by the CPWG) and a co-lead from the State (focal point of the Division of Social Affairs, DivAS). The coordination also opted to add a secretary position to facilitate tasks such as reporting; this position is reserved for a national NGO in order to provide better understanding and experience in facilitation/coordination to national actors.

1. The main responsibilities of the CPWG Lead (UNICEF)

- Establish coordination mechanisms for child protection actors in the field;
- Coordinate the implementation of assessments, identify gaps and priorities for child protection and coordinate responses;
- Ensure the proper functioning of the Information Management System by following the guidelines provided by the national CPWG, including:
 - i. Collection of alerts, ad hoc transmission to the national CPWG or management at the provincial level;
 - ii. Monthly analysis of the child protection problem and proposal of solutions in the monthly narrative report;
 - iii. Monthly data collection, compilation and transmission to the national CPWG of the 6W matrix;
- Establish referral mechanisms for child protection cases and coordinate the updating of the mapping of services (protection, health, GBV, community-based child protection networks (RECOPEs), etc.)
- Maintain the CPWG contact list and share relevant information with CPWG and sub-CPWG members;
- Invite members and lead the monthly and ad hoc meetings of the CPWG;
- Support CPWG members in fully understanding and implementing documents and guidance from the national CPWG;
- Strengthen the capacities of the CPWG members on the coordination and technical aspects of the CP and promote the exchange of good practices;
- Support the members of the CPWG in the implementation of CP activities in line with the main approaches and minimum standards of CP and in compliance with the fundamental humanitarian principles of CP;

- Promote the transversality of CP as well as ensure that transversal issues are taken into account in CP activities, such as gender, HIV/AIDS, disability, safeguarding of children, etc.;
- Support territorial sub-CPWG leads and co-leads in territorial coordination, including providing guidance and feedback on monthly reports, building their capacity, and visiting them every six months as possible;
- Lead the South Kivu CPWG's contribution to the HNO and HRP and other response plans;
- Represent CPWG South Kivu at the Provincial Protection Cluster meeting;
- Represent CPWG South Kivu at meetings of the Inter-Cluster Coordination Groups at the field level (ICR) and other coordination frameworks of the Center East Hub.

II. The main responsibilities of the co-lead, State representative (DivAS)

- Represent the Congolese government in the coordination of the CPWG;
- Be a resource person on national child protection norms and standards and build the capacity of the CPWG members on these;
- Update regularly (every quarter) the mapping of Temporary Foster Family (FAT) and Transit and Orientation Centre (CTO) for South Kivu and share them with the CPWG SK and the sub-CPWG at the territorial level;
- Support CPWG members who wish to approve FAT placements;
- Liaise between the CPWG and the Provincial Child Protection Coordination (led by DivAS) to better coordinate the work of the two structures;
- Facilitate collaboration between CPWG members and DivAS representatives at the territorial level;
- Contribute to the development of advocacy messages, particularly towards state actors, and be the bearer of these messages;
- Host the CPWG meetings in the DivAS room approximately every two months (i.e. every other meeting);
- Support the CPWG lead in facilitating the meetings;
- Review monthly reports and meeting minutes and provide feedback within 3 working days whenever possible;
- Participate regularly in needs assessments to the extent that logistical resources are available (or made available by CPWG members) and involve other government services as appropriate.

III. The main responsibilities of the co-lead, (NGO/civil society organization)

- Act as the interim lead for the CPWG when he/she is unable to attend, mainly: facilitating meetings, managing the contact list, compiling and sharing the monthly and 6W report, and participating in the provincial Protection Cluster meeting;
- Support the lead in facilitating meetings;
- Support the secretary in finalizing the minutes of the monthly meeting;
- Review monthly reports and provide feedback within 3 working days whenever possible;
- Take the lead in the development of the annual CPWG Action Plan;

- Brief new CPWG members on operations and tools;
- Support CPWG members in completing the 6W matrix;
- Support CPWG members in developing key advocacy messages and take the lead in coordinating advocacy activities;
- Support territorial sub-CPWG leads and co-leads in coordinating at the territorial level, including providing guidance and feedback on monthly reports, and visiting them for capacity building as opportunities arise
- Monitor and ensure compliance with and implementation of global sector commitments and standards as well as humanitarian norms and principles, including sensitization/training of CPWG members in this regard;
- Ensure capacity building of cluster members in needs assessment, planning, monitoring, reporting and advocacy.

IV. The main responsibilities of the secretary (NGO/local civil society organization)

- Take minutes of the draft meetings to share with the CPWG lead and co-lead;
- Facilitate the compilation of various information, such as internal surveys of the CPWG members;
- Maintain the CPWG archives;
- Participate in the GBV working group meetings as the CPWG focal point and report back to the CPWG;
- Assist the co-lead in supporting the members of the CPWG in completing the 6W matrix;
- Support the lead and co-lead in the drafting of various documents or in various processes at their request;
- Co-facilitate meetings in the absence of two of the (co-)leads.
- Participate regularly in needs assessments as logistical resources permit.

Notes:

The 3 members of the coordination and the secretary will meet every second Tuesday of the month (or as agreed) to prepare the monthly CPWG meeting.

The positions of co-leads and secretary are voluntary. The elections for the co-lead (NGO/civil society organization) and the secretary will take place every 3 years.



4. PowerPoint presentation for Induction to new cluster coordinators and information managers by the Global Education Cluster



Access: https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/G4.-Global-Education-Cluster-Induction-to-new-CCs-and-IMs.pptx_FINAL.pdf
interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/hct_tors.pdf



5. Standard Terms of Reference for Humanitarian Country Teams



Access: https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/hct_tors.pdf



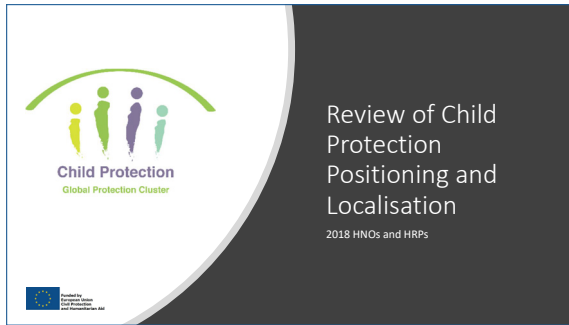
6. Localisation Orientation Module Presentation by the Child Protection Area of Responsibility



Access: https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/G6.-Localisation-Orientation-Module-Presentation-by-the-Child-Protection-Area-of-Responsibility.pptx_FINAL.pdf



7. Review of Child Protection Positioning and Localisation in HNOs and HRP by the Child Protection Area of Responsibility



Access: https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/G7.-Review-of-Child-Protection-Positioning-and-Localisation-in-HNOs-and-HRPs-by-the-Child-Protection-Area-of-Responsibility.pdf_FINAL.pdf



8. Estimated budget for institutional capacity strengthening for 10 local actors

Certified online training courses organizations with some level of institutional capacity	100
Certified online training courses for individual organizations with little or no institutional capacity	200
Shorter training for organizations with some level of institutional capacities (Mentoring and Coaching)	10,000
Longer training and establishment of systems for organizations with little or no institutional capacity (Mentoring and Coaching)	20,000
Costs related to IT for organizations with some level of IT capacity	9,000
Costs related to IT for organizations with very little IT capacity	25,000
Implementing partners	18,000
Overhead costs for implementing partners (7%)	5,761
Total in USD	88,061



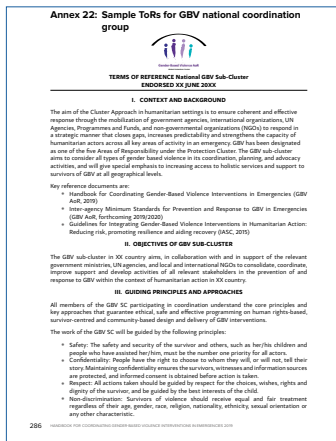
9. Presentation on Localization in Cluster Coordination (PowerPoint)



Access: https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/G9.-Presentation-on-Localization-in-Cluster-Coordination.pptx_FINAL.pdf



10. Sample: Terms of Reference for GBV national coordination group



Access: <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/G10.-Sample-ToRs-for-national-GBV-coordination-group-Mali-English.pdf>



11. Sample: Global Education Cluster Induction Presentation for new Cluster Coordinators and Information Managers (PowerPoint)



Access: https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/G9.-Presentation-on-Localization-in-Cluster-Coordination.pptx_FINAL.pdf



12. Institutional Capacity Strengthening - Project Sheet Template

Project Summary:

This project aims to identify the central institutional capacity needs of local and national non-governmental organizations (L/NNGOs) involved in humanitarian responses in line with the Grand Bargain and education cluster priorities. Through this process, a capacity enhancement plan can be realised where these actors' can increase their effectiveness, efficiency, overall service delivery quality and expand national level resilience to respond to humanitarian crises. The project cycle consists of an assessment and analysis of the capacity needs of the L/NNGOs, developing a capacity development plan and list of indicators¹ for tracking improvement in each organization based on gaps identified, implementing the capacity development initiatives, and continuous monitoring and evaluation of the activities, and results.

The target group will be L/NNGOs who are part of the cluster mechanism and have a genuine interest and determination in improving their organizational capacities and demonstrate it by applying this programme through submitting a written application.

The project will be implemented over a period of 18 months by a consortium of international and national NGOs, who are keen to develop the quality and capacity of overall humanitarian response at the country-level through developing the organizational capacities of the cluster's national and local partners. The method of delivery will be a combination of online courses and tutored learning through mentorship and coaching. The expected outcome of this initiative is increased operational capacities for local and national actors, and thus, promoting sustainability of the humanitarian action. Institutional capacity strengthening will also help National NGOs to access humanitarian funding as directly possible, building up their own resource mobilization capabilities, and leading the way to stronger community engagement and accountability through including affected populations via organizations that are set up by them.

Needs and Justification:

Local and national NGOs (L/NNGOs) play a key role in reaching people in need of humanitarian assistance. In 2019, XX% of children in need of Education in Emergency (EiE) services were reached by L/NNGOs. With the Covid-19 pandemic obstructing the mobility and access of traditional international actors in 2020, the central role of L/NNGOs as articulated in the Grand Bargain has become more apparent as local actors can more readily access affected communities. Local actors have the advantage of closely observing and understanding the needs of the affected communities, and tailoring generic interventions to better match the needs. They can communicate in the local languages and there is a commensurate level of trust which comes from this interaction. Such advantages situate L/NNGOs in an advantageous position to provide relevant and contextualized services these communities need in contradistinction to

¹ Some suggestions for such indicators for tracking improvement can be: # of L/NNGOs whose capacities gaps are assessed; # of Policies (Finance, Procurement, Human Resources, etc...) Produced; # of staff trained on policies/procedures/SOPs; # of L/NNGOs that have Medium or Low risk rating in UN's HACT-assessment; Total amount of EiE funding that L/NNGOs can access directly, etc...

the internationally led, at times socio-culturally out of step, humanitarian assistance. Furthermore, local actors are usually the first responders in an emergency and present in the field when international providers leave due to security concerns, such as the Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated, or funding priorities shift.

Nevertheless, persisting gaps in institutional capacities of L/NNGOs present considerable barriers for the local and national actors to take leadership of the humanitarian community, participate and influence the decision-making mechanisms, and match the thresholds of capacity requirements that keep them from accessing humanitarian funding directly. Organizational Capacity Assessments (OCAs) of L/NNGO members of the cluster indicate gaps in areas including Finance and Accounting, Procurement, Asset Management, Human Resources, Governance, and Project Management at varying levels. While some organizations have their policies and procedures in place but their staff need further training/coaching/mentoring to ensure these policies are followed at all times, other organizations need support to develop and adopt such policies. Most partnership agreements do not involve such peer support and are rather in the form of subcontract agreements for service delivery rather than long term, strategic partnerships, which envision capacity development for observing longer term results. Strengthening organizational capacities of local actors is a key intervention for both building the local resilience and making humanitarian interventions more sustainable as well as accountable to local populations hit by the crises.

Therefore, it is critically important to develop their capacities if the end result is to scale up the humanitarian response to reach more people efficiently while also enhancing the programme quality and the accountability that humanitarian professionals and donors have for affected populations.

Objective: Strengthening institutional and operational capacities of Local and National NGOs engaged in Cluster or other relevant EiE coordination groups in order to scale up the overall humanitarian response and improve its quality.

Implementation of Activities:

The first stage of the project will involve the purposive selection of ## L/NNGOs to participate in the programme. This process will be based on transparent criteria agreed and set by a Reference Group including Strategic Advisory Group members. The criteria will, which include being a humanitarian NGO with activities in Education and Child Protection, active engagement with the Education and Child Protection clusters, and a demonstrated interest and dedication for capacity development. Next, an assessment of the organizational capacity gaps will be carried out. The capacity assessment will be a combination of a desk-review of existing assessments previously conducted, and an external assessment to pinpoint specific capacity gaps inherent in the systems and structures of these organizations. The identified needs will be then discussed with the beneficiary organizations and key focus areas for development will be agreed upon jointly. The areas of capacity strengthening will be:

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| 1. Financial Management | 7. Resource Mobilization |
| 2. Human Resource Management | 8. Procurement Management System |
| 3. Information Technology | 9. Project Management |
| 4. Institutional Governance | 10. Risk Management |
| 5. Management | 11. Supply Chain Management and Logistics |
| 6. Leadership | |

After an evaluation of the assessment results and agreement on the key areas of focus, a plan for capacity strengthening will be developed for each organization based on the focus areas above. The plan will draw upon the Institutional Capacity Strengthening Framework developed by the Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility and the Global Education Cluster in terms of scope of the capacity building and phasing-in the implementation of each.

The modality of capacity building activities will be in the following formats:

1- Online Courses and Resources:

Several certified online courses are available online for free or at a nominal fee on a broad range of topics. Detailed catalogue of the courses are provided as an annex to Institutional Capacity Development Framework.

This type of capacity building will be self-paced or tutored structure.

2- Mentoring and Coaching Services:

Although several online courses are available, mentoring and coaching services are critical to provide tailored and close support for organizations which have weak systems and need to invest in their staff. The main goal of such services is to provide professional, tailored, close, and continuous support for L/NNGOs to develop their organizational capacities and attain a higher level of performance. Structured evaluations will determine areas of professional development that L/ NNGOs need. In order to use resources efficiently and scale up the impact of the project, the beneficiary L/NNGOs will be clustered into groups depending on their level of needs in a focus area (for ex, Finance), and will be take tailored support in that area from professional service providers.

The service providers will be as follows:

- a) Professional consultancy firms or organizations who are internationally or nationally recognized experts in their area of focus. These consultancy firms are most versatile and can provide well-tailored services to even community-based organizations and community-based networks and accompany them throughout the process and in local languages too.
- b) International or National NGO's which have more robust operational systems and structures. This can be through shadowing, on the job training, and also through staff exchanges that allow placing a local organization staff at the national NGO for some time or vice versa. The I/

- NNGOs which provide these services would require additional funding for this to provide the mentoring and coaching services to local organizations.
- c) Private Sector companies, which have experience in providing these services including shadowing and on the job training at a cost or pro bono basis.

Logframe:

Impact	Indicator	Baseline	Target
Local and National NGOs access direct funding and Donor Funding is used more efficiently	# of L/NNGOs with reduced risk ratings # of L/NNGOs which are pass HACT assessment and can access HPF # of children reached per 1 USD		

Activity	Indicator	Baseline	Target
Capacity Assessment and Evaluation of Needs are Conducted based on well vetted minimum standards for baselines	# of Organizations Assessed	0	3
Institutional Capacity Development Plan Developed	# of ICD Plans Finalized	0	3
Organizations Complete their ICD according to customized ICD Plan	# of Organizations Completing ICD Development Plans # of Policies Produced, Improved, or Adapted # of L/NNGO Staff trained		

Budget: (for 1 beneficiary L/NNGOs)

Total Cost: 88,610 USD

Line Items:

Certified online training courses organizations with some level of institutional capacity	100
Certified online training courses for individual organizations with little or no institutional capacity	200
Shorter training for organizations with some level of institutional capacities (Mentoring and Coaching)	10,000
Longer training and establishment of systems for organizations with little or no institutional capacity (Mentoring and Coaching)	20,000
Costs related to IT for organizations with some level of IT capacity	9,000
Costs related to IT for organizations with very little IT capacity	25,000
Implementing partners	18,000
Overhead costs for implementing partners (7%)	5,761
Total	88,061



13. Advocacy Strategy format - Nutrition Cluster Advocacy Toolkit

Advocacy strategies do not need to be long documents. Four to eight pages that includes all relevant information is a good length. To facilitate sharing with other colleagues and partners, it is important to use clear and accessible language. The following template is a useful guide for the development of an advocacy strategy.

Advocacy Strategy template

Title of the strategy: (reference to country and/or issue) _____
(e.g. Nutrition Cluster Advocacy Strategy to scale up nutrition programming in Afghanistan)

Date: _____ **Expected duration of the strategy:** _____

01 Advocacy overall goal

02 Advocacy change objectives

03 Description of the problem and why it is important

04 Targets

05 Allies and partners

06 Potential risks and mitigation

07 Key advocacy messages

08 Available evidence (reference to existing reports that can be used to support advocacy messages)

09 Opportunities for advocacy

10 Key activities (timing and advocacy approaches)

11 Indicators of progress (to support monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning)