



# Anti-racism & Localisation in Nutrition in Emergencies

A Quick Resource Guide For Nutrition Actors  
and Practitioners



**Anti-racism** is a proactive course of action to address racism at all levels—systemic, institutional, and individual. **Localisation\*** comprises efforts to address the power imbalances between international and national actors, in order to better meet the needs of affected populations.

Anti-racism and localisation are both synergistic and essential to Nutrition in Emergencies (NiE) because of the interlinked histories between colonialism and humanitarianism that continue to affect our work today.

Nutrition practitioners in the ‘Global South’\*\* are persistently portrayed as lacking capacity and expertise while white ‘Global North’ nutrition practitioners are more readily seen as unbiased experts. These notions perpetuate colonial perspectives and impede our ability to provide quality, contextualised, and life-saving nutrition support.

**Better understanding and applying these principles is more important now than ever.**

The murder of George Floyd in the United States in May 2020 and the #BlackLivesMatter movement sparked the GNC’s own anti-racism and localisation journey. While there is still more work to be done to challenge and dismantle racism and the racial bias rooted within us and our systems, as well as breaking barriers to shift power to local and national actors, we are grateful for the voices who have influenced us along our journey thus far.

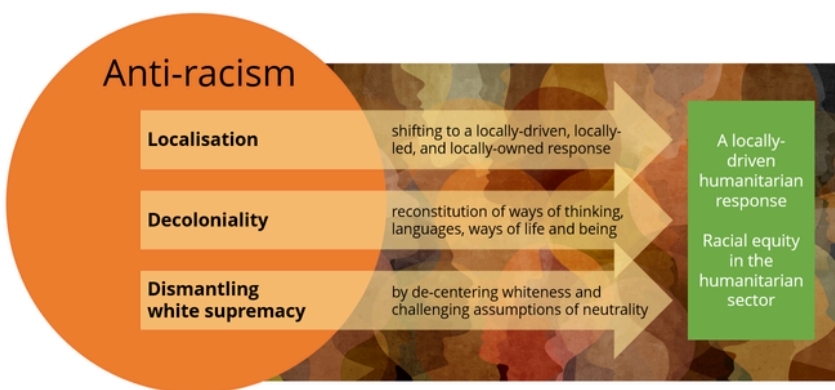
This resource guide is a humble collection of materials that humanitarian and development actors can use to support their efforts towards localisation, decoloniality, and dismantling white supremacy in order to address power imbalances within their work.

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## Our Anti-racism & Localisation Approach

We believe that when localisation is implemented as a restorative process, it contributes to anti-racism efforts and the ultimate vision of racial equity in the humanitarian sector. We also acknowledge that while localisation contributes to anti-racism efforts, localisation alone may not be sufficient for transformative change. Therefore, combining anti-racism with localisation efforts moves us towards this vision in a more comprehensive way, while meaningfully confronting racism and power imbalances in our organisations and in the sector at large.



*Figure A: Anti-racism and Localisation Conceptual Framework*

The GNC’s **Anti-racism and Localisation Working Group** aims to create and build anti-racism and localisation principles and practices into the Global Nutrition Cluster, and share our experiences and lessons learnt with the wider humanitarian sector.

We conceptualise the relationship between anti-racism and localisation using the conceptual framework above, which positions anti-racism as the overarching proactive course of action.

## ► Anti-racism & Localisation Resources

In order to learn and unlearn on the topics of anti-racism and localisation, we have focused our efforts on learning from the lived experiences of Black, Indigenous, and people of colour—particularly those living in the ‘Global South’ and humanitarian settings. The following resources—articles, guidance, webinars, podcasts, and online trainings—were especially compelling for us and instigated important conversations among our colleagues.

### Localisation re-imagined by Arbie Baguios



Arbie Baguios is a researcher and the founder of Aid Re-imagined, an initiative that advocates for a more effective and just aid system. Arbie produced six articles for the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance (ALNAP) in humanitarian action, each of which explores a different dichotomy of the localisation debate. ALNAP’s network of more than 100 members support humanitarians everywhere to improve humanitarian action by exchanging evidence, experience, and practical ideas.

[Read the essay series.](#)

### Time to decolonise aid: Insights and lessons from a global consultation



In 2020, Peace Direct, Adeso, the Alliance for Peacebuilding, and Women of Colour Advancing Peace and Security held a three-day online consultation with 158 activists, decision-makers, academics, journalists, and practitioners across the globe to gather their thoughts on the current power dynamics and imbalances that exist within the humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding sectors. This report presents the findings and recommendations from that consultation.

[Read the full report.](#)

## More guidance, toolkits, and resources

- [Inter-agency toolkit on localisation in humanitarian coordination](#)  
*Save the Children*
- [Guidance on strengthening participation, representation, and leadership of local and national actors in humanitarian coordination](#)  
*Inter-Agency Standing Committee*
- [Guidance on engagement, participation, and decision-making by women-led organisations \(WLOs\) in humanitarian action](#)  
*Inter-Agency Standing Committee*
- [Integrating localisation in the humanitarian programme cycle](#)  
*Global Protection Cluster*

## ▶ Webinars



### When the west falls into crisis: Rethinking humanitarianism in the midst of #BlackLivesMatter and COVID-19

The combination of a COVID-19 pandemic and a global anti-racism movement put into question traditional conceptions of humanitarian aid, prompting the question: How might we change international solidarity?



### How to be anti-racist in aid

An open and honest discussion about racism within the aid community and what can be done to address it, facilitated by Aid Re-imagined.



### Decolonising global health: Perspectives from nurses and midwives

Nurse and midwife leaders share their perspectives on what it will take to deconstruct the narratives, structures, and policies that perpetuate the social inequality, including racism, colonialism, sexism, and problematic power dynamics, inherent in global health.

## ▶ Podcasts

### Rethinking Humanitarianism

The New Humanitarian podcast explores the future of aid in a world of escalating crises.

[LISTEN HERE](#)



### The Power Shift

Dev Hub's podcast brings diverse voices together for wide-ranging conversations on decolonisation.

[LISTEN HERE](#)



### Global Health Unfiltered

The Global Health Unfiltered podcast discusses the unspoken realities of global health in Africa and the world.

[LISTEN HERE](#)



### Living Decoloniality

The Living Decoloniality podcast shares practical experiences of decolonial re-existence through the aid sector.

[LISTEN HERE](#)



## ► Online trainings

Unlearning racism and unhealthy power dynamics in our sector and ourselves is an ongoing process. The GNC Anti-racism & Localisation Working Group has supported this process by hosting an anti-racism training for the GNC Team annually since 2022. One GNC team member reflecting on their takeaway from a self-paced training by Amnesty International:

“This course has made me reflect more on the multiple layers of oppression and disempowerment for the global majority in different geographical locations and how to champion anti-racism in the day-to-day.”

Below are some self-paced online trainings some within the GNC have completed to strengthen their anti-racism and localisation journey.



**Anti-Racism and Human Rights: Understanding and confronting racism, discrimination and inequality.**  
*Amnesty International*

In this training, participants learn about the anti-racism movement in the UK and what individuals can do in their everyday life to champion it.

**Historical, Systemic and Intersectional Anti-racism: From Awareness to Action**  
*University of British Columbia*

Through a Canadian academia lens, this course systemically covers and uncovers implicit and explicit forms of historic, systemic and institutional racisms and their colonial and intersectional impacts on marginalised peoples and their communities in the past and today.



**Localisation in the Humanitarian Coordination System**

***Global Education, WASH, and Nutrition Clusters, plus Child Protection AoR***

This e-learning module was created to support cluster and area of responsibility (AoR) coordination teams increase their understanding of localisation in humanitarian coordination. It offers practical examples of how localisation practices have been implemented in clusters and AoRs globally and at the country level, along with tips for overcoming barriers that might hinder localisation efforts.



**Localisation Concepts**

***FABO (Founded by members of ACT ALLIANCE and hosted by DanChurchAid)***

This course helps to understand the different concepts around localisation as well as how to shift power to local and national actors.



## Lessons learned & key takeaways

As we continue on this path, here are some of our key takeaways and reflections that may help inform others on similar journeys:

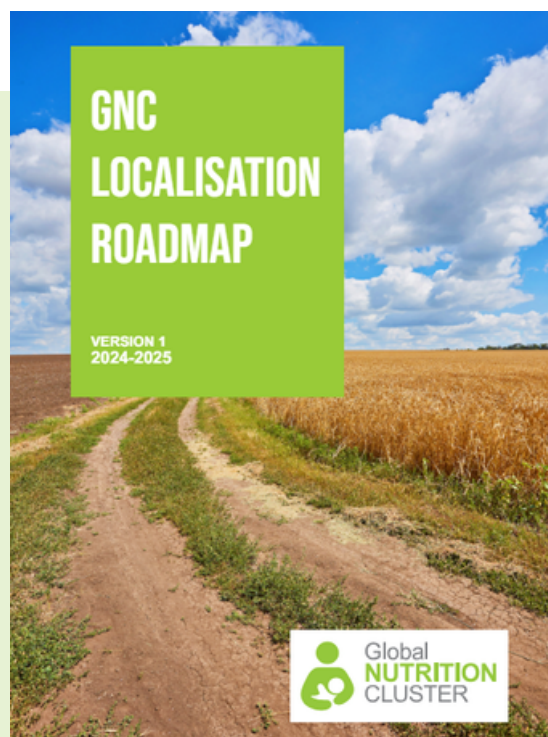
- Engaging with anti-racism requires humility and a willingness to learn and unlearn
- We must be willing to be comfortable with being uncomfortable
- White fragility is best discussed and addressed in all-white spaces
- The burden of dismantling systems of racism should not be on Black, Indigenous, or people of colour
- Localisation alone is insufficient to address the power imbalances in the sectors
- There are often national and regional practitioners with both technical and contextual expertise relevant to the technical needs in-country, and we should prioritise them
- We as a global mechanism need to do a better job of connecting with available expertise in the countries and regions where we provide support
- Shifting from the standard practice of using global practitioners to prioritising national and regional practitioners can be straight forward in terms of implementation, but requires flexible funding, advocacy efforts, and a mindset shift from top-down approaches
- This journey does not have a destination—we are all socialised into a racial system and need to continually confront and unlearn our racist conditioning. The GNC will continue on this journey

## The way forward

Central to our commitment to localisation moving forward is the [GNC Localisation Roadmap](#), which provides an overview of the GNC's current efforts to contribute to localisation and the activities required to support a more enabling environment for a locally-led humanitarian response at a country-level. Divided into three parts with an eight-point plan, it transforms critical concepts into 42 actionable initiatives to progressively shift power towards local and national actors and foster an environment where locally-driven aid can thrive.

The roadmap is in alignment with [IASC Recommended Actions to increase participation, representation, and leadership of LNAs in IASC humanitarian coordination mechanisms](#) and serves as an annex to the [GNC 2022-2025 strategy](#) in support of a reinforced commitment to localisation for the second term.

**[Read the GNC Localisation Roadmap Summary.](#)**



\*The GNC acknowledges that the term 'Localisation' is an imperfect term that is top-down in nature and will likely be replaced in the future.

\*\* According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Global South broadly comprises Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia (excluding Israel, Japan, and South Korea), and Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand). The GNC acknowledges that the term 'Global South' is an imperfect term that is top-down in nature and that it has received criticism and will likely be replaced in the future.

The Anti-racism & Localisation Working Group aims to create and build anti-racism and localisation principles and practices into the Global Nutrition Cluster, and share our experiences and lessons learnt with the wider nutrition sector.

Scan the QR Code to learn more >





**Special thanks to:**

*Alexandra Humphreys, GNC Strategic Development Consultant and Anti-racism & Localisation Working Group co-chair | Martha Nakakande, GNC Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) Advisor and Anti-racism & Localisation Working Group co-chair | independent members and contributing organisations to the the GNC Anti-racism & Localisation Working Group, including: International Medical Corps, Action Against Hunger Canada, UNICEF, World Vision International, Action Against Hunger USA, ADRA, and Building Foundation for Development.*