

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

THE STATE OF LOCALISATION IN ZIMBABWE

A case study of Cyclone Idai and the
2019/2020 drought emergency responses



Trócaire

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The **cover photo** captures a community member who received cash from Caritas Bulawayo staff in Mangwe district of Zimbabwe as part of the drought response cash transfer programme. **Photo:** Ben Mahaka.

All **other photos** were taken at the cash distribution of the Trócaire and Caritas Bulawayo project to provide humanitarian assistance to vulnerable, food-insecure households affected by both drought and COVID-19 in Mangwe District of Province Matabeleland South. **Photos:** Ben Mahaka.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

C4C	Charter for Change
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CCJP	Catholic Commission Justice and Peace
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
COVID	Corona Virus Disease
DCP	Department of Civil Protection
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GOZ	Government of Zimbabwe
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
ICR	Indirect Cost Recovery
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
JPV	Jekesa Pfungwa
KII	Key Informant Interview
LNNGO	Local and National Non-Governmental Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
USAID	United States Aid for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme

PREFACE

The concept of ‘localisation of aid’ has been at the forefront of humanitarian discourse since the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016. The summit resulted in the ‘Grand Bargain’, an agreement between the largest donors and aid organisations that aims to direct more resources towards people in need and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action. Grand Bargain signatories have committed to ‘making principled humanitarian action as local as possible and as international as necessary’, while continuing to recognise the vital role of international actors.

Similarly, the Charter for Change aims to transform the ways the humanitarian system operates to enable local and national actors to play a more prominent role in humanitarian response. To date, 38 international NGOs have signed the Charter for Change. By doing so, they commit themselves to the promotion of a more locally driven humanitarian system. In addition to undertaking advocacy to emphasise the importance of local actors to donors, signatories have committed to passing on at least 25 percent of their own humanitarian funding directly to local and national NGOs (LNNGOs).

While the Grand Bargain and the Charter for Change are rooted in the humanitarian sector, the principles enshrined in these commitments are applicable across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. The humanitarian sector may serve as an entry point for these conversations. However, recent questions about power, race, diversity, equity, and inclusion have brought into clear focus the need to strengthen efforts across the Triple Nexus to critically examine the relationships between local and international actors and undertake deliberate efforts to truly shift power to the Global South.

The report, “Situational analysis of the state of localisation in Zimbabwe”, was undertaken in light of shared observations by Trócaire, Caritas, CAFOD and Welthungerhilfe of the role of local and national actors during two recent emergencies. Additionally, these agencies noted that the aims of localisation as outlined in commitments such as the Grand Bargain and Charter for Change have yet to take root in Zimbabwe. The report focuses on the localisation landscape in broad terms, but also specifically in relation to the experiences of LNNGOs during the recent crises of Cyclone Idai and the 2019/2020 drought.

As demonstrated by the research, local and national actors in Zimbabwe do not necessarily identify themselves as purely humanitarian or purely development-focused in nature. Instead, their work is constantly adapting to their context, including periods of comparative stability as well as times of humanitarian crisis. Consequently, the agencies that commissioned this report intend to apply the findings beyond humanitarianism, with the hope that the learnings will result in concrete changes in relationships and decision-making across sectors.

It is important to acknowledge the role of the various LNNGOs, international NGOs, and donors that took part in this research, as well as Irish Aid for funding the research and production of this report, through Trócaire’s Global Hub on Partnership and Localisation. The agencies that took part in developing the research hope the findings will shed light on the status of localisation in Zimbabwe and present a pathway forward for championing equality in partnership relations and promoting the voice and influence of local and national actors in development cooperation, humanitarian action, and peacebuilding.

Trócaire’s Global Hub on Partnership and Localisation

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Global actors in humanitarianism and development increasingly agree on the potential of local and national non-governmental organisations (LNNGOs) in responding to humanitarian crises as well as supporting recovery and development. These actors also recognise the challenges and obstacles that may impede LNNGOs from taking a leading role in this regard. To address these challenges, global actors have taken action to ensure a stronger role for local and national actors—particularly those responding to humanitarian emergencies—in the form of commitments to increased funding for LNNGOs, partnerships, transparency, and strengthening of local capacity, among others, through platforms such as the Grand Bargain and the Charter for Change (C4C). Several international organisations and donors operating in Zimbabwe are signatories to the Grand Bargain and the Charter for Change. These commitments were signed in 2015 and 2016, but there has not yet been an assessment of their progress in Zimbabwe.

The aim of this study was to conduct a situational analysis of the state of these commitments, focusing on the Cyclone Idai and 2019/20 drought responses. This report documents the extent to which localisation is being put into practice in Zimbabwe during this period and the role of local and national actors during and after these crises.

The study used a cross-sectional design to gather qualitative data from donor agencies, UN agencies, international NGOs (INGOs) and LNNGOs who responded to the humanitarian emergencies caused by Cyclone Idai and the 2019/2020 drought. The study used qualitative data from key informants and focus group discussions to assess progress within key areas of localisation, including policy, funding, partnership, capacity strengthening, and voice and influence in coordination.

Findings

Policy: Most donors and INGOs are signatories to the Grand Bargain commitments on localisation, but many do not have specific global policies and strategies in place to shift their efforts towards localisation. Within Zimbabwe, donors and INGOs do not have specialised plans and

benchmarks on localisation. At present, there is no working group on localisation in Zimbabwe.

Funding: Fifty percent of the institutional donors interviewed have mechanisms through which local and national actors can access direct funding for emergency response. INGOs and UN agencies provided most of the funding to LNNGOs during the two emergencies. Donors, UN agencies, and INGOs do not have any funding quotas for local and national actors. The quality of funding to local and national actors generally covers programme running costs and meeting the minimum humanitarian standards. LNNGOs, however, feel that the funding is not sufficient to cover organisational capacity development and capital equipment. LNNGOs stated that they faced barriers to accessing funding (including co-financing requirements, pre-application costs, and funding based on reimbursement), as well as an inability to compete with INGOs for funding.

LNNGOs felt they faced significant risks, which funding partners did not share, due to structural issues. The risks identified during the study include limited funding, reputational risks, political risks, and financial management and fraud risks. The LNNGOs believed they had adequate systems in place to mitigate financial management and fraud risks, but that other forms of risk were more difficult to address.

Partnership: The nature of partnerships between funders and local and national actors was mainly project-based and functioned more like a subcontracting relationship. Some INGOs funded LNNGOs with whom they had long term relationships through other longer-term programmes and existing institutional partnerships. Funding partners had more say in defining programming priorities and modalities (where these were on a larger scale), national level projects, and new relationships. LNNGOs had more influence in defining programme priorities and modalities when working in longer-term partnerships.

Capacity strengthening: Capacity strengthening efforts by funders were mostly aimed at building the competencies of technical staff and did not tend to cover institutional strengthening or management of capital investments. Funders did not coordinate on capacity strengthening plans.

In most instances, capacity strengthening efforts did not have adequate follow-up or employ evaluation mechanisms.

Voice and influence in coordination: Local and national actors participated actively in local and district level coordination mechanisms. However, their participation decreased at provincial and national levels. Local and national actors faced challenges related to funding, human resources, knowledge about coordination platforms, and centralisation of platforms when trying to participate fully in coordination efforts. Local and national actors have little direct interaction with institutional donors, and they do not have a dedicated group or platform to amplify their voices and assert their influence on humanitarian policy and practice.

Recommendations

The team drew the following recommendations from the study's findings:

Policy

1. The humanitarian and development sector in Zimbabwe should establish a national working group on localisation.
2. The humanitarian coordination system should actively involve LNNGOs in the UN-led humanitarian response plan.
3. LNNGOs, INGOs, and institutional donors should consider formulating local level localisation plans.

Funding

4. The humanitarian system and INGOs should monitor and report on humanitarian funding implemented through local partners. This transparency should also be applied to development funding.
5. Institutional donors, INGOs, and UN agencies should consider adopting funding targets for supporting LNNGOs in emergencies.
6. INGOs and institutional donors should reconsider co-financing and reimbursement mechanisms.
7. LNNGOs should strengthen accountability systems and work towards improving the perception of lack of accountability among LNNGOs.
8. The humanitarian system should develop mechanisms for consolidating available

funding and making funding more flexible to access for LNNGOs.

9. Funding partners should consider funding capital assets, beyond simple project assets like computers and furniture, for LNNGOs.

Partnerships

10. LNNGOs and INGOs should shift from project-based relationships to strategic longer-term partnerships.
11. LNNGOs and INGOs should build more equal and transparent relationships.

Capacity Strengthening

12. International actors should consider setting up humanitarian capacity strengthening projects, in close coordination with local and national actors.
13. Funding partners' capacity strengthening efforts should be coordinated and measurable.

Voice and Influence in Coordination

14. LNNGOs should have a more organised coordination specific to humanitarian response.
15. LNNGOs should create a database of LNNGOs involved in humanitarian action.
16. LNNGOs and INGOs should advocate for LNNGOs to co-chair working groups and clusters.
17. The humanitarian system should decentralise coordination platforms.
18. Funding partners and LNNGOs should budget for coordination.

2 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

There is growing consensus among humanitarian and development stakeholders that local and national actors are instrumental for ensuring the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, and sustainability of humanitarian action and results. Local and national actors are often in place before, during, and after crises and are usually the first to respond when an emergency occurs. Recognising this critical role, international humanitarian actors have, since the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit¹ Grand Bargain, committed to making principled humanitarian action as local as possible and as international as necessary. The commitment to working in partnership with local organisations is further articulated in the Charter for Change (C4C)², an initiative led by both international and national NGOs to ensure a more locally led humanitarian response.³

Charter for Change

The Charter for Change (C4C) is an initiative signed by 38 international INGOs that commits them to change the way they work with and relate to local and national actors. The C4C has been endorsed by over 440 LNNGOs. Signatories to the C4C made the following commitments:

1. Increase direct funding to southern-based NGOs for humanitarian action
2. Reaffirm the Principles of Partnership
3. Increase transparency around resource transfers to southern-based local and national NGOs
4. Stop undermining local capacity
5. Emphasise the importance of national actors
6. Address subcontracting
7. Robust organisational support and capacity strengthening
8. Communication to the media and the public about partners

2.1 DEFINITION OF LOCALISATION

Localisation refers to efforts to develop stronger roles for local actors in humanitarian coordination and response (locally led responses) and the increased allocation of humanitarian financing to local actors for the purpose of increasing the effectiveness and relevance of humanitarian assistance and its long-term impacts.

Localisation, therefore, encompasses processes targeted at creating an enabling environment for local actors to assume leadership roles in humanitarian response. It seeks to foster transformative, equitable, and strategic partnerships between local, national, and international actors with the aim of empowering and promoting the work of local and national actors in humanitarian response. The term can also be applied to local and national actors involved in development and peacebuilding. In this study, local actors included NGOs at national, provincial, and community levels.

2.2 ZIMBABWE STUDY FOCUS

Global commitments to localisation signify that localisation is firmly on the agendas of key actors within the humanitarian and development sectors. The extent to which these commitments are put into practice, however, varies from country to country and from one humanitarian response to another. The degree to which humanitarian action has been localised in Zimbabwe was largely unknown before this study. Aside from the COVID-19 pandemic, Zimbabwe has experienced two severe humanitarian crises over the past two years: Cyclone Idai in March 2019 and a severe drought that resulted in widespread food insecurity in 2019 and 2020. The Cyclone Idai and 2019/2020 drought responses were comprehensively supported by multi-sector funding, coordination, and technical support. This study engaged a range of actors in Zimbabwe to understand the extent to which localisation principles were put into practice during the response to Cyclone Idai and the 2019/2020 drought, the lessons learned

1 interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain-hosted-iasc

2 charter4change.org

3 www.odi.org/publications/10381-time-let-go-remaking-humanitarian-action-modern-era

from the response and recommendations for future responses. The study explored the extent to which local actors were engaged in the humanitarian responses, as well as advances in localisation across the following five key areas:

- Organisational policy
- Funding and resources
- Partnership
- Capacity strengthening
- Voice and influence in coordination

These priority areas were developed as part of the C4C commitments signed by NGOs working in humanitarian action in 2017⁴ and the Grand Bargain, which also outlines donors' commitments to promote the work of local actors. The organisations pledged to reaffirm the principles of partnership, focusing on ensuring equality, transparency, results-oriented approaches, responsibility, and complementarity. The signatories of the C4C also committed to increasing direct funding to local and national NGOs for humanitarian action. The parties further agreed to robust organisational support and capacity strengthening with a commitment to fund adequate administrative support for local partners by 2020. This research examined the extent to which organisations in Zimbabwe have adhered to the key areas outlined in the commitments, the barriers they face in implementing these agreements, and opportunities for further entrenchment of their obligations.

2.3 CYCLONE IDAI

A tropical cyclone swept through parts of Mozambique, Malawi, and Zimbabwe in March 2019, leaving a trail of destruction in its wake. Lives were lost and property, including crops and livestock, were destroyed. The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies estimates that the cyclone affected more than 270,000 people in Zimbabwe, leaving 341 dead and many others missing. The cyclone left 17,608 households without shelter, damaged 12 health facilities, and caused further damage to water, sanitation, and hygiene infrastructure. The cyclone affected 139 schools, including 33 primary schools and 10 secondary schools that had to close temporarily, leaving 9,084 learners without access to education.

The president of Zimbabwe declared the cyclone a state of disaster on March 15, 2019. The Buhera, Chimanimani and Chipinge districts of Manicaland Province were the areas most affected, while Bikita district in the Masvingo province was also impacted.

2.4 2019/2020 DROUGHT

The 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 farming seasons were characterised by erratic rains, and flooding in 2019, caused by Cyclone Idai, and led to poor harvests. The drought occurred within the context of an economic crisis when the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) attempted to stabilise the economy through the implementation of austerity measures. The drought and economic crisis resulted in severe food insecurity for more than 2.2 million urban and 4.3 million rural people. By March 2020, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) had reported that nearly 1.8 million people received food assistance from humanitarian actors, complementing the GoZ's distribution of food to 3.8 million people across the country.

4 charter4change.files.wordpress.com/2016/02/charter-for-change-july-20152.pdf

3 STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 STUDY DESIGN

The research consultants employed a cross-sectional panel design, researching a cross-section of participants at one time. The consultancy team interviewed and collected data from various stakeholders over a five-week period. The consultancy team collected data relating to the two humanitarian emergencies: Cyclone Idai (March 2019) and the 2019/2020 drought. Furthermore, the consultancy team gathered a number of case studies highlighting good practices of localisation during the emergencies, which are included in the report.

3.2 METHODOLOGY

The consultancy team primarily employed a qualitative research methodology to explore the depth and breadth of the key areas relating to localisation mentioned above. The primary data collection method used to answer the research questions and make an objective judgement on the progress made against the Grand Bargain commitments was Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). The study matrix (see Annex 1) and table 2 show the list of indicators used per study area. The consultancy team also conducted two focus group discussions with representatives from two INGOs and six LNNGOs. The consultancy team used purposive sampling by targeting organisations involved in both emergencies.

The consultancy team further broke down the variables in the research matrix to reflect specific questions from the data collection tools. The table below shows the number and type of organisations interviewed in both the KIIs and focus group discussions.

Type of institution	Number
Local NGOs/CBOs	15
International NGOs	9
UN agencies	3
Local Red Cross chapter	1
Institutional donors	4
Coordination platforms	1
Total	33

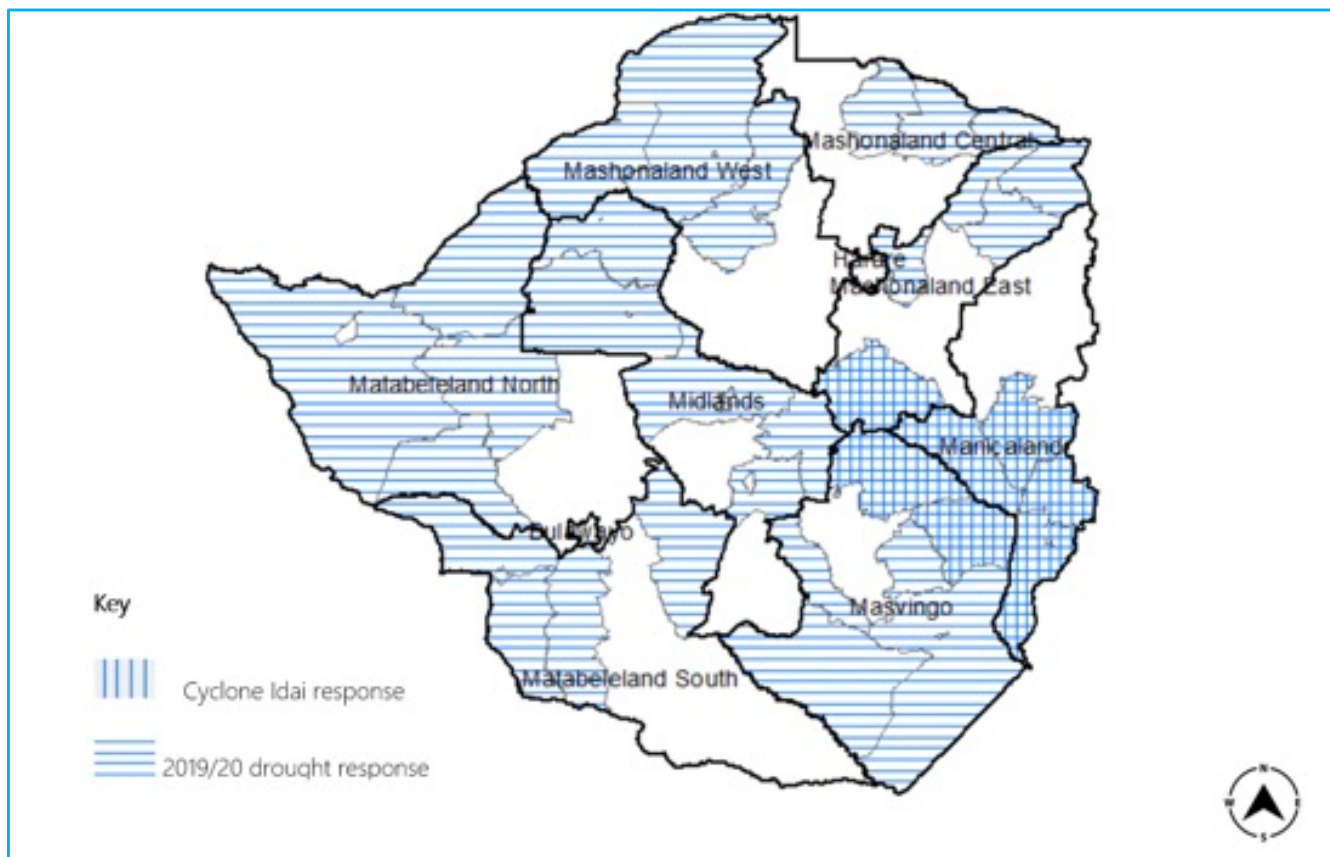
Table 1: Key informants interviewed



Figure 1: Interviewed NGOs' sectors of response

The study reached 24 local and international NGOs working across seven sectors during the Cyclone Idai and drought response. Most of the NGOs worked in the food security and WASH sectors, with only one working in the health sector, as shown in Figure 1. All INGOs and LNNGOs worked across more than one sector.

The consultancy team interviewed local and international organisations, whose collective responses to the cyclone and drought covered 38 districts. Map 1 below shows the geographical coverage of the participating organisations. The response to Cyclone Idai was concentrated in Chimanimani and Chipinge districts, whilst the response to the drought was spread across the country, covering all provinces.



Map 1: Geographical coverage of interviewed NGOs



4 FINDINGS



The report presents findings across five research areas: policy, funding, partnership, capacity strengthening, and voice and influence in coordination. The consultancy team reached a subjective conclusion on the status of localisation under each of the areas, using the indicators and the scale below. The policy focus cut across each of the areas with their defined indicators.

No Significant Progress	Little Progress	Some Progress	Good Progress	Excellent Progress
<p>Quantity and quality of funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliberate donor funding policies for local actors Increase in humanitarian funding to local actors Increase in the number of funding mechanisms made available to local actors Accessibility of funding to local actors Funding for operating costs including relevant institutional costs and operational costs (overheads, security, assets etc.) Provision of adequate funding for meeting quality standards Flexibility to allow local actors to make reasonable adjustments during implementation Local actors have robust financial management systems and accounting procedures Local actors have effective systems in place for mitigation and management 				
<p>Partnership approaches and quality of partner relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local actors have adequate participation in all aspects of the project cycle Local actors are engaged in strategic partnerships, which support organisational development Local actors exercise power within these partnerships 				
<p>Local capacity strengthening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies are in place to strengthen local capacity Resources are in place to strengthen local capacity (for longer-term and response funding) Capacity strengthening efforts are need-driven and target both organisational development and improvement of technical competencies to meet quality standards Capacity strengthening efforts have clear measurements and parameters in place Capacity strengthening efforts have demonstratable results Support for capacity development by INGOs/UN is coordinated and the results are cumulative 				
<p>Coordination, voice, and influence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local actors are active members within the main coordination mechanisms (District, Provincial, and National) Local actors take leading roles in coordination of humanitarian assistance Local actors influence response programme design and priorities in-country Local actors can influence donor and government policy Relationship between humanitarian architecture and government coordination mechanisms 				

Table 2: Subjective rating of localisation⁵



No Significant Progress	Little Progress	Some Progress	Good Progress	Excellent Progress
<p>Most donors and INGOs are signatories to the Grand Bargain commitments on localisation, but they do not have specific global policies and strategies aimed at improving localisation. At a local level, donors and INGOs do not have specialised plans and benchmarks on localisation. There is no working group on localisation in Zimbabwe.</p>				

Twelve out of the sixteen INGOs, UN agencies, and institutional donors interviewed are signatories to the Grand Bargain⁶, and five out of nine INGOs interviewed are signatories to the C4C⁷. At a global level, three out of the nine INGOs interviewed have a specific policy document or are actively working on a strategy paper relating to the localisation of aid. None of the INGOs interviewed had written local policies, strategies, or deliberate targets on localisation. At national level, there is no working group developing or collaborating on localisation in Zimbabwe. According to the INGOs and LNNGOs interviewed, there is not an organised or dedicated platform for discussing strategies and plans for localisation. For some representatives of LNNGOs, the interviews were the first time they had heard about the concept of localisation. Their lack of involvement in the localisation agenda caused some to question the sincerity of the whole initiative. One key informant from a local NGO remarked, “...they have already made a decision about what we need without us.”

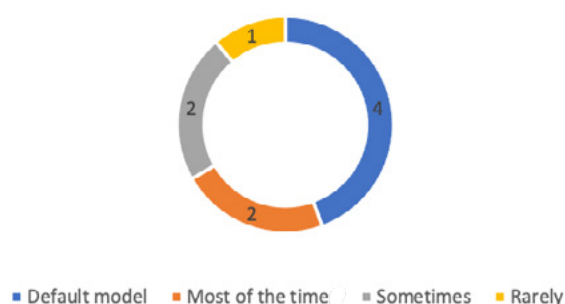


Figure 2: INGOs' practice of working with LNNGOs

Four of the INGOs interviewed stated that they have a default model of working through LNNGOs: two work through LNNGOs most of the time, two said that they sometimes work through LNNGOs, and one indicated that they rarely or never work through LNNGOs in humanitarian response. Figure 2 shows how the INGOs taking part in the study work with LNNGOs in humanitarian action in Zimbabwe.

Good Practice: Trócaire's institutional prioritisation of localisation

As part of Trócaire's new strategic plan (2021-2025), entitled *Local Power, Global Justice*, Trócaire has committed to an evolution in its approaches to partnership by placing localisation at the centre of its work. This strategic change involves shifting greater power towards local partners and supporting local civil society in gaining more voice and visibility within the humanitarian and development systems and processes. Trócaire has set up a global hub, based out of Nairobi, to help advance localisation in the countries where Trócaire works. The hub will be following the recommendations of Trócaire's *Partnership in Practice* report,⁸ particularly those relating to strengthening its commitment to localisation. Further recommendations include updating its internal policies and developing an organisational strategy on partnership and localisation.

6 interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain-official-website/grand-bargain-signatories

7 charter4change.org/signatories

8 www.trocaire.org/sites/default/files/resources/policy/partnership_in_practice_-_steps_to_localisation_web.pdf



4.2 FUNDING

No Significant Progress	Little Progress	Some Progress	Good Progress	Excellent Progress
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Two out of the four institutional donors interviewed have mechanisms through which local and national actors can access direct funding. INGOs and UN agencies represented the main access points for funding for local and national actors during the two emergencies. Donors, UN agencies, and INGOs do not have any funding quotas for local and national actors. The nature of funding to local and national actors generally covers programme running costs and ability to meet the minimum humanitarian standards. LNNGOs feel, however, that the funding does not provide adequate coverage for capacity strengthening or capital equipment. LNNGOs face challenges accessing funding due to co-financing requirements, funding based on reimbursement, and difficulties conducting needs analyses and assessments without having existing funds to support this. Most LNNGOs interviewed believed they had some ability to change budget lines over time depending on evolving needs, albeit within the project scope.

4.2.1 Funding mechanisms for local actors

Two out of the four institutional donor organisations interviewed have mechanisms through which they can fund LNNGOs directly for humanitarian response. Due to policy and administrative reasons, the other two do not have any mechanisms that LNNGOs can use for direct access to humanitarian funding. One donor stated that they could only fund organisations domiciled in the European Union due to policy and legislative reasons, whilst another donor stated they do not have the administrative capacity to handle multiple small grants. To reduce administrative burden, this donor funds either international partners or UN agencies that then administer awards to other organisations, including local entities.

Nevertheless, local entities, including LNNGOs, could access funding from all the institutional donors interviewed as sub-grantees of INGOs and UN agencies. The institutional donors interviewed did not have any contractual provisions within their grants to compel INGOs or UN agencies to fund LNNGOs. All four donors stated, however, that they encourage the INGOs and UN agencies they support to work with LNNGOs where appropriate and feasible. It was not possible to obtain actual funding figures, but Figure 3 illustrates the flow of funding during the Cyclone Idai and 2019/2020 drought responses.



Figure 3: Humanitarian funding flows and sources for LNNGOs

LNNGOs felt that INGOs had the upper hand when it came to accessing funding from institutional donors. They held the perception that institutional donors are more inclined to fund INGOs based in their home countries for reasons relating to internal policies, historical relationships, and networking. Additionally, the LNNGOs stated that INGOs had more experience with the application processes and managing institutional donors' funds, which placed INGOs at an advantage when applying for funding.

All four institutional donors funded UN agencies directly, whilst only two funded local partners directly. All the UN agencies funded at least some local partners directly, although the bulk of their funding went through INGOs. Both INGOs and LNNGOs also obtained funding from sources other than the institutional donors and UN agencies. Examples of such funding included funds from members, the public, and private sector companies. Due to sensitivities around budgets, the study could not ascertain the value or proportion of these funds.

In the interviews, the LNNGOs ranked INGOs as their main source of direct funding during the cyclone, followed by UN agencies, other sources, and lastly institutional donors. Regarding the drought response, the LNNGOs and local actors ranked UN agencies as their main source of funding, followed by INGOs, other sources, and lastly institutional donors, as shown in Table 4.

Ranking	Cyclone Idai response	2019/2020 drought
1	INGOs	UN agencies
2	UN agencies	INGOs
3	Other sources	Other sources
4	Institutional donors	Institutional donors

Table 4: LNNGOs' ranking of sources of funding according to size

None of the INGOs interviewed had any quotas or earmarked funding for supporting LNNGOs in emergency response. With specific reference to Cyclone Idai, seven of the INGOs interviewed collaborated in their response efforts with LNNGOs in one form or another, whilst 6 of the INGOs interviewed did so during the 2019/2020 drought response. Two INGOs implemented responses directly and not through local partners during both emergencies, as illustrated in the figure below.

Responded through/ with LNNGOs	Yes	No
Cyclone Idai	7	2
2019/20 Drought ⁹	6	2

Figure 4: Number of INGOs working with LNNGOs during the Cyclone Idai and 2019/2020 drought response

Decisions on the amount of funding destined towards LNNGOs depended on the INGO response model, as well as the scale and scope of work done by LNNGOs. INGOs who responded to Cyclone Idai and the drought response through LNNGOs allocated between 20 and 95 percent of their response budget to their local partners. INGOs with a default approach of working through LNNGOs allocated

more of their budgets to local partners, whilst INGOs who also respond directly to emergencies assigned less of their funding to LNNGOs. More specifically, INGOs whose principal modality is working through LNNGOs allocated between 60 and 95 percent of the funding they received to LNNGOs. INGOs tended to retain funding for their overheads, monitoring, and oversight roles. In some instances, the INGOs retained funds for centralised procurements. Centralised procurement was cited as a risk factor by some LNNGOs who indicated that goods and services procured centrally often come with specifications that do not meet requirements on the ground, resulting in incomplete or below standard products that they must then justify or account for to local stakeholders.

Fifty percent of the INGOs interviewed do not work through local partners in humanitarian response as their default partnership model. INGOs that primarily respond directly to emergencies tended only to fund local partners who had expertise specific to certain areas or sectors. This expertise was most often in the areas of protection, child protection, gender-based violence, and human rights work.

4.2.2 Challenges to accessing funding by local actors

The main due diligence requirements for LNNGOs in accessing funding were around accountability and monitoring systems, the technical capacities of LNNGOs, and LNNGO policy and practice on issues such as safeguarding.

Although the INGOs interviewed stated that LNNGOs did not have difficulty in meeting due diligence standards, three INGOs said that they have waiver or derogation systems in place for LNNGOs who have capacity gaps that the INGO and LNNGO need to address. The waiver system for humanitarian response entails going forward with funding to LNNGOs so they can respond quickly whilst taking measures to address gaps identified in the due diligence process.

The clarity of donors' calls or requests for proposals did not seem to be a significant factor in preventing LNNGOs from accessing funding. On a scale of 1 (not clear) to 5 (very clear), five out of seven LNNGOs rated the calls or requests as 4 with two rating the calls or requests as 5 (very clear). LNNGOs stated that one of the

9 One interviewed INGO did not respond to the drought.

biggest challenges in accessing funding was the co-financing requirement. The co-financing across the two emergencies ranged between 10-15 percent of the total grants obtained. Co-financing presented a greater challenge to smaller organisations than larger, more established LNNGOs. Larger LNNGOs stated that they could use the monetary value of fixed assets, such as offices and warehouses, to count towards co-financing. Larger LNNGOs also had institutional donors that would provide funds for co-financing. Additional requirements that LNNGOs identified as preventing their access to funding included: pre-application costs, funding on a reimbursement basis, inability to compete with INGOs, access to information on proposals, and the need for audited accounts from applicants. With

reimbursement funding, the LNNGO is expected to meet the project costs upfront and then claim the costs back from the donor or INGO. LNNGOs highlighted that they often did not have enough cash flow to meet project costs before receiving the donor or INGO funds. LNNGOs also noted that they faced challenges financing pre-grant application costs such as conducting assessments and proposal development.

In one instance a local, women-led NGO suggested that the existence of gender-based discrimination also impacted their access to funding: "...*apart from that, we believe as a women's organisation, there are stereotypes that work to our disadvantage.*"



The table below contains some direct quotes from LNNGOs on the major challenges they face in accessing funding during emergencies.

Co-Financing “Some requirements, such as co-financing, are like telling someone in a wheelchair to go use the stairs, knowing fully well that they will fail– if you want to apply for a grant worth \$1m with 10% co-financing, the organisation has to raise \$100,000, which is quite significant and out of reach for many.”		Needs assessment and pre-application costs “We do not have the capacity to write proposals that require a needs assessment to be done first. We don’t have the funds to finance such activities; therefore, we find proposals to be costly.”
Reimbursement basis funding “Sometimes funding is provided on a reimbursement basis; no local organisation has the capacity to pre-finance their activities. The requirement eliminates LNNGOs from competing for funds.”	Need for Audited accounts “Many local organisations do not have the capacity or funding for regular institutional audits.”	Inability to compete with international organisations “Aside from the requirements such as co-financing, local organisations have to compete with international organisations, so we end up waiting to go into partnerships with INGOs because we cannot compete with them.”

Table 5: Quotes by local actors on how donor requirements prevented access to different types of funding

4.2.3 Quality of funding to local actors

Across the two emergencies, only one INGO had any stated policy on splitting costs with LNNGOs through Indirect Cost Recovery (ICR). INGOs did indicate, however, that they expect a split between direct programmatic and support costs in their local partners’ budgets, using ratios like 60/40 percent or 80/20 percent. These splits are also influenced by the institutional donor that is funding the project. The definition of programme costs, however, was not uniform across funders. The INGOs stated that they covered funding for meeting quality standards, purchasing working assets like computers, programme costs, and a share of indirect costs like offices and personnel.

This research sought to understand LNNGOs’ perceptions and experiences relating to the adequacy of funding for covering the costs of assets, overheads, and indirect costs and in meeting humanitarian standards. Figure 5 summarises the LNNGOs’ responses. Overall, LNNGOs thought funding was insufficient in terms of purchasing capital assets or covering overheads or indirect costs but was generally sufficient to meet humanitarian standards. According to the LNNGOs interviewed, funding rarely covered the purchase of capital assets such as vehicles. Additionally, LNNGOs felt that funding allocated to items like vehicle maintenance was minimal and barely covered the real costs. Interviewees thought that this funding approach allows LNNGOs to respond to immediate emergencies but undermines their preparedness and ability to respond to future disasters.

“When you are in crisis, the objective is to assist people on the ground, so funding partners do not focus on buying assets... they want organisations that can hit the ground running” – local NGO

Assets

Assets vital for project implementation

- Funding partners generally provide sufficient funding for working assets like laptops and furniture.
- Funding usually does not include budgets for purchasing vehicles. Vehicles are essential for current programming and building the capital base of local organisations for future responses and programming.
- Funding partners pay for “mileage” when LNNGOs use their own vehicles, but the funding is barely enough to cover vehicle maintenance and repair.
- Human resources funding is sometimes insufficient to cover all areas of expertise required for a programme.
- In some projects, LNNGOs are given second-hand assets that no longer have any monetary value.

Costs

Meeting overheads and indirect cost rate

- The donors decide how much they want to pay, which is often insufficient for LNNGOs.
- LNNGOs understand that INGOs allocate a percentage of the budget to indirect costs, but this arrangement is not available for LNNGOs; making indirect cost recovery available to LNNGOs would go a long way in ensuring institutional development.
- LNNGOs stated that they do not get funding for organisational audits, yet this is one of the requirements when partners conduct due diligence assessments.
- Exchange rate losses are not factored into budgets, nor are they funded.

Meeting standards

Ability to meet minimum humanitarian standards

- Some projects are underfunded and understaffed to the extent that the coordinator becomes an all-rounder who does everything.
- In some instances, LNNGOs feel the numbers of programme participants reached seem more important to international partners than the quality or depth of assistance.
- LNNGOs feel that limited funding does not permit the project to take programme participants through the full recovery journey.
- Funding partners usually provide technical and safeguarding training to support LNNGOs to meet minimum humanitarian standards.

Figure 5: LNNGOs’ perceptions on the adequacy of funding

Most LNNGOs interviewed believed they had some ability to change budget lines over time depending on evolving needs, albeit within the project scope. LNNGOs felt they could reprogramme funds if they had a good justification for doing so and communicated with and obtained consensus from funding partners. In instances where LNNGOs were part of substantial national programmes that had standard provisions, ways of working, and entitlements per programme participant, it was more challenging to change programming. These programmes would largely be driven by the funding partners with LNNGOs mainly playing an implementing or contractor type of role. LNNGOs stated that they had to adhere to agreed terms regardless of the changing context. Donor restrictions on budget flexibility ranged from restrictions on changes between different cost lines or the maximum allowed percentage changes within the same budget lines.

4.2.4 Risks and risk-sharing

LNNGOs believed they faced significant risks that funding partners did not share due to structural issues and the fact that the LNNGOs were the ones implementing programmes on the ground. Risks identified during the study

include limited funding, reputational risk, political risk, and financial management and fraud risks. The LNNGOs believed they had adequate systems in place to manage or mitigate financial management and fraud risks but that other forms of risk were difficult to address. Table 6 shows the risks identified by the LNNGOs.

Risk	Nature of risk	Mitigation measures
Limited funding	LNNGOs unable to meet government officials and stakeholders' expectations as these groups may demand allowances that funding partners do not pay for. Inability to meet the affected communities' significant needs due to limited funding resources.	Open communication on projects
Political risk	Risk of losing operating space and threats of persecution of LNNGOs if government officials perceive LNNGOs to be "dabbling" in politics.	Consistent stakeholder engagement and transparency
Reputational risk	LNNGOs are responsible for project implementation and interfacing with local stakeholders, but they have limited involvement in designing programmes. Vendors contracted by funding partners do not follow instructions by LNNGOs. LNNGOs growth strategies are compromised as funding partners do not always fund strategic growth of the organisation.	Engagement with stakeholders and funding partners
Financial management and fraud	Risk of fraud.	Internal control and accountability systems

Table 6: Risks faced by LNNGOs



4.3 PARTNERSHIP

No Significant Progress	Little Progress	Some Progress	Good Progress	Excellent Progress
<p>The nature of partnerships between funders and local actors was mostly project-based and of a more subcontracting nature. INGOs did, however, fund LNNGOs with whom they had long-term partnerships through other longer-term programmes and institutional relationships. LNNGOs had more say in defining programme priorities and modalities if they had prior long-term programming arrangements in place with the funder than when they were engaged in new short-term arrangements.</p>				

4.3.1 Quality of partnerships

During the two emergencies under review, LNNGOs were engaged in consortium agreements with INGOs, direct partnerships with INGOs, programme partnership agreements with UN agencies, or acting as partners to institutional donors and sub-grantees of INGOs. The most common funding arrangement was direct funding or being a sub-grantee to an INGO. The table below illustrates the partnership models used by LNNGOs.

Funding Model	Comment
Sub-grantee or direct award to an INGO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most common funding model among LNNGOs interviewed. • INGOs with more experience and established systems provided access to funds and sub-granted part or all the implementation to LNNGOs depending on their operational models. • INGOs sub-granted/partnered with LNNGOs with a specialised focus. • INGOs sub-granted to LNNGOs with whom they have engaged in long-term work and relationships.
Other private funding and fundraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private funding from traditional fundraising sources, including members, international partners, the private sector, and the public. • Most private funding was complementary to other funding arrangements.
Member of a consortium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LNNGOs teamed up with INGOs, as INGOs have the fundraising expertise, while LNNGOs have the contextual knowledge and technical expertise in specific areas.
Direct award with UN agency (WFP, UNICEF and UNFPA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly to larger LNNGOs who have implemented UN agency emergency programmes before and are familiar with the funding requirements and compliance issues. • Larger LNNGOs who have worked as sub-grantees to INGOs implementing UN agency programmes before. • Specialised LNNGOs working in niche areas such as gender-based violence and protection.
Direct award with an institutional donor (USAID and SIDA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger LNNGOs with prior relationships with institutional donors. • Expansion of existing programmes to counter the impacts of the emergencies, e.g.: Lead Trust expanded the focus of their USAID funded 'Feed the Future' agricultural programme. • Least common funding model among LNNGOs.

Table 7: LNNGOs funding models during Cyclone Idai and the 2019/20 drought response

Based on the interviews, long-term and/or pre-existing partnerships were key to LNNGOs securing funding during the two emergencies. INGOs responded to the cyclone through their partners in long-term development and recovery programmes. Most INGOs conducted capacity assessments and due diligence with LNNGOs prior to the disasters. The INGOs cultivated relationships and signed partnership agreements with LNNGOs as part of their longer-term development and disaster response plans. INGOs who have a default mode of working through partners seemed more proactive in having prior agreements with LNNGOs. The partnerships transcended the emergency response, with INGOs providing longer-term institutional support. This relationship assisted in a quick scaling-up during emergencies. Another feature of longer-term relationships was the scaling-up of existing programmes.

Institutional donors and INGOs worked with LNNGOs to scale-up responses in geographical areas where LNNGOs had already worked. The scaling-up was aimed at responding directly to the disasters and to “protect” gains made through longer-term programming. For UN agencies, funding for the two emergencies was available to prequalified organisations under the UN country programme cycle and through an open bidding process.

Good Practice: DanChurchAid’s partnership model

Through their developmental work, DanChurchAid establish stable strategic partnerships with local CSOs. At any given time, the organisation has approximately 25 partners in Zimbabwe, with a maximum of four new partners joining annually. Funding applications for development projects are usually done jointly through consortia comprising of DanChurchAid and local partners. The Directors of each organisation in the consortium form a constitutive board of directors to provide strategic leadership to the consortium. DanChurchAid believes in pre-positioning knowledge and capacity. Hence, the pool of 25 organisations is trained in different areas such as emergency response, agroecology, procurement procedures, and other areas. In the event of an emergency, a partner with the relevant technical capacity is identified from the pool for the response.

Although longer-term relationships were important in securing funding, the LNNGOs interviewed also obtained funding from new partners, especially for the Cyclone Idai response. International partners with limited prior experience in the affected operational areas partnered with LNNGOs so implementation could begin quickly. An example of a new partner was the World Bank. Other LNNGOs also established partnerships with traditional INGOs looking to respond to the cyclone.

Relationships between LNNGOs and funding partners bared a closer resemblance to subcontracting arrangements than that of equal partners. LNNGOs who worked with UN agencies and with new INGO funding partners indicated that they had project-based relationships with the funders. Even LNNGOs with longer-term relationships with INGOs stated that their funding relationships were project-specific and not institutional. INGOs who have a default model of working through local partners had more

institutional relationships with LNNGOs that were not project-based. Local chapters of international families of organisations (for example, Caritas) stated that they had longer-term relationships with their international chapters and the support they received went beyond project-based support.

Good Practice: Christian Aid requires a waiver process if they want to implement projects directly

Christian Aid’s default is a partnership model is based on local and national partners together with Christian Aid designing humanitarian programmes, which partners implement with Christian Aid’s technical and financial support. All parties leverage the specific, complementary expertise and resources that each party brings. While a locally-led response is usually an appropriate and effective way of responding to needs, there are special circumstances in humanitarian work in which there is a place for a level of direct implementation by Christian Aid to save lives. If the scale and complexity of a crisis exceeds the capacity of local partners to meet needs effectively, and there is significant unmet humanitarian need not being tackled effectively by others, then the Country Manager, their Line Manager, Head of Humanitarian Division, and Regional Head of Humanitarian programmes jointly consider if circumstances warrant including direct implementation in the response. If they decide to pursue direct implementation, they complete a rapid request to the Directorate for endorsement, following written procedure. Even when direct implementation is approved, there must be a clear plan for enhancing the capacity of local responders/partners.

LNNGOs participated in competitive bidding processes as well as non-competitive negotiated application processes to obtain funding. In the competitive processes, LNNGOs stated that the setting of priorities and programme design were usually the responsibility of the funding partner, whilst in non-competitive processes LNNGOs had some influence on programme design and priorities. LNNGOs in longer-term partnerships also tended to have greater influence on programme design and priorities. Another factor that limited the participation of LNNGOs in decision making included the speed with which responses were implemented, especially during the initial stages of the Cyclone Idai response. According to INGOs, donor agency policies and practices affected their ability to engage fully with LNNGOs. When donors have explicit

priorities, work in specific geographical areas, and have a sectoral focus, INGOs are not in a position to change these when they in turn subcontract the work to LNNGOs. Both the INGO and the LNNGO would be subcontractors to the donor agency with little influence on programme priorities. During implementation, implementing partners might be able to modify the projects in consultation with funding partners if there was a need to align with the changing context. The table below shows the application process LNNGOs undertook to obtain funding and the nature of relationships from those applications.

Application process	Process and comments
Competitive bidding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LNNGOs competing with other local and international entities through a tender process (World Bank) or a bidding process (WFP and UNICEF). • Funding organisations had pre-defined project priorities and design. • Bidders/competitors ranked according to pre-existing selection criteria involving competencies around technical ability, financial management, accountability, capacity with similar programmes, and organisational governance.
Negotiated new relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New relationships based more on negotiation and consultation between INGOs, international partners, and LNNGOs
Negotiated existing relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on prior relationships and ongoing programmes, (e.g. network relationships and existing sub-grantee/partner agreements). • Application process mostly clear and partners shared problem definition and programme design. • Negotiated priorities and programme focus.

4.4 CAPACITY STRENGTHENING



No Significant Progress	Little Progress	Some Progress	Good Progress	Excellent Progress
Capacity strengthening efforts by INGOs, UN agencies, and institutional donors were mostly for building technical staff competencies and did not cover much institutional strengthening or infrastructure. Funders did not coordinate capacity strengthening assessments and plans. Capacity strengthening efforts did not have adequate follow-up or evaluation in most instances				

4.4.1 Capacity assessment

Most INGOs stated that they have some form of systematic capacity assessment tool they used with LNNGOs. INGOs who have a strong track record of working with local partners conduct capacity assessments and capacity strengthening plans before the actual emergency response. INGOs who do not have a strong track record of working with LNNGOs did not have specific capacity development plans for partners. Capacity assessment was used more for ascertaining readiness and ability to execute programme funds and not as a tool for continuous capacity enhancement. Only two INGOs stated that they also facilitate the LNNGO in assessing the INGO's suitability for partnership with them. The most common competencies among the capacity assessment tools included:

- Governance structures and organisational structures
- Technical ability

- Financial management systems
- Accountability
- Administrative procedures
- Organisational and human resources policies
- Safeguarding, child protection, and related policies

Good Practice: USAID supporting capacity strengthening of LEAD

In June 2015, USAID awarded LEAD, a local private voluntary organisation, a US\$8.0 million cooperative agreement to implement the Feed the Future crop development project.

To strengthen the capacity of LEAD, USAID engaged Fintrac, an international USAID contractor, to mentor and develop LEAD's management systems over a period of five years. Fintrac was tasked with developing various management systems, including monitoring and evaluation, financial management, information technology, asset management, and strengthening the capacity of the board of directors to provide oversight and strategic leadership to the organisation. When Cyclone Idai hit in March 2019, LEAD helped communities recover, with a focus on affected communities that already formed part of the longer-term Feed the Future Zimbabwe crop development project.

In December 2020, Old Mutual South Africa awarded LEAD as the overall winner of its Strategic Partner Initiative. The award was based on LEAD's reach, impact, ingenuity, and ability to deliver tangible socioeconomic transformation with communities.

There were varying levels of follow through regarding the continuous changes and improvement in the capacities of LNNGOs following the initial assessments. In short-term partnerships established for these specific emergencies, the assessments mainly focused on the current partner capacity of the LNNGO. If an INGO was satisfied with the partner's capacity, little effort seemed to be made to follow up on areas that could have been strengthened. However, in more stable partnerships that transcended the drought or Cyclone Idai responses, mechanisms for continuous capacity enhancement were available. For instance, one INGO working with local partners indicated that, in addition to having a comprehensive online capacity-building platform, they also conduct periodic Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis sessions. According

to the organisation, the strategies undertaken as a result of the SWOT analyses often contribute to capacity strengthening.

LNNGOs indicated that INGOs rarely coordinate with one another in terms of conducting capacity assessments or strengthening. Due to the different tools each of the INGOs and donors use, LNNGOs could be obliged to carry out various capacity assessments for different funding partners. According to LNNGOs, this limits the utility of these assessments as well as actions taken to improve areas of weakness.

4.4.2 Quality of capacity strengthening

Most capacity strengthening activities tended to focus on specific skills and competencies that LNNGO staff needed for carrying out the emergency response. Budgetary allocations for capacity strengthening in emergency response did not focus on institutional capacity. Capacity strengthening seemed to be more focused on technical skills and less on institutional capacity. The training that most LNNGOs mentioned receiving during an emergency from INGOs included monitoring and evaluation and financial management. Other training provided was around safeguarding and donor compliance issues. During interviews, LNNGOs argued that the sole focus on staff technical skills was not effective without infrastructural, operational, and response capacity development of the organisations themselves. Figure 6 shows a word cloud of the types of training LNNGOs mentioned receiving in interviews. Given that some partners were in long-term relationships and others were not, it is possible that some of these trainings were received before and during the crises.

Capacity strengthening in short-term relationships focused on enhancing the ability of the local partner to deliver the project in compliance with expected humanitarian standards. In more stable relationships, capacity strengthening goes beyond the current response to include organisational strengthening in areas such as fundraising and coordination. For instance, UNICEF developed the technical capacity of one of its local partners and strategically positioned them as the WASH focal point agency within the government coordination systems at the provincial level. Stable relationships come with mechanisms to sustain and further enhance the capacity. For example, DanChurchAid's mutual SWOT analyses enable both partners to periodically identify capacity gaps and collectively work towards addressing these gaps.

Good Practice: CAFOD's humanitarian capacity strengthening programme

CAFOD has a global humanitarian capacity strengthening programme that seeks to strengthen the capacity of partners to respond to humanitarian emergencies, recognising that this involves institutional capacities as well as technical skills. CAFOD has engaged with four partners in Zimbabwe over the last eight years. The partner-led capacity strengthening approach involves taking a selected partner through a capacity strengthening journey initiated by a self-capacity assessment (an introspective process to identify strengths and weaknesses) and development, implementation, and review of capacity strengthening plans, based on the areas identified using the humanitarian capacity strengthening framework (which has 13 capacity domains and 33 indicators.)

Several methods are used to address the identified capacity areas for strengthening, including simulations, training, and peer to peer learning. The process is facilitated by Capacity Strengthening Officers, who act as catalysts to the process. A recent evaluation found evidence of improved emergency response capacity, for example with the response by Caritas Zimbabwe to Cyclone Idai, as well as stronger organisational policies and processes. Key lessons from the process include the need for trust between the parties and longer time scales, recognising that meaningful capacity strengthening takes time.





Figure 6: Word Cloud of training LNNGOs received from funding partners

“One of the challenges we have with capacity is that the funding partner may give you a vehicle to implement a project, but as soon as that project ends you have to return the vehicle... If you build the capacity of individuals, you are elevating them in the job market. Capacity building should include an assessment of remuneration, working conditions, assets, internet connectivity, etc.” -Local NGO

Funding partners with longer-term relationships with LNNGOs conducted capacity strengthening prior to the emergencies. During the

emergencies, capacity strengthening took the form of orientation and on-the-job support

LNNGOs indicated that current capacity strengthening efforts are skewed towards skills and competencies at the expense of issues that would enable LNNGOs to respond to future disasters. LNNGOs identified the following key elements to be missing from current capacity strengthening efforts: vehicles, internet connectivity, communication systems, warehouses, and other physical infrastructure that would enable them to respond to future disasters.

4.5 VOICE AND INFLUENCE IN COORDINATION



No Significant Progress	Little Progress	Some Progress	Good Progress	Excellent Progress
Local and national actors participated actively in ward and district level coordination mechanisms. However, their participation drops significantly at the national level. In trying to participate fully in coordination, local actors face challenges related to funding, human resources, knowledge about coordination platforms, and centralisation of platforms. Local and national actors have little direct interaction with institutional donors. Local and national actors do not have a dedicated grouping or platforms to amplify their voices and assert their influence on humanitarian policy.				

4.5.1 Participation in coordination forums

Zimbabwe’s humanitarian coordination forums begin at ward level and go up to national level. The GoZ coordinates humanitarian activities through the Department of Civil Protection (DCP). Donors and NGOs also have separate coordination forums, including the cluster system. LNNGOs tended to be very active in coordination mechanisms at ward and district level. District level coordination forums

tended to discuss implementation issues such as geographical targeting of operational wards and reporting on sector level implementation. As the coordination mechanisms move to provincial and national levels, fewer LNNGOs participate for various reasons. The reduced participation of LNNGOs at provincial and national level

forums has negative implications on their ability to influence policy. Provincial and national level coordination forums have a significant impact on the direction responses take and on humanitarian policy in general. Figure 7 shows the participation of LNNGOs in coordination forums.

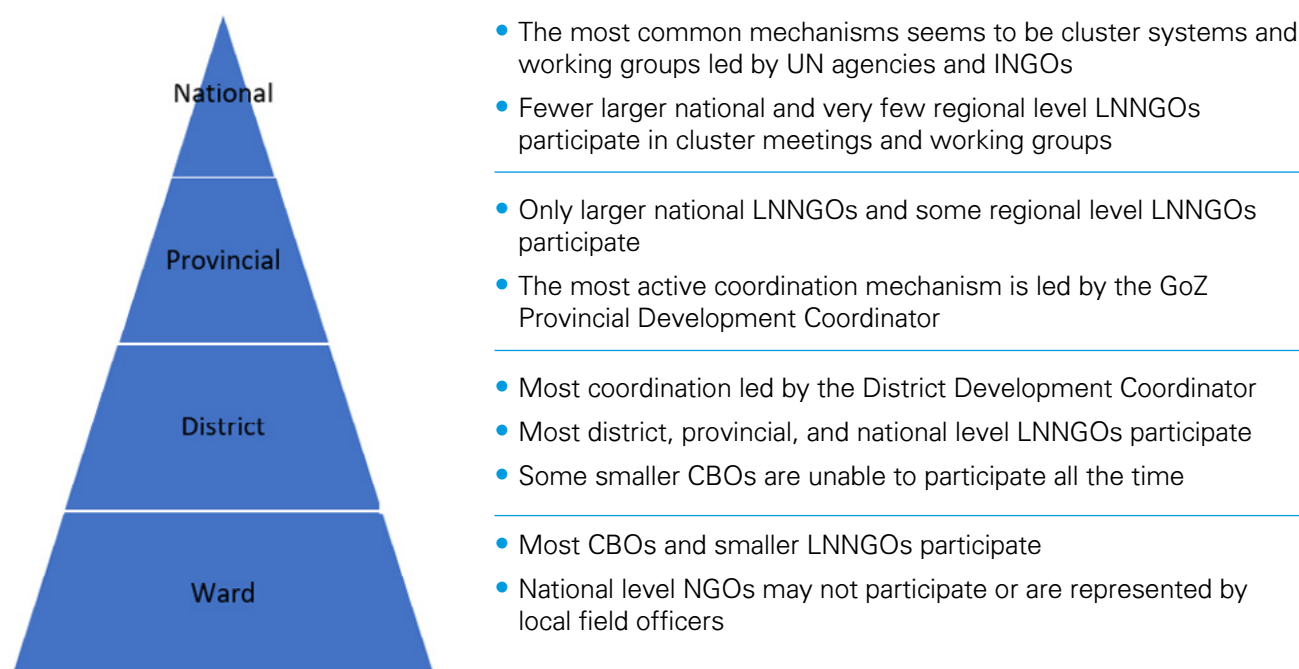


Figure 7: LNNGO participation in humanitarian coordination forums

Participation in coordination forums at the district level was mandatory for all NGOs working in a district. At national level, LNNGOs stated that they participated in cluster meetings at the invitation of funding partners. LNNGOs seemed unaware they could attend national level cluster meetings without the invitation of funding partners. This could be indicative of the internalised power dynamics of the hierarchical relationships between LNNGOs, INGOs, and donors.

4.5.2 Challenges to participation

LNNGOs mentioned that they face several challenges participating in coordination forums. Figure 8 lists challenges highlighted in the interviews.

Resources	Information	Structure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human • Financial • Internet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of meetings and forums • Knowledge of requirements to participate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centralised nature of forums • In-person options only (prior to the COVID-19 pandemic)

Figure 8: Challenges to LNNGOs' participation in coordination forums

LNNGOs indicated that they sometimes lack financial resources and budgets for attending meetings. Smaller organisations mostly faced this challenge; the lack of resources limited their attendance and participation in district, provincial, and national level coordination mechanisms. Other resource constraints mentioned included human resources and, more recently, internet connectivity to attend online meetings. Human resources were a challenge when a project coordinator had to juggle between attending coordination meetings and the implementation and management of field activities.

In some instances, LNNGOs indicated that they had no knowledge of some of the coordination platforms. All interviewed LNNGOs knew about the district level coordination mechanisms. Still, knowledge of coordination platforms was increasingly vague from the provincial level upwards. Even some of the larger LNNGOs who knew of national platforms like the clusters were unsure about the frequency of meetings and the requirements for participation. If LNNGOs did not receive funding, or very little funding, in a sector, they would not attend those cluster meetings, thus missing out on other technical discussions and potential funding opportunities.

Regional level LNNGOs felt the structure of the coordination mechanisms was too centralised in Harare, limiting their participation, voice, and influence. The regional LNNGOs stated that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, most of the central coordination meetings were in-person with no option for virtual participation. The requirement to attend in person limited participation due to logistical, resource, and time constraints. Regional level LNNGOs indicated that online and virtual options, even for meetings where others are attending physically, could enhance their participation.

4.5.3 Influence on humanitarian practices and coordination

Of the 15 LNNGOs interviewed, only two stated that they had some form of a leadership role in any of the coordination mechanisms from ward level up to national level. All other LNNGOs indicated that they are ordinary participants. None of the LNNGOs interviewed chaired any of the working groups or clusters in the coordination forums. According to the interviews, district level coordination mechanisms were co-chaired mostly by GoZ line ministries and INGOs, whilst UN agencies and INGOs

chaired national level clusters and working groups. A key informant noted, however, that several structures, including the Humanitarian Country Team, which is the highest tier UN-led coordination forum in-country overseeing the cluster system, have dedicated seats for the participation of LNNGOs. No LNNGOs have taken up these positions, however, probably due to lack of information on the part of LNNGOs.

Good Practice: Jekesa Pfungwa influence on women and girls' issues

Jekesa Pfungwa (JPV), a local NGO responding to Cyclone Idai, used their presence and participation in coordination forums to advocate for girls and women's issues during the response. During the needs analysis and assessment stage, JPV consulted all population groups and focused on women and girls' issues. During regular district level coordination meetings, JPV would advocate for coverage of girls and women's needs in the emergency. As part of its project implementation, JPV set up livelihood activities for women in the emergency recovery phase. Working with the GoZ's department of Women's Affairs, JPV also provided a cellphone short message service (SMS) platform to send awareness raising messages on gender-based violence, girl-child marriage issues, and services referral pathways to the affected community.

LNNGOs rarely interface or dialogue directly with institutional donors, reducing their voice and influence. Institutional donors stated that they had no platforms where they could interact directly with LNNGOs on LNNGO issues or humanitarian policy and standards. The interviews with LNNGOs also suggested that there is no specific coordination, representation, or pressure group for local humanitarian and development actors. Interviews with LNNGOs and INGOs suggested that the lack of such a grouping reduces LNNGOs' ability to present a unified front and amplify their voices on humanitarian policy and practice.

Good Practice: Catholic Commission Justice and Peace (CCJP) Mutare information provision

CCJP Mutare used its broad local membership to provide information on the status of affected communities. This was especially useful in the early days of the emergency when affected



communities were cut off and inaccessible to the outside world due to damaged roads and bridges. CCJP coordinated information provision to affected communities and the district department of civil protection through information kiosks. The kiosks acted as a link between affected communities and parties who needed to provide support. By attending district coordination meetings, CCJP influenced the response, were part of the first responders, and provided initial rapid assessment information.

Individuals, however, had examples showing their influence on policy and practice, as highlighted in the good practice example with JPV. Further, Catholic CCJP Mutare used their local membership to provide information access to remote and hard to reach areas during the initial stages of the Cyclone Idai response, as shown in another example.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 POLICY

1. **The humanitarian and development sector in Zimbabwe should establish a national working group on localisation.**

Some of the LNNGOs who participated in the study were unaware of the shift towards localisation in humanitarian and development discourse, which suggests they are not actively participating in shaping this paradigm shift. INGOs and donors working on aspects of localisation do not engage in conscious collaboration on good practices, progress, and challenges. Establishing a national level platform to discuss, plan, monitor, and evaluate the implementation of the internationally agreed principles is a good starting point to ensure inclusive operationalisation of the policy shift. A national working group would support an integrated approach to localisation, as INGOs stated that sometimes donor policies constrain them from pursuing some localisation practices. This working group could be modelled off the existing Charter for Change working groups in other countries, including Kenya and Uganda, and be comprised of local and international NGOs, ideally led or chaired by a local NGO that endorses the C4C. An INGO who is signatory to the C4C could ideally co-chair the group. In addition to conducting joint advocacy, the group can raise awareness of the C4C in Zimbabwe across local and national NGOs engaged in humanitarian action and development and encourage them to become endorser agencies.

2. **The humanitarian coordination system should actively involve LNNGOs in the UN-led humanitarian response plan.**

LNNGOs are an integral part of the humanitarian response system. They bring a wealth of contextual knowledge and experience to emergency responses. The humanitarian coordination system should make deliberate efforts to ensure participation and give adequate room for LNNGOs to actively participate in

drafting and implementing the country humanitarian response plan.

3. **LNNGOs, International NGOs, and institutional donors should consider formulating local level localisation plans.**

More than 80 percent of INGOs who took part in the study already work with and support local partners in one way or another. To systemise and guide this support, LNNGOs, INGOs, and institutional donors should consider establishing a localisation working group with a mandate for developing a national level localisation framework. Individual INGOs should in turn use the national framework to draft plans to enable the setting up of deliberate targets and milestones to implement localisation principles and commitments. The design of targets and milestones should be conducted with the participation of local partners.

5.2 FUNDING

4. **The humanitarian system and INGOs should monitor and report on humanitarian funding implemented through local partners. This transparency should also be applied to development funding.**

At the national level, the humanitarian coordinator should establish a system that allows for tracking and reporting on funding going through local partners (direct and indirect) and local capacity strengthening. Measuring funding going through local actors enables the monitoring of commitments and trends and lobbying for corrective measures to promote localisation. Ideally, this same level of transparency should later be applied to development funding, though this will require significant and consistent coordination.

5. **Institutional donors, INGOs, and UN agencies should consider funding targets for supporting LNNGOs in emergencies.**

To systematically promote the localisation of humanitarian action, funding agencies and partners should consider adopting funding targets for LNNGOs. Such a system would ensure consistent funding and develop the experience and expertise of LNNGOs in humanitarian programming. This may also influence the way donors prioritise funding local and national actors in development.

6. International NGOs and institutional donors should reconsider the use of co-financing and reimbursement requirements.

LNNGOs stated that they did not have financial resources to meet co-financing requirements, conduct pre-response activities like assessments, or run projects on a reimbursement basis. Institutional donors and INGOs should consider revising such requirements as they pose a barrier to LNNGOs in accessing funding for humanitarian response.

7. LNNGOs should strengthen accountability systems and work towards improving the perception of lack of accountability among LNNGOs.

One of the reasons given for reduced funding to LNNGOs related to concerns about the perceived lack of accountability among LNNGOs and weak financial management systems for allocated funds. LNNGOs, INGOs, and donors should invest in putting in place sound financial management and accountability systems and highlighting examples of good practice. LNNGOs should also work on proactively improving their perception around accountability.

8. The humanitarian system should develop mechanisms for consolidating available funding and making funding more flexible to access for LNNGOs.

Some donors are unable to fund LNNGOs directly, due to policy and administrative reasons. Additionally, some funding partners and agencies cannot manage numerous small awards. The humanitarian system should establish pooled funds that would allow LNNGOs to directly access funds for humanitarian response. Pooled funds provide small flexible funds to local partners upon

request, thereby enabling them to respond to emergencies within 72 hours. Additionally, training and capacity strengthening on the management of pooled funds can be part of the funding.

9. Funding partners should consider funding capital assets for LNNGOs beyond simple project assets like computers and furniture.

Organisations interviewed over the course of the study indicated that the primary goal and focus during an emergency is to save lives. As such, funding partners are more concerned about getting support to communities as quickly as possible, than funding capital expenditure for LNNGOs. However, investment in capital assets like vehicles, warehouses, and communications infrastructure ensures that LNNGOs continually have the capacity to respond to and build their preparedness for future emergencies. This funding could be considered as part of longer-term capacity support and emergency preparedness.

5.3 PARTNERSHIPS

10. LNNGOs and INGOs should shift from project-based to strategic longer-term partnerships.

Building strong partnerships requires time. INGOs almost exclusively worked on response projects with LNNGOs with whom they had a prior relationship. International and local NGOs should forge longer-term partnerships that go beyond the emergency period, into recovery and longer-term development. In thematic areas and geographical locations where INGOs do not have prior experience, they should respond through LNNGOs that are familiar with the context.

11. LNNGOs and INGOs should build more equal and transparent relationships.

Equality is one of the five principles of partnership adopted by the Global Humanitarian Platform. The Charter for Change also affirms this principle. Analysis of the research findings suggests that LNNGOs view current partnerships to be underlined by unequal power relations. There is a

need to strengthen the transparency of partnerships and invest in building trust through meaningful involvement of all stakeholders in designing interventions and engaging in regular, open, and honest discussions around overhead costs, staffing levels, and other factors to build trust.

5.4 CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

12. **International actors should consider setting up humanitarian capacity strengthening projects, in close coordination with local and national actors.**

Time constraints during emergencies make it difficult to focus on capacity strengthening for LNNGOs. Funding partners should consider setting up LNNGO capacity strengthening projects, in line with the expressed needs of the LNNGOs. These projects would specifically focus on jointly identified areas for strengthening, including technical competencies and institutional capacities. This approach should be purpose and need-driven, build on prior investments, and fit within a broader strategic framework that is jointly agreed upon. Capacity strengthening projects would also reduce the current ad hoc nature of efforts and ensure that capacity strengthening efforts are taking place prior to and after emergencies.

13. **Funding partners' capacity strengthening efforts should be coordinated and measurable.**

Findings from the study suggest that efforts by funding partners to strengthen capacity are neither coordinated nor collaborative. Additionally, the efforts do not have measurable outcomes for determining the impact of the capacity strengthening processes. Funding partners should engage in more collaborative and coordinated capacity strengthening efforts that incorporate milestones for tracking progress and look towards building common standards and tools for compliance. LNNGOs should be more active in 'controlling' capacity strengthening processes through their own capacity development plans, and they should feel empowered to decide

what types of assessments they want and when.

5.5 VOICE AND INFLUENCE IN COORDINATION

14. **LNNGOs should have a more organised coordination specific to humanitarian response.**

The LNNGOs interviewed stated that they had no common platform. LNNGOs should consider organising a forum for LNNGOs involved in humanitarian action. The forum would enable the LNNGOs to work on common issues related to localisation, as well as amplify their voices in the humanitarian sector. The forum could advocate on common issues and improve the representation of LNNGOs in various humanitarian spaces. The group could also work with and feed into the broader localisation working group suggested above.

15. **LNNGOs should create a database of LNNGOs involved in humanitarian action.**

To improve coordination between LNNGOs themselves, there is a need for mapping the various LNNGOs involved in humanitarian action. This kind of mapping would be used to establish a database of LNNGO profiles that would be useful not only to LNNGOs but also to the broader humanitarian community. The development of the database/mapping can be coupled with the establishment of the forum mentioned in the previous recommendation. LNNGOs should also seek to be included in cluster mapping of 'who, what, where, when' (4Ws).

16. **LNNGOs and INGOs should advocate for LNNGOs to co-chair working groups and clusters.**

To promote their leadership roles and amplify their voices and influence on humanitarian policy and coordination, LNNGOs should push to co-chair working groups and clusters. Most LNNGOs interviewed in the study were participating in working groups without holding any leadership roles. INGOs should, in turn, actively support sharing and/or ceding of leadership and decision-making positions to LNNGO leaders in working groups and clusters. Additionally,

INGOs and LNNGOs should develop mentorship relationships that would allow for mutual learning and strengthening of their participation and voice in coordination forums.

17. The humanitarian system should decentralise coordination platforms.

High-level coordination meetings are mostly hosted in Harare and in person. Decentralising meetings from Harare or improving the possibilities for virtual participation, as well as having a reserved quota of seats for LNNGOs, would enhance the involvement of regional LNNGOs in these platforms. There is a need for better linkages and complementarity between national and local, UN-led, and government-led coordination forums.

18. Funding partners and LNNGOs should budget for coordination.

Smaller LNNGOs and CBOs could not attend some coordination meetings because they did not have the financial resources to do so. Some LNNGOs did not have sufficient staff to attend the meetings during the responses. Funding partners and LNNGOs should make budgetary provisions in humanitarian crises for coordination and networking. They should draw learning from COVID-19 in relation to the use of remote technologies that would enable wider participation in coordination forums during future emergencies. This includes investments in organisational accounts with online platforms such as Zoom, as these have proven fundamental in developing new ways of working within the sector.

6 ANNEXES

6.1 ANNEX 1: STUDY MATRIX

Research Question	Indicators/measures
What progress has been made to date towards the implementation of the Grand Bargain commitments, in terms of direct and indirect funding to local actors?	Increased access to funding by local actors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberate donor funding policies for local actors • Increase in humanitarian funding to local actors • Increase in the number of funding mechanisms made available to local actors • Accessibility of funding to local actors • Funding for operating costs including relevant institutional costs and operational costs (overheads, security, assets, etc.) • Adequate funding is provided to meet quality standards • Flexibility for local actors to make reasonable adjustments during implementation • Local actors have robust financial management systems and accounting procedures • Local actors have effective systems in place to mitigate and manage risk • International organisations adopt a risk sharing approach with local organisations
What progress has been made towards the implementation of the Grand Bargain commitments, in terms of partnership approaches and quality of partner relationships?	Nature and quality of partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local actors adequately participate in all aspects of the project cycle • Local actors have strategic partnerships, which support organisational development • Local actors exercise power in partnerships
What progress has been made since March 2019 towards the implementation of Grand Bargain commitments in terms of local actor capacity (technical and organisational) strengthening?	Level of technical, sectoral, and institutional capacity strengthening of local partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies are in place to strengthen local capacity • Resources are in place to strengthen local capacity (in longer-term and response funding) • Capacity strengthening efforts are need-driven, and target both organisational development and improving technical competences to meet quality standards • Capacity strengthening efforts have clear measurements and parameters in place • Capacity strengthening efforts have demonstrable results • Support for capacity development by INGO/UN is coordinated, and the results are cumulative
What coordination mechanisms underpinned the three responses and at what level (national, district, provincial) and to what extent have local actors exercised voice and influence at these levels?	Participation and influence in coordination mechanisms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local actors are active members of the main coordination mechanisms (District, Provincial and National) • Local actors take leading roles in coordination of humanitarian assistance • Local actors influence response programme design and priorities in-country • Local actors can influence donor and government policy • Relationship between humanitarian architecture and government coordination mechanisms

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