

WEBINAR: HOW LOCALISATION CAN FOSTER RESILIENCE

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INTRODUCTION

At Cordaid we have been looking more closely at the link between localisation and resilience and how to foster the latter by having local communities and people 'in the driving seat'. Building on experiences from the Philippines, Uganda and Indonesia we have looked at:

A) How do key localisation and resilience principles align

Localisation as a collective process involving different stakeholders refers to transformative, structural changes at the local, national and international level, to ensure local and national actors have the resources, partnerships, capacities, space and power to participate in decision-making on issues that touch them as well as to lead on addressing those issues.

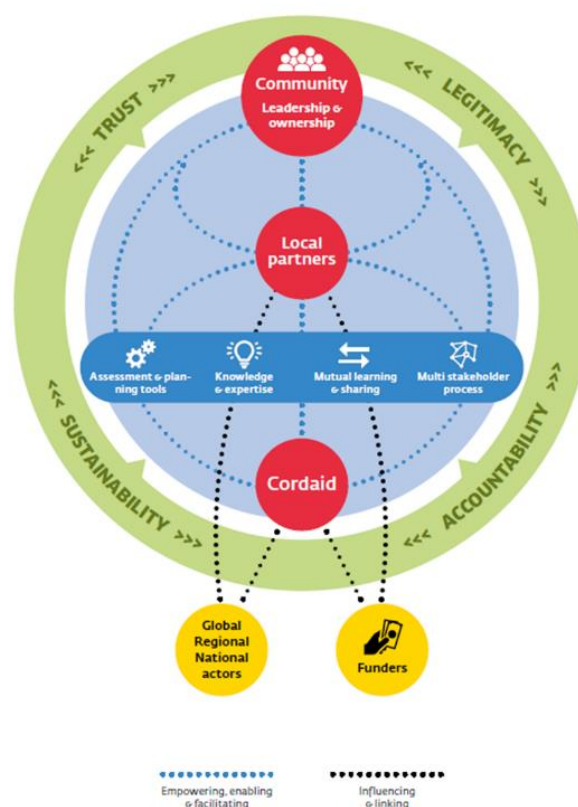
Key localisation principles include

- Local analysis and building on what is there,
- Partnership and trust,
- Amplifying local voices,
- Better quality and quantity of funding for local actors and
- Inclusion and participation.

This aligns well with key resilience principles including:

- Putting people at the centre-stage by using multi-stakeholder approaches,
- Linking humanitarian and development by integrating disciplines and approaches to encompass different risks,
- Addressing risks at a landscape scale and managing and restoring ecosystems,
- Working on different time scales to ensure adaptive planning and
- Linking local realities with global processes.

B) What are the role of Cordaid, local partners and the communities in the process - see [policy paper](#):



C) Key recommendations to take this further

Three key takeaways:

- Need for local relevance and legitimacy of actors
- Actions need to be locally driven and build on local capacities (which need to be present)
- Need for greater donor investment and confidence building with those donors (key role for INGO's)

But practically **How can we achieve resilience through localisation in practice?** Based on case studies from the Philippines, Uganda and Indonesia three breakout groups looked at - key approaches and concrete steps, - main challenges to consider and how to address those challenges.

UGANDA BREAK-OUT GROUP

Facilitated by Rachel Kyozi, Program Manager Resilience, Cordaid Country Office Uganda

Cordaid resilience programmes used PDRA to form DRR communities at community levels, which were supported by NGOs and the government. It takes time as well as capacity strengthening to establish those community groupings to ensure they know and can play an effective role, are connected with the right stakeholders and effectively represent the voice of people from the community. In Teso and Karamoja we have seen tremendous changes and donors have been implementing community-structures programmes.

Uganda's Resilience Framework is looking at the triple-nexus and seeks to support refugees and host communities to access basic services. And local CSOs can access pooled funds as soft loans. And initiatives such as the Democratic Governance Fund can fund local organisations on governance issues. Together this allows the strengthening of local structures to take lead. And this kind of approach needs enhancing.

While the country was already affected by Covid a 2nd locust plague hit. In this situation the local resilience structures functioned as first respondents. The Government depended on CMDRR committees to assess which villages were affected and to what degree. While CSOs then gathered the data, the quality of which also depended on the strength of the local organisations and committees. But villages without CMDRR committees were more difficult to reach and quick and adequate responses difficult to organise.

Key take-aways

Approaches and concrete steps:

- Connecting/disseminating information from national to local level
- Bring local voices to national levels
- Participatory appraisals are key and DRA supports local partners to take the lead
- Capacity strengthening is an essential step for localisation – for both program strategies, participatory planning and implementation but also broad organisational strengthening including Lobby & Advocacy

Main challenges:

- Involving women and youth remains challenging
- Getting (flexible) funding to local actors and communities.
- Lack of trust in local partners by (I)NGOs
- Local CSOs/CBOs still lack specific capacities to play a full lead role in donor relations
- Capacity to organise and mobilise communities for joint actions at different levels

- How to effectively respond to human rights abuses in Uganda with the support of local communities.
- Gaps in knowledge
- Social media can easily miss inform communities.
- Covid responses - Reaching most vulnerable and manage multiple disasters (reallocation of funds having detrimental effects on other risks)

Recommendations:

- **Capacity Strengthening** is key at all levels - for women/youth to be able to act to participate and influence the development planning – for local actors/CSO's to have the needed skills to manage larger grants
- **Lobby and Advocacy** towards (I)NGOs, government and donors to a) support more local actors and change their own practices to develop flexibility and trust as well as b) provide space for women and youth participation (lobby to include local level structures and individuals)

PHILIPPINES BREAK-OUT GROUP

Facilitated by Anat Prag, Cordaid Country Director, Philippines

The Calamianes an island region surrounded by the ocean with limited access, communication challenges and exposure to typhons as well as restricted access to fresh water. Population is a mix indigenous people, fisherfolk, forest gathers and upland farmers and upcoming tourism, which has caused some tensions and conflicts.

Cordaid focused on supporting a multi-stakeholder resilience network/alliance building (CRN) through the PfR programme. CRN brings together 43 actors from variety of backgrounds and works on watershed protection, food security, disaster response capacity. Cordaid helped set up network systems, management structures, operating procedures and policy frameworks. Cordaid also worked on securing legitimacy with local governance actors. And it helped undertake participatory risk assessments evaluating vulnerability and capacity as a basis of addressing priorities for action. This informed all follow-up actions by CRN. These included working on municipal plans/IRM, climate, disaster management as well as mobilising resources to invest in resilience.

In 2020 and under Covid-19 there was a significant transformation of the work and standing of the Network. Forest Foundation (FFP) supported a watershed assessment project that originally aimed at having CRN in the lead. But FFP would only fund Cordaid as it is registered and already had a track record. This project was approved just as the Covid lockdowns were put into place in the Philippines. In reaction to Covid-19 CRN came to Cordaid proposing a mitigation and prevention project. While

waiting for Cordaid approval and support (which came a bit later) CRN started rolling out their project using internal resources of the network. In parallel, Cordaid tried to implement the FFP project by providing online capacity building support but, due to the lockdown and emerging demands for Covid responses, was really struggling. This work was also not aligned with CRN and disharmony and confusion emerged between the parties. To resolve this many partnership and strategy meetings were required, which led to an agreement between Cordaid and CRN to have CRN also lead the FFP project. Cordaid then advocated for this with FFP, finally convincing them that CRN was able to drive the project while Cordaid would help guide them based on partnership agreements and in compliance with donor standards.

CRN then implemented the FFP watershed assessments despite Covid restrictions. And CRN are now also driving humanitarian responses in the region, expanding their project interventions and developing longer term strategies in each locality. The network is finalising its projects and developing new proposals. FFP are actually using them as an example for other partners on how to continue continued working safely on the ground under Covid. FFP is awaiting an autonomous proposal from CRN based in their increased confidence in the network, and CRN continue to develop new initiatives based on their capacity, confidence, and identified needs.

Take-aways:

Findings

- Local networks are sustainable, have local access and are quick to respond: local community structures remained active during the pandemic.
- It's a long, very contextual, multi-year process
- Covid-19 was a catalyst for building trust: with donors (showing CRN had capacities, systems (including legal registration) & structures) and communities.

Recommendations

- Build alliances and strengthening networks that are embedded in the communities is key.
- (I)NGOs must strengthen capacities of local networks/alliances to secure own resources and build their independence
- The importance of trust. Both within networks and with communities (e.g. when responding to a new threat like Covid) and between donors and the network. Both must be built up and maintained as it can break down under strains.
- INGOs must facilitate the work and document, not drive the content. E.g. by helping to find common ground, hosting consultations and dialogues to build strategies.
- To build more trust we need more incubation, pilots etc. for organisations to learn by doing.

INDONESIA BREAK-OUT GROUP

Facilitated by Yohan Santosa, Program Coordinator at KARINA, Indonesia

The key starting point for localization to drive resilience is to ensure that communities have the relevant capacities. At the same time the local partners who help move this work forward (in this case Caritas Indonesia and Maumere Diocesan Caritas) must also have the necessary capacities to facilitate participatory processes.

Key localization achievements in Indonesia include:

- Facilitation of the establishment of multi-stakeholder platforms which developed integrated management plans and watershed management plans (based on PDRA);
- Those platforms securing financing for the watershed management priorities on the development plans and budget;
- One of those multi-stakeholder platform from the watershed management forum undertaking capacity assessments in other regions;
- Further advocacy to have these best practices to be used in making national level policies, where in 2019,
- Caritas Indonesia has successfully pushed Watershed Management Directorate of Indonesia Ministry of Environment and Forestry to have MoU with Ministry of Agrarian and Spatial Plan to integrate the watershed management into spatial planning;
- Influencing local governmental policy through those partnerships to ensure IRM and community planning are integrated in those policies; Fostering the learning and (innovation) from the PfR experience as well as between local NGOs to have community at the forefront of planning.

Covid-19 further accelerated localization steps with local partners and communities assisting the communities and local governments developing their Covid-19 response operation plans at district level (Sikka and TTS Districts), without much external support. In the ensuing discussion further steps, challenges and possible responses were identified.

Take-aways:

Key steps for driving resilience through localization include

- Sustainability - local systems must (continue to) work without external support such as PfR, however some enabling environment such as series of capacity buildings for CSO partners, strengthening the CSO network. Etc, should be built as well.
- Communities must be mobilized to take charge of their own destiny.

- Advocating for country action planning. Push community agenda and not only the CSO.

Challenges:

- Difficulty in adapting local M&E processes towards donors requirement (too complicated)
- In certain countries/situations an effective link (and trust) between local organizations and community is difficult because of size of the country/geographic distance.
- Dealing with corruption: you have to understand what drives it and know how to address it.

Steps to address these challenges:

- Advocating for action planning at various relevant scales (e.g. village planning up to national action planning).
- Include accountability and communication processes that ensure the community in the driving position (and not CSO) agenda is being advanced and advocated for.
- Empower local NGOs and listen more to community voices.

CONCLUSIONS

Pascal Richard, Cordaid Adviser Localisation and Local Leadership, Netherlands

In the conclusions some key take aways and next steps to take the localisation agenda and resilience further were shared based on examples from above and as noted in Cordaid's Policy Paper. These cover broadly four issues.

Build on local capacities and structures:

- Undertake a mapping of actors within communities and participatory capacity need/gap assessments. Pay great attention to local coordination and networking

Locally driven:

- Ensure greater local accountability. Develop and support systemic analysis and learning for and from local partners and communities. Make time, listen and create flexibility in your programmes. Stop successfully and ensure sustainability

Advocate, build confidence and linkages with donors:

- Scale up localisation advocacy towards donors

INGOs need to Walk the Talk

- INGOs must review their own roles, structures and systems to strengthen localisation.

ABOUT CORDAID

Cordaid works to end poverty and exclusion. We do this in the world's most fragile and conflict-affected areas as well as in the Netherlands. We engage communities to rebuild trust and resilience and increase people's self-reliance.

Our professionals provide humanitarian assistance and create opportunities to improve security, health care and education and stimulate inclusive economic growth. We are supported by nearly 300,000 private donors in the Netherlands and by a worldwide partner network. Cordaid is a founding member of Caritas Internationalis and CIDSE.

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