

BEYOND 2.0

Dutch Relief Alliance and the Grand Bargain Commitments



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JUNE, 2023

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Localisation is ...

Throughout the publication: mini-interviews with partners in the Joint Response regions



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Arjen Joosse

Chairman Dutch Relief
Alliance

PREFACE

Committed to change: it starts with the right decisions made by the right people

The world trembled when the 7.8 earthquake hit Türkiye and northwest Syria in February 2023. The Dutch Relief Alliance has been active in Syria for years to assist people who were victims of the Syrian conflict.

When we saw the devastation the earthquake has caused in places like Idlib and Aleppo we knew we had to respond immediately.

I am confident that the way we could respond in the days directly following this horrible disaster, is a tribute to the value of the Grand Bargain Commitments. Since the beginning, the Dutch Relief Alliance has taken these commitments to heart.

One of the results was a significant improvement of our flexibility. Already on the day after the quake we were able to redirect funding from the existing humanitarian response programme in Syria. Using a small portion of the funds that the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs had granted us for the protracted crisis in Syria, we were able to start an immediate response to the earthquake needs, and more funding could be committed the following day.

The key difference is that in recent years we gradually moved from a chain-model to a network approach. Let me explain. In a traditional model the first decisions would be made by a donor, based on incomplete information. That would likely take a few days. A proposal would be prepared by an international NGO who would then at best subcontract to local partners. The result: an inefficient, drawn-out process based on insufficient knowledge on existing local capacities. For example: how to take into your design from the Netherlands if transport is possible between Damascus and Idlib? Which borders are open? Which local partners are still operational? Long story short: the emergency assistance would be inefficient and slow to address the needs of people.



→ **See the interview**
with Shahida Suleiman
on page 15.

The current approach of the Dutch Relief Alliance is based on partnership and dialogue including with local actors who are well placed to design and deliver assistance. The knowledge of local actors is factored in at all stages of the process. That makes our efforts quick and targeted.

The Local Advisory Group for me symbolises the changes the Dutch Relief Alliance has made. Through this group representatives of local partners can directly engage with our Supervisory Board and Board of Directors. Recently the Local Advisory Group was involved in cost sharing and capacity strengthening agreements within the alliance. The group is also participating in our dialogue with the ministry on risk sharing.

For me a true 'hero of localisation' is Shahida Suleiman, the chairperson of the Local Advisory Group. [See the interview with her on page 15.](#) I remember her recent performance last March in Brussels during the European Humanitarian Forum. She was one of the few women representing local organisations. She boldly challenged participants to rethink what meaningful locally-led action is. Why is so much debate on localisation dominated by the usual suspects? Why are the first five keynote speakers all white male representatives from Western institutions? Are we really making the right decisions with the right people?

Arjen Joosse

Chairman Dutch Relief Alliance



Localisation is ...



Shams Eldin

Programme Advisor at Friends of Peace and Development Organisation (FPDO)

→ Strengthen the organisational capacities of local actors

The much needed, next big step towards localisation is strengthening the organisational capacity of local humanitarian actors. There are still notable gaps in local abilities to design, manage and deliver effective humanitarian response programmes. Stronger capacities in these fields may remove some of the barriers to direct funding and strengthen the overall quality of humanitarian assistance and accountability to affected populations. Simultaneously, partnerships need to be revisited. Currently, most partnerships are limited to meeting donors' requirements (governance, expertise, and managerial management etc). True partnerships are based on equality, on transparency, on accountability, on complementarity and on joint learning.

Dutch Relief Alliance should continue to promote longer-term programming, including programming for resilience, climate adaptation, and peace-building while international NGOs can increasingly join the in-country advocacy efforts for more commitments by international actors to localised emergency assistance.



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THE DUTCH RELIEF ALLIANCE IN A NUTSHELL



The Dutch Relief Alliance was established in 2015 in response to an increase in the number of humanitarian crises and people affected globally. Dutch non-governmental humanitarian organisations, in partnership with the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, came together to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their humanitarian efforts.

Over the years, the Dutch Relief Alliance has delivered humanitarian aid to millions of people in more than 45 crises worldwide, working together with over 100 local organisations.

At the heart of the alliance lies the ambition to put the Grand Bargain commitments into practice. The Dutch Relief Alliance sees itself as an on-going, global 'testing ground' for engagement with Grand Bargain and Core Humanitarian Standards commitments like localisation, multi-year funding and programming, accountability and community engagement.

The Partners

Current alliance partners are:

CARE Nederland; Cordaid; Dorcas; Oxfam Novib; Plan International; Help a Child; Save the Children; SOS Children's Villages The Netherlands; Stichting Vluchteling; Tearfund NL; Terre des Hommes; War Child; World Vision; and ZOA.

Joint Responses

The Dutch Relief Alliance responds to humanitarian crises by designing 'Joint Responses', drawn up and implemented by the partners best placed to address a specific crisis. The alliance implements Protracted Crisis Joint Responses (with an annual or multi-annual timespan) and Acute Crisis Joint Responses (with a maximum of 6 months). At the moment (June 2023) the following Joint Responses are under way:

- **Yemen Joint Response** (Protracted)
- **Ethiopia Joint Response** (Protracted)
- **Syria non-government controlled areas Joint Response** (Protracted)
- **Syria government controlled areas Joint Response** (Protracted)
- **South Sudan Joint Response** (Protracted)
- **Somalia Joint Response** (Protracted)
- **Somalia Bay region Joint Response** (Acute)
- **DR Congo Joint Response** (Protracted)
- **Afghanistan Joint Response** (Protracted)
- **Sudan Joint Response** (Protracted)
- **Mozambique Joint Response** (Acute)
- **Syria earthquake Joint Response** (Acute)
- **Myanmar Joint Response** (Acute)
- **Sudan Joint Response** (Acute)





Localisation is ...



Khalil Rahman Osmani

Programme Fundraising and Development Manager - Organization of Human Welfare

Boost the impact of aid

Localisation of emergency assistance in Afghanistan is of vital importance. Local organisations in my country are confronted with huge challenges. Not in the least because qualified NGO-staff have been forced to flee the country. Many local organisations have been forced to shut down.

Dutch Relief Alliance and its international NGOs should intensify the support of local organisations. As in other countries, channeling aid through

local organisations boosts the impact. Even when affected by brain drain and loss of clout, local NGOs have better access to local communities than most International NGOs. But the involvement of the local NGOs in the channeling of emergency assistance has as an added value that it will also strengthen the capacities of civil society organisations. The increase of the involvement of local organisations should go hand in hand with an intensified capacity development effort. Institutional capacities of local NGOs should be strengthened to secure their role in the delivery of emergency assistance and long-term support to sustainable development.

GRAND BARGAIN

Grand Bargain Annual meeting
in June 2023

What comes after 2.0?

The humanitarian landscape is constantly evolving, presenting new challenges and complexities. In response to these challenges, the Grand Bargain commitments were born. The Grand Bargain, established during the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, represents a collective effort by humanitarian actors to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability of humanitarian aid.

Sixty-six countries, NGOs, UN-organisations, Red Cross/Red Crescent movements and intergovernmental organisations have signed the Grand Bargain Commitments.

Over the years the Grand Bargain has evolved. In 2021 the Grand Bargain 2.0 was launched: an update of the system designed five years earlier. The nine original 'workstreams' (see box) were reduced to five, with different signatories working to implement each commitment. Two priorities were identified: 'quality funding' and 'localisation'. In 2021 the Grand Bargain caucuses were established. Caucuses are flexible, informal groups of dedicated stakeholders, working to overcome political barriers to specific commitments. And finally, National Reference Groups (NRGs) were initiated to translate global commitments to the country level and vice versa.

The Grand Bargain 2.0 was designed to run for two years, until 2023. During the next Grand Bargain annual meeting, to be held in Geneva on 19 and 20 June 2023, the signatories will decide on how to go forward. It is clear that a great majority favours some kind of continuation of the Grand Bargain. But how?

The so-called 'Facilitation Group', established to guide the Grand Bargain process, presented a proposal for the Grand Bargain beyond 2023. In this proposal the Facilitation Group concludes that, since 2021, humanitarian needs have grown further: *"Humanitarian needs are driven, and exacerbated by new crises, conflicts, climate change and natural disasters, and public health emergencies. Many of the challenges we face today in the humanitarian sector can only be addressed through multi-stakeholder collaboration in fora such as the Grand Bargain as a unique platform that brings together all relevant humanitarian stakeholders."*



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→ **See article:** Towards a risk sharing framework on **page 22**

The 'Facilitation Group' suggests slight changes in the scope, timeline, structure and funding of the Grand Bargain beyond June 2023. According to the proposal, the Grand Bargain will maintain its ambitious character, as the scope is defined as: 'an accountability mechanism and incubator for sector-wide transformation.' The Facilitation Group suggests adding two cross-cutting issues: Gender and Risk Sharing ([see article on page 22](#)). The 'new' Grand Bargain is to continue at least until 2026, but there is also support for the idea to expand the horizon until 2030 to link the humanitarian agenda to the Sustainable Development Goals.

WORKSTREAMS

The heart of the Grand Bargain were initially 9 'workstreams'

1. Greater Transparency
2. More support and funding to local and national responders
3. Increase the use and coordination of cash-based programming
4. Reduce duplication and management costs with periodic functional reviews
5. Improve joint and impartial needs assessments
6. A Participation Revolution: include people receiving aid in making the decisions which affect their lives
7. Increase collaborative humanitarian multi-year planning and funding
8. Reduced earmarking of donor contributions
9. Harmonise and simplify reporting requirements

In 2021, it was decided to continue working on workstreams 1, 2, 5, 6 and 9.

More on the Grand Bargain <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain>



PROGRESS TO DATE OF THE DUTCH RELIEF ALLIANCE: HIGHLIGHTS

In the 2018-2021 period, the Dutch Relief Alliance identified four strategic priorities: localisation, accountability, innovation and collaboration. While considerable progress was made, challenges and obstacles also arose. Below a summary of the highlights and how previous challenges can be met in the coming years, as presented in the Dutch Relief Alliance's 2022-2026 strategy.

Localisation

The Dutch Relief Alliance is strongly committed to localising humanitarian assistance. Localisation is defined as a process towards local actors having a stronger role and greater leadership in humanitarian assistance. Drivers for localisation are commitment to effectiveness, equitability, sustainability and efficiency. Localisation improves effectiveness by leveraging local knowledge, context awareness and links to communities. Three major achievements of the previous period:

- Increased funding to local actors: we have exceeded the Grand Bargain target of at least 25 per cent already before the end of 2021.
- 43 per cent (38 per cent PCJR/57 per cent ACJR) of the direct costs in our Joint Response budgets was allocated to local partners in 2022.
- The number of local partners in protracted Joint Responses increased from 41 in 2019 to 73 in 2021.
- We amplified local voices in international humanitarian settings. A Local Advisory Group, made up of representatives of local partners, is involved in the designing of the Joint Responses to ensure more locally-led responses. They also provide input into the Dutch Relief Alliance's new strategy.

The localisation agenda within the Joint Responses has facilitated a shift from capacity building towards mutual capacity sharing. This means shared decision-making between local and international organisations to jointly define priorities for context-specific approach to strengthening organisation capacities (e.g. technical, financial or institutional knowledge) in a sustainable manner.

The strength and added value of local partners within the Joint Responses lies, for example, in their understanding of the operational contexts, sensitivity towards socio-cultural dynamics, strong relations with communities and local authorities, and their access to hard-to-reach places. They often have a long-time presence in the areas where they are working, which gives them advantages such as direct access to information and acceptance from the communities.





In recent years, local partners have requested support on a variety of topics. These include, amongst others, reporting mechanisms, budgeting, procurement, internal controls and audits. A challenge is the lack of understanding of local partners on policies and procedures of international NGOs. In the Syria Joint Response this was addressed through regular sensitisation. Equitable partnership was chosen as one of the focus areas in Syria. Based on an assessment in February 2023, concrete actions will be identified to further strengthen the capacity and role of the local partners in decision-making processes within the Syria Joint Response.

Equitable partnerships

Equitable partnerships are essential to balance power, resources and ownership of risk in the humanitarian sector, especially between international organisations and local actors. We understand partnerships as principled, diverse and effective collaborative relations between two or more actors, aimed at addressing key humanitarian challenges. Subcontracting and transactional relationships are not equitable partnerships. This definition builds on the Principles of Partnership (2007), which were an attempt to acknowledge gaps in the humanitarian reform process, such as neglecting the role of local and national response capacity (<https://www.icvnetwork.org/transforming-ournetwork-for-impact/principles-of-partnership>).

Additionally, localisation means working towards locally-led programming, resulting in more equal and equitable partnerships. Key elements in these localisation efforts are multi-year funding assurance, multiple local and international NGOs cooperating in partnership in the Joint Responses, and budget flexibility (e.g., for capacity building). Enhancing local humanitarian leadership stands high on the Dutch Relief Alliance localisation agenda. Equitable partnerships between local and international humanitarian actors are crucial for the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance, but also to address prevailing power imbalances within the humanitarian system. The Dutch Relief Alliance will also finalise its risk framework based on the strategic commitment for equitable partnership in humanitarian aid which emphasises complementarity, mutual respect, sharing of risks and benefits, and brokering collaborations between diverse actors and networks at community, local and national levels.





Accountability

The Dutch Relief Alliance wants to be accountable to crisis-affected populations, donors and to the Dutch Relief Alliance partners' constituencies. Good progress is being made with enabling meaningful participation within each Joint Response, for example by implementing inclusive project committees and innovative accountability mechanisms. Yet, to further pursue the accountability goals, the Dutch Relief Alliance will need to upscale best practices and enhance the involvement of affected people in all stages of the program cycle. The Dutch Relief Alliance's multi-year funding scheme can be well suited, as it generates longer-term and more strategic engagement of affected communities. Accountability also entails the inclusion of disadvantaged groups, such as women, children and differently abled people, in line with one of the the key pillars of the Grand Bargain 2.0. To achieve quality, responses must understand the capacities, priorities, and views of affected people, and include people whose needs and vulnerability are heightened by gender inequality, social exclusion and marginalisation.

While the Dutch Relief Alliance has gender-sensitive proposal criteria and the Joint Responses apply gender-sensitive approaches, it is crucial to keep the spotlight on these issues and apply these approaches consistently throughout the Joint Responses. For example, by allowing local women's organisations and other relevant networks to take the lead, and to address the root causes of gender inequality and exclusion, thereby reshaping unequal gender and power relations.

Praying clothes instead of head scarfs

Beneficiaries of the Syria Joint Response received a dignity kit containing a head scarf, among other things, from ZOA. A post-distribution monitoring survey pointed out that the people involved preferred a praying clothes set. In the second batch of distribution, ZOA replaced the scarf therefore by the praying clothes. 90 per cent of the consulted beneficiaries expressed satisfaction towards the quality of the provided services, and ZOA received no formal complaints.

Innovation

The Dutch Relief Alliance has tried innovative approaches to better reach hard-to-access populations, anticipate crises and address issues of exclusion and (gender) discrimination. A funding tool specifically geared at innovations in humanitarian responses, the Dutch Relief Alliance Innovation Fund (DIF), enabled scaling up best-practices within the Joint Responses. To further pursue this scaling, the innovative methods need to be aligned with the specific local context within the Joint Responses. This means engaging affected people and local actors in deciding which type of innovations should be applied in which contexts.

With the help of the DIF, a portfolio of eighteen innovative projects was created. The projects covered four themes:

- Smart Use of Data
- Cash Programming
- Safety & Protection
- (Renewable) Energy



This portfolio contains a wealth of information on the innovations, but also on the approaches and processes behind these innovations. This way, these innovative projects greatly enhance knowledge on understanding the challenges behind the solutions.



Personal cash aid through 121

How to make cash based aid during humanitarian disasters easier, safer and faster? The answer is 121. This is a platform and an app that provide cash programmes in emergency situations. 121 has three types of end users: persons affected, aid workers in the field and cash programme managers. Due to COVID-19, 121 was not piloted in Malawi and Ethiopia, as was intended, but in the Netherlands, targeting undocumented migrants. Other pilots were held in St. Maarten, Kenya and Ukraine. An important part of the process was the co-designing of the app by the end users. 121 was scaled in Lebanon by Dorcas and in Ethiopia by ZOA in 2021 and 2022. In the Netherlands, private parties such as Albert Heijn and Philips participated in the pilot phase.

In the period 2022-2026, the focus is on embedding innovation in the Joint Responses. This means that instead of being something isolated, innovation has become an integral part of the work process. Room for innovation in the Joint Responses is created by, among other things, thoroughly analysing the challenges before introducing solutions. Part of this process is challenge mapping, a form of problem analysis that precedes innovation. Challenge mapping has so far been applied in the Joint Responses in DRC, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

Collaboration

Through collaboration in the Joint Responses, the Dutch Relief Alliance has achieved impact through harmonised programmes, joint needs assessments, and exchange of knowledge, skills, expertise and learning. Collaboration has resulted in jointly targeting people in need of affected populations, joint trainings on Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL), sharing technical capacity and expertise among the partners involved, as well as sharing resources such as offices and warehouses.

Changing the life of a young Yemeni woman

In war-torn Yemen, collaboration helped change the life of Sumaya, a young deaf woman with special needs. Sumaya moved from Aden to Hajjah Governorate in search of safety. There she participated in a sewing workshop aimed at improving the livelihoods of young rural women. It was supported by two partners of the Yemen Joint Response, ZOA and the London based Sustainable Development Foundation. The project provided sewing machines, solar energy, sewing materials and training for the young women. As a result, Sumaya started sewing clothes for herself, her family and people living in her village, providing her a small income.



WHAT'S LEFT ON THE TABLE

ChatGPT helps understand localisation

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying <https://chatgptonline.ai/chat/>. The page features the ChatGPT logo and navigation links for Home, Chat, and Privacy policy. The chat interface shows a conversation where the user asks for a column on strengthening localisation in humanitarian assistance. The AI responds with a detailed explanation of the concept, its importance, and ways to empower local actors.

AI Hi! How can I help you?

You Write a column on strengthening of localisation in humanitarian assistance

AI Hello! I'd be happy to write a column on the topic of strengthening localisation in humanitarian assistance.

The concept of localisation in humanitarian aid refers to the process of shifting power and decision-making from international organisations to local actors, including governments, civil society organisations and affected communities themselves. It is a concept that is gaining traction in the humanitarian sector as a way of making aid more efficient, effective and sustainable.

Localisation is not a new concept, however, it has become increasingly important in recent years, as the number of crises around the world has increased, and as the humanitarian system has come under increasing pressure to deliver aid that is accountable and responsive to the needs of affected communities.

Empowering local actors is key to strengthening localisation in humanitarian aid. This involves building the capacity of local organisations to take on more responsibility for delivering aid, and ensuring that they have the resources, expertise and support they need to do so effectively.

One way to do this is by investing in local organisations through capacity building and training, providing them with the tools and resources they need to deliver aid in their communities. It also means creating opportunities for local organisations to lead in decision-making processes, to ensure that the aid being delivered is appropriate and relevant to the needs of the communities it is intended to serve.

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Localisation is ...

Embrace a consortium model

Seven years after the signing of the Grand Bargain Commitment, localisation of humanitarian aid still faces a lot of opposition. Most international NGOs still need to be convinced of the importance of localisation. Let's be clear: localisation does not mean they won't have a role to play. Unfortunately, many local partners also have a distorted perception of localisation, thinking that they are automatically the best channel for funding. They forget that often their systems are not up to standard. Localisation cannot be just about funding, but should be tied to capacity strengthening. The next big step, I think, is to embrace a consortium model where all relevant actors, international and local, jointly analyse, plan and decide, based on their capacities.



James Keah

Executive Director Universal Intervention & Development Organisation, South Sudan

Localisation is ...



Ula Khaled

Project Support Manager-
Yamaan Foundation

Respect the leadership and agency of local actors

The key step to reach real localisation is to enhance local leadership. This means empowering local actors to lead and manage humanitarian programmes and ensuring that they have a seat at the table in all relevant discussions. This can be achieved through directing decision-making power and resources allocation to local actors, including local NGOs and communities.

International NGOs have a significant role in making this step towards real localisation. They can leverage their resources and networks to support local actors and communities to build their capacities in managing emergency funds and taking a leading position. However, to achieve real localisation, it is essential that international NGOs recognise and respect the leadership and agency of local actors and communities and work in partnership with them to ensure that emergency assistance is tailored to their needs and priorities.



EXPERIENCES FROM THE JOINT RESPONSES

Shahida Suleiman,
chair of the Local Advisory Group:

***“We have to shoot for the stars
and land on the moon”***

Shahida welcomes the interviewer in the Oxfam Novib office in The Hague with a namasté gesture. She combines an open look with a friendly appearance and shows remarkably lively, despite her hectic travel schedule. Having just arrived from Nairobi, she is about to travel to Brussels and then on to Mogadishu. As her organisation, Save Somali Women and Children, is based there, the capital of Somalia is Shahida's working place, although she herself is Kenyan.



Shahida chairs the Local Advisory Group. Local NGOs participating in the Joint Responses provide the members of the Local Advisory Group. Initially, the Local Advisory Group was a rather voluntary body within the Dutch Relief Alliance, but it was given independent status in 2022. Since its inaugural meeting in November 2022 the Local Advisory Group forms a permanent part of the participation structures of the Dutch Relief Alliance. One of the main topics it treats is localisation. That's a subject Shahida is well acquainted with, also on the local level. She tells, enthusiastically:

“We are really pushing for the localisation agenda in Somalia. Within the Somalia NGO Consortium we have a localisation working group which urges INGOs and the UN to put their money where their mouths are. Currently, 65 per cent of the pooled funding through the Somalia Humanitarian Fund (a multi-donor mechanism created to allocate funding for the most urgent interventions, managed by UN OCHA, ed.) goes to local organisations. That is a big step towards localisation. But we want more organisations to have access to the funds. Access is based on capacity, but the parameters differ per donor. One could meet Oxfam's criteria, for example, but fail for UN OCHA's. To address this, the localisation working group of the Somalia NGO Consortium came up with a harmonised capacity assessment tool, based on common key areas. We are now inviting donors to use this tool.”

Shahida Suleiman

Chair of the Local
Advisory Group:



“You can only encourage and inspire the members to move the needle at the same pace.”

How about localisation within the Dutch Relief Alliance?

“Within the Joint Responses of the alliance, local actors manage up to 35 per cent of the budgets, in line with the alliance’s target. But some international NGOs don’t disburse that kind of amounts, maybe because of internal mechanisms. Local partners within a Joint Response therefore experience big differences. My wish is that the partnerships will look the same for all local actors.”

Can you give an example of a recent advice of the Local Advisory Group?

“We haven’t given any concrete advice yet, instead we developed a work plan which identifies key strategic areas we are going to focus on. The first one is co-leadership within the Joint Responses. Normally the architecture is that one of the Dutch Relief Alliance members is leading the Joint Response, contracting local NGOs and leading the other international NGOs. In the case of co-leadership, the international NGO is leading together with a local organisation. This gives the local organisation the opportunity to understand the processes at a higher level and obtain a broader view. This is taking shape now in South Sudan. We will try to learn from that experience and see whether it is possible to replicate it to all of the Joint Responses.”

Where do you see this partnership going?

“An important question we are currently discussing within the Dutch Relief Alliance is: at what point have we sufficiently strengthened our capacity to be able to access direct funding? If you’re still building capacity after twenty years of relationship I would not call that a sustainable partnership. A very large part of capacity building now is ticking boxes instead of meeting the needs of the local organisations. Most international NGOs within the alliance only bring local organisations on board because the donor requires an aspect of localisation. It is still more a transactional than a transformational relationship. One of the underlying problems is the duration of the partnerships. It is difficult to demonstrate that you have built capacity in six months or two years. So it would be useful to have partnerships of three years or longer.”

How did the alliance respond to the Local Advisory Group’s work plan?

Laughing: “Both the Board of Directors and the Local Advisory Group itself think it is very ambitious. Which is not a bad thing. The Grand Bargain is quite ambitious as well. We have to, how do you say that, shoot for the stars and land on the moon. That means: aim high, and then see what can be achieved. But there is no opposition against our work plan. The alliance has opened the door for our feedback and criticism.”

If you were in command in the Dutch Relief Alliance, what would you change?

“Then I come back to equal partnerships. Oxfam Novib is clear and keen about localisation and says that 35 per cent of the budget should be managed by local actors. But several alliance members do not comply with this and as a consequence, some local actors do not have access to the budget at all. It is key for me that every local organisation has access to 35 per cent of the budget. The Local Advisory Group is working on this. In Somalia for example, the Local Advisory Group representative and the Joint Response coordinator are planning a Partnership Health Check in which local partners can give feedback on the state of their partnerships.”



Is this a difficult thing to change?

"In an alliance, you can't enforce this. You can only encourage and inspire the members to move the needle at the same pace."

Are you positive about the Grand Bargain? Did it yield what it promised?

"The intentions are in the right place. But when it comes to realisation we still have a long way to go. Take for example the funding policies of the different donors. Many countries within the EU are signatories to the Grand Bargain. But the EU humanitarian organisation, ECHO, allows only 60,000 euro to be directly funded to local actors. I don't expect that they change this overnight to suit the Grand Bargain. That will take a lot of time."

Can you mention a result or positive development caused by the Grand Bargain?

Sighing: "Nothing comes to my mind. In Somalia for example, the landscape hasn't changed much after the Grand Bargain."

What are the biggest obstacles for the Grand Bargain to be a success?

"The policies of the UN and the EU. When the funding policies were developed, there was not much thought about the role of local actors. The biggest challenge is to change these policies."

Do you consider the lack of measurable localisation indicators, like the number of local staff in senior management of international NGO offices, a major problem?

"Yes and no. Yes if it translates to what is actually happening on the ground. No if it is only about reporting and checking boxes. A lot depends on who is deciding about the indicators. It is only helpful and useful if their development is participatory and if they are designed with the aim of transforming."

How far are we from the total transformation of the humanitarian system?

"Wow, that's a multi-faceted question. We must be realistic about what we can achieve. Maybe our groundwork will only bear fruit in twenty or thirty years. But that's okay, because it's not only about the result but also about the journey. I think we're laying the foundation now and we can see some building blocks, but I don't think the whole building will be there in the foreseeable future."

Can the Local Advisory Group play an important role when it comes to this?

"Yes. We can help to solve the huge information gap between the donors and the local actors. It enables them to hold the international NGOs within the alliance accountable. They can say, for example: look, we're entitled to a 6 per cent cost sharing minimum but you're only giving us 4 per cent! The Local Advisory Group prevents the alliance from having conversations only on the The Hague level, without involving the local partners. Doing this, it gives credibility to the Dutch Relief Alliance policy and it can even change its direction."

“When something unexpected happens, we can decide ourselves how to respond.”

Should it be possible for local parties to be a member of the alliance?

“That is our dream. It would be a next step, after capacity strengthening. It will differ from local partner to local partner how much time it will take to take that step. But my organisation is ready for it, we have the systems in place.”

Where does the Dutch Relief Alliance stand when it comes to the Grand Bargain?

“The alliance is a frontrunner. Localisation is at the heart of what the alliance is doing. It is demonstrated in many ways, among them quality funding and flexible funding. Part of the funding of my organisation, for example, is unearmarked. When something unexpected happens, we can decide ourselves how to respond. We need to see more of that. The recognition that we also have indirect costs, like system development and insurances, is another strong point of the alliance. Other donors can learn from the alliance with regard to this.”

What’s the most important step the alliance has taken since the Grand Bargain?

“The introduction of quality funding. The Dutch Relief Alliance has laid the groundwork for the Grand Bargain commitment of 25 per cent direct funding.”

What do you consider the most valuable asset on the ground of quality funding?

“The unearmarked funding. In the past, you could not make adjustments in the event of a crisis. It takes months to access funds, by which time the situation would have deteriorated or there would have been no need for funding anymore. Unearmarked funding demonstrates confidence in the ability of local organisations to make decisions about the needs and actions on the ground.”



Humanitarian response after the earthquake in Syria

Localisation in times of disaster



The earthquake that hit Turkey and North-Western Syria in February 2023, took the lives of tens of thousands of people and destroyed countless homes and rendered infrastructure useless. One of the first things that bounced back in the hours after the quake was the resilience and solidarity of local people. “We made sure that our loved ones were safe and then we went to work,” that was what Dutch Relief Alliance members heard from their local partners. Localisation is not a ‘luxury’ commodity, that immediately goes overboard when all hell breaks loose. Exactly when things get tough, localisation is vital.

In the early morning of February 6, 2023, the earth shook, even in Damascus. Roy Moussalli, Executive Director of St. Ephrem Patriarchal Development Committee (EPDC), lives in the capital of Syria, more than 400 kilometers from the epicentre of the earthquake that devastated parts of Turkey and north-western Syria. *“My son and I woke up from the shock. At first I thought a missile had hit our building. But the trembling continued. That ruled out an attack. Was the washing machine playing tricks? But then I heard sounds from the street. Children crying.”* Only the next day Roy Moussalli realised the extent of the major earthquake – 7.8 on Richters scale – that had hit the north-western part of Syria. In this part of the country, with Aleppo as major city, his organisation was already involved in (protracted) emergency assistance, in the wake of the Syrian crisis.

The tremblings in Damascus were nothing compared to the devastation in Aleppo and the many rural communities around it, Moussalli soon found out.

EPDC is one of the local partners of the Joint Response of the Dutch Relief Alliance in Syria. Lead by the organisation ZOA, the Joint Response has been active in Syria since 2015. Over the years emergency assistance was provided to people affected by the crisis that tore up the Syrian society. As in all Joint Responses initiated by Dutch Relief Alliance, localisation is developing steadily. More and more local organisations are centre stage in humanitarian assistance. This process has resulted in the fact that on average, 30 to 35 percent, of Dutch Relief Alliance’s emergency budget is channelled through local organisations. This is seen as quite an accomplishment in the difficult Syrian context.

And then an earthquake happens. Buildings are destroyed; people rendered homeless; suddenly the most basic facilities are unavailable. What then? Is a process like localisation the first thing going overboard? How effective can local organisations be if they are also hit by a disaster? If local staff is also homeless? If offices are destroyed or unsafe?

Obviously local helpers and other staff were also affected after the earthquake, Dina Al Nashef admits. Dina Al Nashef is Project Coordinator - Syria Response of ZOA, lead organisation of Dutch relief Alliance’s Joint Response in Syria. She tells about local organisations having their offices damaged, and that some staff-members of local partners have lost members of their family. *“But even during a disaster, local organisations are the first ones providing aid. They know best what the needs are, what areas are most hit, what the challenges are.”*





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Very quickly after the first quake, and even during the aftershocks, local aid workers already were available to view the damage, and to make an assessment of the needs. At first with the limited resources that are still available. But when international aid started to flow, sometimes days or even weeks after the quake, the local organisations were the ones that knew what is needed. They knew who the affected people are. They also knew what areas were relatively safe. Dina Al Nashef: *"I talked to staff members of our local partners in Aleppo. They said: of course we made sure that our loved ones were safe. That was our first concern. But then we went to work."*

That was exactly the course of action of Ibrahim Nsier, pastor at the Presbyterian community in Aleppo. *"At 04.17 our house began to shake. My two daughters and my wife and I were together. We were scared. Not so much afraid to die, but afraid to die without our other family members who have all fled to the West during the conflict. The minutes after 04.17 were the longest moments of fear in our lives. Luckily our house, in the old Syrian quarter in Aleppo, survived the shocks. Later in the street I saw children crying, mothers screaming and fathers walking around desperately, not knowing what to do. Some said people should hide in the basements of building in case of aftershocks. 'No', I cried, 'hiding in basements is what you do during a bombardment. During an earthquake you go to the street and stay away from building that might collapse.'"*

Soon after the quake Ibrahim Nsier got calls from staff members of his organisation: people were cold, many fled to the street just wearing their night clothes, it was winter, they had no place to stay. *"At that moment I decided that we would open our school for the people. That building was sturdy, built in the 1930's, it had survived. In the days and weeks after the quake, we gave shelter to over 600 people. The church provided blankets, mattresses, food and drinks. And later we provided other things that were needed: medical supplies, sanitary items, you name it."*



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“The earthquake gave an enormous boost to the willingness of all actors to work together. There was a shared conviction that we all were one team.”

With the aid of Joint Response member Dorcas, the Presbyterian church in Aleppo extended its aid to the 30+ other refugee-shelters in Aleppo. According to Ibrahim Nsier, the key to effective emergency assistance is the interplay between local organisations and big international humanitarian organisations. *“The earthquake gave an enormous boost to the willingness of all actors to work together. There was a shared conviction that we all were one team.”* ‘Localisation’ and ‘the Grand Bargain Commitments’ are not familiar terms to Ibrahim Nsier. *“I only informed Dorcas what was most urgently needed, and they did their best to get it”,* he says simply. *“I have no idea if 30% of the budget was spent through local organisations. I was even happy when people from Dorcas were here helping to prepare sandwiches for the people.”*

For the members of the Joint Response in Syria, the process of localisation that had been developing in the years before, greatly contributed to the preparedness of local emergency assistance. Roy Moussalli compares the situation in Aleppo with what happened in the harbour city Latakia, at less than 150 kilometers away. In Aleppo the local organisations are much more developed: there are more organisations present and their capacities are more developed. Moussalli explains that, as a result of the better developments of local organisations, humanitarian aid in Aleppo materialised almost immediately. Local organisations took matters into their hands and quickly established lines of communication, streamlining the emergency assistance. Their good communication with international NGOs secured that before long also international aid started flowing. In Latakia, in contrast, aid took a long time to come, and when it came it was not well coordinated, ill placed and insufficient. This is, at least partly, a result of a weak civil society. According to Moussalli, most international NGOs realise this central role of local organisations. So after requests from local organisations, at least 25% of OCHA*-funds was channelled through Syrian local organisations. Before the quake, most local proposals did not meet the OCHA requirements and were denied.

*OCHA: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs



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Towards a risk sharing framework

Humanitarian assistance is peppered with risks. And we're not just talking about the security risks during violent conflicts or of operating in remote, accident-prone areas. There is also the risk of fraud or theft; the risk of engaging with less reliable parties; financial risks; ethical risks; or risks of reputation damage. The current practice of 'unilateral risk management', however, often leads to risks being 'transferred' to actors elsewhere in the 'humanitarian chain'.

Humanitarian aid is faced with all kinds of threats. Different actors in the humanitarian 'chain' face different kinds of risks. On the one hand, back donors – usually governments – may fear reputational, fiduciary or political repercussions when humanitarian actions go sour due to scandals. On the other side, local organisations – the last link in the delivery chain – are confronted with operational risks: security risks obviously, but also the risk of being confronted with obstacles for delivery such as, for example, local bureaucratic impediments, or financial risks if budgets are not adapted to accommodate changing circumstances.

Currently, the management of these – and other – risks is problematic. In some cases risks are unilaterally transferred to other actors, or the impacts of risks are reduced with little concern for the effects on other organisations. This does not reflect the collective nature of humanitarian action. It is one of the unbalanced elements in the humanitarian system that a number of Grand Bargain signatories aim to address.

Already in 2018, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), together with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and InterAction, agreed to take the discussion further and promoted the idea of risk sharing between donors and implementing organisations. During the next annual meeting of the Grand Bargain signatories, they will present a 'risk sharing framework'.

Renet van der Waals, coordinator in the Stabilisation and Humanitarian Aid Department at MFA, has been involved in shaping the discussion on risk sharing. During a Zoom-interview she explains the importance of such a framework. Van der Waals: *"We think that a key element in risk sharing is an open dialogue between all actors in the humanitarian chain about each other's risks and responsibilities. Such a dialogue should ideally take place at the beginning of a humanitarian response: get all parties around the table and talk openly about the risks each actor is facing. Recognise that different partners face different risks: it's not just about security risks, but also, for example, the risk of mismanagement. How do you weigh these risks? Who is most affected? Based on such a dialogue, agreements must be made about mitigating measures: and also about who does what when something happens."*



Renet van der Waals

Coordinator in the Stabilisation
and Humanitarian Aid
Department at ministry of
Foreign Affairs (MFA)

“....risk sharing will not replace regular agreements on risk management, but complement and improve these.”

That sounds easy and straightforward. Why is this not standard practice already?

“Of course risks are being discussed in the current practice. But each actor does so from its own perspective and based in its own analysis. At the beginning of a joint response, Dutch Relief Alliance, for example, presents a risk analysis. And we at the Ministry discuss this with the Alliance. But this is not a joint process. It does not yet include implementing partners, or identification of all risks, perceived by any actor in the chain. And let's be clear: such a dialogue will be quite complicated. The risk sharing framework is intended to guide such a dialogue. We will present it during the next annual meeting in June. After that different humanitarian actors are planning to start pilots.”

What will this framework look like? Can you give us a sneak preview?

“First of all it lays down a number of principles to be accepted by all parties involved. For example, that all accept to collectively consider the totality of risks of the whole chain and not just the risks to their own organisation. And they also need to accept that everyone involved has their own considerations. It is important that all parties go into the dialogue with a similar mindset: open to the differences, and open to the opportunities that risk sharing offers for improved delivery. Secondly, the framework is a series of questions, through a number of stages, that parties can use to jointly identify, assess and weigh risks and develop mitigating and preventing measures. As well as responses in case a risk materialises: who bears the risk and how is it shared? These questions should lead to clarity about the risks and the responsibilities and lay the foundation for agreements on joint risk management.”

Sounds logic.

“It is. I hope that all people working with this framework will realise how attractive and obvious it is to approach risk factors jointly, in an open dialogue.”

Unfortunately at the moment, risk transfer is still common practice. How does that work, risk transfer?

“Risk transfer may be built into contractual relationships, for example in cases of alleged mismanagement; this may lead to putting a project on hold. That sounds obvious, but may affect implementing partners elsewhere in the delivery chain than where the alleged mismanagement occurred. Parties that have nothing to do with the mismanagement will suffer from the freezing of the program. Not all organisations are able to deal with such a temporary freeze of funds. Or, when operational and security risks, run by implementing partners, are not acknowledged by intermediate and/or funding partners, thus not allowing for appropriate security measures in the budget. But, to be clear: it is not so that risk transfer never is a smart and appropriate form of risk management. Sometimes risk transfer can be the logical outcome of risk assessment or an adequate, jointly selected form of risk management which helps avoid the risk of non-delivery. The idea of risk sharing is that the considerations around this are weighed jointly in a more equitable dialogue, with respect for each other's positions.”

“It is sometimes suggested that risk sharing and risk management is specifically important if you work with small, local organisations, because these organisations are supposed not to have their systems in order. We have a reversed take on this: the unilateral risk management methodologies that are used by many large organisations and donors, lead to risk transfer and other risk management strategies making it difficult for local organisations to engage in cooperation with these organisations: the risks are too great.”

“I think I also need to be clear: risk sharing will not replace regular agreements on risk management, but complement and improve these.”



“We hope that many organisations will be inspired to use the framework in order to step up their efforts on risk sharing..”

What are, or should be, the lessons learnt for MFA itself in this respect?

“It is a process. But one that we are taking up seriously: what are the consequences of the way we at the Ministry deal with risks? We must acknowledge that unilateral risk management strategies are not the most effective and may hinder achievement of our humanitarian objectives. Risk sharing is not an additional burden, but an opportunity to improve our impact. And, I agree, risk sharing is not yet common practice at the Ministry. But the wish to take steps is there.”

“For example: part of a new discussion that we have with Dutch Relief Alliance is about the Indirect Cost Recovery of local organisations. What indirect expenses do organisations in the chain have to do their work. Such expenses can include the mitigation of risks. We have now decided that 6 per cent of the programme budget is to be given directly to implementing organisations as Indirect Cost Recovery. And on top of that, intermediary organisations get a maximum of 4 per cent of this budget for their intermediary role, also taking note of the costs and risks that might be associated with this way of working.”

Did you have discussions with Dutch Relief Alliance on risk sharing and on the Framework you are developing?

“Certainly. As a matter of fact the Dutch Relief Alliance is a member of the Risk Sharing Platform that is involved with developing the framework. We have had monthly meetings with this Platform to prepare the Risk Sharing framework. Now that the Framework is ready for use, we will discuss ways ahead with the Dutch Relief Alliance.”

What do you hope will happen during the Annual meeting regarding the proposed framework?

“We hope that many organisations will be inspired to use the framework in order to step up their efforts on risk sharing. We have to be realistic: it is a lot of work. So we expect a number of pilots and we hope that all partners involved will gather their experiences and use these to improve and further promote the framework.”



© Stan Klinkenberg / Save the Children





Localisation is ...

Real Commitment for Localisation

For me, the Grand Bargain Commitment is the birthplace of localisation. It is all about creating a stronger role, leadership and meaningful engagement of local partners in the humanitarian aid system. And it is about creating a power balance and equitable partnership between international and local actors.

But there are challenges.

There is a gap in implementation. Many donors take the limited capacity of local partners as an excuse for not providing funds to local partners. The truth is that in some areas the capacities of the local partners exceed those of International NGOs. Creating synergy and complementarity (capacity sharing) between international and local actors in humanitarian response is important to enhance the efficiency of humanitarian aid. The complex criteria of donors like UNOCHA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, EDS) are another obstacle for local partners to accessing funds. We have raised this issue repeatedly, but nothing seems to change. And the third challenge is that most international partners prefer a situation where their capacities are stronger than those of their local partners.

There are some things that International NGOs need to do. The criteria for local actors accessing humanitarian funds like UNOCHA fund, has to be revisited. International NGOs need to give attention to organisational development of local partners. And finally: Dutch Relief Alliance needs to develop a mechanism of long-term partnership with local partners.



Workayehu Bizu

Executive Director of
ANPPCAN-Ethiopia





The Dutch Relief Alliance scales up innovations like TeamUp

Jumping your traumatic experiences away

Every time the little feet land on the dry sandy ground, clouds of dust fly up. The rope sways under the children's feet as they jump. The air is filled with laughter. A round hut with a thatched roof forms the background. Just a game of happy children in a warm and not so rich country? The fact that the girl with the large yellow flowers on her blue skirt is missing a leg suggests otherwise.

And indeed, we are in South Sudan. At least 4.2 million children in this war-torn country have been affected by violence and conflict. Many of them are displaced as a result of it. The war didn't leave only physical scars but also a range of mental challenges, like anger, fear and loneliness. But while often mental problems are neglected in health programmes, in the TeamUp session we are watching they are right at the center.

Play, dance and sports

TeamUp is a movement-based group intervention aimed at improving the psychosocial wellbeing of children aged 6-18 affected by war or conflict. It is all about play, dance and sports, allowing children from different ethnic backgrounds and speaking different languages to engage and socialize together.

Facilitators are adults from the community trained and mentored by TeamUp trainers. The facilitators organise sessions according to the social and emotional needs of children and monitor their behaviour. Children requiring additional professional support are identified and referred.

TeamUp is an evidence informed intervention developed by Save the Children, UNICEF the Netherlands and War Child. Initially it was used for children with a refugee background arriving in the Netherlands, but gradually also for war affected children elsewhere. The intervention is being applied in 26 countries now. TeamUp was rolled out in South Sudan with Save the Children, War Child, SOS Children's Villages and Help a Child.



The Dutch Relief Alliance Innovation Fund (DIF) provided TeamUp the opportunity to test and further develop processes that helped to scale with more partners and in more countries. This included refinement of tools for monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning, designing a certification process for facilitators and trainers, and the initial exploration of business models.

‘TeamUp brings unity, togetherness and peace, to the children, but also to the facilitators themselves.’

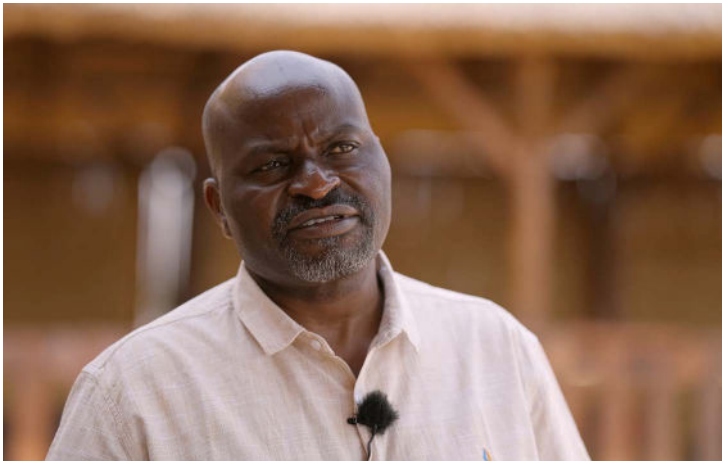


Embedding innovation in Joint Responses

Since 2018 the DIF financed eighteen innovations, ranging from personal cash aid to clean energy kiosks in refugee settlements. The emphasis in the current phase, running from 2022 to 2026, is on embedding the innovations in Joint Responses.

Scaling innovations in the humanitarian sector is not an easy job, says Lisette Gotink, the innovation manager of the Dutch Relief Alliance. *“Humanitarian projects often have a short life cycle, while scaling up requires a longer lead time. So to make innovation a success, you have to extend the duration of the projects. In addition, research and development in the pressure cooker of humanitarian aid is often neglected. That is a pity, because crises are in fact a fertile breeding ground for innovation. We are therefore now trying to enable more space for innovation in the Joint Responses by thoroughly understanding the challenges before we search for solutions.”*

In the beginning, an Innovation Working Group supported Lisette, but it was disbanded due to the Dutch Relief Alliance's new direction in embedding innovation in the Joint Responses. Lisette is proud of the progress made in the past year and a half. In total six Joint Responses, in DRC, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen, practised challenge mapping, a form of problem analysis that precedes innovation. She thinks this is a natural step in strengthening the innovative capacities of the Dutch Relief Alliance, its programming and all its partners, including the local ones. From something that has been set aside in the structure, innovation is becoming an integral part of the work process.



Kevin Ndemera

War Child Holland
Regional Director

Apart from embedding innovation in the Joint Responses, structured learning is a focal point in the current phase. Lisette planned to make an Innovation Knowledge Map. This is an online tool containing and connecting all the lessons learnt in innovation. All projects were evaluated separately, so the building blocks are there. But the tool has yet to see the light of day, mainly due to a lack of time. ‘We did do a

learning needs assessment,’ Lisette adds. ‘We asked what our partners needed most when exploring our innovation know-how. It turned out that they wanted to be able to search the information thematically and geographically. So that remains the basis of building such a tool.’

Unity, togetherness and peace

Back to South Sudan. Men and women wearing TeamUp t-shirts surround the playing children. One of them is Kevin Ndemera, War Child Holland Regional Director. *“If someone experiences so much violence in his formative years, the impact will stay with him for a very long time”,* he says. *“For some this is life-changing when it comes to their perception of the world and others. We hope we can contribute to reaching their full potential. We know that there is a child in everyone. Sometimes it is just waiting for an opportunity to come out. TeamUp actually frees the child in you.”*

This doesn’t only count for the children. Mobarak Zacharia Arial, SOS Children’s Villages Facilitator. Who wears a beautiful blue shirt with yellow figures: *“TeamUp brings unity, togetherness and peace, to the children, but also to the facilitators themselves.”* Dut Agany, TeamUp trainer and facilitator, who’s shirt reveals he works for Help a Child, adds: *“When the children are playing, we notice from their faces that it relieves them, but it also relieves us from our own stress.”*

The four organisations that execute TeamUp in South Sudan work in close coordination. Monthly, they exchange views on the progress and challenges of the programme. They also pay visits to each other’s sessions to learn from each other. This contributes significantly to the much needed upscaling. But the children play a role in this as well. They introduce TeamUp at home and in their schools. Even the parents sometimes join them while playing.

The girl with the blue skirt with large yellow flowers walks home, using a crutch instead of her missing right leg. At school she used to get bullied, she tells: *“They called me one-leg. But now the other children respect me. That’s why I like TeamUp.”*



Mobarak Zacharia Aria

SOS Children’s Villages
Facilitator



How the Dutch Relief Alliance tackles innovation and supports the Grand Bargain Commitments

Innovation forms one of the key strategic ambitions of the Dutch Relief Alliance. Since 2022, the Dutch Relief Alliance is transitioning from fund-driven innovation to embedding innovation in its Joint Responses. Specifically, there has been significant effort of partners in challenge mapping: identifying local problems followed by searching local solutions. By ensuring that these activities are taking place locally, the Dutch Relief Alliance supports Workstream 2 of the Grand Bargain Commitments, 'more support and funding tools to local and national responders.'

Between 2018 and 2021, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs supported the Dutch Relief Alliance with a fund of 12 million euro. Every year, the Dutch Relief Alliance called for innovation proposals and eventually had an innovation portfolio of eighteen innovations piloted, adapted or scaled by partners. The thematic focus in the Dutch Relief Alliance innovation portfolio was on safety and protection, renewable energy, smart use of data and cash programming (according to Grand Bargain Workstream 3, 'increase the use and coordination of cash-based programming'). Some of the projects were at an early stage, others were getting ready to scale. Public as well as private parties were involved. Podcasts, talkshows, videos and workshops were used in the various dissemination activities. Among the projects were an incident reporting app, a cost analysis tool, a pre-emptive cash tool, a project to address harmful social and gender norms, a buddy project, a waste to clean energy project and a sustainable water services project.

Localisation is ...

→ **Just thoughts on paper**



Basheer Srour

Monitoring and Evaluation
Officer MSJM

I think localisation in Syria is still just thoughts on paper.

The most important issue is the mentality of international NGOs and the way they look at local partners. Local NGOs are mostly treated as sub-contracting agents or lower level players in the humanitarian field. A far cry from equitable partnerships.

Next steps needed for real localisation of emergency assistance include:

1. Changing the mentality of International NGOs toward local and national partners and giving them the confidence that they are able to lead the responses.
 2. Changing the capacity building mechanism from traditional training to real sharing experiences
 3. Provide local NGOs with timely and fitting resources.
- Note that these steps should be considered as one chain, they are interconnected. You cannot pick one and ignore the other steps.



Localisation is ...



Address power dynamics



Feras Fares

Head of Programs
Independent Doctors
Association

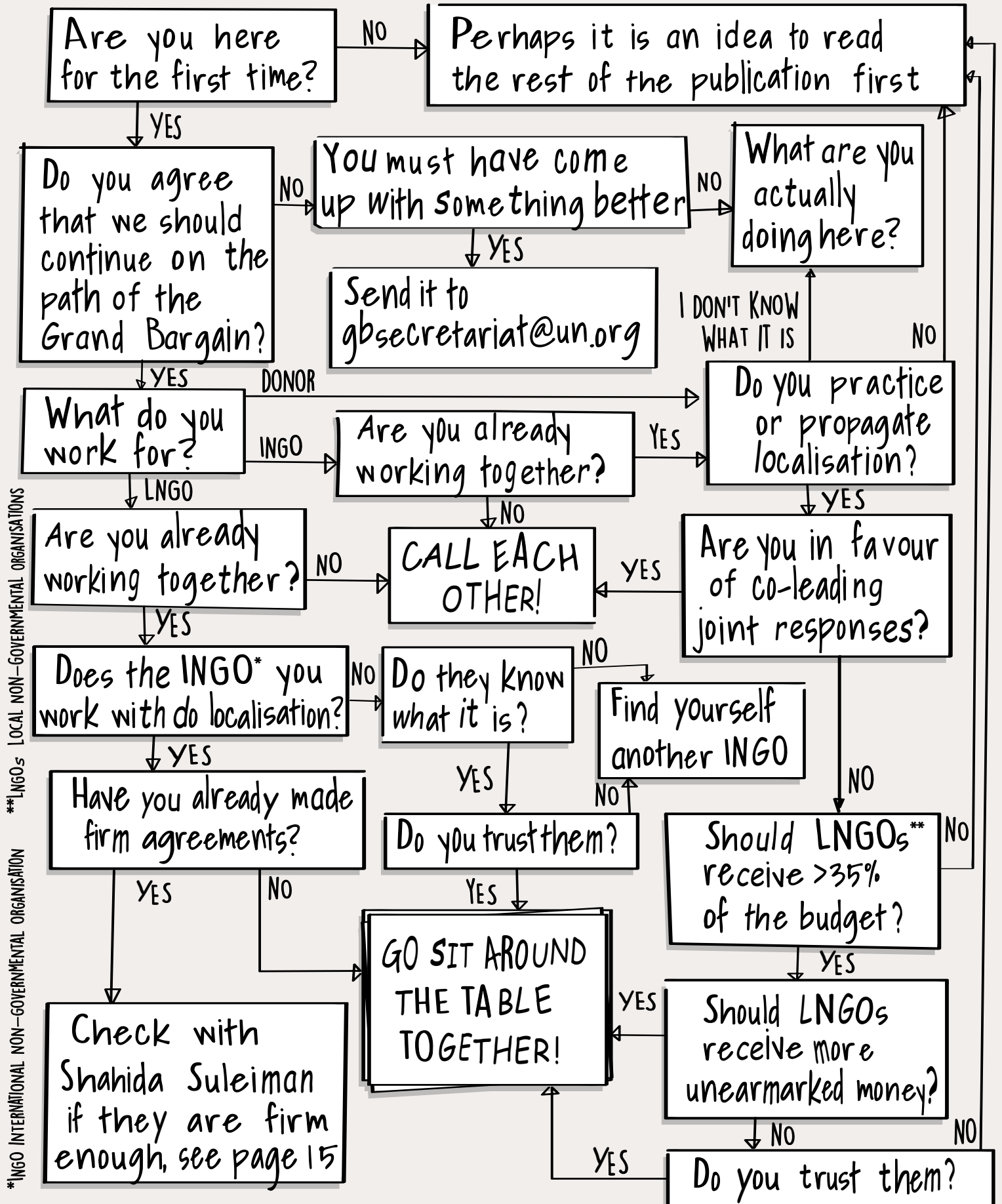
I'm sorry to say so, but from my perspective, the Grand Bargain Commitments are far from completed. There are still structural barriers that prevent local actors from taking a leading role in humanitarian response. This is mainly due to lack of planning and clear procedures that could unify the approach of donors and International NGOs towards localisation.

There are exceptions.

The consortium my organisation is part of also includes members of the Dutch Relief Alliance. The contribution of the international NGOs in this consortium address power dynamics between international and local actors effectively. This includes promoting more equitable partnerships between international and local organisations, as well as creating opportunities for meaningful participation and decision-making by local actors.



The Grand Bargain Flowchart



Can't figure it out? Go back to the start!

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Photos: Dutch Relief Alliance, unless indicated otherwise