

Local Humanitarian Leadership Tip Sheet

Overview

Localization is the movement of returning disaster response decision-making, leadership and planning to local organizations with the most current situational awareness and understanding of the needs of the communities they serve. As disasters worldwide become more frequent and severe, it becomes more critical for philanthropy and aid organizations to support local humanitarian leaders adequately.

The localization movement received its most significant support at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 when an agreement known as [The Grand Bargain](#) was hammered out.

“The Grand Bargain, launched during the WHS in Istanbul in May 2016, is a unique agreement between some of the largest donors and humanitarian organizations who have committed to get more means into the hands of people in need and to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the humanitarian action.” – [About the Grand Bargain](#)

What Is Each Party Doing?

International/National/Regional and Local Philanthropic Organizations

The Grand Bargain Secretariat leads the Grand Bargain under the United Nations. Their work is separated into nine workstreams to enhance efforts to shift the power to national, regional and local actors. Goals of this movement include:

- Greater transparency in funding allocations and reporting.
- More direct support and capacity-building tools for local, national and regional responders.
- Increased use and coordination of cash-based programming.
- Reduced duplication and management costs with periodic functional reviews.
- Improved joint and impartial needs assessments that can be shared with funders.
- Greater representation of aid recipients in planning and decision-making.
- Increased collaborative humanitarian multi-year planning and funding and reduced earmarking of donor contributions.
- Harmonized and simplified reporting requirements with greater flexibility to move money to emerging needs as they occur.

Sub-National and Response Organizations

As the lead agencies for disaster response and recovery in specific geographies, these organizations also have responsibilities to ensure that funding for local organizations and empowering local leaders can happen successfully. Several principles undergird this work:

- Transparency about needs and how funding is being spent.
- Ongoing capacity and capability enhancements to support local disaster management.
- Coordination with other sub-national organizations to reduce duplication and costs.

- Increase opportunities for participation and leadership from people receiving disaster-related aid.
- Complete reporting requirements quickly and concisely.

Recommendations for Blue Sky Times

International/National/Regional and Local Philanthropic Organizations

- Work with other similar organizations to consolidate and coordinate reporting requirements.
- Share information and documentation about Sub-National and Response Organizations.
- Work with other organizations to develop common needs assessment documents.
- Develop criteria for multi-year planning and funding.
- Educate donors on the need for unrestricted funding.
- Create standard capacity and capability curricula to harmonize skills across organizations.
- Evaluate internal policies that work against collaborative funding, long-term, flexible grants or cash payments.
- Consider funding networks of organizations as strategic partners.

Sub-National and Response Organizations

- Build networks and relationships with other organizations.
- Develop and distribute templates for anticipated funding needs.
- Ensure financial and management documents are up-to-date and readily available.
- Support capacity and capability development by training local staff and volunteers.
- Collaborate with other organizations to increase opportunities for community participation.

Recommendations for Times of Disaster

International/National/Regional and Local Philanthropic Organizations

- Pre-stage or reserve resources to be immediately available as needs are identified.
- Establish disaster-specific funds if it is within your organization's scope of work.
- Share updates from organizations working in disaster-affected areas.
- Share resources (including trained staff) with Sub-National and Response Organizations to temporarily increase their capacity and capabilities.
- Promote the goals and equity benefits of funding locally among your philanthropic peers.
- Collaborate with other funders to pool support for national/regional/local responders.

Sub-National and Response Organizations

- Communicate needs clearly and concisely.
- Coordinate needs requests with other organizations.
- Complete needs assessments and damage assessments as soon as possible.
- Provide frequent updates about operations, needs, and other disaster-related information.

Case Studies/Suggestions and Ideas for Funding

Please visit our toolkit on [Strengthening Local Humanitarian Leadership](#) as part of CDP's Disaster Philanthropy Playbook for case studies and suggestions for funding.

Further Reading

UN Interagency Standing Committee (IASC): [The Grand Bargain](#)

Overseas Development Institute: [Grand Bargain Annual Independent Report 2020](#)