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Reflections and Key Takeaways

In-Person Convening of the Strengthening Local Humanitarian Leadership Philanthropic Collaborative

September 20-22, 2023
Hosted by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Facilitated by the Center for Disaster Philanthropy

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Background, purpose and summary outputs

In September 2023, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation generously hosted the third in-person gathering of the Strengthening Local Humanitarian Leadership Collaborative (LHL). Members were joined by peer funder networks, advocates and broader ecosystem thought leaders and practitioners. CDP led the planning and facilitation, collecting suggestions for topics from invited participants.

The gathering was more diverse and cross-sectoral than previous convenings, noting that working with a broader ecosystem of actors is required to address the root causes of vulnerability and marginalization. Participants challenged each other to think in new ways and break out of the echo chamber, recognizing the need to close the gap between humanitarian needs and funding.

CDP also made a decision to disrupt the often-repetitive conversations and calls to action and invited peer funder networks and movements that have made similar commitments to fund proximately and equitably. These peer networks shared their perspectives, approaches, experiences and lessons from their collective progress and successes.

Participants included:

- Humanitarian leaders from local, national, regional and global actors, including Global South networks such as CRGR and NEAR.
- InterAction, representing the largest network of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs).
- A range of peer funders and networks covering human rights, child rights, feminist and women-led funding and movements, LGBTQI issues, environment and climate change, peace and security.
- Intermediaries, INGOs and local organizations with programming rooted in various disaster-affected contexts.

The convening included significant and notable cross-pollination of ideas between different funder networks, local practitioners and thought leaders. Participants brought unique perspectives and experiences from their leadership journeys.

Topics included:

- Proximity and modalities of funding.
- Advocacy for power shifts.
- Funding grassroots and community-led approaches and movements.
- Funding resilience as a localization approach.
- Collaboration inside and outside the traditional humanitarian ecosystem.
- Overcoming internal barriers for power shifts.
- Investing in piloting, testing and scaling new mechanisms, solutions.
- Investment in institutional capacity strengthening in addition to projects and partnerships.

See Annex 1 for objectives for the convening and Annex 2 for the full list of participants, including their contact information.

Owning individual power and committing to action

Prior to the meeting, participants completed an anonymous survey that asked them to reflect and share some of the powers they have to make changes. They completed the following statement: "In my position as [fill in the blank] I have the power to [fill in the blank]."

The responses included:

- Acknowledging the power to change institutional policies and practices.
- Taking personal responsibility and action.
- Improving relationships with partners and peer funders.
- Simplifying requirements for grantees.
- Ensuring local partners are not short-changed by INGOs via unfair ICR-sharing arrangements.

Strengthening Local Humanitarian Leadership Collaborative (LHL)
The LHL is a group of disaster and humanitarian philanthropists who are shifting power to crisis-affected communities and local humanitarian leadership, and adopting more equitable partnership practices. It is convened and run by a small secretariat team at the Center for Disaster Philanthropy (CDP), which organizes and facilitates monthly calls and peer-to-peer learning exchanges, and identifies opportunities for collaboration, joint funding and collective action. Since the last in-person meeting in 2019, this group has grown to include more U.S.-based philanthropic institutions and has opened membership to European institutions, given the group's goal of influencing philanthropy more broadly. The group made a commitment to recruiting new members after the meeting, no matter what stage of their localization journey they are on. The was done to follow through on the objective of influencing philanthropy beyond existing membership, continuing to energize the group and bringing new perspectives and capacity to enable greater collective action. All participants are invited to provide CDP with recommendations for potential new members with shared values and commitment to the LHL group's stated mission. While philanthropy is, by some measures, performing better than the aid system overall, we accept we can do more, individually and collectively.

See Annex 3 for the entire list of power statements.

At the convening, participants acknowledged that we all have power to make changes. The exercise clarified that we can do more with that power at the individual, relational and institutional level.

Participants were consistently encouraged to review the power statements and identify additional powers they hold but are not exercising. This was critical for obtaining concrete commitments from everyone at the close of the meeting. ***Participants are encouraged to continue to review and reflect on these power statements, consider which ones apply, and use them to inspire action and continue moving the needle within their spheres of influence.***

Non-funder attendees created lists of anonymized but concrete asks of philanthropy. Separately, funders reflected and challenged each other and were asked to write down at least three commitments and actions that they would take after the convening to further shift power and create more equitable partnerships. In the final session, the two groups reconvened and every funder in attendance at the meeting stood up and announced at least one of the actions they were committing to. ***These funder commitments can be found in Table 1 below.*** [1] [2]

Opening remarks and setting the stage

The opening session emphasized the evolution of the discourse and philanthropic actions in support of strengthening local humanitarian leadership. Grand Bargain commitments made by donors and select INGOs in 2016 framed the trajectory towards more localized humanitarian action by setting indicators and targets for the major donors to move toward. However, this resulted in narrowly casting localization regarding funding amounts going from donors directly to locally registered organizations.

This limited the aid sector's thinking and vision, and ignored the fundamental shifts required across the entire global aid system, and the individual mindsets within it, for meaningful change to occur. While hailed as a success at the time, the aid system has failed to meet the 25% target it set itself, having regressed to under 2%. If this one measure of progress on localization can't gain any traction with stated commitments and

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[1] *The meeting followed Chatham House rules and therefore, the report does not attribute personal statements made in the meeting to any specific funder. However, to hold ourselves accountable for our words and actions, the LHL group will provide an update to all participants six months after issuance of this report, where those same funders will be asked to share an update on how far they have progressed against their personal commitments made to the group in Seattle.*

[2] *This will be updated with actions/commitments from LHL members who were unable to attend in person.*

donor efforts to shift towards it, how likely is it we will see the real change required within the system in the next eight years?

There are many who believe that the 25% direct funding target should not be the main measure of success in shifting power to local humanitarian leadership. Funders can and should also focus attention and funding on the other ways power and agency can be shifted to local responders, non-traditional local actors, proximate intermediaries and affected communities.

Philanthropic institutions and their partners are at different stages in their journey to shift power. In her opening remarks, Heba Aly noted that The New Humanitarian and broader evidence from donors, INGOs and philanthropic experiences acknowledges that *system change takes time*.

There is also cause to acknowledge and *celebrate the incremental progress that has been made* toward this goal. Participants introduced themselves by sharing their examples of bright spots, highlighting a range of promising practices and achievements. The variety and wealth of initiatives and changes taking place across the ecosystem (every person shared different real-life examples) was a surprise and offered hope. By moving away from what many consider to be a limited definition of localization (i.e. a 25% direct funding target), one starts to see immense efforts to build solidarity and equitable partnerships, decolonize, and shift power and agency.

Many of these efforts, most of which participants had never heard of before, are supported by philanthropists who are generally more flexible and risk-tolerant than institutional donors. Examples ranged from experimenting with innovative funding mechanisms, successfully increasing funding amounts to local actors, rewriting policies to redefine partnerships and simplify due diligence and grant conditions and increasing focus and investment in place-based survivor and community-led responses (sclr) and mutual aid efforts. Philanthropy can and should continue to play a unique role in the ecosystem by replicating and scaling workable solutions and piloting new ones.

While some progress was accelerated during the pandemic response, including the push to work with non-traditional humanitarian actors, most changes were borne out of necessity. It is not enough for funders to temporarily rewrite policies or change some practices to serve their own objectives.

Key decision-makers within philanthropic institutions also need to shift their attitudes and mindsets to center local humanitarian leadership and communities and better steer the deeper and wider institutional shifts. This emerged as a barrier for some funders in the room. But the reluctance to give up power is real and has been documented and acknowledged.

Navigating proximity, legitimacy and shifting power through funding choices

Heba Aly moderated a lively plenary discussion exploring what funders need to consider when making funding decisions. Many funders indicated they need help and advice for how they should assess and evaluate the options available, and which characteristics to look for when aiming to fund more proximately. The importance of nuance in the discussion of proximity and how this differs from legitimacy of local actors was illustrated by different perspectives and practical examples shared by colleagues from the Network for Empowered Aid Response (NEAR), Ecoweb Philippines, InterAction and Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies:

- The Change Fund, established as a locally led, globally held humanitarian response fund with initial support from one of the LHL members, disburses rapid response funding led by NEAR members, sometimes for hyper-local emergencies. Governance structure is central to the way this pooled fund is managed with local (proximate) governing boards within an otherwise globally based team of NEAR regional coordinators. ***When considering proximity, evaluating the governance setup of the mechanism is key.***

- Ecoweb in the Philippines and Adeso in Somalia use the survivor- and community-led response (sclr) approach with support provided by several LHL members committed to scaling this as a truly localized program approach. They disburse microgrants to support a range of community-led efforts. The key is enabling affected people to generate and prioritize solutions, apply for funding and lead the implementation. Ecoweb required changes to its governance structure and greater flexibility in internal systems. ADESO's biggest challenge was getting local staff to adopt a different mindset that acknowledged community agency, relied on trust and redefined what accountability looked like. In both organizations' experiences, funding local actors alone does not automatically equate with proximity, especially if NGOs continue making most program decisions. Donors should assess whether the funding will support an approach that is truly community driven. ***Proximity should be measured in reference to the roles of affected communities not the location of the NGOs serving them.***

- INGOs have long occupied the default role of preferred intermediaries for most institutional donors and foundations. As the current and future roles of INGOs are scrutinized, including through the Reimagining the INGO (RINGO) Project hosted by the West African Civil Society Institute (WACSI) and the Pledge for Change hosted by Adeso, discussions about what constitutes a sufficient level of proximity for the role of intermediaries are active and hotly debated. InterAction members are interested in becoming better intermediaries and more equitable partners, and some organizations are exploring merging, with hopes of reducing competition over resources and redundancies in INGO architecture. Many INGOs continue to note flaws in the direction of accountability, which mostly focuses on the donors and rarely centers communities, due to often-competing incentives*. **Even when INGOs intend to shift power, the***

barriers created by complex and elaborate due diligence, risk and compliance requirements imposed by institutional donors have proven difficult to overcome.

- Similarly, funders shared that *rather than local partner capacity being the barrier to more direct funding, philanthropy's limited staff capacity prevents it from making all grants direct to local actors, due to the inability to manage the grant administration*. This has resulted in funders choosing alternative ways to fund more proximately that don't require the same level of grant administration (i.e. through intermediaries or proximate funding mechanisms). Participants discussed the emphasis placed on *proximity* versus *legitimacy* of national, regional and international organizations and who the affected communities consider as legitimate representatives of their community voice. Some case studies have found that communities consider trusted INGOs with long history and deep roots in their communities to be a trusted and legitimate representatives as opposed to government or local NGOs. *There is a growing viewpoint that legitimacy of the partner (even if international) in the eyes of the community is the better indicator to use and is more important and consequential than proximity alone, which automatically places national actors' interests before community agency and choice.*

Participants distilled characteristics and criteria as central in relation to legitimacy, authenticity, proximity and local rootedness and in determining who to fund:	
☐ Local leaders genuinely lead the work ☐ Local leaders lead planning and design ☐ Peer to peer governance models ☐ Approaches that prioritize dignity ☐ Locally determined needs ☐ Intermediary has trust and transparency with local partners	☐ Local control over decision-making ☐ Risks for local partners part of the partnership agreement ☐ Flexible funding and core support needs ☐ Not privileging only larger well-established organizations ☐ Accountability to the affected communities

Practical actions for philanthropic funders to ensure power is in the hands of communities

Participants jointly generated a list of concrete actions that funders can take to accelerate power shifts. Many posed that the philanthropic sector needs to shift away from an emergency response model and mindset to one of solidarity. There are lessons to be learned from peer funder movements that have been more coordinated and successful in working in solidarity. The list below echoes past open letters, public calls to action and constructive dialogue with Southern leaders who have engaged donors, INGOs and philanthropy in joint search for solutions.

1. **Think big.** Funding to local organizations can have a bigger impact if it is part of a large-scale flexible investment in local systems and interconnected efforts.

2. **Provide multi-year flexible core funding.** This is the kind of core support that has been given to INGOs for many years to build their programmatic capacities, organizational development and institutional systems and should be extended to their peers in other geographies.

3. **Recognize and address your lack of capacity to administer multiple grants.** Local organizations have been on the receiving end of capacity building for decades and often perceived as deficient. The funders who find it challenging to fund proximately because of internal limitations are also lacking the capacity, in this case, to administer multiple small grants to the types of proximate organizations they aspire to partner with. This reframing is key to help boards, senior leadership and finance teams to understand what to prioritize internally.

4. **Review reporting requirements and due diligence** to reduce unnecessary burdens and duplicate requests. Improve your capacity (see above) to meet organizations where they are.

5. **Fund legitimate proximate actors while also supporting field building and systems change.** Invest in partner-led innovation and new resourcing models. This helps build the "infrastructure" for supporting locally led efforts, intermediaries and platforms that act in solidarity and channel funding to local actors. Uplift existing good work.

6. **Build trust with your partners.** Partnerships feel risky when trust hasn't been established. Funders need to build relationships with organizations before emergencies. Support networks of local organizations in your priority geographies. Do not start building relationships during a crisis.

7. **Fund with humility.** Even a generous grant doesn't solve every problem in the community and doesn't address or support the multiple dynamics and ecosystems that exist in the communities.

8. **Challenge the power dynamics that show up.** These can range from racism to patriarchy to adultism. Listen to and engage with people of different identities and ages.

9. **Acknowledge pre-existing social norms and patterns of exclusion.** In times of crisis, historically marginalized groups face greater discrimination and their needs should be prioritized.

10. **Support local actors' communication and visibility tools** so they can advocate for themselves, share their stories, successes and challenges, and connect in solidarity with a wider audience.

Advocating for power shifts: Practical tips for advocacy in action

The above actions cannot happen overnight and require multiple forms of advocacy at different levels: internal advocacy by program officers with their senior management and the board, peer to peer influencing, advocacy with donors and funders, and even making grants that empower and supports partner advocacy efforts related to power shifts.

Recognizing that these levels involve different advocacy and influencing strategies and tactics, participants heard examples of good practices and pitfalls to avoid from Open Society Foundation (OSF), Moving Minds Alliance and the Elevate Children Funders Group. In addition, a smaller breakout session focused on advocacy gaps and needs. A list of practical and realistic suggestions from these conversations is presented below:

- **Be clear about what the advocacy needs are.** Localization no longer needs a headline-level advocacy pitch. We need to clarify how to effectively localize, how to address persistent barriers and outline the timelines or urgency for the needed changes.

- **Find common ground and priorities with other funders.** Advocacy works best when a group of actors traveling in the same direction are saying similar things. But foundations and other ecosystem partners are not always in agreement on joint advocacy goals. Participants saw untapped potential to advance the localization agenda, especially by donors with advocacy capacities who could direct their advocacy to this purpose.

- **Focus on inclusion and broadening participation.** Invite your partners to support your advocacy goals and make it easy. Decide what needs to be done in person and what needs to be online. When you plan global convenings, ensure the selected country has easy visa entry requirements for partner organizations. When planning online engagement, schedule meetings across multiple time zones.

- **Build bridges with movements and grassroots actors.** Identify who has been systematically left out of conversations and be intentional about a process to build relationships and make space for new and alternative viewpoints. This may require humanitarians to learn from peer movements.

- **Invest in advocacy internally, then enlist other advocates.** Hilton Foundation currently has 7 advocacy initiatives and a delegated focal point on each topic. OSF recently created a crisis advocacy response unit. Funders that have dedicated advocacy teams, strategies and products can easily enlist and partner with peer funders to leverage their networks and influence to broaden engagement, audience/targets and impact, and ensure consistent and repeated messaging from multiple sources to key advocacy targets, including new ones.

- **Identify shared advocacy goals with your grantees.** First, fund your partners already advocating for equitable partnerships in the wider ecosystem. Second, take risks and fund advocacy areas that your partners are prioritizing. Fund organizations that are vocal and politically savvy in their advocacy and movement-building work.

Listen to them about opportunities and strategic timing. Don't impose on the process.

- **Use your leverage.** Philanthropic institutions have leverage that should be deployed more often to engage peers and bilateral funders. Engaging bilateral donors does not have to be about leveraging funding. Talking to them about power shifts, risk sharing and innovative ideas can change the dynamic.

- **Model good practices to influence others.** Funders supporting locally driven efforts should frequently report the positive outcomes with peers as "proof of concept" to build up the evidence base of why localization is not just the right thing to do but is also feasible and impactful. A growing evidence base will also strengthen advocacy by others.

Mutual expectations: What do we need from each other

Because we convened a diverse group of leaders from across the ecosystem, we wanted to harness the moment and create a brave space and honest space for attendees to be direct and tell the other actors in the room what they specifically need from them to support achieving their goals within the movement, something that participants noted doesn't happen often.

Participants used the "What I Need From You or WINFY" method to identify needs and make direct requests of each other. The results of this engaging session are presented below. ***Participants are encouraged to use this tool and refer to it to inspire action, or to remember that because of their position within the ecosystem, they can be useful in effecting change in other parts of the ecosystem, and in ways they may not have thought about.***

What Do the Funders Want From:	
Other funders	- Stage of disaster cycle you are operating in. - What are your red lines.
Networks	- Needs of your network membership for strategic gap filling. - When is the right time to hear updates from INGO CEOs? - Thought partnerships.
Partners	- Impact data on localization (research and case studies). - For INGOs: want to know more about your local partners and their capacities.
Advocates	- Ideas and strategies for effective tactics. - Bring advocacy experts in to talk to our leadership.
What Do the Networks Want From:	
Funders	- Direct funding to networks and network members. Take risks. - Fund us because we have convening power. - Show up to our events and platforms.
Partners	- Direct us where we can be useful.
Advocates	- Get clear on shared agenda and be real, not polite! - Work together to change narratives of humanitarian assistance.

What Do the Partners Want From:	
Funders	- Don't call us implementers. - Want equitable partnerships. - More respect, trust, openness. - Direct, multi-year, flexible funding.
Networks	- Play key role in sharing knowledge, tools, technology. - Play a key role as a network and convenor: invite local organizations.
Advocates	- Tell the truth to the funders. - Fix the narrative about lack of capacity and risky local organizations. - Let the community lead in some of the advocacy efforts.
From all:	- Build an abundance mindset. - Stay accountable and be open to what scaling looks like.
What Do the Advocates Want From:	
Funders	- Advocacy shouldn't be an afterthought or an add on. Resource it properly. - If you want to fix the narrative about local agency resource us intentionally. - Use platforms and convening authority.
Partners	- Honest feedback and dialogue. - Combine forces and be part of more collaborations. - Share more of your success stories.
Networks	- Collate advocacy gaps and needs. - Include different perspectives and ensure networks are not gate keeping.

From conversation to action: Funder commitments and concrete actions

The second day of the convening offered an opportunity for participants to split up into parallel funder-only and non-funder reflections and to distill concrete next actions. The participants of the funders-only session were challenged to leave the convening with a concrete set of actions. The proposed actions should result in collaboration and co-funding that moves beyond the haphazard and opportunistic way most members have been doing it to date, to one that is more responsive, coordinated, strategic and impactful.

In parallel, the ecosystem leaders and advocates identified concrete ways they would like the funders to transform practices and be more responsive to local needs. They offered several ways ecosystems leaders are willing to support funders in this effort. When the two groups reconvened, every funder announced at least one of the actions they were committing to. These commitments, actions and proposed areas for improvement are presented in the tables below.

Final reflections by LHL members and looking to the future

LHL Members convened, reflected on the two days of engaging discussions and action planning, noting how it re-energized them, and discussed the future direction and focus of

the Collaborative, including how members could improve their internal and external engagement, collaboration and collective impact going forward. Members agreed:

- To continue to have monthly calls covering agenda items and themes that are relevant to the whole group.
- To deepen engagement. They requested that CDP arrange, host and facilitate more separate side-calls on specific geographies, themes or topics of interest to a smaller number of members of the group, building on a format that was trialed in 2023 and was found to be more practical, action-oriented and therefore beneficial to the group.
- To identify focal persons to (co-)lead on actioning emerging themes from the event.
- To take a more proactive and "evangelical" role in expanding membership to more like-minded funders across the humanitarian ecosystem.
- To find more systematic ways of working beyond traditional humanitarian peer funders and actors to broader, including with some of the networks in the room such as the Human Rights Funders Network and the Peace and Security Funders Network.
- To convene again in-person in 2024.
- To be collectively accountable to themselves and to the fellow participants in attendance in Seattle, by following up and reporting against some of the commitments and actions shared.

Feedback received from participants of the meeting

- "This was a very good platform and has potential for sharing not only good practices, but also resources."
- "Just sharing my appreciation! I left feeling energized and productive and thought the organizers and moderators did a good job of creating inclusive, collaborative, constructive spaces."
- "It was wonderful sharing with other peer funders and operational organizations."
- "I found it valuable to have participants from the broader international aid ecosystem to exchange best practices and hear practical commitments."

TABLE 1. FUNDER COMMITMENTS AND AREAS FOR INTERNAL IMPROVEMENT AND JOINT ACTION

	EASY ACTIONS / LOW EFFORT		MEDIUM EFFORT
Share information	□ Share outcomes of this meeting with program officers and senior leadership in the foundation. □ Regularly share information about ongoing funder collaborations and co-funding opportunities with LHL group members. Make this information available to senior management teams in each foundation. □ Share information (e.g. partner pitch decks) with strategic and geographic priorities, grantmaking approach, and partner selection criteria with peer funders and broader audiences. □ Share relevant internally commissioned research summaries and evaluation findings with peer funders. □ Create opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and exchange on flexible funding practices. □ Create explanatory documents on due diligence and fund disbursement timelines and share these with partners. □ Regularly update and share information about local partners in specific geographies with LHL group members and other peer funders (e.g. use CDP's Google sheets).	**Advocate & support**	□ Advocate internally for increasing core and unrestricted funding and for testing new practices (e.g., pilots with core funding). □ Work with internal advocacy team on key messaging and influencing in relation to locally led action and proximate funding. □ Explore/create a two-way vetting assessment tool □ Ensure partners' advocacy, M&E and communications costs are integrated grant budget allocation. □ Have deeper, more strategic discussions about pooled + pre-positioned funds with my team and peer donors
		Raise the bar	□ Work with colleagues internally to improve transparency and accountability. Share more information on our website. □ Discuss and act on recommendations with program team. □ Propose tracking indicators in a new grants system. □ Refine segmentation of local actors as strategic action □ Review, refine and publish targets and indicators and commitments of all LHL members. Raise current targets. □ Set target of at least 75% of funding going to local actors.
Gather information	□ Create a checklist of questions for proximate intermediaries. □ Make linkages and seek collaboration opportunities with peer funder efforts focused on locally led action (e.g. CoF/Hilton/Packard convened Leadership Circle and other localization networks) □ Review relevant frameworks and resources from peer funder networks (e.g. ECFG's Weaving Collective Tapestry)	**Collaborate**	□ Schedule meetings with other funders to discuss co-funding strategies and initiatives. □ Collaborate with other funders to streamline due diligence and reporting. □ Collaborate on investments for cash poor but tech heavy early warning systems. □ Work with others to identify country or context with strong local actors, identify appropriate partners. □ Meet with an in-country network members on next visits.

	STRETCH ACTIONS & LONG-TERM COMMITMENTS
Raise the bar	□ Secure CEO commitment to raising the target of funding to local actors above 25%. □ Seek to establish a baseline of at least 50% direct funding by 2024 and a longer-term target of 75% direct funding to local actors. □ Articulate a vision with specific goals, targets of LHL specific grantmaking to be adopted/endorsed by the Board. □ Prepare a draft concept note for a Grand Challenge focused on locally led preparedness. □ Work on risk-sharing and structural challenges in direct funding during complex crises.
Co-fund	□ Work with LHL funders and other foundations on joint funding opportunities to leverage funding for local partners. □ Find intentional co-funding partners, especially with a funder who can do general operational support. □ Explore co-funding opportunities for survivor- and community-led responses (sclr) approaches. □ Find a co-funder for silo-breaking projects (climate, resilience, environment, health). □ Engage with other funders on a pooled fund for feminist movements and co-funding indicators. □ Propose robust resilience partnership with peer funders. □ Develop a plan for consistently funding local NGOs to hold our foundation accountable.
Collaborate	□ Enable secure data sharing and identification sharing of partners, especially for due diligence. □ Prepare matrix of all funders' priorities and share with LHL group members during monthly calls for discussion. □ Build collaboration between other funder networks and platforms focused on localization networks. □ Collaborate with other funders to discuss risk levels and identify de-risking strategies that we can take to move funds.

	TABLE 2. REQUESTS AND "ASKS" FROM ECOSYSTEM LEADERS, PARTNERS AND ADVOCATES TO THE FUNDERS		
Transparency	□ Share information about what organizations you fund. □ Share grantmaking frameworks and strategies to clarify what you fund and why. This helps to build stronger partnerships. □ Share the list of grassroots organizations that you fund. □ Share available budget amounts for portfolio or program area and average grant amounts. Many funders already do this. □ Be clear about who makes the ultimate decisions on grants.	**Institutional capacity**	□ Ask local partners what capacities they want to strengthen. Their priorities can differ from ones assumed by INGOs and funders. □ Provide institutional strengthening grants. □ Set aside % of each grant as unrestricted for institutional investments at partners' discretion. These funds can support organizational systems development, professional development, external representation, advocacy, communication, etc.
Nexus	□ Link humanitarian response to recovery and long-term development to support resilience. Don't just focus on crisis. □ Some members of LHL group fund resilience focused programs and this good practice should be shared. □ Nexus and resilience focused funding requires intentional linkages built through grantmaking and co-funding.	**Strategy**	□ Ask for partners' multi-year strategy to understand their vision, strategic direction and multiple program components. □ Fund interconnected parts of the strategy and portion of the organizational budget, instead of short-term projects. □ Be clear about how long your funding will be available. Be realistic about what can be achieved with funds in that timeline.
Change the rules	□ Use a reverse call for proposal where local organizations and communities decide on local priorities and funding gaps and issue requests for support and choose who to partner with. □ Demand driven RFPs can include a comprehensive set of ideas proposed by local partners and funded on their terms. □ Always expect to see a community led component. Make it a requirement in all grant proposals.	**Harmonize & co-fund**	□ Use passporting: accept other funders' assessments, due diligence reports and institutional policies (e.g. safeguarding). □ Advocate with bilateral donors and peer funders to match funding. □ Go for scale and establish a "Grand Challenge" with peer funders. □ Collaborate with other funders and introduce partners to other funders.

Areas for improvements for partner organizations		Offers from partner organizations to funders
□ Improve strategy setting and coordination among partners. Share advocacy agendas, strategies, program approaches and indicators to support funders in making decisions about complementary grants and co-funding opportunities. □ Reduce competition among grantees and increase collaboration. Learn from NEAR Innovation Labs as a good model.		□ Partners can support program officers in their internal advocacy to senior leadership and Boards to strengthen the case for more proximate and localized funding streams. □ Partners can identify 10-12 things that are "passportable" to reduce barriers and duplication. □ Partners can support inclusion by inviting their subgrantees to meetings with funders and expand networks.

Annex 1: Meeting objectives and outcomes

Overall, there were multiple objectives set for this convening:

1. Identify and evaluate different direct and intermediary funding models and ways in which all stakeholders fit into an ecosystem that promotes equity and maximizes the transfer of power and agency to communities we serve.
2. Discuss and identify ways funders can better support models and various ecosystem partners to transition to a role that acknowledges their value-add and enables more equitable partnerships.
3. Develop deeper relationships between LHL group members and organizations.
4. Identify opportunities to develop deeper, mutually beneficial relationships with peer funders, thought leaders and advocates in attendance.
5. Share openly and vulnerably and learn more about each other's strategies, priorities, and internal and external obstacles to identify complementarities, synergies and opportunities for future collaborations.
6. Review and evaluate existing examples of successful collaboration within our ecosystem and identify potential areas for future collaborations.
7. Identify promising practices and opportunities for exchange with peers in the philanthropic sector to strengthen locally led humanitarian action and equitable local partnerships.
8. Exchange learning with other movement leaders and funder groups who may have had greater success in influencing change within their movements.
9. Identify actionable, realistic advocacy and influential strategies and tactics.
10. Identify ways in which we can leverage other shift-the-power advocacy initiatives (i.e. Pledge for Change, #Shiftthepower, etc.)

A condensed list of outcomes for this convening and for subsequent monthly LHL calls and follow-up actions:

1. A shared understanding of the emergence and utility of different funding modalities and models and their contribution to shifting power to local and national actors/leadership.
2. A better understanding of the ease and/or barriers for funders to move towards supporting more local organizations and movements and/or proximate intermediary models and increased knowledge of practical examples and tangible ways to support intermediaries in their journey towards shifting power and creating more equitable partnerships (e.g. ICR policy to provide larger percentage to local partners, pre-financing projects, etc.).
3. Stronger connections that result in more frequent formal and informal bilateral communication, leading to greater collaboration and tangible opportunities for collaboration (i.e. co-funding, etc.) among existing group members and other non-LHL members and industry peers in attendance.
4. A greater understanding of each other's strategic priorities, approaches and internal/external challenges and identify areas of immediate or future potential support and collaboration.

5. An agreement on concrete actions and next steps for advancing the stated influence and advocacy goals of this group and continued sharing of information of each other's initiatives to better leverage each other's efforts and increase types and levels of collaboration.
6. A greater understanding of peer funder initiatives and ways to strategically collaborate and better partner with non-traditional humanitarian actors such as local philanthropy serving organizations, rights-based organizations and grassroots movements and networks.

Annex 2: List of participants

- Alex Gray, Center for Disaster Philanthropy
- Barri Shorey, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation
- Cameron Birge, Microsoft Philanthropies
- Cath Thompson, Peace and Security Funders Group (PSFG)
- Connie Warhol, Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies
- Daphne Panayotatos, Open Society Foundations
- Daryl Grisgraber, Oxfam
- Debbie Campos, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Emily Garin, Sesame Workshop
- Eugenia Mazurenko, Philanthropy in Ukraine
- Federico Motka, Vitol Foundation
- Heba Aly, The New Humanitarian
- Hibak Kalfan, NEAR
- Ida Thyregod, LEGO Foundation
- Isabella Jean, CDP & Brandeis University
- Jason Chau, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Jess Goddard, Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies
- Julien Schopp, InterAction
- Kellea Miller, Human Rights Funders Network (HRFN)
- Marco Tulio Granados, Concertación Regional para la Gestión de Riesgos
- Mark Lindberg, Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies
- Matt Clausen, Inter-American Foundation
- Mayfourth Luneta, Center for Disaster Preparedness
- Nana Afadzinu, West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI)
- Nicole Paul, Global Whole Being Fund
- Obed Kabanda, Global Fund for Women
- Pilar Pacheco, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Regina "Nanette" Antequisa, Ecosystems Work for Essential Benefits (ECOWEB), Inc.
- Reginald Cean, Haiti Development Institute
- Riva Kantowitz, Radical Flexibility Fund
- Robert Miyashiro, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation
- Sagal Hussein, Adeso
- Sheela Bowler, Elevate Children Funders Group
- Tara Gingerich, Oxfam America
- Taylor Dudley, Center for Disaster Philanthropy
- Teresa Crawford, Adeso
- Valerie Bemo, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Annex 3: Power statements

In my role as a(n)…	In relation to supporting locally led action and advancing equity, I have the power to…
Individual — Funder	- Challenge INGOs/intermediaries on their ICR policy with local partners. - Introduce local actors to other funders who have alignment with their work. - Resource and uplift proximate actors. - Influence my organization's ICR policy so that it ensures indirect costs of local and national actors are covered when funding through an intermediary. - Take risk. - Try new untested ideas or mechanisms that may address a challenge facing participation by local & proximate actors.
Individual — Ecosystem Leader	- Empower. - Build an ecosystem and system. - Initiate and support interventions. - Ensure a diversity of voices are included in the design of solutions.
Individual — Network Leader	- Continue to speak up externally about the power of the network approach as an effective pathway for localization. - Speak truth to power. - Influence who and what our network of funders hears and focuses on.
Individual — Advocate	- Amplify local voices and support creating solutions. - Help stakeholders (private and public donors) understand why localization is both the right thing to do and the smart thing to do.
Relational — Funder	- Recommend non-traditional partners for collaboration. - Co-fund local partner projects to fill gaps and ensure full cost recovery. - Probe potential grantees to determine whether they engage in equitable partnerships. - Focus giving opportunities on local orgs. - Allocate funding to support local actors' participation in national and global coordination, influencing, and representation spaces.
Relational — Ecosystem Leader	- Initiate and support interventions. - Build communities and their capacities. - Strengthen capacity. - Bring people together in honest reflection. - Engage other power holders. - Connect with others and convene. - Engage the NNGOs and networks with donors and to have an international voice. - Ensure that our actions include equity at the center.

In my role as a(n)…	In relation to supporting locally led action and advancing equity, I have the power to…
Institutional — Network Leader	- Connect locally led network partners directly to funders so they can build up their own partnerships and portfolio. - Convene key actors. - Influence strategies of humanitarian actions on the ground and network agenda and advocacy actions in relation to improving the humanitarian ecosystem towards making it more centered on the people affected and vulnerable to crisis and disasters.
Funder	- Give more consideration to funding INGOs that are committed to localization (i.e., Grand Bargain or Pledge for Change signatories). - Influence changes in our grantmaking practices. - Ensure any grant proposal funded to local or international actors is solely based on needs identified by local communities themselves. - Leverage our (philanthropy's) higher risk appetite to support the funding, development, piloting and testing of local intermediary funding mechanisms. - Allocate my organization's flexible funding to parts of the organization that have embraced local humanitarian leadership and to support their efforts. - Advocate for changes to my organization's policies and practices so that they are in line with the local humanitarian leadership commitments we made (e.g., pushing for an ICR sharing policy and building ICR for our partners into budgets in the meantime).
Ecosystem Leader	- Facilitate support for multi-year flexible funding for grassroot movements that we fund directly. - Hold our field accountable (including through evidence and advocacy).
Advocate	- Leverage resources and advocate for greater direct funding for locally-led action. - Push internally and externally for strong commitments to localization, concrete pledges to realize it and timely implementation thereof (if not the power, at least the responsibility to try).