



LOCALISATION IN TONGA: DEMONSTRATING CHANGE

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This paper is part of Humanitarian Advisory Group's *Intention to impact: Localisation of humanitarian action in the Pacific* research project.



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Cover photo: Cyclone damage. Pangaimotu Island; Tonga. Avalon/Photoshot License / Alamy Stock Photo.

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About CSFT

The Civil Society Forum of Tonga is the non-government organisation and civil society organisation umbrella body in Tonga.

About PIANGO

PIANGO is the major regional NGO umbrella body with membership in the 23 countries and territories of the Pacific Islands. For over 25 years, PIANGO has served the Pacific through strengthening and building the capacity of the civil society sector. This is through giving the sector a voice for policy formulation and development, and strengthening National Liaison Units or the umbrella organisations in member countries.

About Humanitarian Advisory Group

Humanitarian Advisory Group (HAG) was founded in 2012 to elevate the profile of humanitarian action in Asia and the Pacific. Set up as a social enterprise, HAG provides a unique space for thinking, research, technical advice and training that can positively contribute to excellence in humanitarian practice.

Partnership for research impact

PIANGO, CSFT and HAG are partnering on this research. Working together increases reach and influence across the region.

PIANGO has a strong civil society network of organisations involved in humanitarian preparedness and response in the Pacific, and has been involved in promoting localisation initiatives and perspectives in national, regional and global forums including the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS). PIANGO was actively involved in the Pacific lead-up to the WHS. Its priorities include reinforcing local leadership, strengthening community resilience and localisation of aid.

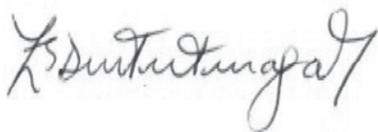
HAG is undertaking a three-year research initiative called [Humanitarian Horizons](#) supported by the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The first project in the Humanitarian Horizons research program is *Intention to impact: the localisation of humanitarian action in the Pacific*. This project explores the action and impact of localised approaches to humanitarian action in the Pacific, with a focus on two case study countries. The project aims to generate tools and approaches to measure localisation that can be adopted and used to inform humanitarian programming in the Pacific. The first paper outlines a [proposed approach to measuring localisation](#), and the second outlines [Pacific priorities for measuring change](#).

FOREWORD

Emele Duituturaga, Executive Director, PIANGO

Localisation is at the heart of transforming the humanitarian system which emerged strongly at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit. It is also embraced in the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP), endorsed by Pacific Islands Forum Leaders in 2017 as an integrated regional approach to address climate change, disaster risk management and community resilience. In 2018, the Pacific Resilience Partnership was established to implement the FRDP, and as a member, PIANGO sees localisation is a key strategy to achieve the goals of the Framework to reinforce local leadership, strengthen community resilience and reinforce localisation of aid. This is especially so in the Pacific, where 80% of our population are rural based, the first and the last response is always the local response.

Evidence based advocacy is one of PIANGO's key strategic areas of focus is and so we embraced the opportunity to partner with HAG, to talanoa with Pacific Humanitarian actors in Fiji, Vanuatu and Tonga to identify the seven Pacific priorities for tracking localisation. Building on this, our partnership with HAG extended to conducting this baseline research in Tonga with the engagement of the Civil Society Forum of Tonga – CSFT, PIANGO's national member. It is critically important that that local CSOs on the ground share ownership of the research process in order that they use the research findings to drive the necessary changes to progress localisation within their respective context. This research is ground breaking and the baseline data collected contributes to our policy influencing advocacy in the regional and global arena.



Emele Duituturaga
PIANGO Executive Director

Drew Havea, Board Chair, CSFT

Historically, category five cyclones in Tonga occur roughly every 20 years. However with the changing climate, cyclones of greater intensity are wreaking havoc on the land and environment and causing humanitarian crises at smaller intervals. Tonga is still rebuilding from Tropical Cyclone Ian in 2014, and the recovery from Tropical Cyclone Gita in 2018 will be a similarly long process.

Humanitarian work is not to be treated as a normal occurrence but as a response to urgent disasters and crises. Our response needs to do more than focus on isolated sectors; the question is how we create the greatest impact for vulnerable people. We are learning to grapple with challenges such as damage to property and infrastructure and threats to people's safety, dignity and psychological wellbeing.

Humanitarian crises urgently requires empowered processes, new innovative systems and procedures. It requires a new way of doing business and changing the mindset of those with the power to set policies and direct responses to ensure the active participation of communities.

This baseline report is based on evidence from the last two disasters in Tonga and demonstrates the extent to which we have localised our response and fostered stronger people, participation and partnership. Using this baseline to measure progress into the future will ensure a more efficient and effective response, building resilience and sustainability.

Government and donors need to respect the community's aspiration to localise humanitarian response by developing a new local government structure that builds strong democratic participation.

Leaving no one behind requires strong partnerships at all levels, localising coordination, and collaboration between the national government, international donors and civil society. Full representation of civil society and local government in policymaking and planning will enable local actors to reduce the impact of disasters, preventing them from becoming large-scale humanitarian crises.



Drew Havea
CSFT Board Chair

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CSFT	Civil Society Forum of Tonga
CSO	Civil society organisation
EMA	Emergency Management Act
EMP	Emergency Management Plan
FTS	Financial Tracking Service
HAG	Humanitarian Advisory Group
MORDI	Mainstreaming of Rural Development Innovations
NEAR	Network for Empowered Aid Response
NEMO	National Emergency Management Office
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PHT	Pacific Humanitarian Team
PIANGO	Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations
SOP	Standard operating procedures
ToR	Terms of reference
TC	Tropical Cyclone
UN	United Nations
VANGO	Vanuatu Association of Non-Governmental Organisations

INTRODUCTION

The international humanitarian sector is currently developing ways to measure progress on localisation following the commitments made at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016. This has also been a key issue for humanitarian actors in the Pacific region. Generating an evidence base on localisation is important in order to demonstrate change is happening and its impact. This report builds on the pilot baseline report produced for Vanuatu and launched by HAG, PIANGO and the Vanuatu Association of Non-Governmental Associations (VANGO) in February 2019. The baseline utilises the Measuring Localisation Framework developed through a consultation process in three countries undertaken by PIANGO and HAG.

WHAT IS THIS BASELINE FOR?

The baselining process is intended to build an evidence base to allow international, national and local organisations to track progress against localisation.

This baseline aims to achieve the following goals.

1. For **international actors**, it is intended as a resource and evidence base for tracking implementation of localisation commitments.
2. For **national and local actors**, it provides a body of work on what localisation means to them and outlines how progress can be monitored. It is intended to be used as a resource and evidence base to advocate for accountability and change.

About the Framework

The Measuring Localisation Framework has **seven areas of measurement** for measuring localisation in the Pacific as prioritised by Pacific actors: partnerships; leadership; capacity; coordination and complementarity; funding; participation; and policy, influence and advocacy. **Each area has a set of qualitative and quantitative indicators**, with associated means of verification. The indicators and means of verification were drawn from the consultation process and previous work on localisation and its regional and global levels, including HAG's **Measuring Localisation** paper, the START Network, ALNAP and the Network for Empowered Aid Response (NEAR).

In this report, we assess the level of evidence of action against indicators in each of the seven areas of measurement. The four levels of evidence are: **no evidence**, **limited evidence**, **some evidence** and **strong evidence**.

DEFINITIONS

Localisation This research uses a definition of localisation developed by Pacific actors: "Localisation is a process of recognising, respecting and strengthening the independence of leadership and decision-making by national actors in humanitarian action, in order to better address the needs of affected populations."¹

National, local and international organisations

This report uses the basis of definitions outlined in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Humanitarian Financing Team's localisation definitions paper. National and local organisations were considered to be "organisations engaged in relief that are headquartered and operating in their own aid recipient country and which are not affiliated to an international NGO."²

¹ This definition comes from the Australian Red Cross research '[Going Local: Achieving a more appropriate and fit-for-purpose humanitarian ecosystem in the Pacific](#)'.

² Inter-Agency Standing Committee Humanitarian Financing Task Team, Localisation Marker Working Group Definitions Paper (January 2018), page 2

METHODOLOGY

Humanitarian Advisory Group developed the baselining methodology in collaboration with PIANGO. It was designed to reflect Pacific ethical research approaches, and methods of conducting research in participatory and localised ways. The research team comprised international, regional and national researchers from PIANGO, HAG and the Civil Society Forum of Tonga (CSFT).

The baseline process involved a combination of methods. CSFT led a self-assessment process with 17 organisations, and undertook interviews and focus group discussions with communities.

ETHICS

This research recognises the importance and primacy of ethical localised research. PIANGO and CSFT's expertise and knowledge of ethical processes in the Pacific framed the research approach. This included how and when to engage stakeholders in the research, and seeking the necessary permissions. The Pacific region has various ethical frameworks and guidelines that draw on traditional concepts, and these were used to guide the approach.³



LIMITATIONS

Interpretation bias: The research team undertook interviews and the guided self-assessment process both as a unit and separately. Where possible, the team sat with respondents to complete the self-assessment survey to ensure that any questions that were unclear could be clarified. Despite this, language barriers may have led to some differences in understanding of key terms and key concepts.

Representation of actors: Whilst the team sought representation from a range of actors, most were from national and international NGOs. Government, donor, private sector and faith-based organisations were involved, but overall numbers of each were minimal.

Availability of evidence: Evidence of progress was lacking in some areas. This does not mean that there has been no progress in relation to the measurement area or indicator, rather that no evidence was found through the baselining process.

³ See Pacific Research Methodologies by USP Oceania Centre for Pacific Studies MOOC program on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nPfcotbuy2Y>; The Kakala Research Framework was developed by Professor Konai Thaman using the metaphor of garland making. Other Tongan academics have enhanced the framework.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS



PARTNERSHIPS



Key Finding: SOME TO STRONG EVIDENCE. There is some evidence of action to support a shift towards equitable and complementary partnerships between local, national and international actors.

- ✓✓ There is **some evidence** of good partnership practices like umbrella partnership agreements to minimise reporting, some agreements framed by ethical partnership principles, and some core funding available.
- ✓✓✓ There is **strong evidence** of action to support increased power and decision-making for national and local actors within partnerships.



LEADERSHIP



Key Finding: STRONG EVIDENCE. There is strong evidence of action to support a shift towards national actors leading on humanitarian action.

- ✓✓✓ There is **strong evidence** of increased leadership by government and by local and national actors in decision-making. There is also evidence of increasing engagement with donors by national and local actors.
- ✓✓ There is **some evidence** of investment in national and local organisational leadership and respect for in-country leadership mechanisms and structures.



CAPACITY



Key Finding: LIMITED TO SOME EVIDENCE. There is some evidence of international actors providing appropriate and targeted capacity strengthening support to local and national organisations.

- ✓✓ There is **some evidence** of action to reduce reliance on international surge and to develop contextualised plans and legislations.
- ✓✓ There is **some evidence** that capacity support has increased alignment, appropriateness and relevance to the requests of local and national actors (versus the compliance needs of international actors).
- ✓ There is **limited evidence** that contextualised, appropriate humanitarian standards, tools, legislation and policies exist.





COORDINATION AND COMPLEMENTARITY



Key Finding: SOME EVIDENCE. There is some evidence of commonly agreed approaches to complementarity ('as local as possible, as international as necessary').

- ✓✓ There is **some evidence** of actions to shift the operating language of coordination meetings to the local language and support for national leadership of clusters.
- ✓✓ There is **some evidence** of funding or technical support to national CSO coordination mechanisms or evidence of intentional processes to analyse approaches to complementarity.



FUNDING



Key Finding: LIMITED TO SOME EVIDENCE. There is limited to some evidence of action to localise funding.

- ✓ There is **limited evidence** of local and national actors having direct access to funding.
- ⊘ There is **no evidence** that the amount of humanitarian funding has increased.
- ✓✓ There is **some evidence** that local and national actors have increased decision-making in financial matters.



PARTICIPATION



Key Finding: LIMITED EVIDENCE. There is limited evidence of changed practice in community participation.

- ✓ There is **limited evidence** of standards being contextualised and circulated with local and community stakeholders.
- ✓ There is **limited evidence** that increased community engagement is shaping humanitarian programming.



POLICY INFLUENCE AND ADVOCACY



Key Finding: LIMITED TO SOME EVIDENCE. There is limited to some evidence that policies reflect the priorities of national and local civil society actors more accurately due to their increased engagement in policy and advocacy.

- ✓✓ There is **some evidence** of national and local actors increasing their awareness of relevant policies and influencing their development.
- ✓✓ There is **some evidence** that local and national actors influence donor priorities.



LOCALISATION IN TONGA: CONTEXT

Localisation of humanitarian action in Tonga has been influenced by recent humanitarian responses, including the response to Tropical Cyclone (TC) Gita in 2018. Only a few international actors have an ongoing presence in country and Tonga has a small historical humanitarian profile compared to some of its Pacific neighbours.

Contextual factors and relevancy for localisation

1 Civil society presence

103 civil society organisations (CSOs) are registered in Tonga.⁴

2 Humanitarian response architecture

Tonga uses the cluster system, with 10 clusters all led by national government agencies, with support from international and regional agencies within the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT). The cluster system was activated for the first time during TC Ian in 2014. TC Gita, in 2018, was the first disaster for which the cluster system was used at scale.

3 Disaster profile

Tonga is the second most at-risk country in the world in terms of exposure to natural hazards.⁵ Tropical cyclones are the most likely and consistent threat for Tonga, but other common hazards include earthquakes, tsunamis and volcanic eruptions.⁶ Recent large disasters include TC Gita (2018) and TC Ian (2014).

4 Scale

Tonga is a Polynesian kingdom of over 170 South Pacific Islands. The total population at 2017 was 108,020.⁷ Cyclone Gita affected 80,000 people⁸, or 75% of the population, and Cyclone Ian affected an estimated 5,000 people. Whilst these numbers are small compared to many international disasters, increasingly severe storms affect significant proportions of the population.

5 Traditional structures

Churches play an integral role in disaster response in Tonga, and have shifted from a focus on members of their own congregations to a broader community-focused response. Further, traditional leaders have historically not been formally included in planning and responding to disasters.

6 Humanitarian and development financing

In 2017, Tonga received USD55.47 million in aid funding. The top five donors are Australia, World Bank Group, International Fund for Agricultural Development and Asian Development Bank.⁹

4 <http://www.piango.org/our-members/member-countries/tonga/>

5 UNU-EHS World Risk Report 2017 (2017)

6 Kingdom of Tonga Disaster Management Plan (2007), http://www.met.gov.to/index_files/national%20disaster%20plan.pdf

7 <https://data.worldbank.org/country/Tonga>

8 Government of Tonga, *TC Gita Response Plan* (2018)

9 <https://pacificaidmap.lowyinstitute.org/>

LOCALISATION IN TONGA: FINDINGS

This section is divided into **seven areas**.

- Partnerships
- Leadership
- Capacity
- Coordination and complementarity
- Funding
- Participation
- Policy influence and advocacy



Each area presents the key findings and evidence of progress against localisation indicators. There is also a snapshot data page showing the headline issues and some standout statistics.

Throughout the report, international and national actors are identified by the following symbols.



PARTNERSHIPS

Hoa Ngaue: Ko e ngaue fakataha 'i he femahino'aki 'a e taumu'a ngaue mo e faitu'utu'uni 'a e ongo fa'ahi 'o 'ikai fakatefito he mafai.



PARTNERSHIPS



Key Finding: SOME TO STRONG EVIDENCE. There is some evidence of action to support a shift towards equitable and complementary partnerships between local, national and international actors..

- ✓✓ There is **some evidence** of good partnership practices like umbrella partnership agreements to minimise reporting, some agreements framed by ethical partnership principles, and some core funding available.
- ✓✓✓ There is **strong evidence** of of action to support increased power and decision-making for national and local actors within partnerships.

Impact indicator	Indicator	Evidence of progress
There are equitable and complementary partnerships between local, national and international actors.	1. Partnerships based on equitable and ethical practices	✓✓ Some
	2. Longer term strategic partnerships that build systems and processes which mirror the ambitions and goals of local/national partners	✓✓ Some
	3. Increased power and decision-making of local and national actors within partnerships	✓✓✓ Strong

What evidence was sought?

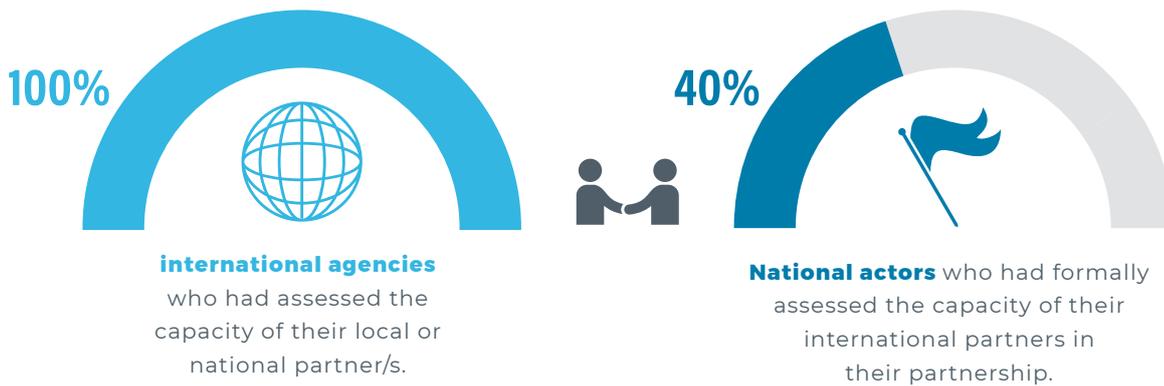
- ▶ Existence of partnership MoUs or agreements
- ▶ Existence of partnership principles embedded in documentation and review processes
- ▶ Opportunities for national partners to assess capacity of international partners
- ▶ Partnership funding allocated to anything other than project implementation
- ▶ Investment in organisational systems and processes
- ▶ Perceptions of equitable partnerships, increased decision-making and shifts towards strategic funding and partnerships
- ▶ Public recognition of partnerships

INDICATOR 1: PARTNERSHIPS ARE BASED ON EQUITABLE AND ETHICAL PARTNERSHIP PRACTICES

“Yes, partnerships are meaningful – some up and down, but overall, we make it work.”¹⁰ (National actor)

Whilst there was limited evidence of documented principles-based partnerships, most actors referenced some sort of periodic review process that was undertaken as part of the partnership.

10 Interview 7



There is still scope for improved two-way partnership review processes; only 40% of national actors had ever formally assessed the capacity of their international partners, compared with 100% of international actors.

Partnerships between international and national and local actors in Tonga were generally perceived as meaningful.¹¹ Both international and national and local actors reflected that many partnerships were generally built on respect, trust and transparency and that these were integral qualities of strong partnerships.¹² The space and ability to express differences of opinion without compromising the partnership is important in demonstrating equality and strongly linked to partnerships being perceived as meaningful, rather than a tick-box exercise.¹³ One national actor specifically referenced importance of the ability to engage in robust dialogue: “*We had a few lively discussions in which we both raised our concerns and then agreed*”,¹⁴ whilst another likened their partnership to a sibling relationship.¹⁵

“Here we are in a developing stage and making sure that everything is in place in terms of policies and procedures ... [our international partner] is always trying to make things happen; they are more like

a brother or sister for us to make things happen so that things go according to plan.”¹⁶ (National actor)

Overwhelmingly, respondents linked partnerships to funding. Few organisations spoke about partnerships that did not have funding attached, demonstrating the importance and power that funding brings to the table. This highlights opportunities for partners to engage in dialogue around their partnership in a broader sense that transcends financial commitments.

“The partnership involved high levels of respect, supported by a strong understanding of the complementary skill sets of the partners... respect was also supported by the absence of significant power imbalance in the partnership. Contrary to the typical partnership dynamic, neither partner was financially dependent on the other.”¹⁷

11 Interviews 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 15
 12 Interviews 6, 7, 16, 11, FGD 2, Partnership evaluation document
 13 Interviews 3, 7, 11
 14 Interview 12
 15 Interview 13
 16 Interview 11
 17 Partnership evaluation document

INDICATOR 2: LONGER-TERM STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS THAT AIM TO BUILD SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES THAT MIRROR THE AMBITION AND GOALS OF THE LOCAL/NATIONAL PARTNER

There is some evidence of longer-term strategic partnerships outside of the TC Gita response, but many actors referred specifically to short-term project-based partnerships that had ended after TC Gita. National actors also articulated the challenges of short response focused funding cycles in partnerships, and that this limited their ability to prepare for and respond to disasters.¹⁸ Few of these project-based partnerships reflected the strategic organisational goals of the national or local partners. There is appetite for an increased long-term investment outside of response with a focus on more strategic capacity-strengthening objectives. Where long-term partnerships did exist, several actors reported that they focused on important areas of capacity strengthening.¹⁹

“One of the problems for NGOs [is that we] spend more time entertaining the donors for small amounts of money. Disaster has to be annual funding.”²⁰ (National actor)

“Funding during response is not an issue, but how can organisations be well prepared to respond if they don’t have funding?”²¹ (National actor)

International and national and local actors brought different perspectives on what their partnerships funded. International actors reported that costs

associated with supporting operational staff and overheads were always or sometimes funded: 57% said they *always* provided operational staff costs. By comparison, 30% of national actors reported that organisational costs were *never* covered and 20% reported that overhead costs were *never* covered.

Both international and national organisations reported similar numbers of partnerships.



All international partners had assessed their local or national partners, but only 40% of national organisations had assessed their international partners. Whilst this is an imbalance, it still demonstrates two-way partnership processes exist in some cases.

INDICATOR 3: INCREASED POWER AND DECISION-MAKING OF LOCAL AND NATIONAL ACTORS WITHIN PARTNERSHIPS

“They give us time, space, opportunities. We identify the communities and their capacity, we identify the communities and inform our partner so we have a chance to speak out and share our opinions and perspectives.”²² (National actor)

18 Interviews 14, 8

19 Interviews 1, 11

20 Interview 7

21 Interview 8

22 Interview 11

There is progress to be made in achieving more equal partnerships in which national actors feel their views are heard. Only 60% of national and local actors felt their views were heard in their partnerships *all of the time* and 71% of international actors reported considering their partners' views in partnership discussions *most of the time*. Several national and local actors acknowledged that there was a positive shift towards strengthened national capacity and empowered decision-making in their partnerships.²³

A similar pattern was evident in reporting on decision-making in partnerships. Fifty-seven per cent of international organisations reported that local partners were involved in decisions such as budget or geographic allocations *all of the time*, compared to 50% of national organisations reporting *all the time*, and 30% *most of the time*. Several examples were given that demonstrate international partners respect the decisions of their national partners, including around surge profiles²⁴ and approaches with communities.²⁵

"We gained a bit of experience, so we can insist more on knowing what they are submitting."²⁶ (National actor)

International partners reflected on the strength of their national partners in directing programming.²⁷ National actors gave some examples in which international partners applied a top-down approach in their partnerships, but these were the exceptions rather than the rule.

There is still room for progress in understanding transparency and accountability, particularly around finance. *"Accountability and transparency of the process of making decisions – this is not clear for the national partner."*²⁸ It was, however, acknowledged that there has been a shift towards increased transparency.

"We need access to what they are submitting to donors – before we didn't even know what they were submitting. Its more transparent now than it was before."²⁹ (National actor)

"Yes, there is transparency both ways – it's an ongoing thing."³⁰ (National actor)

"Sometimes donors hinted they have some funds for certain activities and if my boss feels that the activity is not related to our mandate, she will say so and the donors will be satisfied. Most times, my boss will propose another activity that is more relevant to our work, and the donors mostly agreed to those proposals."³¹ (National actor)

23 Interviews 7, 11, 12

24 Interview 12

25 Interview 1

26 Interview 12

27 Interviews 1, 2, 3, 5

28 Interview 12

29 Interview 12

30 FGD 2

31 Interview 16



SNAPSHOT DATA: PARTNERSHIPS

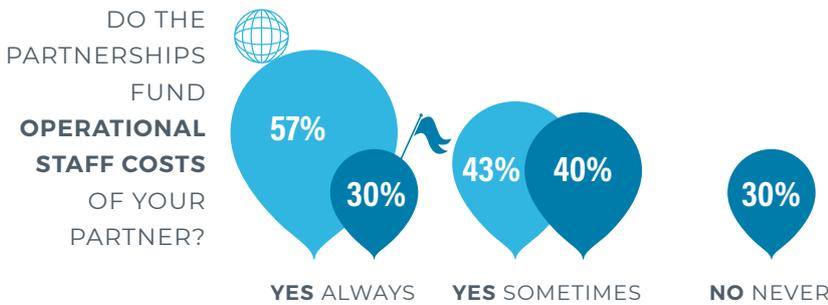
NUMBER OF PARTNERSHIPS



100% of international actors reported that partnerships always involved financial support



WHAT PARTNERSHIPS FUND

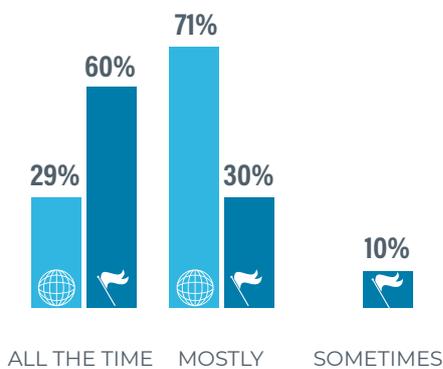


100% of international actors reported that partnerships always covered operational costs



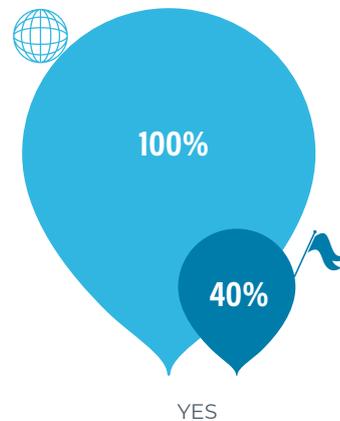
PARTNERSHIP EQUALITY

ARE THE NATIONAL PARTNER ORGANISATIONS' IDEAS AND VIEWS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN THE PARTNERSHIP?



TWO-WAY ASSESSMENT PROCESSES

HAVE YOU EVER FORMALLY ASSESSED THE CAPACITY OF YOUR PARTNERS?



International



National

LEADERSHIP

Taki Lelei: Ko e Taki Lelei 'i he fengau'e'aki 'a e Pule'anga mo e ngaahi Kolo ke makatu'unga 'i he takitaha 'ilo lelei hono fatongia.



LEADERSHIP



Key Finding: STRONG EVIDENCE. There is strong evidence of action to support a shift towards national actors leading on humanitarian action.

- ✓✓✓ There is **strong evidence** of increased leadership by government and by local and national actors in decision-making. There is also evidence of increasing engagement with donors by national and local actors.
- ✓✓ There is **some evidence** of investment in national and local organisational leadership and respect for in-country leadership mechanisms and structures.

Impact indicator	Indicator	Evidence of progress
National actors define and lead on humanitarian action.	1. International actors support and strengthen national leadership	✓✓ Some
	2. Local and national actors lead response and dominate decision-making	✓✓✓ Strong
	3. International actors work with and respect in-country leadership structures and mechanisms	✓✓✓ Strong

What evidence was sought?

- ▶ Perceptions about national leadership structures and processes, and decision-making
- ▶ Evidence of action around engagement with donors
- ▶ Percentage of national staff in leadership positions
- ▶ Investment in local and national leadership, particularly in the response to TC Gita

INDICATOR 1: INTERNATIONAL ACTORS SUPPORT AND STRENGTHEN NATIONAL LEADERSHIP

“I believe when international actors were present during TC Gita, they were just here to give support and to represent their respective organisation in assisting what the Government and people of Tonga needed after the cyclone strike. And I also believe there were present to give their expert advice and views while the locals made the decisions, the planning and also the implementation.”³² (National actor)

There are positive perceptions about the role of international actors in strengthening national leadership, though there is still scope for international actors to better target support. There was also a strong sentiment from national and international actors that international actors respected national leadership in the TC Gita response.

“They always ask is it OK? And [there is] no push back if we say no.”³³ (National actor)

INDICATOR 2: LOCAL AND NATIONAL ACTORS LEAD RESPONSE AND DOMINATE DECISION MAKING

“The localisation discussion is talking about government capacity to lead responses on the one hand and on the other local organisations to take on their role”³⁴ (International actor)

There was a significant difference in perception of leadership roles in the response. International actors felt that the Government of Tonga plays a strong leadership role, with 85% reporting local government leads on decision-making in response *all the time*. By comparison, only 40% of local actors felt that government led *all the time*, and 40% only *sometimes*.

International actors commended the role of the National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) in leading the response. One actor referenced NEMO's TC Gita response framework, which helped donors position their support of government-led priorities.³⁵

At the community level, Town Officers play an integral role during emergency response. There is scope to better resource the leadership capacity of Town Officers through increased training on roles and responsibilities during a response, because despite this integral leadership role there is no clear understanding of expectations.³⁶

“CSOs are very aware of their roles and what they do but decision-making is through the cluster system process. There needs to be a better understanding of roles.”³⁷ (International actor)

32 Interview 16

33 Interview 12

34 Interview 1

35 Interview 3

36 Tropical Cyclone Gita Cluster Lessons Learned Report, 2018, p. 20

37 Interview 5

There is scope to strengthen national and local non-government actors' decision-making in disaster response. Only 50% of local actors reported that local and national NGOs led on decision-making, compared with 42% of international actors.

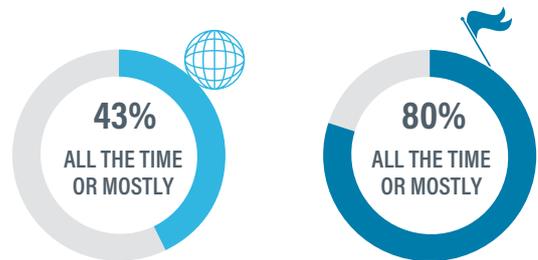
INDICATOR 3: INTERNATIONAL ACTORS WORK WITH AND RESPECT IN-COUNTRY LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES AND MECHANISMS

"In TC Gita there was a lot of pressure from global humanitarian agencies to intervene in the disaster operation but the cabinet never approved of it so they never intervened which shows respect for the government."³⁸ (National actor)

Local actors did not perceive that international actors had bypassed national leadership structures in the response to TC Gita; they believed international actors played a supportive role rather than a leadership role. Interviewees gave few examples of international actors undermining local leadership, with many actors stating that international actors worked with and respected the leadership of NEMO. There was reference, however, to the need for increased government capacity in assuming NEMO's leadership role and scope for international partners to support this.

The views of national and international actors diverged with respect to in-country leadership and decision-making. Interestingly national actors perceived that international actors respected in-country leadership more compared to international actors' self-perception. Just 43% of international actors felt that international actors respected in country leadership always or mostly, compared to 80% of national actors.

DO YOU THINK THAT INTERNATIONAL ACTORS RESPECT AND WORK WITH IN-COUNTRY LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES AND MECHANISMS?



"A lot of the UN flew in super briefly and really were trying to support the government to push out better documents. There really weren't many international NGOs that turned up."³⁹ (International actor)

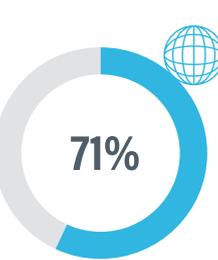
38 Interview 9
39 Interview 1



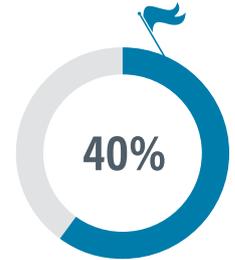
SNAPSHOT DATA: LEADERSHIP

RESPECT FOR IN-COUNTRY LEADERSHIP MECHANISMS

DO YOU THINK THAT INTERNATIONAL ACTORS RESPECT AND WORK WITH IN-COUNTRY LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES AND MECHANISMS?



5+
TIMES



ENGAGEMENT WITH DONORS

HOW MANY TIMES IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS HAS YOUR ORGANISATION MET DIRECTLY WITH AN INTERNATIONAL DONOR?

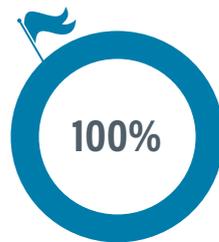
PERCEPTIONS OF LOCAL AND NATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN RESPONSE

DO YOU THINK THAT LOCAL AND NATIONAL **GOVERNMENT** LEAD ON DECISION MAKING IN HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCIES IN YOUR COUNTRY?



DO YOU THINK THAT LOCAL AND NATIONAL **NGOs** LEAD ON DECISION MAKING IN HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCIES IN YOUR COUNTRY?

ORGANISATIONAL LEADERSHIP



NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS LED BY NATIONAL STAFF



International



National

CAPACITY

Ivi Malava: Ke ngaue'aki 'a e ivi malava 'oku ma'u 'e he fonua pea fakalahi mai 'a e ngaahi 'ilo fakatekinikale fakatatau ki he fiema'u.



CAPACITY



Key Finding: LIMITED TO SOME EVIDENCE. There is some evidence of international actors providing appropriate and targeted capacity strengthening support to local and national organisations.

- ✓✓ There is **some evidence** of action to reduce reliance on international surge and to develop contextualised plans and legislations.
- ✓✓ There is **some evidence** that capacity support has increased alignment, appropriateness and relevance to the requests of local and national actors (versus the compliance needs of international actors).
- ✓ There is **limited evidence** that contextualised, appropriate humanitarian standards, tools, legislation and policies exist.

Impact indicator	Indicator	Evidence of progress
Local and national organisations can respond effectively and efficiently, and have targeted support from international actors.	1. National and regional surge capacity and use of local over international expertise	✓✓ Some
	2. International actors do not undermine capacity of local and national actors in emergency response	✓✓ Some
	3. Contextualised humanitarian standards, tools, legislation and policies are available	✓ Limited

What evidence was sought?

- ▶ Perception and action about the use of surge capacity and local and national expertise
- ▶ Evidence of local and national actors being facilitated to contextualise global humanitarian standards
- ▶ Perception that local and national actors are appropriately supported before, during and after response, and perception that they identify their own capacity needs
- ▶ Existence and awareness of key disaster response legislation, policies and standards

INDICATOR 1: NATIONAL AND REGIONAL SURGE CAPACITY AND USE OF LOCAL OVER INTERNATIONAL EXPERTISE

“They asked if they can send finance and we said no, we have our own finance, we need a water engineer. We need a technical person.”⁴⁰ (National actor)

National and local actors did not perceive that international surge overwhelmed national actors during the TC Gita response (in contrast to recent Pacific responses such as TC Pam in Vanuatu). Where international surge personnel were deployed, some organisations reported the use of a ‘twinning’ approach, ensuring that international deployees focused on working directly with a national counterpart, or that the role was to support national partners rather than play a lead role in implementation and design.⁴¹

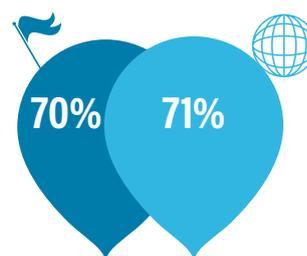
“Technical assistants are always meant to work with local counterparts...for example, there was a deployee who was here building capacity for two years.”⁴² (National actor)

Interviewees gave examples of regional surge being prioritised. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) facilitated surge from the Solomon Islands to support the Government of Tonga’s emergency response,⁴³ and two Regional Disaster Response Team personnel were deployed to support Tonga Red Cross’ response, in addition

to peer exchange with a Logistics Officer from Vanuatu.⁴⁴ When international support was provided, deployees specifically focused on linking their national partner to international mechanisms, including UN technical agencies and coordination meetings.⁴⁵

Seventy-one per cent of international actors and 70% of national actors reported that surge was deployed to support national partners. National actors were sometimes able to decide on the profiles for surge deployments, with most feeling that they were able to negotiate with their international partners to achieve surge profiles that aligned with their priorities.⁴⁶

71% of international actors and 70% of national actors reported that surge was deployed to support national partners.



Further improvements in surge modalities could include reducing the number of rotations and an increased focus on performance appraisals by national actors. For example, only 42% of international actors and 40% of national actors reported that national actors had done a performance appraisal of international surge staff.

Fewer, longer-term roles were preferred over many rotating positions of the same function, particularly from a capacity and relationship-building perspective.⁴⁷

40 Interview 12

41 Interviews 3 and 8, Cluster Lessons Learned Report

42 Interview 3

43 Interview 8, Cluster Lessons Learned Report

44 IFRC (2018) DREF end of operation report, <http://adore.ifrc.org/Download.aspx?FileId=213405>

45 IPPF Sprint Response Localisation Case Study

46 Interviews 12

47 Interviews 1, 7

INDICATOR 2: INTERNATIONAL ACTORS DO NOT UNDERMINE CAPACITY OF NATIONAL ACTORS IN EMERGENCY RESPONSE

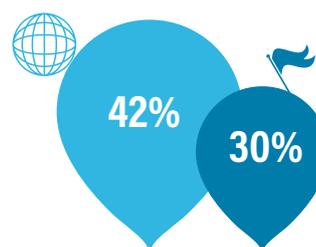
Overall coordination and support from international donors and actors was for the most part perceived positively.⁴⁸ International actors were described as largely respecting national leadership and strengthening, rather than undermining, local capacities. Some examples, however, were given of international actors undermining national capacity. One national actor mentioned a cash for work program in which they advised their international partner on a preferred approach, after which the international actor proceeded to do the “*exact opposite*”,⁴⁹ perpetuating harmful top-down approaches and not considering the needs of affected communities. Another national actor spoke about poor coordination, in that international actors failed to recognise the important roles of some national actors in the cluster fora, undermining their role leading on particular protection issues.⁵⁰

There was a disparity in opinion about whether international actors focused on the areas of capacity strengthening requested by their local partners. One national actor reported that international partners rarely focused on the areas of capacity strengthening that they required, citing a lack of operational support from international partners – “*funding our operations – we need a lot of staff to be efficient and effective in what we do – we’ve had to put a lot on hold because we don’t have the manpower to deliver on what we need to do.*”⁵¹

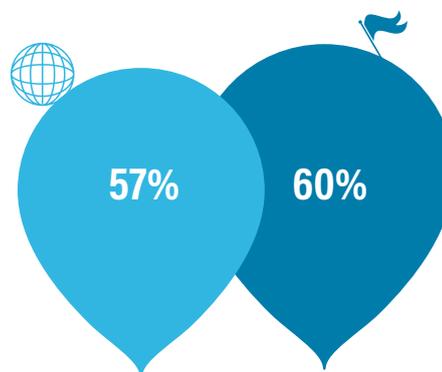
Forty-two per cent of international actors felt they always responded to the areas identified by local partners, compared with 30% of national actors. Most international and national actors stated that capacity priorities were jointly determined and mostly appropriate.

“They need to ask us whether we want support and let us identify the areas in which we need support.”⁵²

Forty-two per cent of international actors felt they always responded to the areas identified by local partners, compared with 30% of national actors.



Most international and national actors stated that capacity priorities were jointly determined and mostly appropriate.



International partner engagement in capacity-strengthening priorities was deemed to be valuable, particularly in bringing expertise and experience from other contexts to inform decisions.⁵³ Actors reported that disaster management was the highest-priority area for capacity strengthening.

48 Cluster Lessons Learned report, p 15

49 Interview 12

50 Interview 30

51 Interview 13

52 Interview 11

53 Interviews 2, 5

Despite being such a high-risk context, Tonga has limited experience in large-scale disaster management operations. Both national and international actors felt that disaster management should be prioritised for capacity strengthening and skills transfer.⁵⁴

**[INTERNATIONAL ACTORS]
HAVE A MAJOR ROLE IN
INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY**

STRENGTHENING - continuing to raise awareness on response processes, procedures, skills in assessment, distribution - we still need that sharing of knowledge and experience."⁵⁵ (National actor)

“Disaster management is still new, training for example – its important now for this to become more regular until we have that kind of training accessible, skills and capacity transfer is important.”⁵⁶

(National actor) Initially, capacity support offers were accepted in order to meet CARE’s requirements, but increasingly **MORDI began to identify its own capacity requirements** and requested support across areas ranging from policy development to finance mentoring.”⁵⁷

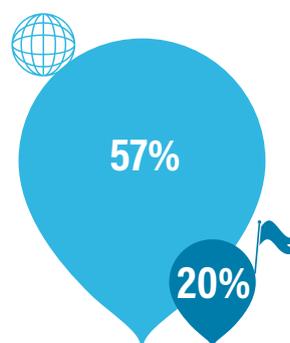
(National actor)

INDICATOR 3: CONTEXTUALISED HUMANITARIAN STANDARDS, TOOLS AND POLICIES ARE AVAILABLE

“We’ve heard of these policies...but we’ve never seen them.”⁵⁸

International, national and local actors highlighted that there is significant opportunity for progress in this area, in particular in the ongoing revision of current disaster management frameworks in Tonga. There was a lot of confusion about roles and responsibilities in disaster management arrangements, including in understanding the roles of government, national civil society and international actors at the national and district level. For example, several actors were confused about the role of PHT agencies and the scope of the support they were able to provide, and how the regional OCHA chaired cluster system complemented the in-country cluster system.⁵⁹ There is scope for greater involvement of national actors in the development and contextualisation of standards, tools and policies, including in translation and socialisation.

Only 20% of national organisations felt they were involved in influencing policies all the time, compared with 57% of international actors.



54 Interview 2, 3, 5

55 Interview 5

56 Interview 8

57 Partnership evaluation document

58 FGD 2

59 Cluster Lessons Learned Workshop report, p. 15

The Emergency Management Act (EMA) (2007) is the primary guiding policy framework for emergency management in Tonga, and is complemented by the Emergency Management Plan (EMP) (2009). The International Federation of Red Cross' International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles Review process (2013) raised concerns about both the EMA and EMP, including the absence of clear parameters for international assistance, inconsistencies between the EMP and EMA, and a lack of clarity around the roles, responsibilities and frameworks of actors working in disaster management. There are currently 20 other legislation and policy documents in Tonga that reference emergency provisions; centralisation and standardisation is a key issue. The EMA and EMP are currently under review. The implementation of the revised Act will be critical in supporting more effective response and broader awareness of disaster management arrangements, including socialisation at the district and village level to ensure that policies are effective and understood below the national level.⁶⁰

"We're also making sure that the public service understands the role of NEMO. [It's] not only between us and development partners, it's between us and the public service and strengthening their capacity and knowledge of what we do."⁶¹
(National actor)

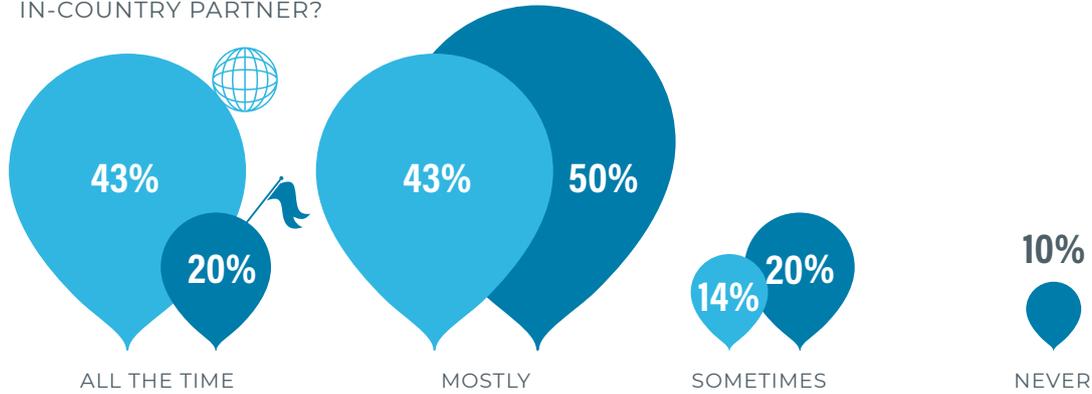
60 Interview 3
61 Interview 8



SNAPSHOT DATA: CAPACITY

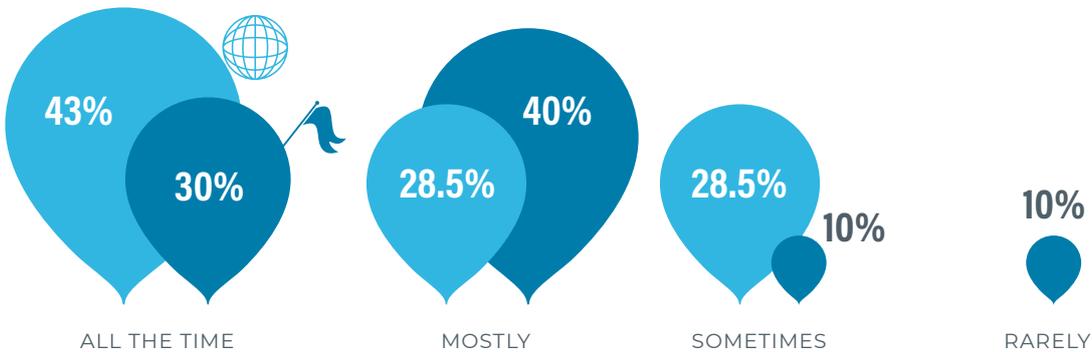
INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

DO YOU FEEL THAT INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT STRENGTHENS THE CAPACITY OF YOUR IN-COUNTRY PARTNER?



APPROPRIATENESS OF CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

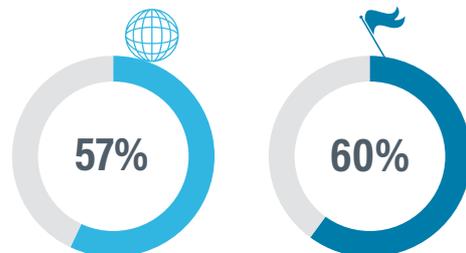
DO INTERNATIONAL ACTORS FOCUS ON THE AREAS OF CAPACITY STRENGTHENING THAT LOCAL PARTNERS REQUEST?




 There was a strong perception that **disaster management legislation and frameworks in Tonga were not widely understood.**

DEFINING CAPACITY NEEDS

WHO DEFINES THE CAPACITY NEEDS OF NATIONAL PARTNER ORGANISATIONS?



A COMBINATION OF BOTH

 International

 National

COORDINATION AND COMPLEMENTARITY

Fakafehokotaki mo fepoupouaki: Ke fakafehokotaki 'e he Pule'anga 'a e ngaahi sekitoa 'ikai fakapule'anga pea fepoupou'aki kenau kau he talanoa mo e faitu'utu'uni ki he ngaahi ngaue tokoni ki he fakatamaki.



COORDINATION AND COMPLEMENTARITY



Key Finding: SOME EVIDENCE. There is some evidence of commonly agreed approaches to complementarity ('as local as possible, as international as necessary').

- ✓✓ There is **some evidence** of actions to shift the operating language of coordination meetings to the local language and to support national leadership of clusters.
- ✓✓ There is **some evidence** of funding or technical support to national CSO coordination mechanisms or evidence of intentional processes to analyse approaches to complementarity.

Impact indicator	Indicator	Evidence of progress
There is application and respect for commonly agreed approaches to be 'as local as possible and as international as necessary'.	1. National engagement in coordination forums	✓✓✓ Strong
	2. Clearly defined parameters for international actors complementing local and national actors in humanitarian response	⊘ No
	3. National CSO coordination mechanisms are funded and have technical capacity to operate in humanitarian response	✓✓ Some
	4. Humanitarian response is delivered in a way that is collaborative and complementary (i.e. based on analysis of the strengths/weaknesses of different humanitarian actors)	✓✓ Some

What evidence was sought?

- ▶ Leadership, participation, language and reporting of the clusters
- ▶ Perception that local and national actors can engage as equal partners, and that international actors support, rather than undermine, coordination mechanisms
- ▶ Funding of national CSO coordination mechanisms
- ▶ Pre-mapping of roles to support complementarity and extent to which actors feel their full capacity is used

INDICATOR 1: NATIONAL REPRESENTATION AT, AND ENGAGEMENT IN, COORDINATION FORUMS AND MEETINGS

The activation of the cluster system for TC Gita was the first since TC Ian in 2014, after which the clusters had been inactive. Clusters in Tonga are all led by national government line ministries with links to international and regional agencies. Reported attendance at cluster meetings was high for both international and national actors (100% and 90% respectively), but there was both confusion and some frustration amongst national actors around the utility of the coordination fora.⁶²

Challenges in national representation and engagement in coordination were commonly perceived. Interestingly national actors reported that they felt their opinions and idea were heard in coordinations forums more so than those of international actors. Twenty-nine per cent of international actors felt that their ideas were mostly heard in cluster meetings, whereas 60% of national actors reported feeling like their views were *mostly* heard.

DO YOU THINK YOUR IDEAS AND
SUGGESTIONS ARE HEARD IN
COORDINATION FORUMS?



Representation in Tonga Clusters

Of the 58 actors mentioned in the TC Gita response plan, 18 were national organisations, 18 were government agencies and 22 were international organisations.



International and national actors agreed on the need for increased engagement of national NGOs and CSOs in decision-making in cluster fora. There is scope for this position to be formally strengthened through the revision of the EMA and EMP currently underway. There is also opportunity for broader understanding of roles and responsibilities in coordination fora to improve this collaboration and meaningful representation in future.

“Most of the NGOs are called into the cluster forum. Going into the future we’re trying to involve NGOs much more in the decision-making...currently the bulk is government but we’re trying to get the private sector and NGOs into the committee. We’re trying to get them a seat at the table.”⁶³ (National actor)

The cluster system in Tonga in its current iteration is not fit for purpose, with processes focusing on individual clusters rather than interrogating whether the system itself is the best fit for the Tonga context.

62 Interview 7, FGD 2, Cluster Lessons Learned report

63 Interview 8

“[the focus has been on] what can the clusters do to make themselves more effective rather than the actual system being appropriate.”⁶⁴ (International actor)

Cluster meetings were mostly conducted in Tongan, unless expatriates were present at the meetings, in which case meetings would be held in English. Cluster reports, however, were always written in English.⁶⁵

“You have to speak in the language you prefer to get what you want. Nowadays, we’re trying to do it in Tongan.”⁶⁶ (National actor)

INDICATOR 2: CLEARLY DEFINED PARAMETERS FOR INTERNATIONAL ACTORS COMPLEMENTING LOCAL AND NATIONAL ACTORS IN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Many actors highlighted that complementarity in disaster management arrangements is not well understood in Tonga. The cluster system is not mentioned in any of the national emergency management frameworks or legislation.⁶⁷ The small number of activations of the cluster system and current status of disaster management legislation in Tonga meant that there is some confusion around the roles of a range of actors. However, interviewees stated that government and local actors faced a bigger challenge in understanding their different roles than did international and local actors.

The EMA does not have specific provisions for the role of international actors in humanitarian response.⁶⁸ On the 14th of February 2018, after TC Gita, the Government of Tonga requested assistance from the PHT, but a subsequent cluster lessons learned workshop highlighted that there was confusion around the type of support the PHT could offer some clusters, and how the international system aligned with the Tongan cluster system.⁶⁹

International actors referenced the strong government leadership in response.⁷⁰

“There was a real sense that the purpose was to allow NEMO to take the lead – whether they could do it or not was not the point – it was reinforcing the government’s role”⁷¹ (international actor).

Many national and local actors were also clear on the role of government in leading the response, but also felt that civil society did not have a strong enough (or scope to assume a) leading role in the response.⁷²

In the Tonga case we were actively coordinating with the international community. It may have felt like there was a lot of international presence in country but the local government and sectors were leading. The international community were waiting to be led by the government... very strong leadership from the government.”⁷³ (International actor)

64 Interview 3

65 Shelter Cluster Meeting Minutes, Self-Assessment Survey data

66 Interview 8

67 Cluster Lessons Learned report, p. 55

68 The NEMA is currently under review

69 Cluster Lessons Learned workshop, p. 15

70 Interviews 1, 3, 4, 5

71 Interview 1

72 FGD 2

73 Interview 4

INDICATOR 3: NATIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY COORDINATION MECHANISMS ARE FUNDED AND HAVE TECHNICAL CAPACITY TO OPERATE IN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Accessing funding through the cluster architecture was challenging for national actors. Funding came through the clusters from the Government of Tonga, and most CSOs missed out on funding, with government actors prioritising projects being run by line ministries rather than civil society or NGOs. Many actors commented on the utility of the clusters, with one actor identifying the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) cluster as the only functional cluster, and linking it to the funding and capacity support that had been invested in that cluster.⁷⁴ Funding support was also provided to the Ministry of Internal Affairs to support coordination of the Safety and Protection Cluster.⁷⁵

One of the biggest challenges across clusters was in assessments, with 29 different assessments being undertaken in 'Eua alone, resulting in assessment fatigue.⁷⁶ Technical capacity in assessment exists in Tonga, but results were not shared widely, and there is limited evidence of data being used to inform decisions.⁷⁷

The role of CSFT

During TC Gita, the civil society coordination body CSFT was not well represented in cluster fora. Inclusion and resourcing of CSFT could enhance its participation in response to humanitarian crises in Tonga in future, as well as formalising its role in response in revisions of disaster management policy and frameworks.

INDICATOR 4: HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE IS DELIVERED IN A WAY THAT IS COLLABORATIVE AND COMPLEMENTARY (I.E. BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE SPECIFIC STRENGTHS/ WEAKNESSES OF DIFFERENT HUMANITARIAN ACTORS)

“Sometimes you don't know what you don't know.”⁷⁸ (International actor)

There is some evidence that priorities in response are based on analysis of strengths and weaknesses. During TC Gita there was strong coordination between local and international agencies and NGOs, aligning resources appropriately to meet identified needs.⁷⁹ Despite this, some international actors undertook activities that were not relevant or did not properly align with national and local partners. One international actor described an international responding agency arriving in country to support coordination and not collaborating with the right local actors, citing a “*lack of recognition of the role of who the local actors were.*”⁸⁰ Some actors also felt that international, national and local NGOs did not align their response efforts with government priorities, suggesting that overall coordination and planning between all actors could be enhanced.⁸¹

74 Interview 1

75 Interview 9

76 Cluster lessons learned report, shelter cluster lessons learned report

77 Shelter Cluster Lessons learned report

78 Interview 2

79 Cluster Lessons Learned report p. 15

80 Interview 4

81 Cluster Lessons Learned workshop p. 57

Government Leadership: Requests for support in Ian and Gita

The two most significant recent responses in Tonga demonstrate a shift in leadership. Ten days following TC Ian, which hit Tonga on 11 January 2014, a formal request for international assistance was issued via the PHT.⁸²

Following TC Gita, despite its impact and scale being far greater than that of TC Ian⁸³, the Government of Tonga did not issue a call for international assistance. Instead, it issued bilateral requests to existing partners, as well as for targeted technical support and financial supplementation from members of the PHT.

82 TC Ian response plan

83 TC Ian affected 5,000 people TC Gita affected 80,000 people as per Government of Tonga TC Ian and TC Gita response plans



SNAPSHOT DATA: COORDINATION AND COMPLEMENTARITY

COORDINATION LEADERSHIP

100% OF CLUSTERS ARE LED BY NATIONAL AGENCIES WITH INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT



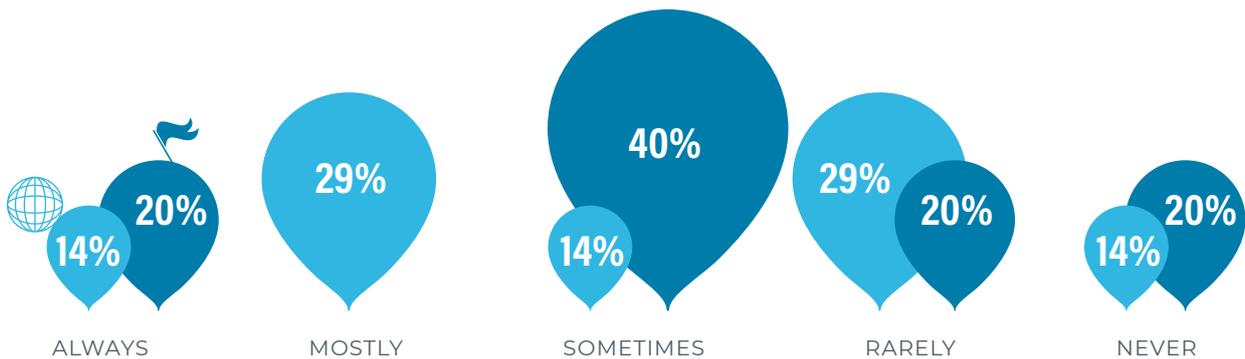
CLUSTER REPORTING

ARE CLUSTER REPORTS WRITTEN IN THE LOCAL LANGUAGE?



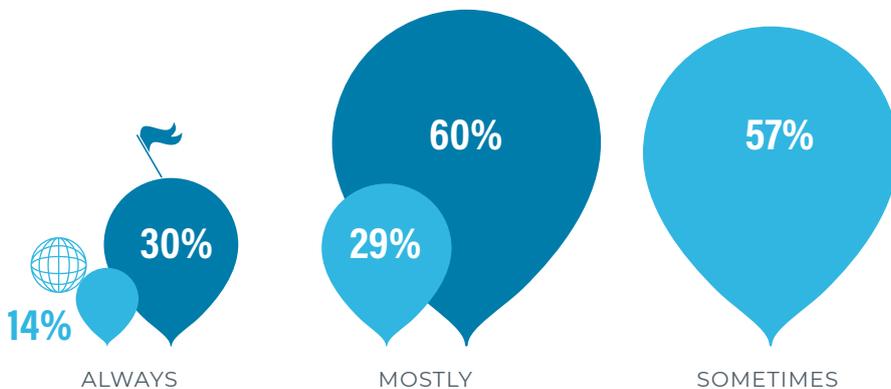
CLUSTER LANGUAGE

ARE CLUSTER MEETINGS CONDUCTED IN THE LOCAL LANGUAGE?



ENGAGEMENT IN COORDINATION FORUMS

DO YOU THINK YOUR IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS ARE HEARD IN COORDINATION FORUMS?



FUNDING

Fakapa'anga: Ko hono fakapa'anga 'o e ngaahi ngaue tokoni ki he fakatamaki ke fakafaingofua pea malava 'a e ngaahi kulupu 'ikai fakapule'anga ke ngaue'aki ke a'u 'a e tokoni ki he kakai 'i he taimi fiema'u vivili.



FUNDING



Key Finding: LIMITED TO SOME EVIDENCE. There is limited to some evidence of action to localise funding.

- ✓ There is **limited evidence** of local and national actors having direct access to funding.
- ⊘ There is **no evidence** that the amount of humanitarian funding has increased.
- ✓✓ There is **some evidence** that local and national actors have increased decision-making in financial matters.

Impact indicator	Indicator	Evidence of progress
An increased number of national/local organisations are describing financial independence that allows them to respond more efficiently to humanitarian needs.	1. Local and national actors have access to direct funding with limited or no barriers	✓ Limited
	2. Increase in the amount of humanitarian funding to local and national actors	⊘ No
	3. Local and national actors have increased decision-making in financial matters	✓✓ Some

What evidence was sought?

- ▶ Number of funding sources for international and national actors
- ▶ Increase in international actors publishing funding of local and national partners
- ▶ Perception that local and national actors receive a fair proportion of funding and have increased control
- ▶ Transparency of financial decision-making in partnerships
- ▶ Evidence that funding has increased to both local and national actors

INDICATOR 1: LOCAL AND NATIONAL ACTORS HAVE ACCESS TO DIRECT FUNDING WITH LIMITED OR NO BARRIERS

“There is a middleman, that’s challenging.”⁸⁴

There are still significant barriers for some local and national actors directly accessing funding, with national actors reporting they were not aware of in-country funding mechanisms that could be accessed without an international partner.⁸⁵

84 Interview 12

85 Interviews 7, 11, 12

“All funding comes through international partners. Australia, New Zealand and ECHO all comes through partners.”⁸⁶

National and local partners can access direct response funding from the National Emergency Fund, administered by the Ministry of Finance. Interviewees representing national and local actors expressed some frustration and confusion around the process for activation of this mechanism, including how to draw-down on funds.⁸⁷ Actors cited government prioritisation as a significant barrier to obtaining funding, with cluster line ministry leads prioritising their own projects over those of NGO partners. The cluster lessons learned process identified limited coordination between the Ministry of Finance and the clusters as a key contributing factor to this confusion.⁸⁸ The National Emergency Fund could improve its communication, protocols and understanding of priorities, and could benefit from a dedicated Emergency Unit within the Ministry of Finance.⁸⁹

Some funding mechanisms within organisations or partnerships enable rapid access to funds. For example, the International Planned Parenthood Federation coordinated with its national partner, Tonga Family Health, to facilitate rapid access to flexible funding, seen as a key success factor in the localised, tailored response plan.⁹⁰ The Government of Tonga received funding from several donors very rapidly, including USD3.5 million from the Pacific Catastrophe Risk Assessment and Financing Initiative within nine days of activation, and USD6 million of disaster resilience contingency funding from the Asian Development Bank within two days of its request.⁹¹

National and local actors reported not receiving funding through the government financing mechanism, which is also open to voluntary contributions from external donors. There is an absence of coordination between the Ministry of Finance and clusters, resulting in confusion as to how to access funding for response activities from the Emergency Fund.⁹²

“No funding to CSOs or NGOs that came from the government. As far as I know there was nothing from the government emergency funds.”⁹³

Delays in procurement and capacity gaps in allocating funding to clusters were also cited as challenges in disbursement of cash contributions.⁹⁴

INDICATOR 2: INCREASE IN THE AMOUNT OF HUMANITARIAN FUNDING TO LOCAL AND NATIONAL ACTORS

There remains a significant discrepancy between the financial stability of international and national actors. Seventy-one per cent of international actors reported that they were financially stable *all the time*, compared with only 10% of national actors. Many local actors also noted the discrepancy in availability of funding during response and peacetime, highlighting an absence of long-term sustainable funding of local and national agencies.

86 Interview 7

87 FGD 2

88 Cluster Lessons Learned report, p. 20

89 Ola F, MoF 2018 in Cluster Lessons Learned report

90 IPPF SPRINT Response Localisation Case study

91 Cluster Lessons Learned report, p. 20

92 Cluster Lessons learned report, p. 25.

93 FGD 6

94 Cluster Lessons learned report, p. 23

Financial stability

Of the 13 recipients of funding as per UN OCHA's Financial Tracking Service reports for 2018, only two are national or local actors: Tonga Red Cross (receiving USD272,798) and the Government of Tonga (USD1,041,633).

Government  

National  

International  

The vast majority of funds reported (over USD10 million of the total USD13,676,165) went to unspecified recipients. This may have gone direct to national actors, but also demonstrates a lack of public reporting and transparency on funding in response. By comparison, in 2017 – the first year since the World Humanitarian Summit – the total funding reported to FTS was USD500,313.95

Fifty per cent of national actors had over five sources of funding for preparedness and response work, compared with 71% of international actors.

INDICATOR 3: LOCAL AND NATIONAL ACTORS HAVE INCREASED DECISION- MAKING OVER FINANCIAL MATTERS

There is significant progress to be made in financial transparency. Sixty per cent of local actors reported their international partners *never* shared their budgets or financial reports. Conversely, a large minority of international actors reported sharing financial information with their partners *all the time* (42%).

“It all comes down to who your donor is to match the change. The day you [the donor] stop asking for long proposals, the day you know that localisation has worked.”⁹⁶
(International actor)

International actors still hold power over national actors in financial decision-making, but this is shifting. Nonetheless, one national actor spoke about an agreement for 12 months of TC Gita response funding which was then pulled and reallocated without consultation.⁹⁷

There was some evidence that national actors have decision making power over financial matters, though they still worked through their international partners. Several national actors reported that donors were flexible in adjusting budgets if the amendments were justified.

“Our partners are very very flexible in the way that we work as it’s a two-way thing – we do have a lot of networks on the ground that provide a lot of strong evidence-based decisions that could influence how programs can be operationalised by our donor partners.”⁹⁸

“We can change. We just inform them we are having a change.”⁹⁹

95 https://fts.unocha.org/countries/226/flows/2018?order=directional_property&sort=asc

96 Interview 7

97 Interview 12

98 Interview 9

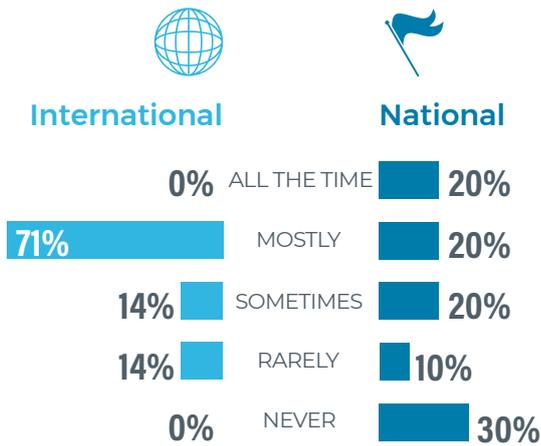
99 Interview 11



SNAPSHOT DATA: FUNDING

PROPORTION OF FUNDING

DO YOU FEEL THAT LOCAL AND NATIONAL ACTORS RECEIVE A FAIR PROPORTION OF FUNDING IN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE COMPARED TO INTERNATIONAL ACTORS?

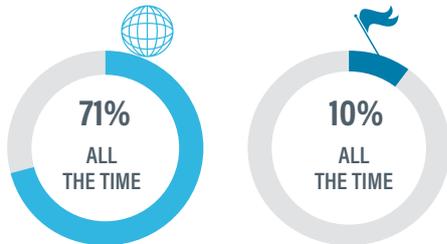


All national and local NGOs reported significant barriers in receiving funding and **still perceive that they do not receive a fair proportion**



FINANCIAL STABILITY

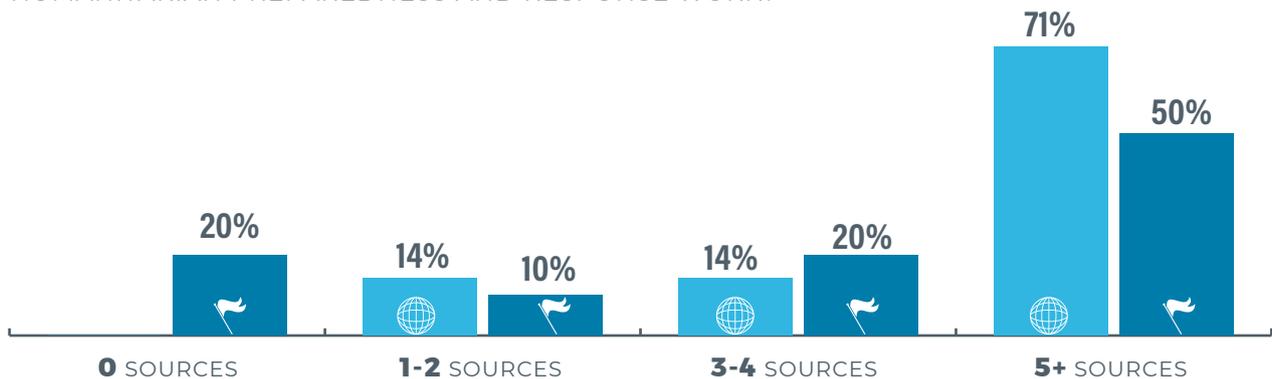
HOW OFTEN DO YOU FEEL YOUR ORGANISATION IS FINANCIALLY STABLE (E.G., OPERATIONAL BUDGET ENOUGH FOR THREE MONTHS)?



International actors were likely to have more numerous sources of funding and have **much higher levels of financial stability**

SOURCES OF FUNDING

APPROXIMATELY HOW MANY SOURCES OF FUNDING DOES YOUR ORGANISATION HAVE FOR HUMANITARIAN PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE WORK?



PARTICIPATION

Kau he fakahoko ngaue: Ko e kau 'a e kakai he faitu'utu'uni ko e mahino ia kuo lava ke ongoa honau ngaahi le'o.



PARTICIPATION



Key Finding: LIMITED EVIDENCE. There is limited evidence of changed practice in community participation.

- ✓ There is **limited evidence** of standards being contextualised and circulated with local and community stakeholders.
- ✓ There is **limited evidence** that increased community engagement is shaping humanitarian programming.

Impact indicator	Indicator	Evidence of progress
Communities lead and participate in humanitarian response.	1. Development of community/contextualised standards for all actors working in that context	✓ Limited
	2. Communities have increased opportunities to shape programming, including evaluating INGO work	✓ Limited

What evidence was sought?

- ▶ Common standards and policies have been contextualised
- ▶ Perception that tools and standards are appropriate to meet needs of affected people
- ▶ Existence of mechanisms and processes to ensure participation of affected people (including feedback)

INDICATOR 1: DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY/ CONTEXTUALISED STANDARDS FOR ALL ACTORS WORKING IN THAT CONTEXT

Most organisations reported taking the perceptions of affected communities into account in programming. Nevertheless, there is scope to improve the overall systematic collection of community views and feedback, including of vulnerable groups.¹⁰⁰ The current structural arrangements for coordination focus primarily at the national level – with limited NEMO representation at the district or community level.¹⁰¹ This is an area in which international actors

¹⁰⁰ Shelter Cluster Pacific & IFRC. (2018). *Kingdom of Tonga Emergency Shelter and Non Food Items Cluster and Reconstruction Cluster: TC Gita 2018 Response Review Workshop Report.*

¹⁰¹ Tonkin and Taylor International Ltd; *TC Gita Emergency Preparedness and Response – A Comprehensive Review and Lessons Learnt. NEMO Tonga & UNDP. February 2019. p 10.*

in Tonga can support local actors, particularly around establishing community feedback and accountability mechanisms. Seventy-one per cent of international actors reported taking community perspectives into account *all of the time*, compared with only 50% of national and local actors.

“There was no evidence of community representation in decision-making. We piloted a women-led program, even with [national partner] it was a struggle to get around the concept of community driven.”¹⁰²

INDICATOR 2: COMMUNITIES HAVE INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES TO SHAPE PROGRAMMING, INCLUDING EVALUATING THE WORK OF INTERNATIONAL NGOS

“Communities rarely have a [say] in decision-making but they do share [their views] with CSOs.”¹⁰³

There is scope for significant improvement in meaningful participation, with communities having minimal involvement in decision-making in recent disaster responses. Community members did not feel that their perceptions were considered in the TC Gita response, and there was confusion about where support was coming from, which demonstrates a lack of communication and feedback mechanisms.

Community representatives mentioned the integral communication and leadership role played by the Town Officers. There is some confusion about roles and responsibilities between different government ministries and non-government actors in disaster response, including down to the village level. This is a barrier to effectively engaging with communities. Some actors felt that community perspectives were gathered, but were unclear whether their voices and concerns were actually being addressed. Several actors gave the example of the many assessments done in the TC Gita response (anecdotally 29 in ‘Eua alone), with no real clarity on what the information was being used for, and limited evidence as to whether the community perspectives elicited in the assessments were actually being addressed. Some agency-specific feedback mechanisms were established, to varying degrees of success.

Interviewees gave some examples of communities being involved in programs, but believed that these utilised a top-down approach rather than being community led.¹⁰⁴

“Our voices were heard, whether or not they were addressed is a different question. We understood the aid to be coming from the town officers and there was no discussion about who donated the aid – we assumed it was the government.”¹⁰⁵

102 Interview 2

103 Interview 4

104 TC Gita Cluster Lessons Learned workshop report

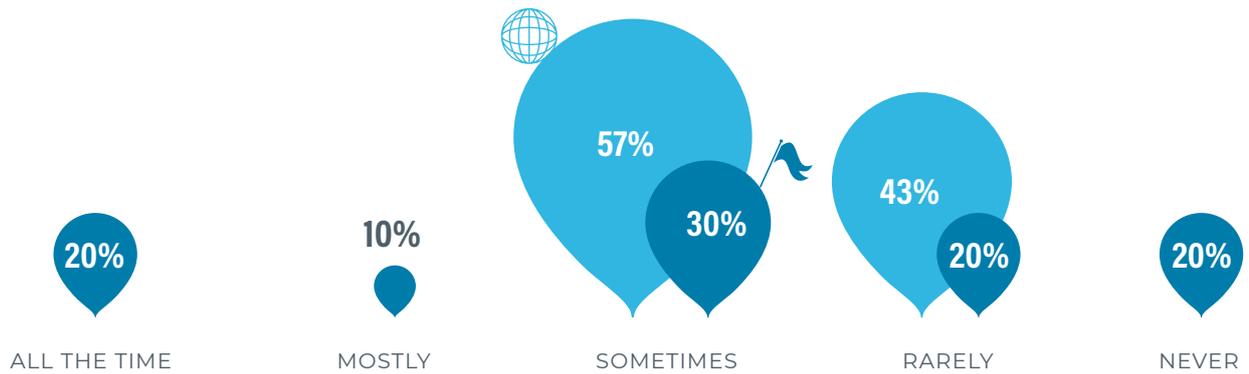
105 FGD 6



SNAPSHOT DATA: PARTICIPATION

LOCAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

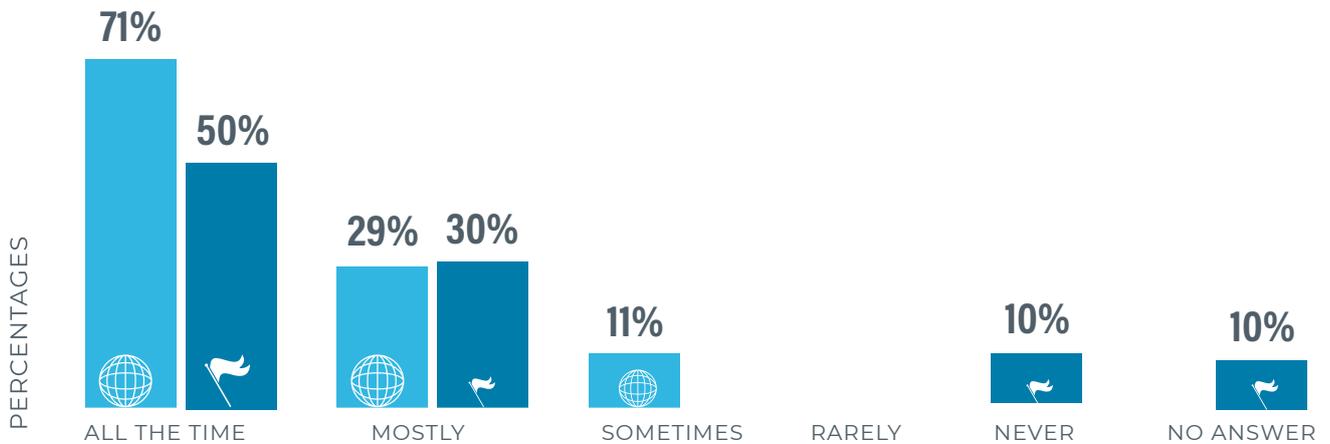
DO YOU THINK LOCAL COMMUNITIES LEAD ON DECISION MAKING IN HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCIES THIS COUNTRY?



ENGAGEMENT WITH AFFECTED POPULATION

DOES YOUR ORGANISATION TAKE OPINIONS OF AFFECTED PEOPLE INTO ACCOUNT DURING DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMS?

Most international, national and local organisations believe that they take the opinions of affected people into account



POLICY INFLUENCE AND ADVOCACY

Taukave'i mo teke ha tu'utu'uni ngaue ke liliu: Ko e kau fakataha 'a e Pule'anga, ngaahi Kulupu 'ikai fakapule'anga fakalotofonua mo e Ngaahi kautaha Tokoni hono talanoa'i 'a e ngaahi taumu'a ngaue ke tokoni'i fakapa'anga.



POLICY INFLUENCE AND ADVOCACY



Key Finding: LIMITED TO SOME EVIDENCE. There is limited to some evidence that policies reflect the priorities of national and local civil society actors more accurately due to their increased engagement in policy and advocacy.

- ✓✓ There is **some evidence** of national and local actors increasing their awareness of relevant policies and influencing their development.
- ✓✓ There is **some evidence** that local and national actors influence donor priorities.

Impact indicator	Indicator	Evidence of progress
Humanitarian action reflects the priorities of affected communities and national actors.	1. Policies are informed by local and national voices including those of communities	✓ Limited
	2. National actors are recognised as key stakeholders in national debates about policies and standards that affect them	✓✓ Some
	3. Local and national actors influence donor priorities in-country, including program design and implementation	✓✓ Some

What evidence was sought?

- ▶ Engagement of local and national actors and NGO networks in humanitarian policy issues and standard-setting
- ▶ Perception that humanitarian policies and approaches are informed by local and national voices, including those of communities
- ▶ Evidence for increased representation of national and local actors in humanitarian action plans relative to international actors

INDICATOR 1: POLICIES ARE INFORMED BY LOCAL AND NATIONAL VOICES, INCLUDING THOSE OF COMMUNITIES

More international actors believed that they were influential in development of national policies than did national actors. Fifty-seven per cent of international actors felt that they were able to feed into or influence development of policies in country *all the time*, compared with only 20% of national actors. There is evidence of an increasing role being played by civil society in Tonga, such as in the historic passing of a family protection bill (2013), in which many CSOs¹⁰⁶ collaborated with government during a three-year process.¹⁰⁷ There is scope to

¹⁰⁶ including the Tonga National Centre for Women and Children, Women and Children Crisis Centre, Ma'a Fafine & Famili, CSFT, Tonga aw Society, Friendly Islands Human Rights and Democracy Movement and Tonga Women National Congress, Talitha Project.

¹⁰⁷ Asian Development Bank (2015) <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/177184/csb-ton.pdf>

amplify the engagement and role of civil society in the revision process of the EMA and EMP to elevate local and national voices in humanitarian policies in Tonga.

INDICATOR 2: NATIONAL ACTORS ARE RECOGNISED AS KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN NATIONAL DEBATES ABOUT POLICIES AND STANDARDS THAT AFFECT THEM

Many local and national actors highlighted that there is scope to strengthen national NGOs' ability to influence the development of policies and standards in Tonga. Local organisations were perceived as integral in demonstrating leadership in disaster response processes, policies and systems, but there remain questions about whether their involvement was appropriately respected and integrated by government leadership.

“Local organisations make decisions and feeding that back – they exhibit leadership – link into systems, actively engage in cluster meetings, provide information... whether the information was heard is a different question.”¹⁰⁸

Current policy and planning frameworks for response do not mention the roles of the nationally-led cluster system in response and recovery. Further, there is no consistency around terms of reference (ToR) and standard operating procedures (SOP) for all clusters. For example, the Safety and Protection Cluster does not have an endorsed TOR or SOP. If clusters have these guiding documents, they are not comprehensive or clear on roles and responsibilities.¹⁰⁹

There is a significant gap in formal civil society representation in emergency management procedures, including at the village level. *“There is a need to enhance the role of civil society by formal recognition of the critical role that they play and their proven ability to execute initial and immediate emergency response.”¹¹⁰*

INDICATOR 3: LOCAL AND NATIONAL ACTORS INFLUENCE DONOR PRIORITIES IN COUNTRY, INCLUDING PROGRAM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

National and local actors meet frequently with international donors. This is sometimes facilitated by international partners, though not always. International actors play an important role in facilitating national partners to meet with international donors and brokering additional financing from other sources.

There was a perception that some priorities are still donor driven and mismatched with those of local actors. However, donors and national and local actors stated that constructive dialogue in many cases had helped to align priorities. *“[It] can be a good thing if it is local actors or local organisations pushing back, [it becomes] a good discussion.”¹¹¹*

108 Interview 3

109 Cluster Lessons Learned report, p. 27

110 IFRC IDRL Report, p. 47

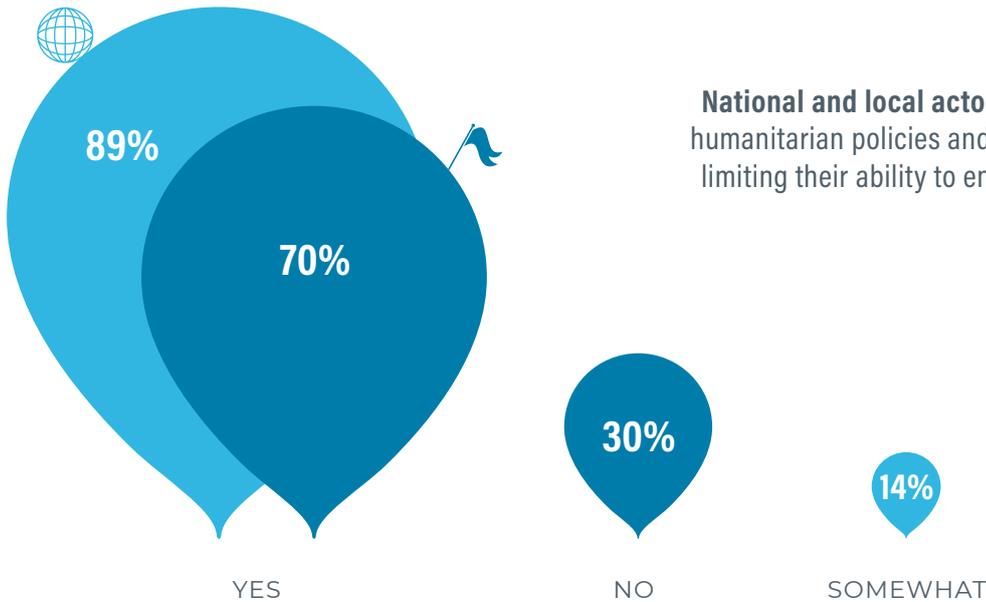
111 Interview 3



SNAPSHOT DATA: POLICY INFLUENCE AND ADVOCACY

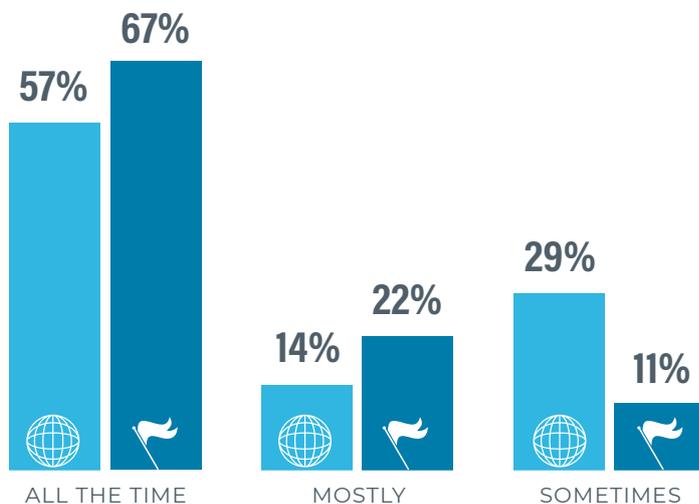
AWARENESS OF POLICIES AND PLANNING PROCESSES

ARE YOU AWARE OF THE HUMANITARIAN POLICIES AND PLANNING PROCESSES IN-COUNTRY?



INFLUENCE ON NATIONAL HUMANITARIAN POLICIES AND PLANNING

HOW MUCH ARE YOU OR YOUR ORGANISATION INVOLVED IN INFLUENCING/FEEDING IDEAS INTO THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMANITARIAN POLICIES AND PLANNING PROCESSES NATIONALLY?



VISIBILITY IN TC GITA RESPONSE PLAN

International organisations' public reporting of the response to TC Gita reflected localisation principles, referencing strongly the leadership of national organisations in the response, and partnership approaches to meeting humanitarian needs.

