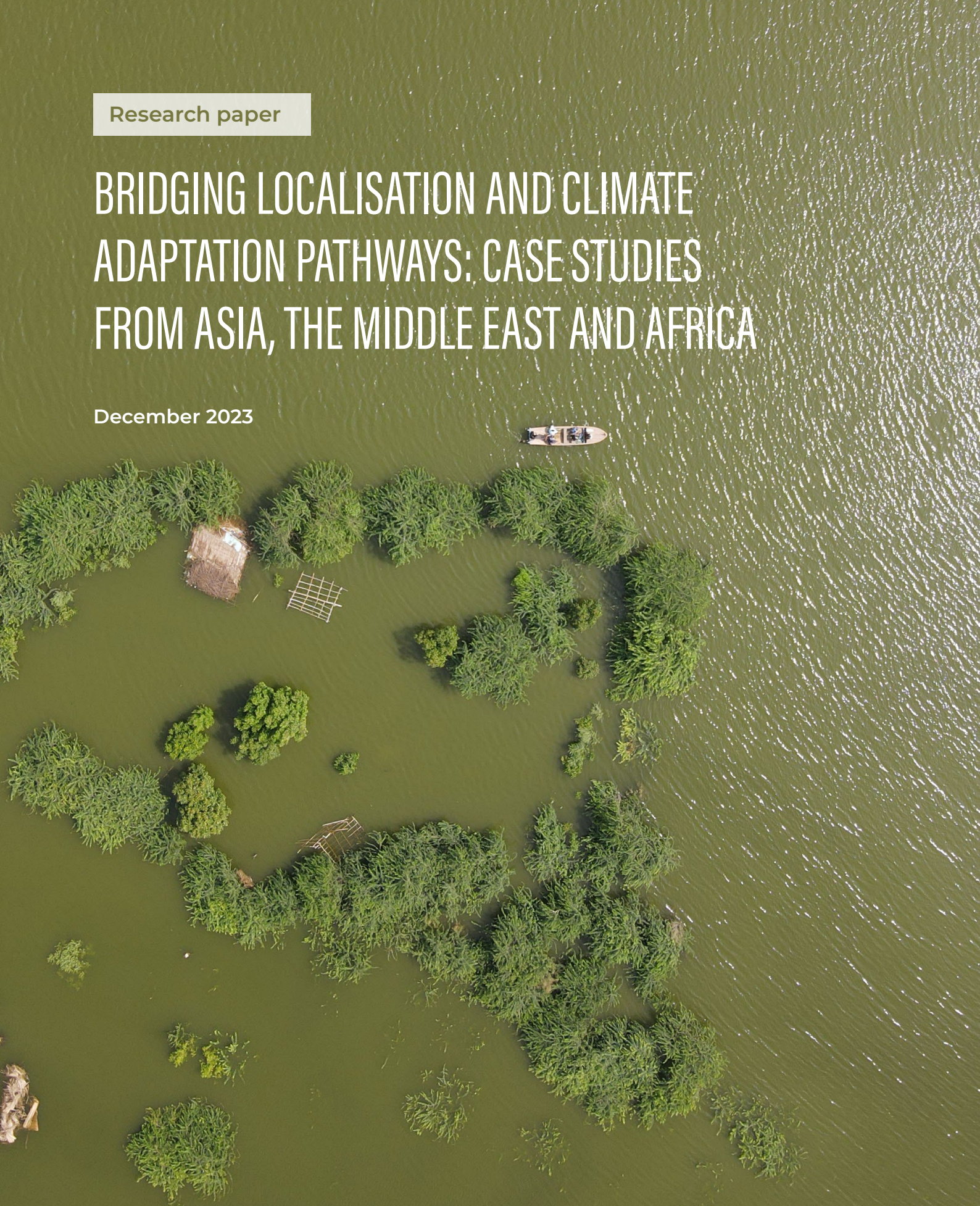# BRIDGING LOCALISATION AND CLIMATE ADAPTATION PATHWAYS: CASE STUDIES FROM ASIA, THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

December 2023

Islamic Relief Worldwide

STRIDE

GLOW CONSULTANTS

HUMANITARIAN ADVISORY GROUP

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

About the Partners

GLOW Consultants, based in Pakistan, is a leading national entity providing practice solutions and field implementation support to donors, their implementing partners and research institutions. GLOW has successfully completed more than 100 third-party monitoring and evaluation assignments.

Humanitarian Advisory Group 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 contributes to excellence in humanitarian practice.

Islamic Relief Worldwide is an international aid and development charity that aims to alleviate the suffering of the world's poorest people. An independent non-governmental organisation, it was founded in the United Kingdom in 1984.

Humanitarian Advisory Group is BCorp certified. This little logo means we work hard to ensure that our business is a force for good. We have chosen to hold ourselves accountable to the highest social, environmental and ethical standards, setting ourselves apart from business as usual.

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

CAN DO	Church Agencies Network – Disaster Operations
CCA	Climate change adaptation
CSO	Civil society organisation
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
HAG	Humanitarian Advisory Group
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IRW	Islamic Relief Worldwide
LLA	Locally led climate adaptation
L/NNGOs	Local/national non-government organisations
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PNG	Papua New Guinea
STRIDE	Strengthening Response Capacity and Institutional Development for Excellence

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The urgency of the global climate crisis cannot be understated. With the impacts of climate breakdown the population in need of humanitarian assistance is expected to increase by more than 50 million people by 2030.[1] Approximately 132 million people are expected to be pushed into poverty over the next decade significantly impacting development.[2] Without sufficient action, the climate crisis will intensify global humanitarian needs and considerably impact development more broadly, pushing at-risk populations beyond their capacity to cope.

Against this backdrop, developing and strengthening locally led and collaborative approaches to address climate impacts that amplify the voices of at-risk communities and ensures accountability to crisis-affected populations, is a critical step towards improved humanitarian outcomes and community resilience. Localisation of humanitarian action, and locally led climate adaptation (LLA) are two key means of supporting these objectives – yet in practice, there is a gap in leveraging their mutual complementarities to better support needs.

This study explores the interaction between, and mutual complementarity of, LLA and humanitarian localisation to support climate, humanitarian and development actors, policymakers and funders to consider how to more closely align these approaches and produce better outcomes for at-risk communities.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

The research was commissioned by Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) within its multi-country Strengthening Response Capacity and Institutional Development for Excellence (STRIDE) programme, with support from Islamic Relief USA, Islamic Relief Germany and Aktion

Deutschland Hilft, as part of its advocacy and evidence generation for change in the aid sector. As part of its evidence-based approach, Islamic Relief sought to explore how leveraging the complementarity of localisation and locally-led climate adaptation can bring about positive change. Through this research, Islamic Relief aims to support humanitarian actors and climate change practitioners to have a better understanding of the mutual complementarity between localisation and locally-led climate adaptation in policy and practice, including an understanding of opportunities and challenges of integrating these two approaches.

This report also builds on Islamic Relief's recent work on localisation through capacity strengthening[3] and climate-induced migration.[4] It is intended to be used by policymakers, donors, operational actors, researchers and academics in their current and future thinking, programming and research.

BRIDGING LOCALISATION AND LOCALLY-LED ADAPTATION

Locally led humanitarian response and locally led climate adaptation share the goal of addressing the impacts of climate change. Both

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1   IFRC (2019) The cost of doing nothing.
2   World Bank (2020) Revised estimates of the impact of climate change by 2030.
3   IRW (2023) Strengthening humanitarian response through local partnerships: Islamic Relief's approach under the STRIDE project, 13 October 2023.
4   Durrani, Z. (2021) Climate induced migration in Pakistan: Global discourse, local realities and governance, Islamic Relief Worldwide.

concepts require local and national actors to have the resources, capacity and opportunity to participate in and influence operational and policy decision-making that affect them across the humanitarian development continuum. Locally led humanitarian action focuses mainly on meeting immediate needs and typically maintains shorter-term project cycles, while climate adaptation addresses long-term impacts and building resilience over time. Increasing evidence demonstrates the importance of drawing on the strengths of the two approaches and leveraging similarities to improve outcomes for communities.[5]

In this study, six key complementarities between localisation and LLA were explored that can be leveraged to support better collaboration in practice: including operating in a common space of concern, commonality in principles and commitments, a key focus on strengthening local decision-making, shared partners and coordination structures at the community level, investment in bottom-up community led approaches, and leveraging of traditional knowledge and practices to achieve sustainability.

However, evidence suggests that despite many complementarities between locally led humanitarian action and LLA, there are key barriers that exists that limit opportunities for increased collaboration. This includes: the urgency of life-saving operations deprioritises climate considerations, existing donor strategies, structures and funding mechanisms promote siloed ways of working, funding remains inflexible and inaccessible to local actors, and the lack of climate knowledge, skills, and expertise in the humanitarian sector.

Complementarity in action

Despite these challenges, the research identified emerging practices that bridge these two approaches and harness the benefits of each across in three areas across the humanitarian response cycle.

1. Leveraging pre-existing programming

Key characteristic: This area describes leveraging climate resilience, adaptation and/or longer-term development programming as an entry point to bridging LLA and localisation. This usually includes LLA activities that have considered and planned for climate-induced hazards to occur, and which contain programming elements that link to emergency preparedness or resilience building work.

The research found some key benefits of this approach including: linking and building on community expertise developed through adaptation programming to ensure it is utilised more effectively in response efforts; maximising efficiencies such as utilising the resources and infrastructure, as well as community structures developed during climate adaptation efforts, to support cost and time efficiencies in responses and; supporting more effective response through bringing in the skills, knowledge and actors involved in adaptation programming to inform response efforts can support better understanding and tailoring of LLA to local environments.

Emerging practice examples include community-led resilience programmes, community-led early warning and leveraging community knowledge and skills developed from LLA programming to prepare and respond to shocks

2. Intentional integration in early recovery

Key characteristic: This area encompasses how humanitarian and adaptation actors better collaborate and connect in the early recovery phase of an emergency. Key characteristics include a focus on 'build back better' approaches and intentionally planning for climate impacts as

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5   Interaction (2023) Locally led development and localisation in humanitarian response: How we got here: Our working notes; DCA (2022) Locally Led Adaptation, A Call for Local Climate Action; Satterthwaite, D. et. al. (2020) Building Resilience to Climate Change in Informal Settlements, *One Earth*, 2(2), 143-156.; Baguios, A. et al. (2021) Are we there yet? Localisation as the journey towards locally led practice: models, approaches and challenges. ODI Report. London: ODI.

part of programming, including the increasing frequency and intensity of future shocks

The research found some key benefits of this approach including: supporting community ownership because recovery efforts that integrate climate change adaptation better support communities to be more self-reliant and encourage communities to take ownership of the initiatives once humanitarian actors exit the context; pushing a long-term view by encouraging humanitarian actors to adopt long-term planning and foresight, and to break away from short-term thinking and designs that are often the characteristics of humanitarian projects; and reducing the need for intervention through the use of climate resilient livelihoods and reconstruction efforts, promoting more cost-efficient solutions.

Emerging practical examples include community-based climate smart agricultural practices for resilient livelihoods, climate resilient infrastructure, and cash for work to promote nature-based solutions and ecosystem restoration

3. Incorporation in response

Key characteristic: This area includes humanitarian actors incorporating CCA considerations into locally led response programming. The research did not identify any practical examples of incorporation of CCA considerations into locally led response programming (this does not mean it is not happening in practice as the data collection process was not exhaustive). However, many interviewees expressed their desire for LLA to be incorporated into the response phase of disasters. Humanitarian actors interviewed for this research highlighted that they are increasingly aware of the need to include climate considerations in emergency response.

LOOKING AHEAD

The practices identified through this study have the potential to support both more effective response and longer-term resilience in how

communities adapt to climate breakdown and related disasters. The research identified three pathways for humanitarian and climate actors to strengthen collaboration in practice based on the three areas identified across the humanitarian–development continuum. These pathways are underpinned by several cross-cutting enabling components outline above: each pathway contains key opportunities and actions, and is not exclusive. Opportunities may be leveraged across all three pathways simultaneously, depending on the priorities and needs of implementing organisations.

Pathway 1 – Preparedness

This pathway focuses on leveraging the knowledge and footprint of existing initiatives that seek to strengthen climate adaptation and resilience of communities.

> **Opportunity:** Shift organisational practices and individual behaviours to promote joint efforts and programming (for individual humanitarian and climate organisations)

Actions:

▶ Bring together humanitarian, development and climate change departments/teams across organisations to develop integrated programmes and plan for disaster response

▶ Identify ways adaptation activities can be included or strengthened in existing development and resilience-focused programmes

▶ Leverage the expertise of climate experts when planning and designing humanitarian programmes

▶ For intermediaries to invest more long-term funding in local actors to improve their ability to integrate adaptation programming into humanitarian activities

▶ Map out existing activities and partners that can be leveraged during response phase

- Update practices and procedures in order to set LLA integration as a default in humanitarian response triggers
- Advocate to donors and set aside specific funding for local adaptation actors during emergencies

Opportunity: Bring together climate and response actors to identify how future responses can build on adaptation work (sector level)

Actions:

- Share examples of good practice widely to promote greater uptake
- Hold cross-sector events that bring together humanitarian and climate experts
- Support local governments to improve risk data and early warning systems that can be used to inform a more efficient response to emergencies

Pathway 2 – Early Recovery

This pathway offers opportunities to embed climate adaptation in recovery efforts by embracing a long-term perspective whilst taking into consideration the specific context, vulnerabilities, and capacities of affected communities.

Opportunity: Promote the mainstreaming of locally-led climate adaptation considerations into all relevant funding and projects to ensure that resilience-building is integrated into disaster recovery efforts (for individual humanitarian and climate organisation)

Actions:

- Ensure that recovery plans are informed by existing vulnerabilities and are designed with long-term climate adaptation in mind
- Build upon initiatives such as cash-based programming to implement climate adaptation activities in communities
- Explore new partnerships that support LLA in the recovery phase once initial needs have been met
- Consider reallocating a portion of development funding and merge with planned recovery efforts to promote cost efficiencies

Opportunity for the broader sector: Jointly address climate issues in recovery forums and sector-wide planning and coordination (sector level)

Actions:

- Foster collaboration between experts from sectors such as agriculture and engineering to develop climate-resilient livelihood opportunities and shock-proof reconstruction efforts
- Identify ways to leverage and scale-up these practices across the sector, whilst avoiding duplication of efforts
- Support local research on vulnerabilities that can inform more effective interventions (e.g. Islamic Relief has an ongoing work to develop a Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis tool for humanitarian contexts).

Pathway 3 – Response

This pathway identifies opportunities for LLA practices and information to enhance emergency planning and response.

> **Opportunity:** Intentionally consider how climate issues can be addressed in response planning, strategies and frameworks (for individual humanitarian and climate organisations)

Actions:

▶ Consult communities and local actors to identify adaptation initiatives that should be considered/leveraged in emergency planning

▶ Consider how response efforts are affecting existing LLA work

▶ Integrate climate experts into planning and help them to attend coordination forums such as cluster meetings

▶ Create opportunities for climate experts to review sector response plans to identify opportunities for incorporating adaptation measures

▶ Collaborate with other stakeholders, including government agencies, research institutions and local communities to share climate adaptation data, expertise and resources to enhance the overall response to climate-related emergencies

▶ Use climate adaptation data for forecast-based financing mechanisms

> **Opportunity:** Collectively drive awareness and learning about best practice to provide a platform for future momentum

Actions:

▶ Support communities and actors to influence response decision-making that incorporates their climate-related knowledge and skills

▶ Map out the cost and time efficiencies of joint approaches to provide an evidence base for donors

▶ Lower perception and structural barriers by creating incentives for organisations to consider climate issues

▶ Identify green response measures that can promote future adaptation and advocate on this issue to donors

Photo credit: Moussa Goita, Islamic Relief Mali

INTRODUCTION

Locally led humanitarian response and climate adaptation operate in a common space of concern: helping communities respond to and recover from increasing impacts of climate breakdown, including more frequent and intense disasters (see Figure 1 for an overview of projected impacts). Both concepts require local and national actors to have the resources, capacity and opportunity to participate in and influence operational and policy decision-making that affect them across the humanitarian development continuum. Locally led humanitarian action focuses mainly on meeting immediate needs and typically maintains shorter-term project cycles, while climate adaptation addresses long-term impacts and building resilience over time. Increasing evidence demonstrates the importance of drawing on the strengths of the two approaches and leveraging similarities to improve outcomes for communities.[6]

Despite their similar intentions, achieving greater alignment between locally led humanitarian response and climate adaptation is hard in practice. The international aid system is structured in a way that promotes siloed ways of working that limit desire and ability to bring these approaches together. In many contexts humanitarian actors are overstretched, leaving them with perceived trade-offs between lifesaving operations and environmental considerations. At the same time, in both humanitarian and development fields, many actors are grappling with entrenched power dynamics and systemic barriers that hinder efforts to shift power and resources to enable local actors to lead their own response and recovery work. Despite the 25% direct humanitarian funding commitment to local actors outlined in the Grand Bargain, the total remains at just 1.2% as of 2022.[7] Similarly, increased policy momentum around LLA has thus far produced little evidence of impact.[8] The Sixth Assessment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) concluded that current adaptation efforts have not engaged local entities sufficiently, with most research pointing to power dynamics and inequalities as the biggest barriers.[9]

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6 Interaction (2023) Locally led development and localisation in humanitarian response: How we got here: Our working notes; DCA (2022) Locally Led Adaptation, A Call for Local Climate Action; Satterthwaite, D. et. al. (2020) Building Resilience to Climate Change in Informal Settlements, *One Earth*, 2(2), 143-156.; Baguios, A. et al. (2021) Are we there yet? Localisation as the journey towards locally led practice: models, approaches and challenges. ODI Report. London: ODI.

7 ODI (2023) Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2023: Chapter 3, A better humanitarian system: Locally led action; Now on its third iteration, the Grand Bargain 3.0 seeks to 'demonstrate how the Grand Bargain can be more effectively used as a catalyst for sector-wide transformation, to reduce needs through strengthened partnerships and innovative approaches'

8 Rahman, M.F. et al. (2023) Locally led adaptation: Promise, pitfalls, and possibilities. *Ambio* 52, 1543–1557. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13280-023-01884-7; Tye, S. & Suarez, I. (2021) Locally led climate adaptation: what is needed to accelerate action and support? Working Paper. Washington, DC: World Resources Institute.

9 New, M., D. Reckien, D. Viner, C. Adler, S.-M. Cheong, C. Conde, A. Constable, E. Coughlan de Perez, et al. (2022). Decision making options for managing risk. In *Climate change 2022: Impacts, adaptation and vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the sixth assessment report of the intergovernmental panel on climate change*, ed. H.-O. Pörtner, D.C. Roberts, M. Tignor, E.S. Poloczanska, K. Mintenbeck, A. Alegría, M. Craig, S. Langsdorf, S. Löschke, V. Möller, A. Okem, and B. Rama, 2539–2654. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Rahman, M. F. et al. (2023). Promises, pitfalls and possibilities, *Ambio*.

Opportunities exist, but we need more momentum

Increasing recognition of the severity of the climate crisis is opening conversations about systems transformation. Localisation and LLA advocates can collaborate to increase pressure on donors and decision-makers to dismantle systemic barriers. Such efforts would transcend humanitarian, development and climate boundaries and create an important space for joint action.

However, without clear evidence of approaches that effectively demonstrate the synergies between localisation and locally-led adaptation, it is difficult for humanitarian and development actors to develop and plan a more coordinated approach. This report seeks to address this gap by showing how locally led humanitarian response and climate change adaption work intersect. It also highlights opportunities to harness their complementary aspects along the spectrum of humanitarian and development activities.

Amid the ongoing global climate crisis, enhancing locally driven and collaborative strategies to tackle climate impacts, amplifying the voices of vulnerable communities, and ensuring accountability to those affected by crises is crucial for advancing humanitarian outcomes and community resilience. The localisation of humanitarian action and locally led climate adaptation represent vital approaches to achieving these goals, but in reality, there is a gap in harnessing their mutual strengths to better address community needs.

Figure 1: Projected humanitarian impacts of climate breakdown

Force an extra 132 million people into **extreme poverty** over the next decade.[10]

Require significant **scale-up of humanitarian funding**; an additional 1°C rise in average global temperature will add USD1 trillion to the cost of meeting humanitarian needs.[11]

Increase the number of **people in need** of humanitarian assistance by 21m to 50m+ by 2030.[12]

Increase the number of **climate migrants** to 216 million by 2060.[13]

Disproportionately affect poorer countries and **deepen existing inequalities** by harming the most vulnerable more profoundly.[14]

Threaten the livelihoods of more than 2 billion people through drought and desertification.[15]

Destabilise food production systems, precipitating socio-economic deterioration, harming coping mechanisms and increasing the risk of violent conflict.[16]

10   World Bank (2020) Revised estimates of the impact of climate change by 2030.
11   McDougal TL, Patterson JH (2021) The global financial burden of humanitarian disasters: leveraging GDP variation in the age of climate change, *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 55, 102073.
12   IFRC (2019) The cost of doing nothing.
13   World Bank (2021) Groundswell part 2: acting on internal climate migration.
14   IPCC (2022) Climate change 2022: impacts, adaptation and vulnerability.
15   McSweeney R (2019) Explainer: 'desertification' and the role of climate change.
16   ICRC (2020) When rain turns to dust.

About this research

This report describes an exploration of emerging practices across a range of country contexts in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, undertaken to capture examples of the overlap and intersection of humanitarian localisation and LLA. The research was commissioned by IRW within its multi-country Strengthening Response Capacity and Institutional Development for Excellence (STRIDE) project, with support from Islamic Relief Worldwide, Islamic Relief USA, Islamic Relief Germany, and Aktion Deutschland Hilft, as part of is advocacy and evidence generation for change in the aid sector. This report also builds on IRW's recent work on localisation through capacity strengthening[17] and climate-induced migration.[18] It is intended to be used by policymakers, donors, operational actors, researchers and academics in their current and future thinking, programming and research.

Report structure

This report has three main sections.

▶ Section I describes the key concepts and considerations that underpin complementarity between locally led humanitarian action and LLA, as well as key differences and challenges.

▶ Section II offers an analysis of emerging practices that combine locally led humanitarian action and LLA in the humanitarian–development continuum.

▶ Section III presents practical opportunities and pathways for both humanitarian and climate actors.

About STRIDE

To maximise impact and build community resilience, the Strengthening Response Capacity and Institutional Development for Excellence (STRIDE) programme supports and works with local partners to protect lives and dignity of at-risk communities. STRIDE has three workstreams: localisation and partnership building, disaster preparedness, and capacity strengthening and institutional development of IRW and local partners.

Rooted in Islamic Relief's commitment to equitable partnerships, the multi-year, multi-country programme has a core focus of supporting local partners to enhance institutional capacity in disaster preparedness and contribute to resilience building. STRIDE utilises context-specific Capacity Self-Assessments to analyse existing capacities and contextual factors, forming the foundation for STRIDE's development of pathways to enhance humanitarian programming effectiveness and efficiency.

STRIDE continuously reviews the changing humanitarian discourse and align its workstreams and activities accordingly, ensuring commitments to field teams and local partners accordingly to their needs. One of the key pillars of STRIDE is integration of climate change and disaster risk reduction in its humanitarian programming by developing strategies for adaptation and creating safety nets and social protection measures to address the impacts of climate change.

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17   IRW (2023) Strengthening humanitarian response through local partnerships: Islamic Relief's approach under the STRIDE project, 13 October 2023.

18   Durrani, Z. (2021) Climate induced migration in Pakistan: Global discourse, local realities and governance, Islamic Relief Worldwide.

Box text 1. Defining terminology

Climate adaptation is the process of adjustment to actual or expected climate change and its effects. In human systems, adaptation seeks to moderate or avoid harm or exploit beneficial opportunities. In some natural systems, human intervention may facilitate adjustment to expected climate and its effects.[19] Among the global goals on climate adaptation include strengthening resilience, enhancing adaptive capacity of people and systems to the effects of climate breakdown.

Localisation is 'a process of recognising, respecting and strengthening the independence of leadership and decision-making by local and national actors in humanitarian action, in order to better address the needs of affected populations'.[20]

The term 'localisation' is used through this report to refer to any locally led humanitarian action. The research recognised that contextualisation and translation of localisation are important to capture nuances as well as similarities and differences across contexts.

STRIDE localisation framework understands "localisation" as a concrete way to redress the structural power imbalance in the humanitarian system and giving more agency to local actors.[21] Islamic Relief understands the relief and development sector's increasing focus on the importance of Localisation approaches for a decentralisation of power to make the system more equitable, effective and sustainable. Localisation is in line with Islamic Relief's organisational values where it is recognised that there is a no "one size fits all" model in Localisation, and organisational culture is the primary determinant of how we approach the issue.

Locally led climate adaptation requires devolving authority and control over resources to local actors as well as strengthening local institutions and communities so they are inclusive, agile and responsive given the uncertainties of climate change. LLA is therefore characterised by local actors – especially women, youth, children, people with disabilities, displaced people, Indigenous people, and castes and ethnic minority groups that have been marginalised – having agency over the design, prioritisation and/or delivery of adaptation.[22]

Humanitarian–development continuum is used to refer here to the continuity and interconnectedness of humanitarian assistance and development.

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19   IPCC 2019 Glossary, available at https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2019/01/SYRAR5-Glossary_ en.pdf
20   HAG developed this definition in partnership with the Australian Red Cross and other partners, through stakeholder consultations with humanitarian actors in the Pacific, particularly local and national NGOs (see Going Local: Achieving a more appropriate and fit-for-purpose Humanitarian Ecosystem in the Pacific)
21   Islamic Relief does not limit the understanding of Localisation to local/national non-government organisations (L/NNGOs), instead recognises the crucial roles many other local actors play e.g. governments (local and national) community-based actors (informal and formal), private sector, academia, individual and groups within different country contexts all fall under the category of local actors.
22   World Resources Institute. Principles of locally led adaptation, available at https://www.wri.org/initiatives/locally-led-adaptation/principles-locally-led-adaptation

METHODOLOGY

The research was led by HAG (Australia) and GLOW Consultants (Pakistan), and sought to answer three questions:

1. What is the overlap between locally led climate adaptation and localisation?

2. What are the critical success factors for effective locally led adaptation?

3. How can we best support humanitarian actors to integrate localisation and locally led adaptation approaches to deliver better outcomes for communities?

The study took a qualitative approach, exploring emerging practice examples and case studies from selected countries in Asia, the Middle East and Africa. The dataset from the case studies, developed through interviews at country level, was supplemented by a literature review and targeted interviews with key global and regional stakeholders. Interviewees included representatives from international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), local and national NGOs, networks and research institutions (direct quotes from the interviewees are given in Annex 1). The literature review included a scan of academic and grey literature, including policy and strategy documents, programme reports, and evaluation findings. HAG and GLOW Consultants collaborative worked on methodology development and carried out data collection and analysis. Figure 2 provides an overview of the methodology.

Figure 2: Methodology overview

2
research partners

44
interviews

9
case study contexts
(Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Papua New Guinea, Pakistan, Philippines, Somalia, Syria, Yemen)

40+
resources reviewed

To find examples and capture a wide range of perspectives on the enablers of and barriers to complementarity of localisation and LLA, HAG, GLOW Consultants and IRW reached out to local and international organisations in case study contexts and at global level. This allowed the research team to identify examples of emerging practice, and compare approaches across crisis contexts that varied in length of response (sudden onset and protracted crises); climate impacts (drought, flooding, and more intense and severe typhoons), and the presence of ongoing conflict. LLA and localisation initiatives were at different stages in different country and response contexts. Therefore, data from some countries are given more weight in this report, because the corresponding examples of emerging practices are more relevant to the objectives of this research.

The research worked with a behavioural scientist and used behavioural science[23] approaches to understand the shift from conversations to action and to craft recommendations that are practical and actionable for humanitarian actors. This meant drawing on the expertise of behavioural scientist in the team to develop questions for key informants on what behavioural barriers exist to progress locally-led adaptation in humanitarian contexts, and analyse ways to overcome these barriers.

Limitations

This research was designed to draw together a range of approaches from different contexts, rather than provide an in-depth analysis of examples. The research also does not focus on climate change mitigation or climate justice, instead, the case study examples focus on climate change adaptation.

The research was not designed to provide an overall analysis of the impact of the approaches. This research also did not engage with communities, therefore it does not assess the perceived impacts or benefits for communities from bridging response and adaptation activities. Whilst there is some evidence emerging on effectiveness the research does not provide an assessment of outcomes and the impact of these interventions.

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23   Behavioural science is the science of understanding and changing human behaviour. It is a cross-disciplinary field that incorporates behavioural economics, neuroscience, social and cognitive psychology.

Photo credit: Hiba Siddiqui, Islamic Relief Pakistan

BEGINNING THE STORY

To set the scene, we begin with a story about the critical importance of better complementarity between localisation and LLA. It is about local leadership and community-driven efforts that drove sustainable and impactful responses to the impacts of climate change.

BUILDING RESILIENCE FROM THE GROUND UP IN PAKISTAN

In 2022, significant flooding struck Maryam Jamali's province of Balochistan, resulting in many communities evacuating to the canal bank. Maryam is a young activist and leads the foundation of a formal collective called Madat Balochistan (Madat quite literally meaning 'help') composed of community members who were also affected by the flooding. They collectively established a structured basis for decision-making and created a cohesive framework for action.

They collaborated closely with the local population, both in person and through social media, connecting with individuals in need. The collective sought input ensuring that their actions were aligned with the community's actual requirements.

Harnessing local strengths and approaches

Highlighted as one of the community's foremost needs was the reconstruction and restoration of homes ravaged by the floods. Community members brainstormed viable climate-resilient home designs for reconstruction. Meanwhile, Maryam did her own research, and found Yasmin Lari's (Pakistan's first female architect) floodproof home designs being built in coastal areas around Karachi. An amalgamation of these designs and ideas of the local communities helped reach a consensus on an innovative, locally appropriate and climate resilient approach. This approach utilised locally available materials like bamboo to construct a cross-braced frame, filled with mud and canal grass and topped with a layer of lime. This collaborative approach not only provided housing but also generated income for those who had lost their livelihoods due to the floods.

The importance of flexible funding to resilient recovery

The collective relied on crowdfunding, utilising platforms like GoFundMe, and local fundraising efforts. This meant financial resources were entirely under the collective's control, giving them the flexibility to allocate and spend as needed, and enabling rapid action. The collective also maintained transparency by raising its funds through crowdfunding and local donations, which allowed them to respond swiftly without bureaucratic constraints. This helped make the entire process speedy, swift, and efficient, because of which 250 homes were constructed during a span of three months.

Taking it forward

Maryam and Madat Balochistan's story highlights the importance of community mobilisation and local leadership. It also shows that grassroots leadership allowed for an efficient and immediate response to the crisis. The initiative's basis in strong community connection is a vital aspect of its sustainability. By drawing on the collective strength, knowledge, and resources of the local community, Madat Balochistan not only provided immediate relief but laid the foundation for a more resilient future.

Initiatives such as this are beginning to gain traction, but they need more support. Apart from Madat Bolochistan, other initiatives such as the Zero Carbon Shelters by Islamic Relief Worldwide offer inspiration on ways to create lasting solutions for crisis-affected communities through economical practices, built to withstand climate change impacts such as extreme temperatures.

SECTION I: LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR COMPLEMENTARITY

This section unpacks the complementarities between locally led humanitarian action and LLA whilst acknowledging differences in focus, practice and scope across the humanitarian–development continuum. The section also describes the restrictions on collaboration between these two agendas to date, laying the foundation for our exploration (detailed in Section II) of how complementarities can be leveraged and challenges overcome.

UNDERSTANDING LOCALISATION AND LOCALLY LED CLIMATE ADAPTATION

Locally led climate adaptation: LLA is designed to enhance the long-term resilience of communities and reduce the negative impacts of climate breakdown. LLA advocates argue that climate change solutions must be contextually appropriate and grounded in local realities in order to create sustained change for people affected by climate change.[24] In LLA communities bring their unique knowledge and practices into management of their socio-economic circumstances and the complex ecosystems on which they depend.[25] LLA initiatives require flexible and long-term funding.[26]

Localisation: Locally led humanitarian action is concerned with providing immediate relief and support to communities affected by disasters, conflicts or other emergencies, whilst strengthening and empowering local leadership and capacities. Unlike LLA, localisation's focus extends beyond climate-induced hazards to include assistance for other types of crises, including conflict, pandemics and other health emergencies, and geological hazards, among others. Locally led humanitarian action typically targets immediate and urgent needs, such as food, shelter and medical care and protection during crises, but can extend to recovery and rehabilitation support as well. For locally led humanitarian action, funding cycles are typically short term and triggered by sudden and unexpected crises. Funding sources may include emergency relief funds, pooled funds, governments and other humanitarian donors.[27]

KEY AREAS OF COMPLEMENTARITY

Locally led humanitarian action and LLA are implemented in different timeframes and with different scope across the humanitarian–development continuum. In this research, we acknowledged these differences and proposed six key complementarities that can be leveraged to support better outcomes (Figure 3):

24   Baguios, A. et al. (2021) Are we there yet? ODI Report. London: ODI; Westoby, R. et al. (2021) Locally led adaptation: drivers for appropriate grassroots initiatives. *Local Environment* 26: 313–319. https://doi.org/10.1080/13549839.2021.1884669; Rahman, M.F. et al. (2023) Promises, pitfalls, and possibilities, *Ambio*.

25   Westoby, R., et al. (2020). From community-based to locally led adaptation: evidence from Vanuatu. *Ambio* 49: 1466–1473. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13280-019-01294-8.; Makonda, C. & Thomas, D. (2018) Climate change adaptation: Linking indigenous knowledge with western science for effective adaptation, *Environmental Science & Policy*, 88: 83-91. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2018.06.014.

26   Adaptation Fund (2020) Local leadership in adaptation finance: Learning from locally-led action in adaptation fund projects and programmes (Adaptation Fund). https://www.adaptation-fund.

27   Barbelet, V., et al. (2021) *Interrogating the evidence base on humanitarian localisation: a literature study.* HPG literature review. London: ODI (https://odi.org/en/publications/interrogating-the-evidence-base-on-humanitarian-localisation-a-literature-study).

Figure 3: Areas of complementarity

Areas of complementarity

1. A shared space of concern
2. Commonality in principles and commitments
3. Focus on strengthening local decision-making
4. Shared partners and coordination structures at the community level
5. Investment in bottom-up and community led approaches
6. Leverage of traditional knowledge and practices to achieve sustainability

Complementarity 1: A shared space of concern

Both locally led humanitarian action and LLA seek to respond to the impacts of climate change. Although programming operates at different points throughout the humanitarian–development continuum, these approaches share many ways of working and common concerns. Both localisation and LLA require local and national actors to have the resources, capacity and opportunity to participate in and influence operational and policy decision-making that affect them. Programming for both approaches often operate through the same local structures and operational agencies, and work with the same communities (as described below in Complementarity 4). The way in which humanitarian responses operate and how

effectively programming transitions to recovery directly affects the ability of LLA programmes and actors to work with affected communities, and vice versa. The interlinked nature of both sets of programming, and their impacts, results in shared space of concern for locally led response and adaptation work.

Complementarity 2: Commonality in principles and commitments

Locally led humanitarian action and LLA share many principles as well as commonalities across high-level global commitments. Global humanitarian localisation initiatives, notably the Charter for Change (C4C) and the Grand Bargain, have built momentum around the need to fundamentally transform power in the

humanitarian system.[28] This has included calls for the international humanitarian system to 'recognise, respect and strengthen the leadership by local authorities and the capacity of local civil society in humanitarian action, in order to better address the needs of affected populations and to prepare national actors for future humanitarian responses'.[29] In 2020, the Global Commission on Adaptation, in partnership with the International Institute for Environment and Development and the World Resources Institute, developed eight principles for LLA, which have been endorsed by more than 100 organisations, including governments, donors, NGOs, and grassroot organisations.[30] Support was also galvanised at both the 26th and 27th United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties.[31] These initiatives articulate many shared commitments to strengthening local leadership, improving quality and accessibility of funding, and transferring decision-making power to local actors (see Box text 2).

Box text 2: Overlapping principles and mandates

Principles and characteristics of localisation commitments[32]

1. Equitable and complementary partnerships between local, national, and international actors (Partnerships)

2. Local and national actors define and lead on humanitarian action (Leadership)

3. Application of and respect for commonly agreed approaches to 'as local as possible and as international as necessary' (Coordination and Complementarity)

4. Communities lead and participate in humanitarian response (Participation)

5. Humanitarian action reflects the priorities of affected communities and national actors (Policy influence and Advocacy)

6. Local and national organisations are able to respond effectively and efficiently, and have targeted and relevant support from international actors (Capacity)

7. Increased number of national and local organisations describing financial independence that allows them to respond more efficiently (funding)

Source: Drawn from HAG's Measuring Localisation: Framework and Tools (2019)

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28   OECD (2017) *Localising the response*. Commitment into Action series (www.oecd.org/development/humanitarian-donors/docs/Localisingtheresponse.pdf); see also, Barbelet, V., et al. (2021) *Interrogating the evidence base*. HPG literature review. London: ODI.; Roepstorff, K. (2020) A call for critical reflection on the localisation agenda in humanitarian action, *Third World Quarterly* 41(2): 284–301.

29   For more resources on the Grand Bargain, see: https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/content/grand-bargain-hosted-iasc; For more resources on the Charter 4 Change, please see: https://charter4change.org/resources/.

30   World Resource Institute (2020) Principles of locally led adaptation.

31   Rahman M.F. et al. (2023) Promises, pitfalls, and possibilities, *Ambio*; Asian Development Bank (2021) ADB Launches Program to Strengthen Community Resilience in Asia and Pacific, 08 November. https://www.adb.org/news/adb-launches-programstrengthen-community-resilience-asia-pacific.; International Development Research Centre (2022) Step Change launched at COP27 to support locally led adaptation to climate change. https://www.idrc.ca/en/news/step-changelaunched-cop27-support-locally-led-adaptation-climate-change.

32   There are no globally accepted 'principles of localisation'. However, there have been numerous attempts to develop tools to measure progress on localisation and to develop specific focus areas. For a review of current approaches to support localisation levers and priority areas, see Baguios A. et al. (2021) Are we there yet? ODI Report. London: ODI.

Principles of Locally Led Adaptation

1. Devolving decision-making to the lowest appropriate level.
2. Rectifying structural inequalities faced by women, youth, children, people with disabilities, displaced people, Indigenous peoples and marginalised ethnic groups.
3. Providing patient and predictable funding that can be accessed more easily.
4. Investing in local capabilities to leave an institutional legacy.
5. Building a robust understanding of climate risk and uncertainty.
6. Flexible programming and learning.
7. Ensuring transparency and accountability.
8. Collaborative action and investment between and across sectors.

Source: Principles of Locally Led Adaptation, WRI (2022)

Complementarity 3: Focus on strengthening local decision-making

Shifting the power to local actors and communities is at the heart of localisation and LLA. Both operate with the goal of enabling local communities and institutions to lead decision-making rather than as passive beneficiaries of both humanitarian and climate adaptation initiatives. This involves supporting a humanitarian structure and system whereby local actors and communities lead on humanitarian action, working in an effective manner reflecting the priorities of affected communities.[33] This is enabled by financial independence to conduct emergency response and equitable partnerships between local, national and international actors in the sector.[34] A key principle of LLA is that decision-making should be devolved to the most local level of governance, and adaptation methods champion solutions that are developed and led through local participation.[35]

Complementarity 4: Shared partners and coordination structures at the community level

There is significant overlap in the responsibilities of local and national actors who implement humanitarian response and climate adaptation, particularly at the community level. National and sub-national governments hold responsibility for disaster relief, recovery and long-term development, and climate adaptation. Additionally, local NGOs, civil society organisations (CSOs), churches and community groups often work across (invisible) boundaries between humanitarian, development and climate action.[36] Evidence further suggests that communities do not differentiate between what is humanitarian, development, disaster risk reduction (DRR) or climate change adaptation (CCA), because there is less differentiation between workstreams at the local level.[37] For example, authorities responsible for emergency and response planning are also involved in food and water security, preventing shoreline erosion, agricultural innovation,

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33 Barbelet, V. et al. (2021) *Interrogating the evidence base*. HPG literature review. London: ODI.
34 HAG (2019) Measuring localisation: Framework and tools.
35 Falzon, D. (2021) Expertise and exclusivity in adaptation decisionmaking. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability* 51: 95–100. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cosust.2021.03.016; Olazabal, M. et al. (2021) Subaltern forms of knowledge are required to boost local adaptation. *One Earth* 4: 828–838. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.oneear.2021.05.006; McNamara, K.E.et al. (2022) Lessons for adaptation pathways in the Pacific Islands. *PLOS Climate* 1:e0000011. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pclm.0000011.
36 Twig, J. & McDonald, C. (2023) With you in the storm: The role of the local church in buiding resilience, Tearfund.
37 McCommon, J. et al. (2022) Beyond Barriers: Behaviours to enable a more resilient Pacific, HAG.

infrastructure improvement, education, and sharing information on sustainable livelihoods.[38]

Complementarity 5: Investment in bottom-up and community-led approaches

Applying and investing in contextually grounded, locally led and owned approaches is a key pillar of both localisation and LLA. It ensures that interventions are contextually relevant, appropriate and responsive to community needs and priorities. In the humanitarian sector, the localisation agenda's focus on participation and the concept of accountability to affected populations – the active commitment to use power responsibly by taking account of, giving account to, and being held to account by the people humanitarian organisations seek to assist—has been foundational.[39] LLA uses 'bottom-up' approaches and planning to ensure it reflects community priorities and climate change needs in order to facilitate and finance high-quality initiatives. This can take many forms in practice, depending on what is contextually appropriate, but at the core of the approach is emphasising the greatest possible leadership and agency of local communities in deciding what to implement, how to implement, and by whom LLA will be implemented.[40]

Complementarity 6: Both strive to leverage traditional knowledge and practices to achieve sustainability

Leveraging existing capacities and knowledge is an element of both localisation and LLA. Local communities possess invaluable Indigenous and traditional knowledge about the environment, weather patterns and sustainable practices. Environmentally sustainable humanitarian response fostered through greater centrality of and respect for traditional knowledge, practices and values is also beginning to gain traction in the humanitarian sector.[41] Whilst practice to date has been limited, there are promising examples of humanitarian actors leveraging traditional knowledge to provide more appropriate aid and increase resilience.[42] For example, Indigenous knowledge has been used to adapt reconstruction plans after disaster, improve food security through crises, adapt livelihood practices to increase resilience to more frequent hazards, and improve early warning systems across many contexts.[43] Traditional knowledge is increasingly being explored to enhance the relevance and effectiveness of adaptation strategies, increase community buy-in, and ensure that solutions are customised to community needs.[44]

38   Interviews 8, 10, 23, 26, 27, 28

39   Holloway, K. & Lough, O. (2020) Implementing collective accountability to affected populations: Ways forward in large-scale humanitarian crises. HPG, Policy brief 78.

40   Tye, S. & Coger, T. (2021) 50 Organisations committed to locally led adaptation: Now what?

41   UNDRR (2023) Thematic Report on local, indigenous, and traditional knowledge for disaster risk reduction in the Pacific; Hoffman, W. (2021) Indigenous data in effective humanitarian responses, *The Humanitarian Leader*, Working Paper 020, Nov 2021. doi: 10.21153/thl2021art1505.

42   HAG, VANGO (2020) No Turning Back: Local leadership in Vanuatu's response to Tropical Cyclone Harold https://humanitarianadvisorygroup.org/insight/no-turning-back/

43   Kurnio, H. et. al. (2021) Resilience learning and indigenous knowledge of earthquake risk in Indonesia, *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 62, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdrr.2021.102423.; UNDRR (2023) Thematic Report; Hermans, T.D.G. et al. (2022) Exploring the integration of local and scientific knowledge in early warning systems for disaster risk reduction: a review. *Nat Hazards* 114, 1125–1152. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11069-022-05468-8; Baffour-Ata, F. et al. (2021) Using traditional agroecological knowledge to adapt to climate change and variability in the Upper East Region of Ghana, *Environmental Challenges*, 4, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envc.2021.100205; Venugopal, S. et al. (2019) Adapting traditional livelihood practices in the face of environmental disruptions in subsistence communities, *Journal of Business Research*, 100: 400-409, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.12.023.

44   Hoffman, W. (2021) Indigenous data in effective humanitarian responses.

CHALLENGES FOR INCREASED COLLABORATION

Evidence suggests that despite many complementarities between locally led humanitarian action and LLA, collaboration between these sectors remains minimal. Key barriers identified by this research are presented below.

1. **The urgency of life-saving operations deprioritises climate considerations.** Historically, humanitarians have been hesitant to engage in climate issues because this was perceived as peripheral to meeting immediate needs. There is a pre-assumed trade-off between saving lives and saving the environment in the humanitarian sector.[45] Deeply entrenched attitudes and beliefs about humanitarian principles and the way in which the sector operates have often designated climate adaptation as out of the traditional humanitarian scope. Evidence suggests that this mindset is shifting, but there is a commonly held assumption that 'emergency will always take priority over adaption'.[46]

2. **Existing donor strategies, structures and funding mechanisms promote siloed ways of working.** Strategies and structures in general remain separate for humanitarian and climate actors and efforts. This is reflected in practice through a lack of coordination and collaboration at the organisational and sector level.[47] Limited information sharing reduces opportunities for collaboration, and separate funding streams for humanitarian and climate change work perpetuate separate donor priorities and minimise space for joint efforts.[48] Additionally, principles of localisation and LLA largely strive for the same outcomes, yet progress towards these approaches continues to be monitored and measured separately. Conflicting timeframes, scope, and funding cycles of emergency operations and LLA were additionally identified as key barriers to collaboration.[49]

3. **Funding remains inflexible and inaccessible to local actors.** Inflexible funding (where humanitarian funding cannot be used for climate adaptation activities and vice versa) was consistently identified as a barrier to collaboration and progressing locally led action. While donor commitments to localisation demonstrate some improvement in accessibility of funds, progress has been slow, and most funding remains out of reach for local actors.[50] Lack of flexibility in funding also means that many projects cannot be adapted to meet evolving community needs or longer-term impacts. Rigid donor funding mechanisms and regulations remain one of the major drivers that perpetuates siloed approaches and discourages integration between humanitarian action and LLA.

4. **Lack of climate knowledge, skills, and expertise in the humanitarian sector.** A lack of climate skills and expertise in the humanitarian sector was also raised as a barrier to increased collaboration. Humanitarian teams often do not possess the knowledge or skills to effectively integrate LLA approaches into their programming. It was suggested that a lot of the pushback on greater

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45   HAG (2022) Greening the System: A Vision for a Green Humanitarian Future.
46   Interview 17
47   Interviews 3, 5, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21,22, 23, 24, 28, 32, 40, 43, 44
48   Interviews 3, 5, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 32, 33, 34, 35, 38, 43
49   Interviews 3, 6, 12, 21, 23, 24, 28, 31, 32, 37, 43, 44
50   ODI, Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2023: Chapter 3, A better humanitarian system: Locally led action.

collaboration stems from already stretched resourcing and technical capacity gaps.[51] Many humanitarians see climate considerations as an add-on, or another item on the ever-increasing list of donor and sector priorities.[52]

As outlined above, key complementarities between the approaches can be leveraged to support better collaboration in practice, although obstacles exist. The following section provides a snapshot of how actors are bridging approaches in practice and meeting the challenges identified here.

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51   Interviews 2, 3, 22, 24, 25, 28, 32, 40
52   Interviews 6, 12, 13, 19, 24, 32

Photo credit: Pragya Adhikari, Islamic Relief Nepal

SECTION II: COMPLEMENTARITY ON ACTION

This section describes approaches that demonstrate how humanitarian, development and climate actors can work together to strengthen complementary between localisation and LLA efforts. The research identified emerging practices in three key areas across the humanitarian–development continuum:

1. Leveraging pre-existing programming
2. Intentional recovery
3. Incorporation in response.

Each area explores how actors can bring together locally led humanitarian action and LLA in practice at different points in the continuum, leveraging their key strengths, the benefits and challenges of these practices, broader impacts and potential future opportunities. Most of the examples fit under the first two areas listed above, because these were identified more frequently in the research. We found few examples under area 3, but identified entry points, including conversations about environmental considerations in response.

1. LEVERAGING PRE-EXISTING PROGRAMMING

What does this area look like?
This area describes leveraging climate resilience, adaptation and/or longer-term development

programming as an entry point to bridging LLA and localisation. This approach happens during the preparedness stage or pre-disaster (see Pathway 1 in Section 3). This usually includes LLA activities that have considered and planned for climate-induced hazards, and which contain programming elements that link to emergency preparedness or resilience building work.

Research participants highlighted that work in this area brings several key benefits, as demonstrated in the examples in this section. It:

▶ **Builds on community links and knowledge** – links to and builds on community expertise developed through adaptation programming to ensure it is utilised more effectively in response efforts.[53]

▶ **Maximises efficiencies** – resources and infrastructure, as well as community structures developed during climate adaptation efforts, support cost and time efficiencies in responses.[54]

▶ **Supports more effective response** – bringing in the skills, knowledge and actors involved in adaptation programming to inform response efforts can support better understanding and tailoring of LLA to local environments. [55]

Figure 4: Leveraging from pre-existing programming

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53   Interviews 1, 4, 5, 11, 12, 22, 23, 24, 27, 29, 33, 42, 43
54   Interviews 2, 18, 21, 30
55   Interviews 4, 8, 10, 12, 16, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 32, 34, 34, 36, 38, 43

What examples are emerging in practice?

Evidence gathered throughout this research captured emerging examples of how humanitarian responses are increasingly drawing on and leveraging ongoing LLA work in communities. These examples use a variety of different approaches and strategies in programming to bridge pathways between localisation and LLA which are explored below in four areas.

1.1. Community-led resilience programme

Examples of integration of locally led humanitarian action and LLA in the context of community-led resilience programmes are increasingly common. These programmes are often designed to be implemented over the long term (3–5 years or more) and allow a more coordinated approach between humanitarian action and CCA.

In Somalia, community-led resilience programming implemented by CARE Somalia with local and international NGOs over three years included activities such as instituting early warning and early action to ensure communities are able to recognise signs of impending shocks and then respond to reduce their effects on their livelihoods. Promotion of positive coping strategies among community members, such as protecting livestock, was part of its household capacity-building approach. A key strength of this programme was the small amount of funding allocated to households before a crisis to enable communities to prepare to transition to emergency response:

> A small window for crises money was included, if a conflict and/or drought for example happens within the five-year plans we will focus on making coping mechanisms and it's not a quick thing. This includes supporting communities to save animal

> stock, save money, have action plans because the hazard is coming. When the season ends, we then keep carrying on resilience work. Development and humanitarian workers are both complementing the work done here. (International NGO representative)

In Papua New Guinea (PNG), the Church Agencies Network – Disaster Operations (CAN DO) network is part of a broader consortium of NGOs implementing the Disaster READY programme. The programme includes training sessions on farming techniques, climate-smart crops, and supporting communities to prepare and plan for disasters. Key to this programme are CAN DO's church and local partners, which can mobilise resources rapidly in the event of a disaster, and promote ownership of the programme.

> In PNG, we already have an established network – family, tribes – we always shared things in our network, food, stories, we're just tapping into that network that's already there, passing on information, use the established network to push out what we do. (Local NGO representative)

The importance of working in partnership and through consortia to build and share capacity was repeatedly raised by stakeholders who used this approach. [56] Working through consortia created joint plans and pooling of expertise to tackle the different components of the programme.

> Consortiums are a really good way of bringing the two. They put the muscle together, they bring different approaches together and put all their experiences together without contacting organisations individually. (International NGO representative)

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56   Interviews 1, 4, 8, 10, 16, 19, , 24, 26, 28, 31, 32, 33, 43, 44

ADDRESSING THE COMPLEXITIES OF DROUGHT AND FLOODING IN NIGERIA THROUGH EMPOWERING PARTNERSHIPS

The integration of climate change into disaster preparedness is a key aspect of Islamic Relief's approach to community-led resilience building. Notably, Islamic Relief's work in Nigeria addresses the complexities of both drought in the north and flooding in the south by closely working with local actors to address the need of affected communities, showcasing a comprehensive approach to climate-related challenges. The organisation collaborated with local partners to develop joint disaster preparedness plans, considering scenarios pre- and post-disaster.

Realising that Nigeria is a high disaster-risk country, IRW partnered with local organisations including the Nigerian Red Cross Society (NRCS) and invested in their capacity through Financial Sustainability and Leadership Development Programme training opportunities which contributed to their existing efforts and leadership strengthening. Partnership with local actors also helped in scale-up of their existing flood response.

When the 2022 floods struck, IRW quickly deployed funds to NRCS, ensuring a speedy disaster response that supported 500 beneficiaries, including migrants and IDPs, through unconditional multi-purpose cash transfers, addressing multi-sectoral immediate and early recovery needs.

NRCS and IRW's flood response in Nigeria

1.2. Community-led early warning

Using weather and climate information to anticipate and prepare for disasters is critical for local communities. Whilst early warning programmes are generally defined as DRR rather than climate adaptation, some anticipatory actions and initiatives can support climate adaptation approaches.[57] Grassroots weather monitoring in Pakistan (see case example below) is a key example of an early warning system facilitating precautionary measures in hard-to-reach communities. In several contexts, humanitarian organisations are using such information to trigger pre-planned activities (anticipatory action) when climate-related disasters are imminent.

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57   For more examples, see https://www.anticipation-hub.org/; Integration of early warning and anticipatory action into adaptation is one of the proposed targets for the global goal on adaptation, see more: https://unfccc.int/documents/631979

GRASSROOTS WEATHER MONITORING IN PAKISTAN

Recognising the critical data gap in Pakistan and the importance of real-time weather and environmental data for climate resilience, Adnan Mohman, a weather enthusiast with a deep commitment to addressing climate-related issues, strove to provide this essential information to his community. Using satellite images and information from a personal weather station he installed in his home, he provides a weather update and warns of impending floods, urging the community to take safety precautions.

Installation of Personal Weather Station

The initiative also empowers local communities with accurate and up-to-date information, which is particularly important in areas where many residents have low literacy and few information sources. Adnan effectively bridged the gap between being a weather enthusiast and a data-driven community leader by leveraging social media connections. He enlisted trusted community members to share critical weather information through word of mouth, ensuring that the message reached those most at risk of climate-related disasters.

Adnan's story illustrates how an individual's grassroots action can effectively transform a community to be more prepared, proactive and environmentally aware. It showcases the transformative power of data and community engagement in building local capacity for climate adaptation. Moreover, the initiative led to the discovery of consistently high local wind speeds, offering the possibility of installing sustainable wind energy generation for community benefit.

1.3. Leveraging community knowledge and skills developed from LLA programming to prepare and respond to shocks

This approach prioritises community perspectives, building on their knowledge and expertise in developing adaptation activities for use during humanitarian response. Learning opportunities such as trainings offer ways to ensure that the blending of local expertise and technical or scientific information is translated into practical and relevant action. In Bangladesh, as outlined in the case example below, this approach supported self-sufficiency of communities during emergencies, helping them proactively adapt to changing climate conditions and manage the complex ecosystems on which they depend.

HARNESSING LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES TO DEVELOP COMMUNITY-DRIVEN ADAPTIVE APPROACHES IN BANGLADESH

In the small village of Sunamganj in Bangladesh, the community found itself grappling with the relentless challenges of climate change. Sunamganj district is located on the banks of the Surma River, an increasingly flood-prone and climate-vulnerable part of Bangladesh.

Developing locally led adaptive strategies

Anticipating food shortages during emergencies, the elders decided to stockpile food and other crops to ensure sustenance. During the floods, freshwater fish were swept up on the riverside and collected by the villagers and dried for later use.

The community also adopted innovative pyramid-shaped gardening structures that protected its vegetable crops, ensuring they remained above the rising floodwaters. Community members were trained in the art of pyramid gardening by local NGOs, equipping them with valuable skills that helped them diversify their food sources, reducing their reliance on traditional crops that were vulnerable to flooding.

Local collaboration

The community worked with officers of the Agricultural Department and Health Department, benefiting from their knowledge and training. The collaboration between local organisations, NGOs and government bodies demonstrates the power of collective action.

Women community members discuss the challenges of severe flooding in their community

1.4. Utilising resources produced through adaptation programming for response

LLA programming produces resources or products that can be used where needed to support locally led humanitarian response. The examples collated in the research highlighted that this was an unintentional outcome of adaptation programming that had benefits for communities when a disaster struck. For example, improving soil integrity and restoring land plots was the focus of a conservation project in Vanuatu. Networks of women were engaged to restore land frequently damaged by tropical cyclones. When a cyclone hit the community, the plots were able to produce food that sustained them over for two weeks whilst waiting for relief supplies.

> Whilst this project was not able to demonstrate measurable results in the form of plots remaining, it was able to demonstrate ecological outcomes. What would've happened to communities if it didn't have those plots remaining? (International NGO representative)

In another example, from the Philippines Pinnovation Academy, Pandan Tri-people Women Organisation (an organisation of indigenous Ilonggo and Maguindanao women) worked to preserve ancestral land and forests damaged by extreme weather. They sourced natural ingredients to create affordable and effective herbal remedies like tea, ointments, salves and soaps as part of the Lawi Fetinanaan ('House of Healing' in Teduray) project. When a nearby community was flooded in 2022, Lawi Fetinanaan provided herbal products to those affected.

> They were harnessing what the environment is offering them. There are abundant herbal plants, trees, and other materials used in the healing centre. When there is a typhoon or flooding, they went to a nearby barangay to bring their products, and give their products for free – that is their humanitarian act in times of disaster even outside of their community. (Local NGO representative)

Key learning

Implementers of LLA can think about how their programmes could incorporate humanitarian action so as to protect gains when the next crisis hits. Considering the following enablers in programme design and planning can strengthen efforts in this area.

Key takeaways – enabling collaboration

▶ Identify pre-existing programmes which can be used to link LLA and locally led humanitarian response.

▶ Include crisis or emergency funding in existing LLA programming supports transition to respond to emergencies, promote recovery and return to resilience programming seamlessly.

▶ Work in consortia to allow diverse organisations to achieve collective outcomes over the long term, particularly those that are both development and humanitarian actors.

▶ Identify existing skills, expertise and resources produced through LLA that can be used to strengthen humanitarian action.

▶ Listen to marginalised groups – they often have unique perspectives that enhance understanding of the complex ecosystems on which they depend.

2. INTENTIONAL INTEGRATION IN EARLY RECOVERY

This area encompasses how humanitarian and adaptation actors better collaborate and connect in the early recovery phase of an emergency. Key characteristics include a focus on 'build back better' approaches and intentionally planning for climate impacts as part of programming, including the increasing frequency and intensity of future shocks.[58] Here, LLA approaches and considerations become a fundamental component of recovery strategies after a humanitarian crisis strikes (see Figure 5).

Research participants highlighted that work in this area brings several key benefits, as further demonstrated in the examples in this section. It:

- **Supports community ownership:** Recovery efforts that integrate climate change adaptation can support communities to be more self-reliant and encourages communities to take ownership of the initiatives once humanitarian actors exit the context.[59]

- **Pushes a long-term view:** Incorporating LLA into recovery efforts encourages humanitarian actors to adopt long-term planning and foresight, and to break away from short-term thinking and designs that often characterise humanitarian projects.[60]

- **Reduces the need for intervention:** The use of climate resilient livelihoods and reconstruction efforts can reduce the need for repetitive interventions, promoting more cost-efficient solutions.[61].
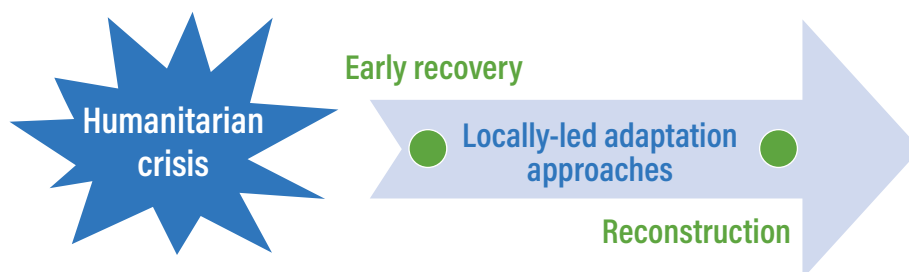
What examples are emerging in practice?

The research found several examples of recovery efforts being informed by specific climate-related risks and planning that centralise local leadership. In practice, this meant humanitarian actors working with other local actors and communities to assess the vulnerability of the area to various climate-related hazards, as well as the potential impacts on infrastructure, livelihoods and ecosystems. By understanding these risks, alongside community priorities for recovery, humanitarian organisations are better able to tailor their recovery efforts.

2.1. Community-based climate-smart agricultural practices for resilient livelihoods

Developing locally informed and led climate-smart agricultural practices that take into account changing weather patterns, shifting growing seasons and the need for drought-resistant crops are increasingly being used as recovery strategies in both sudden and slow-onset disasters. In Bangladesh, the government introduced climate-resilient seeds, which, in the post-recovery phase, led to a remarkable increase in crop production. Another case example below tells the story of the incorporation of farming practices that are more adaptable to climate change impacts (such as soil erosion) in Oromia and Benhangul-Gumuz states, Ethiopia.

Figure 5. Integration in early recovery

58   https://www.wri.org/insights/5-keys-climate-resilient-recovery-after-covid-19 ;
59   Interview 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16, 19, 19,22, 23, 26, 28, 30, 31, 35, 43, 44
60   Interview 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 28, 30, 31, 35, 43
61   Interview 2, 3, 8, 12, 16, 21, ,23, 24, 26, 31

IMPROVING FOOD SECURITY IN DROUGHT-STRICKEN VILLAGES IN ETHIOPIA

Recent changes in the climate have intensified drought and flash flooding in Ethiopia, worsening food insecurity. Deep tilling, part of traditional farming, proved harmful because floods washed away the fertile topsoil. When communities came together to map out risks and priorities as part of the recovery, retaining soil moisture and its nutrients to increase production and productivity was viewed as a priority.

Introducing climate smart agricultural practices

Food for the Hungry Ethiopia and CST Ethiopia, in partnership with Canadian Foodgrains Bank, supported local farmers to adapt agricultural practices to the changing climate to improve food security in the region. This project focused on the conservation, restoration and promotion of the ecosystem through an agrarian-based programme that aimed to slowly incorporate LLA-based agricultural practices into current farming practices. Farm plots were divided, and farmers applied the new LLA based agriculture principles to the selected divisions. If farmers were satisfied with harvests or conversation of nutrients and plants/crops, they would gradually expand their farm plots. To date, more than 50% of the farmers have expanded the new practices to their entire land.

Key enablers and impacts

The practices of the programme were discussed with the farmers before implementation. Indigenous knowledge was used to select which crop to rotate. None of the new LLA-based farming practice involved foreign knowledge or techniques. Most of the methods and crops used were already familiar to farmers, who were willing to use them on their land. Additionally, none of the farmers required specific training.

This recovery support led to institutional strengthening as the results were communicated to the local government, and the programme was promoted nationally through the National Ministry of Agriculture.

2.2. Climate resilient infrastructure

Some recovery initiatives included designing and constructing infrastructure led by communities and local actors that can withstand future climate-related challenges. This can involve building flood resistant homes (see the story of Madat Balochistan in Pakistan on page 12), constructing resilient agricultural systems and strengthening critical infrastructure like water supply and energy systems. Leveraging local knowledge and systems were key to the development of climate-resilient infrastructures such as the case of the rehabilitation of the Karez system in Afghanistan (see case example below).

REVIVING THE KAREZ SYSTEM TO SUPPORT WATER SYSTEM REHABILITATION IN AFGHANISTAN

Facing severe water scarcity and the decline of groundwater tables, local communities in the southeastern regions of Khost, Paktika, and Paktya provinces recognised the urgent need to restore the ancient water management system, the Karez (or Qanat). These systems have been damaged by disaster and conflict in recent years.

About the Karez system
The Karez system is a traditional sustainable water management approach. This gravity-driven system of irrigation channels, tunnels, trenches and wells efficiently delivers large quantities of water to where it is needed.

A picture of the portion of the Karez Water System

Leveraging community efforts and traditional wisdom
The Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, supported by UNICEF, engaged local experts, known as Karezan, in rehabilitation. The project included community-driven construction, maintenance and repair of the Karez. Local residents identified problems, set priorities and designated days for collective work. Community engagement extended the project's adaptability to climate change, incorporating solar energy solutions to mitigate declining water tables. The construction required careful consideration of geographical, hydrological and topographical factors, with skilled and unskilled Karez workers collaborating to dig wells and connect tunnels. The initiative prioritised local councils' decisions and aimed to foster sustainable, locally led solutions to the challenges of water management in Afghanistan.

2.3. Cash for work to promote nature-based solutions and ecosystem restoration

Cash for work initiatives in early recovery to promote nature-based solutions[62] and ecosystem restoration (such as replanting forests, restoring wetlands and preserving coastal mangroves) are increasingly being adopted to support recovery in recent crisis contexts.

> 'Empowering flood survivors as builders of climate-resilient homes channelled their technical skills, local wisdom, and provided financial support to those who had lost their livelihoods. It was a win-win, as the labourers not only contributed their expertise but also facilitated sourcing materials locally, all while earning a steady income for their daily labour contributing towards nature-based solutions' (Local NGO representative).

For example, after the Tonga volcanic eruption and tsunami in January 2021, local CSOs such as the Civil Society Forum of Tonga and partners supported a novel 'cash for crops' initiative designed to mitigate the impacts of agricultural/soil damage and loss of homes and land, and to enable sustainable recovery of Tonga's agricultural sector. The programme targeted the most vulnerable and hardest-hit groups such as women, children, elderly, people with a disability, agricultural workers and fishers, pursuing three priorities: funding to assist affected farmers and labourers, food procurement initiatives, and crop distribution to affected families.

Key learning

Humanitarian actors are increasingly seeking to link locally led recovery efforts to longer-term solutions and systems strengthening. The integration of LLA into recovery efforts promotes durable solutions in which actors work together to mitigate the existing risks and projected impacts of climate change.

Key takeaways – enabling collaboration

▶ Working with communities to assess risks and vulnerability to various climate-related hazards is key to tailoring recovery efforts.

▶ Recovery mechanisms in the humanitarian sector (such as cash for work programmes) can integrate LLA initiatives to produce more sustainable solutions.

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62 Nature-based solutions address a wide range of environmental, societal, and economic challenges by harnessing the power of nature and natural processes native to local ecosystems. These solutions aim to provide holistic and often more cost-effective alternatives to engineering or technological solutions, and are proving to be cost-effective ways of tackling climate change whilst protecting biodiversity and avoiding land degradation.
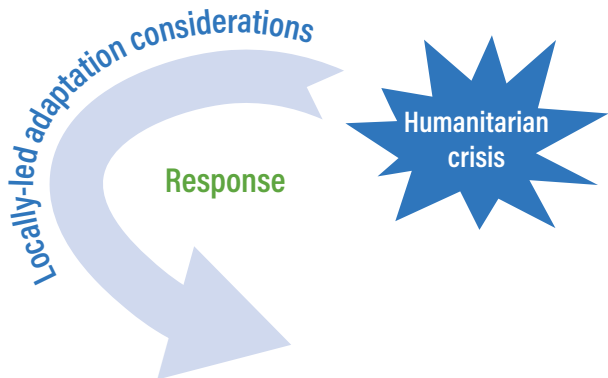
Photo credit: Renhar Hashim, Islamic Relief Philippines

3. INCORPORATION IN RESPONSE

This area includes humanitarian actors incorporating locally-led adaptation considerations into locally led response programming (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Incorporation in response

What examples are emerging in practice?

The research did not identify any practical examples of incorporation of CCA considerations into locally led response programming (this does not mean it is not happening in practice as the data collection process was not exhaustive).

However, many interviewees expressed their desire for LLA to be incorporated into the response phase of disasters. Humanitarian actors interviewed for this research highlighted that they are increasingly aware of the need to include climate considerations in emergency response.[63] It is important to acknowledge the difficulties of doing this, because the response phase is focused on immediate action, rather than the longer-term timeframe generally needed for adaptation work. Despite this, a lot of work on greening humanitarian aid is occurring in the sector, and this could be broadened to include LLA[64] – an area for more research and development.

> **Key lesson**
>
> ▶ Encouraging humanitarian actors, climate scientists, policymakers and local communities to exchange insights and best practices should generate ideas about ways to integrate LLA into humanitarian response.

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63   Interviews 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 19, 21
64   See for example HAG, GLOW Consultants and PIANGO (2022) Greening the System: A Vision for a Green Humanitarian Future https://humanitarianadvisorygroup.org/insight/greening-the-system-a-vision-for-a-green-humanitarian-future/

Photo credit: Gloria Kivuva, Islamic Relief Kenya

SECTION III: BUILDING PATHWAYS FORWARD

This research shows that there are emerging practices where increased collaboration is beginning to gain traction. There are intentional efforts to bring together local led humanitarian response and LLA across the humanitarian development continuum. The report outlined ways to leverage the complementarity of the two successfully in three different areas: leveraging existing programming, intentionally integration in recovery, and incorporation in response. Essential across these areas, are building on local knowledge and capacity, fostering collaboration and partnerships, inclusive ways of working, and flexible and adaptive strategies. Decision-makers, practitioners, and donors need to collectively work together not only to identify entry points for collaboration in these areas, but also to enable shifts in current practices, policies and funding mechanisms that enable sustainable and long-term support for local actors and communities.

CROSS-CUTTING PRINCIPLES OF THE PATHWAYS

Engage local CSOs and NGOs in all spheres of decision-making and planning, and ensure they are adequately and sustainably resourced. Leadership from local actors and communities is critical for the success of both localised humanitarian programming and LLA. In order for these efforts to be sustainable in the long term, donors and NGOs must support communities to own the solutions and maintain efforts in the absence of external support through multi-year funding commitments. Communities should be involved in all stages of the project cycle, from design and planning to monitoring and evaluation.

Create learning platforms and joint spaces to raise awareness of overlapping roles and mandates of localisation and LLA. Use climate change data to advocate for policy changes and funding at national and international levels to raise awareness about the link between climate change and increasing humanitarian needs.

Centralise existing local expertise, traditional knowledge and practices. Integrate local, traditional and scientific knowledge into localisation and LLA approaches.

Inclusive ways of working. Consultations and engagement across communities – including women, children, youth, people with disabilities, LGBTQI+ people and marginalised groups – is essential to support resilience. Engagement is important because groups are affected differently by disasters and climate change, and because different groups will have different insights and contributions that strengthen joint efforts from humanitarian, development and climate actors.

Adaptability and learning. No solution will work in all diverse local contexts. Effective integration of localisation and LLA relies on the development of context-specific strategies that can be adapted to communities' varying and evolving needs. Openness to learning is vital to assessing impact and identifying areas of improvement.

PATHWAYS

Outlined below are three pathways for humanitarian and climate actors to strengthen collaboration in practice based on the three areas identified across the humanitarian–development continuum. These pathways are underpinned by several cross-cutting enabling components outline above: each pathway contains key opportunities and actions, and is not exclusive. Opportunities may be leveraged across all three pathways simultaneously, depending on the priorities and needs of implementing organisations.

Pathway 1 – Preparedness

This pathway focuses on leveraging the knowledge and footprint of existing initiatives that seek to strengthen climate adaptation and resilience of communities.

> **Opportunity:** Shift organisational practices and individual behaviours to promote joint efforts and programming (for individual humanitarian and climate organisations)

Actions:

▶ Bring together humanitarian, development and climate change departments/teams across organisations to develop integrated programmes and plan for disaster response

▶ Identify ways adaptation activities can be included or strengthened in existing development and resilience-focused programmes

▶ Leverage the expertise of climate experts when planning and designing humanitarian programmes

▶ For intermediaries to invest more long-term funding in local actors to improve their ability to integrate adaptation programming into humanitarian activities

▶ Map out existing activities and partners that can be leveraged during response phase

▶ Update practices and procedures in order to set LLA integration as a default in humanitarian response triggers

▶ Advocate to donors and set aside specific funding for local adaptation actors during emergencies

> **Opportunity:** Bring together climate and response actors to identify how future responses can build on adaptation work (sector level)

Actions:

▶ Share examples of good practice widely to promote greater uptake

▶ Hold cross-sector events that bring together humanitarian and climate experts

▶ Support local governments to improve risk data and early warning systems that can be used to inform a more efficient response to emergencies

Pathway 2 – Early Recovery

This pathway offers opportunities to embed climate adaptation in recovery efforts by embracing a long-term perspective whilst taking into consideration the specific context, vulnerabilities, and capacities of affected communities.

> **Opportunity:** Promote the mainstreaming of locally-led climate adaptation considerations into all relevant funding and projects to ensure that resilience-building is integrated into disaster recovery efforts (for individual humanitarian and climate organisation)

Actions:

▶ Ensure that recovery plans are informed by existing vulnerabilities and are designed with long-term climate adaptation in mind

▶ Build upon initiatives such as cash-based programming to implement climate adaptation activities in communities

▶ Explore new partnerships that support LLA in the recovery phase once initial needs have been met

▶ Consider reallocating a portion of development funding and merge with planned recovery efforts to promote cost efficiencies

Opportunity: Jointly address climate issues in recovery forums and sector-wide planning and coordination (sector level)

Actions:

▶ Foster collaboration between experts from sectors such as agriculture and engineering to develop climate-resilient livelihood opportunities and shock-proof reconstruction efforts

▶ Identify ways to leverage and scale-up these practices across the sector, whilst avoiding duplication of efforts

▶ Support local research on vulnerabilities that can inform more effective interventions (e.g. Islamic Relief has an ongoing work to develop a Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis tool for humanitarian contexts. See case below).

CREATING SYNERGIES AT ISLAMIC RELIEF: USING CVCA TO SUPPORT CLIMATE ADAPTATION PLANNING

In order for climate change adaptation planning to contribute to strengthening the resilience of those who are most vulnerable and at-risk, Islamic Relief's country offices manage numerous humanitarian and development projects with explicit or implied climate adaptation elements.

Current Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis (CVCA) toolkits, however, are often designed for long-term development settings rather than for humanitarian contexts. Through its ongoing initiative, IR is building the ability of IR country offices and local implementing organisations to implement this process in their humanitarian interventions. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) funded Strengthening Emergency Resilience of Vulnerable Communities (SERVE) project seeks to do this by developing an accessible CVCA toolkit that can be utilised by IR country offices, partners, and local organisations to help affected communities rapidly assess their vulnerabilities and capacities at the outset of an emergency.

Even though the objectives of SERVE project and STRIDE programme differ, the two teams within IR have recognised the potential in the interconnected nature of these projects to maximize impact. By leveraging existing local partnerships and incorporating lessons learned from effective disaster response, the STRIDE team can enhance the CVCA toolkit's applicability and community relevance. Conversely, the SERVE team can provide crucial climate data and risk assessments to inform the localisation work and STRIDE team's strategies, ensuring they are resilient to evolving climatic challenges. Collaborative workshops and joint community engagements can facilitate knowledge exchange between the teams, fostering a holistic approach that addresses both immediate humanitarian needs and long-term climate adaptation. Through this integration, the organisation can create synergies that empower communities to build resilience comprehensively, bridging the gap between humanitarian localisation and climate adaptation pathways.

Pathway 3 – Response

This pathway identifies opportunities for LLA practices and information to enhance emergency planning and response.

> **Opportunity:** Intentionally consider how climate issues can be addressed in response planning, strategies and frameworks (for individual humanitarian and climate organisations)

Actions:

▶ Consult communities and local actors to identify adaptation initiatives that should be considered/leveraged in emergency planning

▶ Consider how response efforts are affecting existing climate adaptation work

▶ Integrate climate experts into planning and help them to attend coordination forums such as cluster meetings

▶ Create opportunities for climate experts to review sector response plans to identify opportunities for incorporating adaptation measures

▶ Collaborate with other stakeholders, including government agencies, research institutions and local communities to share climate adaptation data, expertise and resources to enhance the overall response to climate-related emergencies

▶ Use climate adaptation data for forecast-based financing mechanisms

> **Opportunity:** Collectively drive awareness and learning about best practice to provide a platform for future momentum

Actions:

▶ Support communities and actors to influence response decision-making that incorporates their climate-related knowledge and skills

▶ Map out the cost and time efficiencies of joint approaches to provide an evidence base for donors

▶ Lower perception and structural barriers by creating incentives for organisations to consider climate issues

▶ Identify green response measures that can promote future adaptation and advocate on this issue to donors

LOOKING AHEAD

The pathways above and the practices identified herein have the potential to support both more effective response and longer-term resilience in how communities adapt to climate change and related disasters. They can also cement and centralise the importance of local leadership. Operational humanitarian and climate actors can collaborate and facilitate linkages in their work, and donors can articulate and advocate for this with their partners.

Against the backdrop of the climate crisis, increasing humanitarian needs, and insufficient funding and support, linking localisation and LLA offers more effective and sustainable humanitarian action whilst promoting the resilience of at-risk communities. This research sheds light on opportunities for humanitarian and LLA actors to come together to break down structural barriers and deliver better community outcomes by capitalising on the shared goals and foundations of both approaches.

ANNEX 1: QUOTES FROM STAKEHOLDERS

THEME: LEVERAGING KEY AREAS OF COMPLEMENTARITY

" 'Climate Adaptation embraces easily adoptable ideas, while localization requires time for communities to adjust, necessitating awareness initiatives. Synthesizing local actors as focal points for awareness minimizes barriers, ensuring communities understand changes at different government levels. Recognizing the vital role of churches and promoting the matching of humanitarian and development approaches, with an emphasis on localization, ensures sustainable changes. Ultimately, increased awareness is pivotal for communities to take ownership of the transformative processes shaping their future.' *– INGO representative, Vanuatu*

" 'In the current landscape, we harness the power of overlaps and shared opportunities between humanitarian and development initiatives, adopting a holistic approach through the humanitarian nexus. No longer confined to standalone projects, it is now recognized that communities grappling with climate change impacts on livelihoods require a multifaceted strategy. Embracing the triple nexus approach, we integrate peace building into our initiatives, acknowledging that conflict is yet another force affecting livelihoods. It's a nuanced understanding that aligns our efforts with the interconnected challenges faced by communities in the context of climate change and development.' *INGO representative, Ethiopia*

" 'In the scope of humanitarian and climate adaptation efforts, a notable challenge lies in separate funding streams, distinct from one another. However, a promising avenue for collaboration emerges in anticipatory action. Here, the expertise of climate change specialists can enhance response capabilities, fostering institutional capacity building. Emphasizing coherence in anticipatory action and early warning systems holds immense potential, bridging the gap between climate action and humanitarian response. Despite divergent funding and instructions, the most significant value for the humanitarian sector lies in anticipatory action.' *– Research institution representative, global stakeholder interview*

" 'Local actors are really best place to do this [leverage complementarity]. They are not just there for the response, some of them are already present in the community for development work.' *– Local NGO representative, Philippines*

" 'I think these days we are just using the overlaps – opportunities between humanitarian and development because we focus on standalone projects. We can't focus on one dimension alone but on the humanitarian nexus approach. Used to focus on development alone but with climate change variability, communities can't manage with climate impacting livelihoods. We need to have a plan for humanitarian projects as well. Thinking about peace building and peace development projects where we are exercising the triple nexus approach.' *– International NGO representative, Ethiopia*

" 'Looking at the commonalities between localization and LLA, a powerful alliance emerges as humanitarian actors and development workers unite in shared responsibilities. Their collective mission spans the safeguarding and development of local territories, the preservation of vital assets and livelihoods, and the protection of human capital, particularly vulnerable populations. Together, they confront the pressing challenge of climate-related migration, emphasizing a common commitment to addressing this pivotal concern.' *Local NGO representative, Bangladesh*

'Drawing from the experiences in Pakistan, common principles and mandates emerge. Firstly, both emphasize community empowerment, recognizing that informed decision-making is pivotal. Capacity building plays a key role, ensuring communities understand the impacts of climate change on their lives. Partnerships between humanitarian organizations, governments, and communities are essential, as is providing necessary resources for empowerment. Policy reformation, adopting a top-down and bottom-up approach, becomes crucial for effective climate adaptation. Lastly, embracing contextualized solutions fosters innovation, ensuring sustainable and community-owned projects.'
– INGO representative, Pakistan

'Undoubtedly, there is a profound alignment between localization and locally led adaptation. Localization champions local capacity, knowledge, and integrates the authentic voice of the community into decision-making. Similarly, climate change adaptation is intricately tied to local communities and stakeholders who possess firsthand knowledge of challenges and viable solutions. In essence, both movements share a common ground, emphasizing the importance of empowering and involving local perspectives for effective and sustainable outcomes in the face of climate change.' –
Local NGO representative, Bangladesh

THEME: ENABLERS OF COMPLEMENTARITY

'Effective integration of localization and climate adaptation relies on three key enablers. Firstly, identifying overlapping priorities is crucial. Secondly, a focus on people, their institutions, knowledge, and diversity are essential. Inclusive policy setting, institutional collaboration, and objective prioritization enhance coherence, resource mobilization, and sustainability. Thirdly, recognizing that climate change

impacts vary across population groups, targeting vulnerable demographics such as women and persons with disabilities aligns objectives and ensures successful outcomes.'
– Independent consultant, Ethiopia

'Language barriers between climate scientists and action implementers hinder progress. Knowledge brokers play a crucial role in translating complex science into actionable and palatable messages promoting critical action. The once clear divide between development and humanitarian work is fading, and as hazards become more frequent, adaptation and resilience must be integral to development projects. Climate change breaks down the barriers between development and humanitarian efforts, emphasizing the need for a unified approach in the face of evolving challenges.' –
International NGO representative, Australia

'Unlocking immense potential lies in collaboration, transcending the limitations of individual focus. By capacitating people and consolidating expertise, the impact of our efforts magnifies. Last year's flood, engulfing 90% of the population due to a typhoon, revealed the power of unity. From regional to city level, NGOs, government, families, and communities joined forces, showcasing that adversity has the unique ability to bring us together for a collective response and a resilient future.' **– International NGO representative, Philippines**

'Empowering communities hinges on enhancing their capacity and addressing challenges such as gender awareness and disability inclusion. By leveraging local knowledge, communities can identify and mitigate gaps, fostering self-sufficiency in addressing the diverse needs of affected individuals. The evolving approach emphasizes the importance of local insights, particularly in remote areas like PNG, where communities lack information on changing weather patterns and may not recognize the impacts of phenomena like El Niño. Through collaborative efforts and

localisation, diverse actors can bridge these knowledge gaps, empowering communities to enact meaningful changes in the face of climate challenges.' *– International NGO representative, Papua New Guinea*

❝ 'Cultivating collaboration between climate change and humanitarian efforts is crucial, requiring a clear definition of territories and an emphasis on integration and community education. The key lies in creating awareness, advocating for complementation, and avoiding conflicts by establishing boundaries. Humanitarian workers must consciously incorporate climate change adaptation into their actions, recognizing the interconnectedness of these efforts. Rather than creating new frameworks, there's a need to emphasize existing ones, fostering a conscious effort to unite DRR, humanitarian development, and climate change adaptation. Working in silos hinders progress, and the focus should be on a unified approach centered around community based DRR and technological innovation.' *– Local NGO representative, Philippines*

❝ 'Empowering collaboration requires shattering traditional barriers, where funders incentivize sharing expertise across sectors. The shift towards rewarding collaboration, not merely enforcing it, dismantles territorial barriers among managing contractors. Our collective strength emerges when we blend diverse expertise, acknowledging that stronger outcomes result from the fusion of varied skills. By embracing nature-based solutions, we tie together humanitarian and development efforts, transcending the debate of responsibility and forging a path towards impactful, responsible, and resilient collaboration in the face of climate change.' – *International NGO representative, Australia*

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❝ 'In our journey towards integration, we must embrace a transformative mindset: share knowledge relentlessly within the sector, eliminating duplication, and unlocking the full potential of collaboration. Internal meetings should pivot outward, emphasizing planning, budgeting, and advocacy to captivate a broader sector audience. It's time to break free from insularity and forge a path of inclusivity and impactful change.' *International NGO representative, Ethiopia*

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❝ 'How do we create consortium or partnerships that are not traditional, how do we work with chambers of commerce, need to not think in short view of humanitarian response, remold local economies and supply chains and practices that are more resilient to shocks of climate change. How do we work with government at national or subnational level to promote

social protection mechanisms, seen a lot of advancements but more can be done to create those partnerships that are a bit more non-traditional.' *– International NGO representative, Australia*

" 'Embracing climate adaptation involves not just the inclusion of indigenous communities, but also recognizing the profound legitimacy of their traditional wisdom. The wealth of knowledge held by indigenous people, gained over centuries of observing water patterns, drainage, and weather, is on par with any scientific or technocratic expertise. In our quest for effective climate change adaptation, acknowledging and incorporating indigenous knowledge is as crucial as any other source of information.' – *Local NGO representative, Pakistan*

" 'Sustainability is paramount for climate adaptation, with local communities driving an enduring impact. Locally led interventions, resilient against the ebb and flow of international cycles, ensure lasting effectiveness. Similarly, scalability is crucial, yet international influence often breeds fragmentation. Diverse donor priorities challenge seamless scaling despite substantial potential. Additionally, adaptability and expansion form a third imperative as local communities evolve. Flexible interventions are needed to meet dynamic circumstances. Innovation becomes a hallmark of locally led efforts, fostering an environment where risks are taken, and resilient solutions to climate challenges emerge.' *– INGO representative, Syria*

" 'Essential to project success is the collaboration with government and key stakeholders. Establishing robust ties with government officials, administrators, and local leaders is paramount for effective implementation. Local leaders, deeply connected to the community, bear a crucial role in fostering development, surpassing our temporary project involvement. The sustainability of local development relies on

their support. Despite challenges in building these relationships, the shared goal of sustainable community development unites us, making it an achievable and integral endeavor.' *Local NGO representative, Bangladesh*

THEME: CHALLENGES TO COMPLEMENTARITY

" 'In our discourse on climate financing, the inherent separation of climate funds from humanitarian and development funding raises concerns about perpetuating silos. The metrics for impact measurement and the initiation of projects often fall short, with many initiatives, such as reforestation projects, lacking a direct community-level impact. Bridging this gap necessitates a concerted effort to merge humanitarian organizations' access at the community level with discussions on fostering livelihoods that are inherently more climate resilient. The critical exploration of linkages between climate funds, humanitarian efforts, and community impact is imperative for meaningful integration' International NGO representative,' *– International NGO representative, Somalia*

" 'Amidst the diverse landscape of organizations, many focus on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) while neglecting Climate Change Adaptation (CCA). There's a prevailing trend of competition rather than collaboration, with each entity attempting to outshine the others. Bridging the gaps requires concerted efforts in policy development and software implementation. Funding becomes a battleground, overshadowing the collective goal of enhancing DRR expertise. The need for cohesive action, information dissemination, and bridging policy-implementation gaps remains paramount in fostering resilience and awareness,' *– International NGO representative, Philippines*

'Beyond funding challenges, barriers to integration extend to risk appetite and a shift from project-centric thinking. Exploring the intricacies of climate financing and engaging with the private sector often proves challenging. The absence of a sustainable exit strategy hinders long-term community-level impact, especially when considering social protection linkages. Additionally, insufficient expertise and tools hinder our ability to measure climate risks at the community level, impacting livelihoods. Success in promoting greener methods in conflict and climate-affected regions highlights the potential for resilience but raises questions about scalability and the need for a nuanced, long-term approach. Bridging the gap between disaster recovery and sustainable development in cyclically affected regions, like the Pacific, remains a complex endeavor, necessitating innovative solutions to merge response efforts with long-term adaptation strategies.' *– International NGO representative, Somalia*

'In the landscape of integration, a significant challenge arises from the perception that development and humanitarian situations are distinct due to conflict, systems, and environmental hazards. The extended analysis of academic and local systems over 5-10 years often blurs the line between what some argue as a humanitarian crisis. This divergence becomes evident when, despite signs of famine conditions during the 2022 drought, the government refrained from seeking humanitarian aid, treating it solely as a development issue. The determination of humanitarian situations by entities like the World Bank further complicates matters, potentially diverting attention away from critical needs. The lack of a cohesive relationship between the development and humanitarian sectors hampers efficient response and recovery, leaving affected communities in prolonged distress' *– Local NGO representative, Somalia*

'The persistent challenge lies in the silos we've constructed—created through workstreams, project-centric thinking, and reinforced by funding structures. Climate change introduces the risk of isolating Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and resilience efforts, overlooking the vital intersection of climate with gender dynamics. These cross-cutting issues demand mainstreaming, pushing organizations beyond a singular focus on CCA to encompass mitigation and environmental awareness. It's an imperative shift towards holistic considerations, recognizing the interconnected nature of climate, gender, and environmental impact' *– International NGO representative, Australia*

'There's a discernible gap between groups engaged in Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and humanitarian response efforts, even within the same organizations. Despite attempts to organize working groups for information sharing, challenges persist due to silos and misaligned priorities. Donors play a crucial role in incentivizing collaboration, yet existing structures and short timeframes hinder coordination. Coordination within multi-mandated organizations is crucial, requiring better funding mechanisms and consortia. Advocacy efforts and discussions at international forums emphasize the need for systemic change. Positive developments, like longer-term humanitarian funding pilots, coexist with the overarching challenge of bridging the gap between the immediacy of humanitarian work and the extended timelines required for effective climate adaptation projects' *– Local NGO presentative, Somalia*

In terms of localisation, if thinking, this year passing down 10% of funds, then next year 20%, then next put own orgs out of work - that's a shallow view of it; more looking at how we're engaging with local orgs, how are they designing the projects, how are they enabling us to set up different accountability mechanisms, how are they enabling us to do more, otherwise it seems responsive to donor priorities, need to take a bit more a principled

approach, we need think about business models of INGOs and local orgs, and how that plays out in atmosphere of decreasing humanitarian funds; where do we have to give in terms of less funding, taking on a new hat, are there new ways of working in terms of secondment,' *– International NGO representative, Australia*

A lot of the focus is on CCA; INGOs are aligning themselves with that language; finding their own way of ensuring not left behind, localisation part of it is not the priority; these are two different conversations,' *– Local NGO representative, Somalia*

In practice humanitarian actors focus on emergencies and managing crisis, their responsibilities should integrate development, humanitarian/crisis management and peacebuilding/recovery plans. In many of the cases these responsibilities are constrained by diverse interests, expertise and resource availability (as challenges as well as opportunities).' *– Independent consultant, Ethiopia*

We talk a lot about climate financing – climate funds are often separate from humanitarian and development funding; are we again creating separate siloes? The ways they measure impact, the way those projects come about, often we know anecdotally that they're not leaving an impact for community, more reforestation projects and projects that don't have a direct link at the community level; how can we merge the two, so humanitarian orgs have access at the community level and can have discussions about how to have livelihoods that are more climate resilient; linkages between two definitely need to be explored further.' – *International NGO representative, Australia*

'The challenge is different key stakeholders have their own way of doing things, trying to put these two together, putting the different stakeholders and approach for delivering those activities.' *– International NGO representative, Papua New Guinea*

'With regards to climate adaptation, local NGOs ardently champion the cause, elevating it to a position of paramount concern. Yet, as these concerns traverse the channels of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), donors, and United Nations (UN) agencies, they intertwine with a myriad of other priorities and subjects. Climate change, initially a focal point, becomes entangled within broader categories like agriculture, livestock, or market systems. Regrettably, this amalgamation often diminishes the singular emphasis and intrinsic value accorded to addressing climate change as a standalone issue.' *- UN World Food Programme Representative, Syria*

'There are challenges within the org itself, and the larger organization. Example, within one organization they have humanitarian emergency programme and then other programs. The reason the org is set up this way is because of funding, humanitarian funding is narrow and compete within the org for one funding which may seem similar., may try to attract funding which the humanitarian unit also want to attract. No clarity -if you have a situation with lot of malnutrition cause of droughts, diseases such as tuberculosis and mortality going up, then health. Nutrition markers are there and need to support the systems as well. In emergency, 1 or 2 years, other orgs help health for 5 years. Do your bit during the emergency, then leave and then have the other organizations to go in further to help with situation.' *International NGO representative, Somalia*

'Some information doesn't trickle down – information happens in silos. Health, nutrition, WASH, food security clusters. Some pieces of work such as WASH programs does relate to climate change, heavily support some things facing in food security. Need cross communication among clusters, the clusters have picked up on this and creating synergies across different clusters.' *– Local NGO representative, Somalia*

‘The climate change space has a lot of info and jargon, last year session with partners on pre-cop workshop, partners haven't been able to engage and translate that to lower communities and their level of understandings.' – *International NGO representative Ethiopia*

‘Those siloes have always been there, siloes that we've created in terms of workstreams and project based thinking, you may have a project trying to empower rural women and another trying to provide protection services; also perpetuated by funding systems.' – *International NGO representative, Australia*

‘It's not only the climate and humanitarian people not talking to each other; it's the climate and climate people not talking to each other; don't know how you get the incentives for orgs to share widely, getting people talking more; maybe having a stronger govt would help.' *Local NGO presentative, Somalia*

THEMES: PERCEIVED IMPACT

‘We need to pitch to funders – if we don't' start working in ecosystem restoration, we're not going to meet rest of SDGs. The way we get traction with humanitarian orgs I think it's about saying coming together and that we can't meet these other outcomes without investing in biosphere ones.' – *International NGO representative, Australia*

‘So when we talk about CCA, it's how people see livelihoods evolving amidst looming crisis. This opens us opportunity to take localisation to next step, to address ongoing needs and project into future a little bit if temp rise, what will that mean for local ecosystem,' *International NGO representative, Ethiopia*

‘Projects that force us by design to think about the exit strategy; to develop something that feeds into existing system or contributes to creating more enabling environment; one that creates more engagement with duty bearers; that's not just superficial, how can we implement a 2 year project, that 5 years later will leave a service that is still there; if forced to do that, we'll have to think about how local orgs business models, how are they accessing funding,' – *International NGO representative, Somalia*

Photo credit: Junaid Saeed, Islamic Relief Pakistan