



# LOCALIZATION THROUGH THE LENS OF ELNHA PROJECT MODEL.



**OXFAM**

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The preparation of this documentation was led by the Public Policy Institute (PPI) with Mr. Emmanuel Kitamirike as the technical team lead. Oxfam appreciates PPI’s facilitative role and commends the active participation of the LNHAs for leading the localization interventions that have provided a rich foundation for the successes and lessons highlighted in this documentation. Oxfam is grateful to the generous financial contribution of IKEA towards the implementation of ELNHA project.

In a special way, Oxfam appreciate its technical team including Ms. Miriam Tusiimire the ELNHA Project Manager, Ms. Christine Akech, the CTP Officer, Mr. Joel Dengel, the Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning coordinator and Ms. Beatrice Akello, the Partnership Coordinator. We are indebted to the various humanitarian platforms that were key in taking up the space and amplifying the voices of local actors for the localization agenda.

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Cover Photo: A refugee information desk on Covid 19 in Rhino refugee settlement made possible with support from HRGF.ELNHA built the capacity and supported refugee led organizations to respond to Covid-19 within the refugee settlements with awareness messaging and distribution of PPEs.

All photos in this document are ELNHA project activities and LNHAs.



# FOREWORD

In principle, there is good will to support the localization agenda, to advocate for increased equitable partnerships and to push for more locally led humanitarian responses. Supporting local actors to constructively question how response is perceived and delivered must be through an eco-system that is ready to listen and put into consideration the recommendations from the local and national partners within the space. We could as international organizations acknowledge that we must invest in systemic changes for local actors to feel part of the humanitarian eco system and create stronger collaborations with such. Through the ELNHA project, Oxfam was committed to supporting the complementarity that should and must exist between INGOs and LNHAs to enable the leadership role of LNHAs in delivering assistance to crisis affected people.

I know that by investing in the strength, voice, and space of LNHAs, Oxfam needed to adjust how it conducted its partnership assessments, funding approaches and relationship with the local and National NGOs. To achieve this, ELNHA drew from the Charter for Change commitments to which it was a signatory and applied all the 8 commitments in its work using the ELNHA project as a learning model. Our support to LNHAs in this process challenged them to even hold us accountable as signatories. By facilitating the process of formation of the charter for change working group in Uganda, it was hence possible for Oxfam to share what it was learning and experiencing on this localization journey with its peers and donors while equipping LNHAs to be more assertive and bolder to hold signatories of the charter for change accountable.

Sharing Oxfam’s learning through the ELNHA model with the world is its way of motivating those who desire to walk the journey of localization- that it is possible. The lessons and processes it has gone through pushed it to identify where the blockers were internally, and devise means to address them. These processes have been covered by this documentation.

It is our wish that whoever reads this document will be able to consider supporting the charter for change principles and apply them in their own way of work. To our fellow INGOs, sharing of power and resources did not make the work of Oxfam less visible or overshadowed by LNHAs. It rather brought to light its facilitating, enabling, and brokering role more visible while complementing the interventions well thought about by the local actors. I hence assert that localization is possible and where the principles are well understood by both LNHAs, INGOs, donors and UN bodies, a more locally led response yields lasting impact for the crisis affected people.

For more reading, please visit <https://www.oxfam.org/en>

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## ACRONYMS

<b>ADINGON</b>	Arua District NGO Network
<b>AWYAD</b>	African Women and Youth Action for Development
<b>CAFOMI</b>	Care and Assistance for Forced Migration
<b>C4C</b>	Charter for Change
<b>CECI</b>	Community Empowerment for Creative Innovation
<b>CEFORD</b>	Community Empowerment for Rural Development
<b>CHS</b>	Core Humanitarian standards
<b>CTP</b>	Cash Transfer Programming
<b>CRRF</b>	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
<b>DDMC</b>	District Disaster Management Committee
<b>DDR</b>	District Disaster Response
<b>DGF</b>	Democratic Governance Facility
<b>DRR</b>	Disaster Risk Reduction
<b>EFSL</b>	Emergency Food Security and Livelihood
<b>ELNHA</b>	Empowering Local and National Humanitarian Actors
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EU-DINU</b>	European Union Development Initiative for Northern Uganda
<b>GBV</b>	Gender Based Violence
<b>GIZ</b>	Deutsche Gesellschaft Internationale
<b>HAF</b>	Humanitarian Action Fund
<b>HRGF</b>	Humanitarian Response Grant Facility
<b>HRV</b>	Humanitarian Risk Vulnerability
<b>HUCOCA</b>	Humanitarian Country Capacity Analysis
<b>IASC</b>	Inter-Agency Steering Committee
<b>ICR</b>	Internal Cost Recovery
<b>INGO</b>	International Non-Government Organization
<b>LNHA</b>	Local National Humanitarian Actor
<b>LNNGO</b>	Local National Nongovernmental Organisation
<b>MEB</b>	Minimum Expenditure Basket
<b>MOFPED</b>	Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development
<b>MSC</b>	Most Significant Change
<b>NEAR</b>	Network for Empowered Aid Response
<b>RLO</b>	Refugee Led Organisation
<b>OPM</b>	Office of the Prime Minister
<b>PPI</b>	Public Policy Institute
<b>QUAM</b>	Quality Assurance Mechanism
<b>RAMON</b>	Risk Analysis Method Oxfam Novib
<b>RTR</b>	Real Time Review
<b>TPO</b>	Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation
<b>UGX</b>	Uganda Shillings
<b>UNASO</b>	Uganda National Aids Support Organisation

<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>VIFOH</b>	Vision for Humanity
<b>VSLA</b>	Village Saving Loan Association
<b>WASH</b>	Water Sanitation and Hygiene
<b>WB</b>	World Bank
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Program
<b>WLO</b>	Women led Organisation
<b>YSAT</b>	Youth Social Advocacy Team

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Term	Definition
<b>Localization</b>	Strengthening international investment and respect for the role of local actors, with the goal of reducing costs and increasing the reach of humanitarian action <sup>1</sup>
<b>LNHA</b>	LNNGOs, CBOs, (local and national) government, private sector, media engaged in humanitarian action, legally registered, and not affiliated to an INGO
<b>Cash Transfer Programming</b>	Is an approach where cash (sometimes in form of vouchers) for goods and services is provided to the final beneficiaries in a humanitarian context
<b>Humanitarian action fund and humanitarian response grant Facility</b>	These are financial facilities hosted by Oxfam to support fund self-designed interventions by LNHAAs. The funds are applied for through a competitive process and awards follow pre-determined guidelines.

<sup>1</sup> This definition of localization was adapted from the Grand Bargain Working Stream 2 website. See <http://.media.ifrc.org/grand-bargain-localization/>



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Charter for Change is an initiative led by both National and International NGOs, to practically implement changes to the way the humanitarian systems operate to enable more locally led responses to crises. Inclusive and visible localization as implemented by Oxfam through the Empowering Local and National Humanitarian Actors (ELNHA) project was an example of how INGOs and donors could make locally led response a reality. This documentation presents the ELNHA model in a detailed manner, and shows how through this model, LNHAs and crisis affected men, women and children were able to benefit from assistance, and how the principles of localization were exemplified through the project. Funded by IKEA, the ELNHA project supported the strengths, voice, and space of local actors and this publication has been developed to share the key practices, tools, and lessons as well as recommendations to strengthen the localization agenda.

The documentation of the ELNHA project model relied on a diversity of approaches to collect both primary and secondary data including: review of project documents, key informant interviews, onsite focus group discussions with LNHAs as well as project implementation observations. Multiple field visits to LNHAs were conducted to appreciate how the ELNHA model led to better contextualized understanding of localization.

The documentation is structured and presented in four sections, each covering a distinct aspect of the localization process, while illustrating the tools used, the practices that explicate the success, and the emerging lessons. The first element introduces how the institutional and programming capacities of LNHAs were strengthened to prepare and respond to humanitarian crises. The second element discusses how local humanitarian leadership was enabled through LNHAs collaboration among each other thus giving the voice to not only coordinate quality humanitarian responses but also lead. The third element illustrates how LNHAs asserted their influence and engaged donors, INGOs and UN agencies to adjust their approaches to support localization. While the fourth element shares the changes that Oxfam as an international actor had to undergo to support localization, depicting the shifts required at organizational level to show case their commitment to localization. The documentation ends with a set of recommendations for donors, government, INGOs and LNHAs themselves.

Some of the key tools used, practices implemented, the rationale for project success, and the emerging lessons include;

- a. Oxfam, through the ELNHA model demonstrated commitment to relinquish control of the humanitarian decision-making and funding by repositioning LNHAs to lead the humanitarian responses.
- b. A systematic approach was adopted, first to appreciate Uganda’s humanitarian context using the Humanitarian Country Capacity Analysis (HUCOCA) and second, to assess the probable risks of repositioning LNHAs in humanitarian response through the Risk Assessment Methodology Oxfam Novib (RAMON).
- c. Beyond the HUCOCA and RAMON, the model employed the Joint Action Planning, designed both as a process and a tool for LNHAs and Oxfam project staff to conceptualize and co-create humanitarian responses that repositioned LNHAs to lead. This process also strengthened the local humanitarian system through improved coordination and collaboration.
- d. Subsequent to the joint planning, Oxfam provided funding through the Humanitarian Action Fund (HAF) and the Humanitarian Response Grant Facility (HRGF) to enable LNHAs demonstrate the skills and knowledge acquired through the project capacity strengthening interventions.
- e. Overall, the strength component of the model enabled Oxfam to invest in the LNHAs capacity for humanitarian response and integration of local voices and the needs of the affected people into the wider humanitarian system including emergency response.
- f. The consortia approach encouraged throughout the ELNHA project was a good practice that strengthened the capacity of LNHAs to synergize, collaborate and benefit from each other’s comparative advantages.
- g. ELNHA heavily supported DRR at the local levels and as a result, recommends investment in disaster preparedness processes at all levels. This builds community systems and structures to be better prepared to manage crises when they happen. Hence investment in the hazard, risk and vulnerability assessments and the role of district and sub county disaster committees should be well articulated and resourced.

- h. Deliberately establishing resources and making them available to LNHAs builds their capacities and grants them space to competitively apply for funding elsewhere.
- i. Involvement of LNHAs in assessment when crisis happens is the beginning of better collaboration between donors, INGOs and peer LNNGOs. When LNHAs are brought in at the end of projects, it is not sustainable as their systems and structures would not have been well prepared. In any case, there would be no space for learning and adaptation since they would have been missing from the start.
- j. Working with beneficiaries of Cash Transfer Programming (CTP) during selection, registration, and verification and considerations in terms of level of vulnerability and gender enabled minimize conflict.
- k. Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) support makes CTP better and should be adopted by all who desire to apply this model to deliver assistance to crisis affected people.
- l. The formation of platforms, coalitions and working groups should be encouraged in localization efforts as it brings different LNHA capacities together to be better positioned to engage with donors and INGOs at the same level.
- m. In localizing humanitarian aid, co-creating and self-designing interventions by LNHAs should be fronted as reflected through ELNHA. It increases involvement in the identification of interventions and builds resilience of crisis affected people to better be protected and live safe and happy lives. This was ultimately the purpose of Oxfam’s humanitarian response grant facility and the Humanitarian action fund.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 ABOUT ELNHA

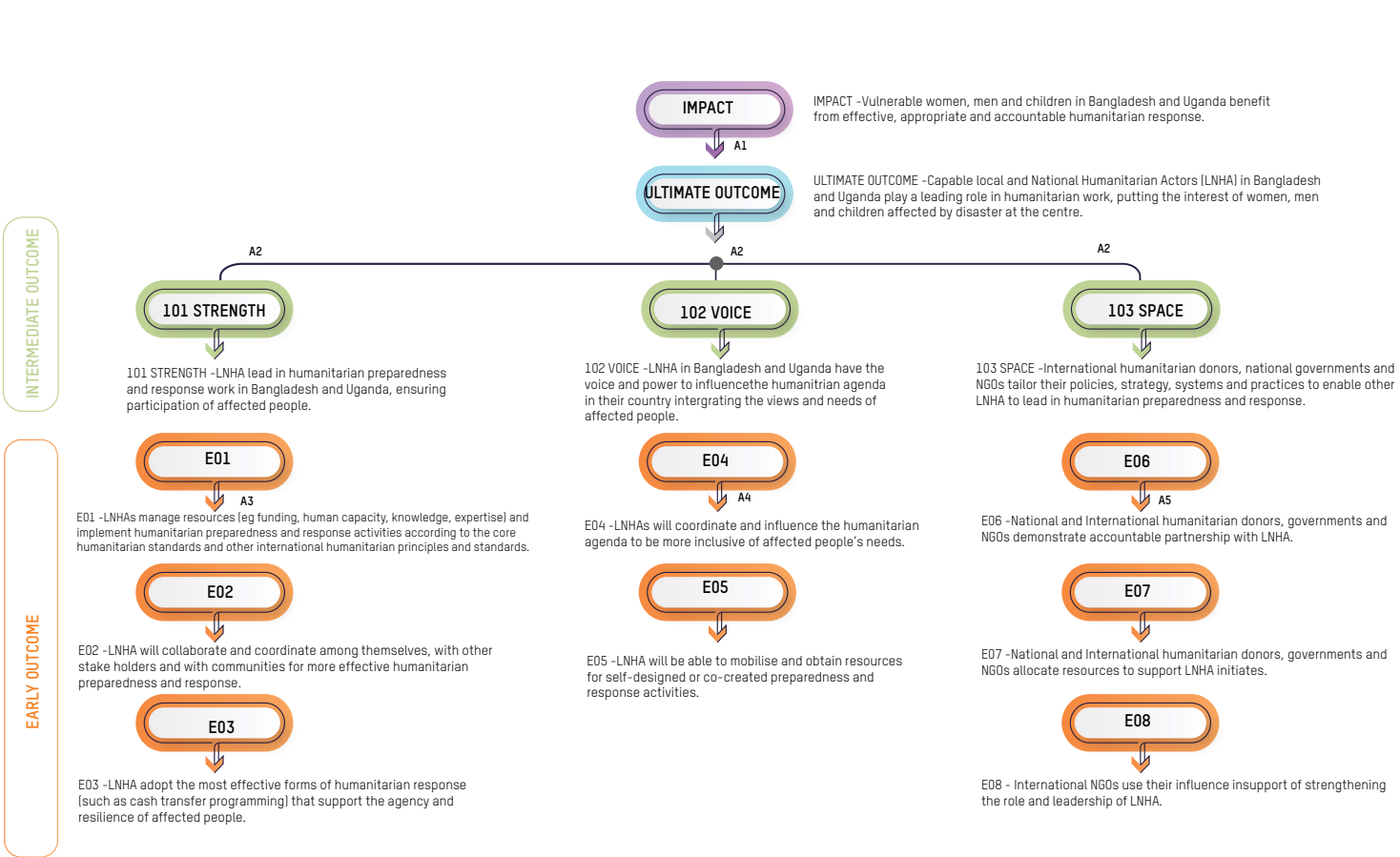
Empowering Local and National Humanitarian Actors Project (ELNHA) was 5 years long (January 2016 – March 2021), with Phase I January 2016 – March 2019 and Phase II April 2019 – March 2021. This documentation covers both phases to highlight the elements that led to success and learnings that illuminate more equal sharing of power and resources in Uganda’s humanitarian sector involving local, national, and international humanitarian actors. The underlying assumption was that by empowering local and national humanitarian actors (LNHA) to lead emergency preparedness and responses in their own context, they would positively impact vulnerable people living in disaster and conflict prone areas, through faster and more appropriate humanitarian response.

ELNHA had three main strategies which complemented each other: (i) Strength which was concerned with ‘the collective and organizational capacity of LNHA to design, lead and deliver humanitarian responses’; (ii) Voice related to ‘influencing the local and national humanitarian agenda through coordination and advocacy among LNHA’s; and (iii) Space which was concerned with influencing the overall international humanitarian architecture in order to create an enabling environment for LNHA.

This documentation was mainly purposed to showcase the ELNHA model of localization of humanitarian aid, highlighting the elements that led to success and emerging lessons from the project. In addition, this documentation; (i) illustrates the HRGF model of responding to crisis; (ii) highlights how the project worked through local networks to strengthen coordination of LNHA; and (iii) showcases how local humanitarian leadership was strengthened. To drive this transformation, ELNHA had eight major early outcomes articulated in the theory of change as illustrated in figure 1 below.

Figure 1: ELNHA Project Theory of Change

Theory of Change - Empowered Local and National Humanitarian Actors - ELNHA Phase 2 -2019



2.2 METHODOLOGY

The documentation of the ELNHA project model relied on a diversity of approaches to collect both primary<sup>2</sup> and secondary data including, review of project documents<sup>3</sup>, key informant interviews<sup>4</sup>, onsite focus group discussions<sup>5</sup> with LNHA as well as project implementation observations. Multiple field visits were conducted to appreciate how the ELNHA model led to better contextualized understanding of localization by LNHA.

The consultants also used self-observation to document several interventions through the Humanitarian Response Grant Facility such as the ECOSAN toilet, bathe shelters, VSLA groups, kitchen gardens, group businesses and Cash for Work or the Women’s group. Lastly, the Most Significant Change (MSC) stories of beneficiaries of the HRGF and HAF were done while checking for the key lessons learnt by the LNHA. Live images were taken of events that have been captured in this documentation. Key limitations included the measures established to combat the spread of Covid-19 that limited normal travel and human to human interactions especially during the observation of project activities. The timing of the documentation also coincided with a general election period that was tense and emotive.

2.3 THE LAYOUT OF THE DOCUMENT

This documentation of ELNHA learning is divided into 4 sections that provide an in-depth discussion of how localization was interpreted by Oxfam and the processes undertaken to achieve tangible localization outcomes. The project components of strength, voice, and space were explained as well as an illustration of the internal adjustments that were undertaken by Oxfam to enable the execution of the localization agenda. The documentation further highlights the various tools and techniques that were adopted to guide the local and national humanitarian actors during the various project processes. The documentation is therefore structured as follows;

- **Element I on Strength** introduces how LNHA were identified and their capacities strengthened to implement humanitarian actions. The element further highlights how the LNHA were exposed to humanitarian programming to enable them become better humanitarian responders and act as catalysts for better outcomes throughout the ELNHA project;
- **Element II on Voice** and Power discusses how LNHA asserted their influence and were better coordinated among themselves to attract resources from INGOs and UN agencies;
- **Element III on Space** illustrates how internal changes within the policies and practices among donors, INGOs, UN agencies, government were adopted in support of localization; and
- **Element IV** shares the experiences of Oxfam as an international actor executing localization, and thus depicts the shifts required at organizational level to walk the talk of localization.

<sup>2</sup> Primary data was collected from Northern Uganda, mainly West Nile (from the districts of Arua, Yumbe and Lamwo) and Karamoja (Napak, Kotido and Kabong districts)

<sup>3</sup> Some of the documents that were reviewed included; the Grand Bargain – Workstream 2 on Localization; project work plans and reports; partnership guidelines and agreements; and various activity reports among others

<sup>4</sup> Key informants included Oxfam partnership officer, MSE Manager, ELNHA Project Coordinator and CTP Coordinator

<sup>5</sup> Focus Group Discussions were conducted with Directors, project managers, MSE officers from the 13 participating LNHA

### 3. ELEMENT 1: STRENGTH - SELECTION AND CAPACITY STRENGTHENING OF LOCAL ACTORS AND ITS IMPACT ON LOCALIZATION

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The selection and capacity strengthening of LNHAs specified how to identify, capacitate, and transfer funding more directly to local and National Humanitarian Actors (LNHAs) in Uganda. Oxfam, through the model demonstrated commitment to relinquish control of the humanitarian decision-making and funding by repositioning LNHAs to lead the humanitarian responses. A systematic approach was adopted, first to appreciate Uganda’s humanitarian context using the Humanitarian Country Capacity Analysis (HUCOCA) and second, to assess the probable risks of repositioning LNHAs in humanitarian response through the Risk Assessment Methodology Oxfam Novib (RAMON). Overall, this element of the model enabled Oxfam to strengthen LNHAs capacity for humanitarian response and integration of needs of the affected people into humanitarian responses. The following section details the selection and capacity strengthening process, explaining the tools and actors involved.

#### 3.2 SELECTION OF LNHAS

ELNHA project phase II relied on the foundation made in ELNHA phase I. The humanitarian country capacity analysis (HUCOCA) carried out in 2016 and updated in 2018 laid a firm foundation for understanding where ELNHA phase II could focus attention. All the approaches and tools in phase II were as participatory as possible to ensure transfer of skills, and ownership by the LNHAs as recommended by ELNHA I.

##### 3.2.1 The Humanitarian Country Capacity Analysis (HUCOCA)

The HUCOCA was used to profile the country’s humanitarian capacity and LNHAs eco system. HUCOCA assessed among others, the capacity of government structures at local (district) and national levels in responding to and managing humanitarian actions. In addition, HUCOCA profiled the humanitarian capacity of local and national NGOs, which provided a benchmark for the strengthening of the capacities of LNHAs under the second phase to demonstrate capacity to respond to humanitarian crises. The capacity assessment was structured in 5 blocks or “capacity clusters”. Each block tackled a different dimension of the humanitarian work of the LNHA. In total 19 thematic areas were analyzed as illustrated in table 1 below:

The HUCOCA process therefore produced a humanitarian profile of Uganda and a set of recommendations to strengthen the local/ national humanitarian capacity. In addition, the HUCOCA recommendations provided the benchmark for capacity strengthening advisory extended to LNHAs by Oxfam.

Table 1: Thematic Areas for the Capacity Analysis of LNHAs

Capacity Cluster	Thematic Areas
Identity and Mission (Who & Why)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Values, mandate, and purpose</li><li>• Leadership and attitudes</li></ul>
Managerial Capacity (Hard how)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Finances</li><li>• Human Resources</li><li>• Logistics and time</li><li>• Analytical, strategizing, planning, and programming</li><li>• Programme management (including M&amp;E) and Knowledge management</li><li>• Networking and alliance building</li><li>• Governance and decision making; Organisational Structure and processes</li><li>• Networking and alliance building</li><li>• Communications</li><li>• Advocacy</li><li>• Risk Management</li><li>• Institutional Resilience</li></ul>
Approach and Commitment (Soft how)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gender Approach</li><li>• Conflict sensitivity</li><li>• Rights based Approach</li><li>• Connectedness, Resilience and DRR approach</li><li>• Highly vulnerable groups</li></ul>
Technical Expertise (what)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Competences in WASH, Competences in EFSL, Other competences</li><li>• Standards’ compliance and accountability</li><li>• Quality Control management</li></ul>
Size Capability (How much)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Size of the organization, finances, and human resources to scale up operations</li><li>• Geographical outreach</li></ul>

Based on the findings of the HUCOCA process, more specifically, the profiles of the NGOs/CBOs, ELNHA project staff reviewed those entities that would be further assessed to demonstrate capacity through direct cash transfer to respond to humanitarian crises. The following considerations were made;

- a. Humanitarian NGOs in the sense that they have clearly integrated the humanitarian mandate and are responding to humanitarian crises;
- b. NGOs/CBOs with relevant work streams in terms of preparedness, risk reduction and strengthening of people’s resilience; and
- c. NGOs/CBOs with potential to develop capacities and perform a stronger role in humanitarian preparedness and response.

3.2.2 The Risk Assessment Method Oxfam Novib (RAMON)

Oxfam conducted a risk assessment using the RAMON tool. RAMON is an organisational risk assessment tool that focuses on identifying associated risks of engagement with a (potential) partner organization. The tool consists of three sections as illustrated in the table 2 below;

Table 2: Risk Assessment Method Oxfam Novib (RAMON) Stages

<div><div></div><div>Quick Assessment</div></div> <div>Identify and describe the organizational risks of a partner based on a review of four key documents including strategic plan, legal registration, audited annual accounts and financial standards</div>	<div><div></div><div>Partner Risk Assessment</div></div> <div>Identify, describe, and score the organizational risks of a partner before engaging in a contractual relationship based on in-depth interview(s) with key staff of the partner organization, a review of organisational systems and procedures, and review of key documents.</div>	<div><div></div><div>Risk Management Response</div></div> <div>Identify and describe the Risk Management Response from the partner before engaging in a contractual relationship, based on the in-depth assessment in stage II</div>
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Source: RAMON Guidelines (<https://oxfam.app.box.com/s/sohr6xnhy29qyro93lpdlwoj4kxppsd>)

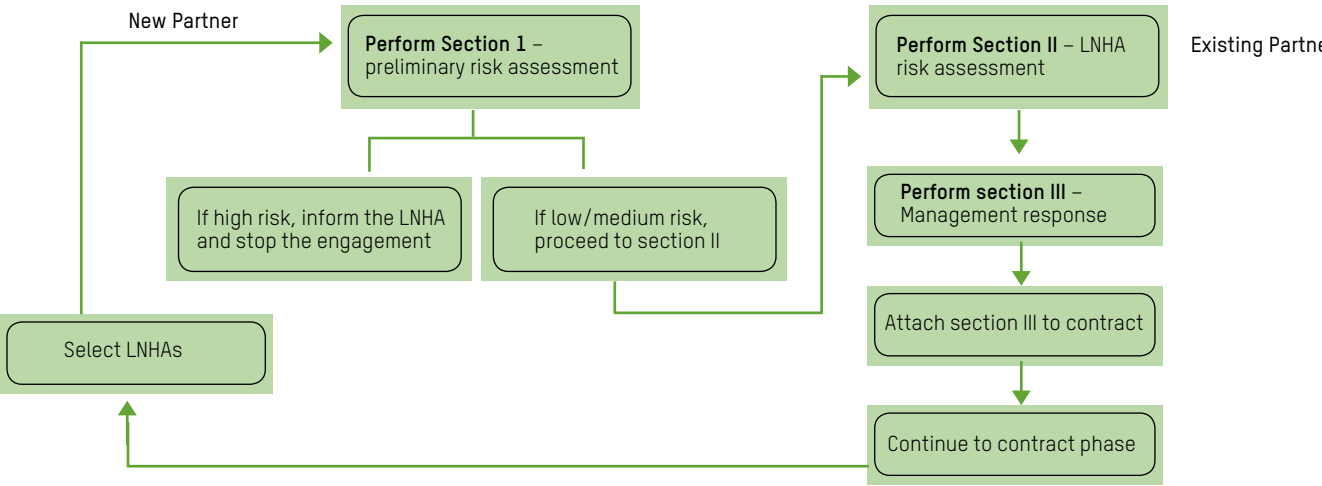
Overall, ELNHA project model applied the RAMON tool to identify what areas needed to be further strengthened to reposition the LNHA to lead the humanitarian responses. The process was jointly done by Oxfam (INGO) and the (potential) LNHA to identify and measure partner risks as well as determine if they may be avoided, reduced, spread, transferred, or prevented. Oxfam’s aim was to avoid a risk exposure that could have a significant impact on the achievement of the strategic objectives and encourage LNHA to modify or eliminate identifiable conditions and practices that may cause losses.

Oxfam conducted a RAMON on all prospective grantee LNHA and conducted annual updates either on fixed dates or wherever there were significant changes in the humanitarian and LNHA context. The method of understanding potential LNHA and investigating the risks was done as illustrated in figure 2 below through a combination of:

- Face to face interview(s) with LNHA staff;
- Analysis of LNHA’s systems and procedures;
- Observations by taking samples; and
- Analysis of key documents.

In some instances, Oxfam acquired independent references, through local governments and local networks, or technical reviews like a financial stock taking.

Figure 2: Illustration of the Risk Assessment Steps using the RAMON Tool



Source: RAMON Guidelines (<https://oxfam.app.box.com/s/sohr6xnhy29qyro93lpdlwoj4kxppsd>)

3.3 DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF CAPACITY STRENGTHENING OF LNHA

Following the RAMON exercise, LNHA and Oxfam agreed on a range of management actions to strengthen the LNHA’s capacities to engage in and sustain humanitarian response. The design of the capacity strengthening initiatives was facilitated by ELNHA project staff using a variety of approaches that transferred hands on humanitarian programming and response skills to LNHA. The approaches (illustrated in table 3 below) and tools used further ensured that LNHA are at the centre of decision-making and resource management.

Table 3: Approaches by ELNHA Project Model to Strengthen the Capacity of LNHA

<b>Formation of Consortia</b>  ELNHA encouraged and supported LNHA to build consortia that leverage their technical and geographical comparative advantage in responding to emergencies. In other instances, LNHA were supported to make use of existing community structures such as refugee committees and women groups to either respond or address emerging conflicts during humanitarian responses. An example of such approach is the work of LUBULE women’s group in Koboko that was involved in responding to Covid-19.	<b>Establishment and Operationalization of Humanitarian Platforms;</b>  ELNHA encouraged and supported LNHA to establish, run or join local, regional, and national platforms. These coordination platforms acted as spaces for humanitarian information sharing and dialogue. More specifically, coordination platforms became spaces for LNHA to amplify their voices and act as key players in the humanitarian eco-system. In many instances, coordination platforms enabled LNHA to assume leadership in local humanitarian responses. It is through the platforms that important decisions for instance on consortia funding or advocacy were initially discussed and agreed upon.
<b>Provision of humanitarian funding (HAF and HRGF):</b>  Through these financial facilities, LNHA were provided the opportunities to learn by doing. Annually the JAPS would be funded through the HAF and the LNHA funded through a competitive process to access the HRGF. In total, 13LNHA Benefited from the two humanitarian funding modalities.	<b>Participation in cash national working group:</b>  5 LNHA were invited to join the cash working group. Through this networking space, LNHA shared their learnings with wider networks. This was also used as an advocacy space with LNHA interfacing with local and international agencies for shared learning and joint influencing.
<b>Provision of Internal Cost Recovery to LNHA</b>  Through the HAF and HRGF funding modalities, LNHA were supported on how to plan and budget for Internal Cost Recovery (ICR) components. These funds were leveraged by LNHA to build their technical, organizational, and institutional capacities. ICR was used to develop/ or amend financial, human resources, procurement, and related policies. The LNHA learnt from the funding modalities how to apportion and plan for the ICR.	<b>Collaboration and Synergy with Local and Central Governments</b>  ELNHA supported LNHA to collaborate, synergize and strengthen links with local and central governments. The role of the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was found not to be understood by the LNHA. They assumed that their presence in the community would automatically translate into being implementing partners during humanitarian response. Through ELNHA, the LNHA organized series of events to support their engagement with OPM and UNHCR including direct requests for recognition of their contribution. At the height of the conflict between refugees and host communities, LNHA played crucial roles to engage host communities to harmoniously live with refugees. Their contribution in the task forces and response during Covid-19 caught the attention of the actors.



### Organizational and Institutional Development

ELNHA provided support to strengthen the boards of the LNHAs. Through orientation training and sharing of experiences, the board members of the LNHAs were able to appreciate their roles. LNHAs were also able to analyze their internal governance practices to ensure they are astute to the aspirations of the demands for effective humanitarian response.

### Quality Assurance Mechanism (QUAM) Process

The NGO QUAM was a self-regulation mechanism developed and administered by and for NGOs in Uganda to generally accepted standards and ethical conduct. QUAM sets principles and standards of behavior for responsible practices to protect the credibility and integrity of certified local and national humanitarian actors. With the QUAM process, local actors were assessed and certified. This certificate was also used as an attachment when applying to the OPM as a credible organization to respond to crisis.



LNHA and ELNHA staff interact with beneficiaries of the cash transfer programme in Kotido district

### 3.4 SUCCESS AND EMERGING GOOD PRACTICES UNDER STRENGTH

ELNHA was programmed as a scalable initiative to inform Oxfam's ways of partnering, building capacity, and responding to emergencies across the organisation. Beyond the confines of the organisation, ELNHA focused on supporting LNHAs to institutionalize localization principles and methods using a variety of tools and frameworks that have been profiled by respondents as lessons to learn from and thus emerging good practices.

#### 3.4.1 Joint Action Planning (JAP)

The Joint Action Planning (JAP) was designed both as a process and a tool for LNHAs and Oxfam project staff to conceptualize and co-create humanitarian responses that reposition LNHAs to lead. The process brought together various LNHAs through their platforms to collectively reflect on the country humanitarian context, systems, and capacity development needs of the various actors in the humanitarian eco-system. In addition, LNHAs through JAP processes were expected to meet the following objectives;

- Ensure functional structures at all levels for disaster management with up-to-date contingency plans and maps or assessments of hazards, risks, and vulnerabilities;
- Improve coordination and collaboration among LNHAs;
- Increase visibility and recognition of LNHAs and their regional platforms;
- Sensitize communities on disaster preparedness and management, and provide them opportunities to express their voices;
- LNHAs mobilizing resources – internal and external – to lead and deliver humanitarian preparedness and response;
- Establish partnership models with other actors, promoting complementarity in programming and advocacy; and
- Monitor/ or document achievements and impact.

LNHAs in each ELNHA district or region met once in a year in a physical location to prepare joint action plans (JAPs).

JAPs were mainly based on findings from a hazard risk and vulnerability assessment as well as from the HUCOCA that were highly participatory following the formation of the platforms. Through their own knowledge, LNHAs set down in the JAPs the key humanitarian actions to address to make the local humanitarian system more effective and inclusive.

They then jointly prioritized capacity development and advocacy activities, contributing to the two ELNHA components of STRENGTH and VOICE.

#### 3.4.2 Humanitarian Action Fund (HAF)

In April 2019, Oxfam through the ELNHA project established and operationalized the HAF as a funding facility managed by LNHAs themselves to support the humanitarian activities prioritized during the JAP process. At the subregional level, the HAF was managed by a steering committee of LNHAs and hosted at one of the LNHAs with which Oxfam had a contractual arrangement. At the national level, the HAF was managed by the Humanitarian Platform for LNHAs in Uganda, launched in 2018 and hosted at the Uganda National NGO Forum.

LNHAs shaped the HAF with Oxfam's support, developing operational guidelines to define aspects such as governance and management modalities, compliance requirements for application to the HAF and implementation of HAF-funded activities. Shaping the HAF happened more or less in parallel with shaping and strengthening the platforms.

How JAP-HAF worked

- a. **Annual development of a JAP:** this process brought all LNHAs together to reflect on the HRV assessment and the district contingency plan to identify the gaps, areas of coordination and suggest areas for advocacy. This was done through a workshop arrangement. During Covid-19, the JAP development was remotely conducted under the leadership of support partners and the HAF committee members. They used self-designed questionnaires to generate member ideas and contributions.
- b. **HAF committee prioritization and Funding:** committee members took an in-depth look at the JAP priorities as suggested by all the platform members and allocated funding based on the priorities. This was followed by development of a work plan using the JAP and assigning activities to LNHAs based on their capacities. An annual work plan, budget and concept notes were then submitted to Oxfam for review and final approval before the HAF Committee awards funding to the LNHA.
- c. **Funding from other Sources:** the HAF steering committee sought funding to support the other non-funded activities from other INGOs and donors where possible. Support partners (LNHAs with contractual obligation with Oxfam) followed up with all the LNHAs who got assigned activities by the committee to ensure better use of the funds and quality implementation of the JAP.
- d. **Reporting:** the support partner was responsible for all reporting of the JAP activities. On a quarterly basis, the HAF committee received reports from the support partner on performance of the JAP. A quarterly report was submitted to Oxfam through the support partner.
- e. **Synergy and Collaboration:** the support partner equally went into activity-based memorandum of understanding with all the LNHAs who were responsible for implementing the JAP.

3.4.3 Humanitarian Response Grant Facility (HRGF)

For Oxfam to demonstrate accountable partnerships, ELNHA made resources available to LNHAs through the HRGF. The HRGF mechanism in phase II was designed and rolled out in 2019 to support LNHAs financially and technically to take on greater leadership roles in responding to emergencies in their communities. Through ELNHA, the HRGF highlighted ‘an important story about how funding opportunities can not only support, but drive, diverse local and national actors to be better equipped and positioned to lead humanitarian responses’.

LNHAs that accessed HRGF funds were selected through a competitive process. Oxfam would release a request for applications stipulating the length of responses and the guidelines for application. A RAMON processes described in section 2.2 above would follow once the successful applicants had been identified and notified.

The following process was executed to grant LNHAs funding through the HRGF;

HRGF provided LNHAs with the opportunity to access funding for;

- Strengthening their capacities to independently design and implement responses, including conducting needs assessments, designing project proposals, managing funds, monitoring, and evaluating the responses, and meeting reporting compliance requirements;
- Demonstrating their capacity to independently design and manage response programs, aimed at increasing direct access to other sources of funding (national and international) – for the same response and/or for future responses; and
- Providing learning to the wider humanitarian community on funding modalities that meet both objectives of enabling quality responses as well as facilitating leadership of local actors

Table 4: A step by Step Process to Access Support from the HRGF

No	Activity	Rationale
1	Oxfam to develop a call for applications for responding to crisis. This stipulates how much is available for the entire call and requirements for the call.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To ensure local actors get accustomed to applying for grants independently</li><li>• To generate a selection of pre-qualified LNHAs</li></ul>
2	Development of a criteria to use for selection of potential grantees once applications are submitted.	This criteria is used for ensuring fairness, quality, and transparency in the process. It also enables LNHAs get used to applying for grants on their own.
3	Conduct a RAMON;	To identify the areas that require strengthening before and during the implementation of humanitarian actions
4	Provide feedback call to the successful applicants	To provide opportunity to improve on the applications and realign the plans for better response
5	Successful LNHAs together with Oxfam go through the joint action programming	To rationalize the various interests and generate actions that are relevant to context and within the capacity of the LNHAs
6	Successful grantees/consortia enter into a contractual agreement with Oxfam	As a prerequisite for Oxfam to provide funding, the partnership principles are well followed.
7	Continuous technical support is extended to the successful LNHAs	This is essential for bridging the identified gaps through the RAMON process
8	Learning review workshop with the participating LNHAs	<p>To review the implementation experience and identify improvements for future responses.</p> <p>Real Time Review was among the most practiced common review method for the different response grants.</p>

Overall, the HRGF process of proposal formulation, planning, discussion, and negotiation was commended by LNHAs as one of the biggest opportunity under ELNHA. HRGF was praised for its flexibility and focus on strengthening the capacities of LNHAs including through the various learning visits between the different humanitarian platforms. In addition, the process of grant application was highlighted as a stamp throughout ELNHA and a true reflection of Oxfam’s commitment to demonstrate the localization agenda. The HRGF was highly regarded by all the LNHAs as it enhanced their confidence to be able to respond to humanitarian crises and created a sense of local ownership for leading emergency response in their contexts.

There were specific key considerations that ELNHA put into play for a funding mechanism such as HRGF to meet the localization principles;

- a. All grants had to adapt to fit the local context bearing in mind the nature of the humanitarian crisis, the timelines to respond and technical support required by the LNHAs;
- b. The amount of funding requested for had to fit the technical strengths of the individual organizations and the humanitarian response;
- c. Where existing LNHA capacity and experience were low, the focus was put on technical capacity strengthening and support to plan and deliver good quality responses;



- d. Where the existing LNHA capacity and experience was higher, more emphasis was given to preparing organizations to access direct donor funding in future, or to supporting the further development of their influencing capabilities to access funding;
- e. All the local actors who had capacity and those who did not have sufficient capacity to respond on their own, were encouraged to apply in consortia. Consortia approach was a preferred model to strengthen collaboration and coordination among LNHAs and facilitate peer learning.
- f. ELNHA engaged with the LNHAs to lead the review of their responses through real time review process; and the peer support enabled better reaction to feedback.

Some of the LNHAs would seek Oxfam's support during the implementation of the response actions; depending on the context, Oxfam's decision was to let LNHAs find solutions themselves as part of their learning. This triggered LNHAs to become more resourceful and, in some cases, opt for consortia and collaboration among local actors to leverage each other's strength – HRGF Learning Brief

### CASE Study of HRGF Support to LNHAs to Respond to Covid-19

On the onset of Covid-19, it was a great space to demonstrate Oxfam's commitment to trust LNHAs to respond to crisis. In any case, Oxfam just like other INGOs was affected by the lockdown restrictions and desired to use the presence of LNHAs in refugee settlements to respond. LNHAs were supported to take up new roles, such as 'supporting food distributions and organizing radio talks shows as learning platforms for disseminating Covid-19 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). With support from ELNHA, refugee-led organizations were able to translate Covid-19 standard operating procedures into languages spoken by the refugees, and also distributed soap and masks to the most vulnerable refugee populations.

Following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in Uganda, ELNHA project issued calls for proposals, to support a demand driven process targeting LNHAs that are capable of designing and implementing local responses to mitigate the spread of the pandemic in refugee settlements across the country. LNHAs such as YSAT, I CAN, PALM CORPs, all located in West Nile were supported through cash transfers to tackle misinformation and communicate the measures to stop the spread of Covid-19 in refugee settlements, including in Rhino and Bidi Bidi with over 500,000 refugees.



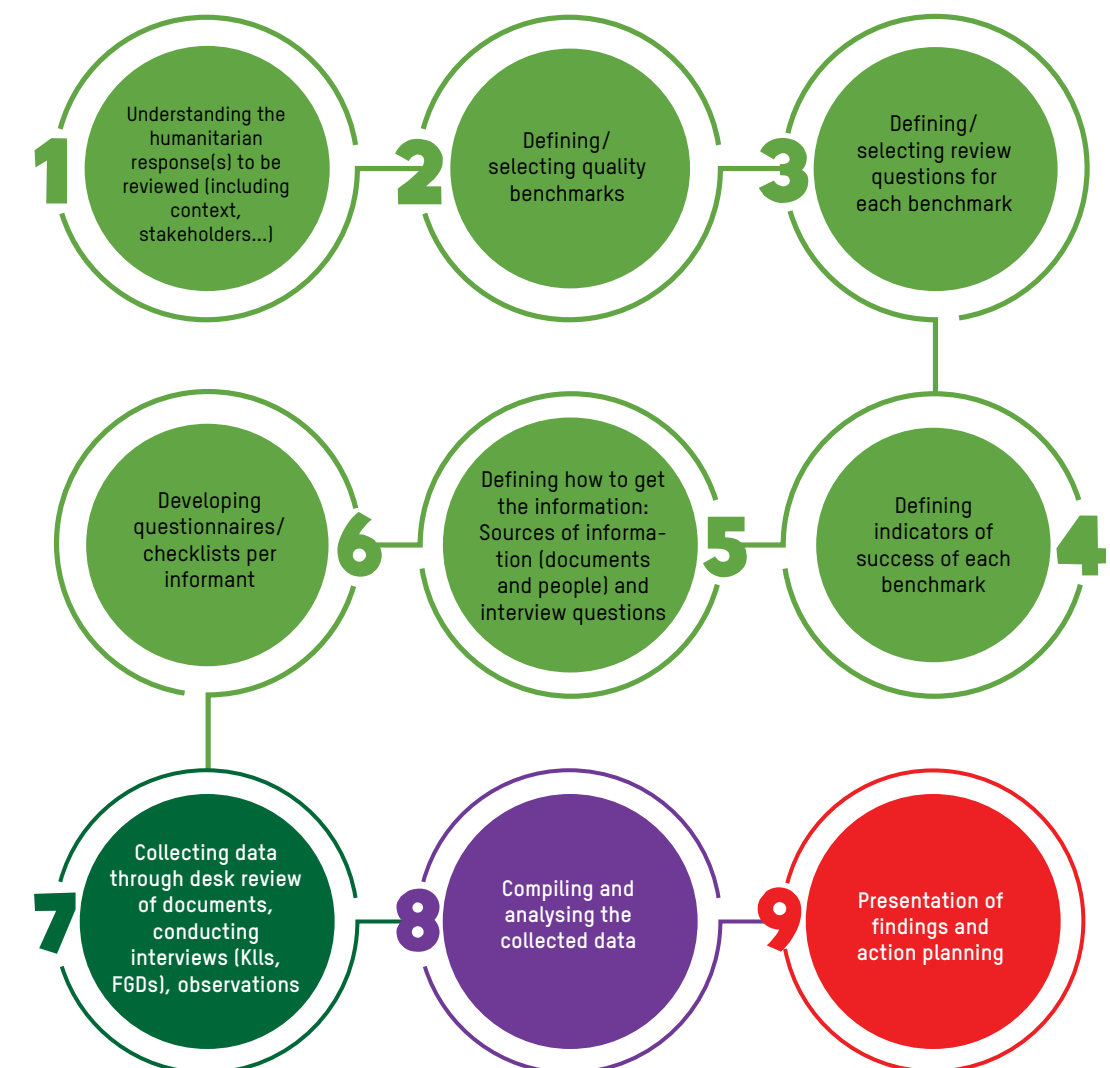
Beneficiaries of the ELNHA cash transfer programme participate in a cash for work initiative implemented by Palm Corps in Rhino Refugee Settlement Camp

### 3.4.4 Real Time Review as a component of strength for LNHAs

The ELNHA project facilitated light touch, modified "real time reviews" (RTR-lite) of HRGF-funded responses performed as peer-reviews. The RTR-lite was an innovative way to foster self-reflection and was only possible because of the great trust that was existing among LNHAs. Real Time Reviews are an Oxfam monitoring, evaluation, and learning methodology, which takes place 6-8 weeks into a response, to support the quality of responses. The methodology was adapted to be used by, and contribute to, local actor leadership. Key to such a 'RTR Lite' was joint reflections and definition among local actors of 'what a quality response was' and what indicators would be relevant in each specific context and provide an opportunity for staff from different organizations operating in the domestic humanitarian sector to share experiences, challenges, and opportunities.

ELNHA project staff together with LNHAs participated in the real time review process. The definition of quality and effectiveness in the specific context was based on the Core Humanitarian Standards but was also contextualized by the review team as part of the RTR process. The review team then provided immediate feed-back and recommendations (usually by day 6) which were immediately translated in a practical action plan (also usually by day 6). At the end of the RTR process, an Action Plan and Summary of findings and recommendations were produced. An RTR lite was not an in-depth impact assessment, not an alternative to project monitoring, not a technical evaluation. The RTR Lite was more focused on the process and learning. The table below illustrates the steps for an RTR;

Figure 3: Step by Step Process for an RTR under the ELNHA Project Model





### 3.4.5 Cash Transfer Programming (CTP)

Oxfam through the ELNHA project adopted the use of CTP as a response mechanism for crisis affected people. This was to enable crisis affected people to make greater choices, enable LNHA to deliver support faster, and a way of empowering crisis affected people.

The ELNHA project promotes the adoption and scaling up of the use of CTP as a means of delivering assistance to crisis affected people. the use of CTP in delivering response provided an opportunity for crisis affected people to have a wide range of choices and access dignified response. Cash modalities increase empowerment opportunities, decision making and promotion of local markets – CTP Standard Operating Procedures

#### Preparing LNHA for CTP Approaches in ELNHA

- CTP capacity assessment was conducted among all LNHA to ascertain the level of understanding, availability of staff and interest to implement CTP interventions.
- Oxfam then developed Standard Operating Procedures for CTP to provide general guidelines in the implementation of CTP
- Oxfam conducted a CTP training to strengthen the capacities of LNHA to design and deliver humanitarian responses using CTP
- Encouraged and supported LNHA using the CTP approach to join the Cash Working Group (CWG)
- CTP grant; towards the end of the project, local actors were granted an opportunity to use their skills to compete for CTP grants. This grant was able to test the LNHA readiness to use the approach for quick and timely response. An estimated €100,000 was given to several LNHA under 4 consortia to implement CTP.

Through beneficiary selection and verification, Cash for Work and multipurpose cash interventions were granted to various categories of people as guided by the Office of the Prime Minister and UNHCR. ELNHA project was able to support various local actors to use cash transfer programming as a modality for delivering humanitarian assistance following training and provision of tools and CTP standard operating procedures. This approach was highly backed by the MEB (Multipurpose Expenditure basket) reports and followed core humanitarian principles surrounding the use of cash as an approach to responding to crisis. By the time ELNHA was coming to an end, several local actors understood and had put in practice the processes required to implement CTP during crises.

A major learning was, 'how in the absence of traditionally used private sector companies to support cash delivery, Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA) collaborated with LNHA for management of unconditional cash transfers'. A post distribution monitoring exercise often followed CTP interventions to support, monitor appropriateness, relevance, and timeliness of response.

### CASE Study of How CTP was Applied to Support Specific Needs of Crisis Affected People

"For those that received multipurpose cash, post distribution monitoring enabled us to check how they utilized their money. We observed that some used the money to invest in businesses, support their medical needs and others to construct houses. It was clear to us that CTP once understood by LNHA will be well embraced" – Christine Akech, CTP coordinator, Oxfam



Susan Dawa (not real names) shows off her huge smile as she makes a ROLEX (Ugandan chapati -naan like-rolled with an omelette inside. ) for her customer who is ready to pay Ugx 1,000/= for each roll. She sells a roll between 1000-2000 depending on the number of eggs in the roll.

Susan Dawa is a beneficiary of the ELNHA funded cash transfer programming implemented by Palm Corps, PEP and VIFOH, members of a consortium that offered business skills training, provided start-up capital to support the beneficiaries to start businesses. Before, then, Suzan entirely depended on the refugee handouts to support herself and 4 children.

### 3.5 CONCLUSION

To ensure LNHA lead in humanitarian preparedness and response in Uganda, Oxfam enhanced their capacities using a variety of tools including the HUCOCA, RAMON, JAP and RTR, among others. To test the capacities, LNHA were supported through HAF and HRGF to manage resources through funding, support to human capacity, knowledge generation and usage, expertise and strengthen implementation according to the Core Humanitarian Standards and other international humanitarian principles and standards. Once their capacities had been strengthened, LNHA were able to collaborate and coordinate among themselves, with other sector stakeholders and with the host communities for more effective humanitarian preparedness and response. Finally, the Strength element of the model supported LNHA to adopt the most effective forms of humanitarian response such as cash transfer programming that support the agency and resilience of affected people.



4. ELEMENT II: VOICE - LOCAL HUMANITARIAN ACTORS THROUGH VOICE AND POWER TO INFLUENCE THE HUMANITARIAN AGENDA IN UGANDA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

To ensure LNHAs play leading roles in humanitarian action and influence the eco system, ELNHA supported LNHAs to have the voice and power to influence the humanitarian agenda in their country, integrating the views and needs of affected people. To this effect, the project invested in ensuring LNHAs are well coordinated and influence the humanitarian agenda to be more inclusive of affected people’s needs and LNHAs mobilize themselves and obtain resources for self-designed or co-created preparedness and response activities.

With slow but steady shift in the humanitarian structures, LNHAs started attracting resources by forming consortia, engaging in sector working groups and twinning with other agencies to mobilize resources for humanitarian action. They further strengthened their internal governance processes to be more supportive of the voice of LNHAs in humanitarian action.

To further be prepared to influence the humanitarian agenda, the LNHAs established and or joined sub national and national humanitarian coordination platforms. The idea of platforms was first introduced in 2018 which brought LNHAs together for more coordinated influencing of the humanitarian eco system. Through the platforms, influencing the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) became even possible. The LNHAs went beyond national frontiers to specific global spaces where the debate on localization takes place, namely in the Grand Bargain and Inter-Agency Steering Committee (IASC), as well other countries supporting locally led responses demanding for recognition.

With this newfound coordination and collaboration among LNHAs, Oxfam as an INGO relinquished further control of humanitarian decision-making and fund management to local actors. Other organizations provided direct funding to the LNHAs based on their strong coordination mechanisms.

For example: In October 2020, Vision For Humanity (ViFoH) secured a multi-year project from the European Union to respond to the increased environmental degradation and to promote alternative energy sources in refugee hosting districts in West Nile, Uganda.

From its formation, ViFoH has mainly implemented activity-based and short-term grants. This slowed down organizational progress due to high staff turnover, and poor sustainability. ViFoH received internal capacity strengthening under ELNHA project and participated for the first time in a consortium arrangement to provide humanitarian response. The consortium arrangement under ELNHA facilitated peer learning, systems strengthening and project experience.

Table 5: Examples of Further Funding Accessed by LNHAs Beyond ELNHA

Sn	LNHA	Source/Donor	Project	Amount
1	Vision For Humanity	ACUMEN	Agricultural Extension Services - Arua	USD 20,000
2	Palm Corps	EU – DINU	Livelihood – Arua	UGX 340,750,000
3	NUWOSO	UNASO	HIV/AIDS	USD 25,000
4	NUWOSO	UNDP	Livelihoods - Agago	USD 20,000
5	Vision For Humanity	EU	Renewable Energy (In Bidibidi)	EURO 1,000,000
6	ADINGON	DGF	Election Observation Collection (In Arua)	UGX 20,000,000
7	ADINGON	Inspectorate Of Government	Accountability Monitoring Of Government Programs - Arua	UGX 90,000,000
8	ADINGON	GIZ	Coordination Mechanism System In Arua Region - Arua	UGX 124,000,000
9	ADINGON	DGF	Civil Society Health And Resilience Program	UGX 1,800,000
10	FOKAPAWA	EU	Advocacy On Issues Of Environment And Protected Areas - Kidepo	UGX 32,000,000
11	NUWOSO	USAID	HIV AIDS – Abim	UGX 48,000,000
12	NUWOSO	USAID	Water & Sanitation For Agago & Lamwo	UGX 56,000,000

As part of self-mobilization, and to promote alignment of humanitarian interventions with government systems, procedures, policies as well as donor funding streams, ELNHA through HAF supported LNHAs to invest in contingency planning. This was as a result of the joint Action plans that prioritized the hazard risk and vulnerability assessment, profiled the role of districts and sub county disaster management committees, and pushed for dissemination of early warning information to the communities.

4.2 DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF THE VOICE ELEMENT

After formation of national and sub national platforms, inclusive of all key actors in the humanitarian eco-system, Joint action plans(JAP) and guiding documents were developed. For West Nile, Karamoja and Acholi sub regions, their platforms instituted steering committees with clear terms of reference to guide the platforms. For the national humanitarian platform, a guiding document was developed and approved by a steering committee. The agenda of the JAP was aligned to the needs and voices of the affected communities and the contribution of the LNHAs. Beyond formation of the platforms, ELNHA facilitated development of joint advocacy plans for the platforms. These advocacy plans were used to engage multi-stakeholder agencies, donors, INGOs in support of localization of humanitarian aid. The project further promoted gender equality and women’s empowerment through the strengthening of women-led and women rights organizations and networks. The table below highlights the different platforms and networks that were established/ or supported through ELNHA:



Refugees in Bidibidi settlement are sensitized about the Covid-19 prevention and management by Ojwok (not real names) a refugee volunteering with YSAT

Table 6: Sub-national and National Humanitarian Platforms and Networks

Platform	Membership	Objectives
National Humanitarian Platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sub regional platforms.</li><li>• NHAs</li><li>• UNNGOF</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure coordination at the national level with other actors.</li><li>• Representation of the LNHAs at the national level</li><li>• Popularization of LNHAs work at the national level</li></ul>
West Nile Humanitarian Platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• LNHAs in West Nile (CBOs, Refugee &amp; women led organisations, L/NGOs, District NGO Networks, &amp; media associations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sharing humanitarian Information</li><li>• Learning from each other,</li><li>• Strengthening the coordination among local LNHAs to promote partnerships</li></ul>
Karamoja Alliance for Local and National Humanitarian Platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All the LNHAs in Karamoja</li><li>• Media</li><li>• DDMCs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sharing humanitarian Information</li><li>• Learning from each other,</li><li>• Strengthening the coordination among local LNHAs to promote partnerships</li></ul>
Platform form Acholi Local National humanitarian Actors is the right name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All the LNHAs in Acholi</li><li>• Media</li><li>• DDMCs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sharing humanitarian Information</li><li>• Learning from each other,</li><li>• Strengthening the coordination among local LNHAs to promote partnerships</li></ul>
The Charter For Change Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Signatories and Endorsers of the C4C</li><li>• Allies for the C4C</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To advocate for localization of humanitarian action, information sharing, engaging stakeholders’ participation, coordination of actions of L/NGOs in aid delivery to affected people and communities</li></ul>
Cash Transfer Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• UN agencies (WFP chairs the group)</li><li>• INGOS</li><li>• ECHO</li><li>• Telecommunication</li><li>• Private Sector and LNHAs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To influence the CTP policies in Uganda</li><li>• Market assessment</li><li>• Setting the expenditure basket – standards used by CTP members to determine how much money should be advanced to those in need across the various needs.</li></ul>



The humanitarian platform and network concept was an innovative conceptualization under the ELNHA project model and below are some of the distinct features that underpinned the humanitarian platforms;

- a. Through these platforms, the concept of LNHA's working through consortia was piloted, providing a stage for Oxfam to support more collaboration among LNHA's. Beyond access to funding opportunities, humanitarian platforms and networks enabled the sharing of humanitarian information across the membership and strengthened coordination and collaboration among local LNHA's, thus promoting partnerships.
- b. Comprehensive terms of reference (guidelines) were drawn, discussed, and approved by the members to guide the day-to-day operations as well as management and governance of the platform.
- c. Each Platform was supported to design and operationalize a website as a medium for amplifying the work of the LNHA's and sharing information and experiences.
- d. Each Platform was hosted by one of the members, consensually agreed upon based on a member's humanitarian profile and capacity to coordinate others.
- e. Each platform formed a Steering Committee constituted of between 9 - 11 elected members.

Between April 2019 and Dec 2020, four rounds of HRGF were conducted and supported a total of 17 locally led humanitarian responses including 11 that were implemented through consortia. ELNHA provided grants to local actors up to \$500,000 and through other co-created projects, LNHA's have obtained over \$1,600,000 million from various donors and international agencies .

Community Empowerment for Rural Transformation (CEFORD), one of the local humanitarian actors supported by ELNHA to respond to the refugee crisis in West Nile was approached by government of Uganda through the Office of the Prime Minister to facilitate stakeholder engagements to calm growing tensions between refugees and host communities. CEFORD engaged and supported the local cultural institution (Rubakhali) to meet the host communities and sensitize them on peaceful co-existence

Youth Social Advocacy Team (YSAT) is a local humanitarian organisation founded and run by refugees mainly from South Sudan and operates in Rhino Refugee settlement in Northern Uganda. ELNHA project supported YSAT to participate in the South Sudan revitalized peace process. The refugee-led organisation convened community dialogues in Rhino Camp to raise awareness about the revitalized peace process and communicate entry points for their participation. Through these dialogues, the two principal conflicting communities – the Nuer and the Dinka tribes were brought together and counselled on peaceful co-existence.



4.2.1 Supporting Refugees as Agents of Peace

In many refugee settlements, especially in Northern Uganda, tensions and conflicts constantly emerged between refugees themselves, and with the host communities. The ELNHA project model was designed to strengthen the capacity of LNHA's with a specific focus on refugee-led organisations to broker sustainable peace, first in the settlements and later in their home countries on return. Oxfam deliberately provided direct technical and financial support to LNHA's and refugee-led organisations to address the causes of conflict among the refugees and with the host communities. Some of the activities supported included mediation or dispute resolution relating to incidents of violence and supporting refugees to engage in ongoing peace processes.

Table 7: Challenges Encountered in Supporting the Voice and Power of LNHA's to Influence the Humanitarian Agenda

Challenges	Adaptation
Knowledge about localization has not fully permeated to LNHA's , leaving the localization discussions to INGOs	Restructuring the local and national humanitarian platforms to play a strengthened expressive advocacy function
LNHA's are still more on the receiving side especially funding for humanitarian responses as opposed to participating in design and priority setting.	The HAF and HRGF helped to address that but the need for civil society country based pooled fund is still relevant. Equally so the involvement of civil society onto the CRRF was able to bring at least one voice to this influential space.
Localization policies and strategies have been designed at the international level with minimal reflection of local contexts.	The charter for change working group was able to bring the localization conversation as close to the crisis affected people as possible. Oxfam further gave up their seats at various platforms to ensure LNHA's are visible and included where it matters. This was not always easy as events and planning always has more people involved in the planning process.

4.3 CONCLUSION

Oxfam through the ELNHA model demonstrated that given space and capacity, LNHA's can play a substantive role in humanitarian programming, coordination and influencing. This element of the ELNHA project model recognized, respected, and strengthened the leadership role of LNHA's in humanitarian action, with evidence of inclusion and impact for the affected persons. Beyond pooled funds for LNHA's, the ELNHA model gradually involved LNHA's in conceptualization of humanitarian responses and implementation of interventions and profiled them across the national and global humanitarian eco-system. The platforms and networks established leveraged the comparative advantage and promoted synergetic relationships of the various LNHA's hence walking the talk and amplifying the slogan – “as local as possible, as international, as necessary”. The coordination through consortia approach of delivering aid enabled the LNHA's to work better together, to generate contribution from the crisis affected people and share data across consortia members.



5. ELEMENT III: SPACE - GLOBAL ACTORS, DONORS AND INGOS SUPPORT THE SPACE AND LEADERSHIP ROLES OF LNHAS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

For a long time, the humanitarian space was predominantly occupied by global actors including donors, UN agencies and INGOs. Following the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS), several commitments were made to among others, reduce barriers that prevent organisations and donors from partnering with local and national responders in humanitarian responses. Oxfam as part of the signatories to the C4C, and working through ELNHA, brought to the fore, local, and national actors in humanitarian planning, coordination, and delivery. This element of the ELNHA project model therefore highlights the extent, and the lessons emerging from Oxfam’s localization actions designed to bring to the fore, LNHAs to national and global humanitarian spaces. In addition, this model further highlighted and explained how Oxfam shifted its financing and partnership policies, systems, and practices to ‘walk the talk’ of localization and reposition LNHAs to lead in humanitarian preparedness and response.

5.2 SUPPORT TO THE SPACE AND LEADERSHIP ROLE OF LNHAS

To ensure LNHAs occupy spaces and be visible, the project focused on ensuring that

- National and international humanitarian donors, governments, and INGOs demonstrate accountable partnership with LNHAs
- National and international humanitarian donors, and INGOs allocate resources to support LNHA initiatives, and governments and INGOs allocate resources to support LNHA initiatives.
- International NGOs use their influence in support of strengthening the role and leadership of LNHA.

The formation and operationalization of humanitarian platforms and networks and especially the national humanitarian platform, was a basis for voices of the LNHAs in Uganda to be heard. Beyond voice, the concept of humanitarian platforms and networks provided ELNHA with the opportunity to support LNHAs to intensify advocacy to have donors, INGOs and UN agencies and to appreciate the role of LNHAs in responding to crises. By doing this, ELNHA was facilitating the creation of space at the local and national levels for LNHAs to lead and influence the humanitarian agenda as well as lobby for the inclusion of representation of local actors in such spaces including the CRRF Steering group<sup>6</sup> (currently represented by the chair of the national Humanitarian platform).

In Uganda, conversations on shaping refugee responses happens at the CRRF and for the LNHA to be better positioned to influence the refugee agenda, their presence at such spaces was vital. Through ELNHA, the national humanitarian platform was able to represent civil society actors at the CRRF steering group alongside local governments that form a large part of the LNHAs. This representation gave opportunity to LNHAs to speak with other humanitarian actors at the same level.

To further support the leadership role of LNHAs, a joint agency impact assessment was conducted to measure the capacity of national local responders and thereafter, an issue paper developed to propose harmonized capacity strengthening initiatives, including common benchmarks for local and national responders to facilitate greater partnership and funding opportunities. An analysis of 2016 and 2017 financial flows in Uganda was also published to contribute to MoFPED’s building of a future financial tracking mechanism whose recommendations were well presented and actions integrated into the CRRF road map.

<sup>6</sup> The CRRF is an important multi-stakeholder group that steers and supports the application of CRRF, under the leadership of The Office of the Prime Minister.

Investment in research in order to provide evidence to international actors on the role of LNHAs. To this effect, Oxfam worked together with the CRRF Secretariat to conduct studies into tracking the funding flows in Uganda to local humanitarian actors. These money talks reports were able to establish a baseline from which international actors could make progress. This analysis further provided useful insights into the nature of LNHAs’ share in the financing and delivery of international humanitarian assistance at the national level. Through the money talks report 1 and 2, LNHAs were then confident to engage the UN agencies through the resident coordinator and other signatories to the charter for change on the realities that they were experiencing daily as fast responders during crisis. Through the various platforms and networks, LNHAs are constantly reminding INGOs, donors, and UN agencies about the importance of involving and supporting local organisations.

At the global level, ELNHA continued to lobby for implementation of the localization agenda through policy input into the inter-agency standing committee principles and speaking events by project team.

In April 2020, a total of 35 LNHAs under the Charter for Change working group in Uganda wrote to the UN Resident Coordinator requesting her support in taking forward the commitments made at the global level, as well as findings from previous efforts in Uganda, to engage with LNHAs on the COVID-19 responses and the Global Humanitarian Response Plan revision process.





### 5.3 SUCCESS AND EMERGING GOOD PRACTICES

#### 5.3.1 The Charter for Change Working Group in Uganda.

In November 2019, inspired by the work of the global Charter for Change network, Oxfam through ELNHA initiated dialogues between Local and National Humanitarian actors, and likeminded INGOs to bring about change in the humanitarian system in Uganda. These dialogues gave birth to what came to be known as the Charter for Change Working Group in Uganda. Two women-led LNHAs – the African Women and Youth Action for Development (AWYAD) and Community Empowerment for Rural Development (CEFORD) were nominated to chair and co-chair the working group respectively.

As the C4C progressed, chairing of the space was taken on by local actors such as CEFORD for the West Nile Humanitarian Platform and Street Child for the South West Humanitarian platform. The C4C working group in Uganda has had several achievements such as the Covid-19 Advocacy letter that was sent to the UN agencies for recognition and mobilized local actors support prior to its submission.

The network has further prioritized making endorsement to the Charter for Change a national movement and to date there are 46 endorsements from Local and National NGOs<sup>7</sup> in Uganda. These have been complemented by International NGOs signatories and allies in trying to shape the agenda on the localization of humanitarian aid.

A major contribution to the success of the charter for change was the sign off of the terms of reference by top leadership of the organizations that were willing to be part of this space. This gave momentum to the future meetings that happen bi-monthly and are coordinated by the chair. The journey may have just begun, and the road may still be at the start, however, the development and adoption of the terms of reference, drawing of an action plan, electing an all women leadership, promoting inclusivity and diversity to the network, soliciting support of the top leadership from their respective organizations, popularization of the C4C, attending bi-monthly meetings, hosting the meetings and development of joint agency influencing products will keep the movement alive.



<sup>7</sup> Notable among these are the Catholic Relief Services, Care International, Cordaid International, War Child Holland, Dan Church Aid, Plan International, Urban Refugees, Trocaire, World Vision, Danish Refugee Council, Xavier Project, Johanniter International Assistance and Malteser International.

The Charter for Change Working Group commemorated the 2020 World Humanitarian Day through a week-long series of activities under the theme #LocalHeroes. The suggested activities were then shared with potential local and international humanitarian actors to solicit for funds to enable the execution of the stated activities. A series of dialogues were held in 4 regions of Uganda with the 5th dialogue being held at national level on the WHD itself. An Op-ed by the charter for change chair was published in one National newspaper (the Daily Monitor) and letter sent out to the UN resident coordinator to demand that LNHAs are given the recognition earned due to their contribution during a crisis.

#### Case Study of how the Charter for Change Working Group provided leadership for events on the world humanitarian day 2020.

The members of C4C organized a series of dialogues under the theme local humanitarian heroes where they were able to showcase their work. The dialogues enhanced awareness on localization and the role and leadership of Local and National Humanitarian Actors (LNHAs). They further contributed to the renewed commitment to support localization by UN Agencies and INGOs who participated<sup>8</sup>. From the dialogue, ELNHA has demonstrated that early planning among the working group members enables mobilization of many actors, who share roles and activities so that different members are part of the events. In addition, these arrangements enable quick action and support from INGOs especially towards funding of some of the earmarked activities.

#### 5.3.2 Donors increasing funding to LNHAs.

With local actors more organized in consortia and better coordinated in the platforms, they become more visible. The LNHAs were present at the Cash Working Group, already they were presented at the CRRF and the advocacy letters sent to donors, UN agencies and INGOs signed by LNHAs were getting them more visibility. As a result, there was increment in funding to LNHAs. Approximately USD 2million (USD) was received by the local actors from agencies like USAID, EU, UNASO, UNDP, TROCAIRE, DGF, Oxfam, GIZ and share trust (see table 6 above). The tools used by ELNHA were also shared with other INGOs and agencies such as The Share Trust that were keen to leverage and learn from the ELNHA model.

In October 2020, the World Bank recognized two members of the Uganda National Humanitarian Platform – Care and Assistance for Forced Migrants (CAFOMI) and Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation (TPO) – as outstanding local actors and invited them to apply for a grant to enhance district capacity to prevent and respond to Gender Based Violence and Violence Against Children.

While traditionally the World Bank funding is reserved for governments and related development initiatives, this recognition of the national actors came as a result of several engagements at national and global levels:

- The chairperson of the humanitarian platform steering committee represents LNHAs in the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) steering committee, which is hosted by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) with UN agency representatives, two refugee representatives INGOs, WB, Private sector, Government MDAs.
- The work of the Charter for Change working group and Grand Bargain work streams, where the chairperson of the National humanitarian platform is a member, also cannot be ignored in contributing to increased visibility at the global and local level, and getting opportunities to present the work of the national and local actors.

A series of influencing and lobby activities can collectively be attributed to this success. The humanitarian platform (supported by ELNHA) that brings together LNHAs and is represented on the CRRF steering group did a lot to increase the exposure of the work of the LNHAs. This steering group with representation from the WB and other donor agencies has worked to influence increased visibility and funding for local actors. Three (03) letters written by the C4C leadership lobbying the World Bank and UN Country Representative highlighting the capacities of LNHAs were disseminated and further engagements by the C4C working group including Global Refugee summits in Geneva in 2018.

<sup>8</sup> Some of the actors that participated in the 2020 WHD included Trocaire, AWYAD, OXFAM, Lutheran World Federation, national humanitarian platform, Street Child, NUWOSO, CARITAS, CEFORD ADINGON Church Aid, Plan International, Welthungerhilfe, Care International, GIZ, World Vision, WFP, and UNHCR were among the actors that took lead in organizing the events and attending other events.

5.4 CHALLENGES AND ADAPTATION RELATED TO SUPPORTING THE SPACE AND LEADERSHIP ROLES OF LNHAS

In August 2020, Community Empowerment for Creative Innovation (CECI) for the first-time secured membership in a global movement of civil society organizations and became the first Refugee-led Organization (RLO) from Uganda to be admitted into the Network for Empowered Aid Response (NEAR)’s Advocacy Working Group, representing local views. CECI, like many refugee-led organizations (RLOs), faced serious difficulties in accessing national, regional and global humanitarian spaces through which it could become part of the decision-making processes and actively contribute to shaping the humanitarian agenda both at national and global scale from the views and needs of affected people. In June 2020 however, CECI received through the Charter4Change Working Group a call for expression of interest to join the Grand Bargain Localization Workstream 2 as shared by NEAR, a member of the localization work stream, to which CECI responded.

When the application was unsuccessful, CECI went further to express interest to join the Network for Empowered Aid Response (NEAR) in August 2020. After a series of virtual engagements and conversations between NEAR and CECI around eligibility, localization, and the work of NEAR, CECI was declared and added onto the membership of the NEAR Advocacy Working Group in August 2020, making it the first RLO from Uganda to be admitted into this kind of global humanitarian space. This allows CECI as a RLO to add voice and strength in shaping the humanitarian agenda to become more inclusive and effective fitting in the views and needs of the people it intends to serve.

Through a monitoring support visit by the ELNHA Team, CECI learnt about the need to endorse and join the Charter4Change and a number of suggested humanitarian spaces. This formed the basis upon which CECI joined 4 regional, national, and global humanitarian spaces namely the Chater4Change, West Nile Humanitarian Platform (WNHP), South Sudan Civil Society Forum (SSCSF), and the Network for Empowered Aid Response (NEAR) through which it has created strategic partnerships to influence the local humanitarian agenda.

Table 8: Challenges on Space and Leadership of LNHAS

Challenges	Adaptation
Limited number of women leaders and women focused organizations in humanitarian space to push and build a strong movement that advocates for the voice and space of women.	ELNHA supported the roll out of the #imatter campaign to enable women at all levels to be visible and contribute to humanitarian response discourse. Activities towards amplifying the role of women were supported.
LNHAS are under-represented in international humanitarian spaces and the active efforts to include more LNHAS into the Grand Bargain and related spaces at the global level are not followed with knowledge and support to participate / represent at that level	The formation of the charter for change working group in Uganda enabled more LNHAS to be visible and the LNHAS seized opportunities brought about by Covid-19 to show- case their relevance.  To this effect as well, the ELNHA global team supported/pushed for more representation of LNHAS at global level. For instance, in July 2020 Ritah Nanser-eko (ED AWYAD/Uganda) was invited to join the Grand Bargain (GB) Work stream 2 (on localization) supported by the global team.
UN agencies are largely implementers, rather than focusing on their role in funding other organizations as agreed upon in the localization work stream	There are ongoing efforts to engage the country leadership of the UN system in Uganda
Loose coalition challenges: as the platforms aimed at bringing local actors together, some LNHAS were more interested in getting resources from the platform. As a result, events aimed at strengthening the relevance of the platform remained less attended.	The HAF grant and the establishment of committee to manage the HAF enabled LNHAS to exercise decision making powers and attain skills in co-creating and self-designing interventions.

5.5 CONCLUSION

The existence of humanitarian platforms that are well coordinated and self-led by LNHAS has brought humanitarian conversations closest to spaces where decisions on humanitarian action are taken. LNHAS in Uganda have pro-actively taken up the space and utilized it to equip themselves, advocate for change and respond to crises. This strategy has increased visibility of the local actors, supported localization advocacy to be inclusive since the spaces enabled LNHAS contribute to discussions at higher level and through the spaces, consultation is easily coordinated. The LNHAS benefited from the capacity strengthening opportunities, leveraged the humanitarian platforms to benefit from grant facilities that repositioned LNHAS demand for recognition, and hold C4C signatories accountable. Further still it has equipped the LNHAS to be better positioned to help affected communities to better prepare, manage and recover from shocks. The use of platforms to manage the HAF supported by HAF guidelines and a strong steering committee has afforded greater flexibility to LNHAS to choose what they want to do, thereby setting the pace for future consultations. By the end of ELNHA, CEFORD as one of the local actors that is hosting the West Nile humanitarian platform had been awarded an implementing partner status by UNHCR on livelihood. This was a huge achievement and there is confidence that as the platforms become stronger, more locally led responses will be seen as more desired thus a success of localization agenda.

6. ELEMENT IV: HUMANITARIAN PRACTICE CHANGES (CASE STUDY OF OXFAM)

6.1 INTRODUCTION

“When we set out to support local actors, we knew that this shift would necessitate changes at organizational level that would either be planned or unplanned. With this expectation, the staff and management were taken through the wider understanding of localization with focus on the C4C as an agenda for localization of humanitarian aid” (Miriam Tusimiire, ELNHA Project Manager). Oxfam believed in the capacity of local actors to think differently about the future of humanitarian response with them at the fore front. Oxfam thus defined as often as possible what this meant to the organization and how Oxfam would facilitate LNHAS acknowledge that the localization agenda was beyond financial obligation. Internally, ELNHA started sharing Localization series within Oxfam’s internal newsletter to increase internal awareness and acceptance of the required shift. There was deliberate effort to showcase why Oxfam was among the C4C signatories. The C4C commitments were highly aligned to Oxfam core values in every way possible. Therefore, below were the success markers that could be shared in this learning;

6.2 THE SUCCESSES AS VIEWED BY OXFAM

- a. Oxfam prioritized designing innovative models specifically on localization as building blocks for ensuring C4C commitments are actualized. The ELNHA project was among the initial innovations with a focus on capacity of local actors, the voice to influence and the space to advocate for greater shift in the humanitarian eco system.
- b. Establishment of consortia; this approach was adopted to support local actors collaborate and coordinate among each other. Through this, the local actors were able to leverage each other’s internal capacities and influence other donors and INGOs together. In total, 7 different Consortia were formed and together accessed over \$500,000 from Oxfam and \$1,500,000 from other donors. This has demonstrated the ability of the three LNHA’s to sustain a consortium arrangement enabling them to collaborate and coordinate among themselves, with other sector stakeholders & with communities for more effective humanitarian preparedness & response.
- c. Walking the talk; with ELNHA facilitating conversations around localizations of aid, Oxfam was forced to adjust its internal partnership practices. From partner sourcing/selection up to project closure, the processes had to be cognizant of the peculiar strengths and gaps among local humanitarian actors. This decision to adjust the partnerships enabled Oxfam to go down to the level of local actor understanding. Support was provided through on job coaching, organizational board member orientation and coaching and investment in national and regional humanitarian platforms.



One of the consortium in West Nile constituted of Palm Corps, Vision for Humanity (VIFOH) and People Empowering People (PEP) used to implement projects individually in their respective organisations. However, following a pre call information session on HRGF by Oxfam in Aura, which highlighted the importance of working in a consortium, the 3 LNHA's came together to build a local consortium which has successfully implemented two projects funded by HRGF and is currently implementing a third one under CTP

- d. Allocation of humanitarian response grants to be managed by local actors. This took 2 approaches, one grant directly managed by support partners named the 'humanitarian action fund' and another grant managed directly by Oxfam named the Humanitarian Response Grant Facility. These enabled LNHA's to cocreate and self-design interventions according to their local needs and priorities. This created space to build community resilience as structures at district level got involved in the processes to lead on hazard risk and vulnerability assessments. District and Subcounty Disaster Management Committees became vital for successful strengthening of community structures to predict, respond, and prepare for disasters;
- e. Oxfam made a strategic move to partner with women-led and refugee-led organizations to identify gaps identified in ELNHA Phase I such as the limited inclusion of affected communities/persons in the design of localization interventions and among the initially selected LNHA's. The inclusion of women-led and refugee-led organisations in ELNHA phase II was therefore deliberate to reposition Oxfam through initiatives like ELNHA to strengthen the role and leadership of women, women-led and refugee-led organizations. This trickled down to ensuring that Oxfam is contributing towards events, activities and initiatives recommended and designed by the local actors. While there were initial challenges such as limited access to internet, lack of equipment, limited good practices, low skills in humanitarian response, Oxfam decided to ride on the willingness of the women-led and refugee-led LNHA's to learn and build themselves. Through rigorous capacity assessment, capacity strengthening plans were attached to contracts. This plan was then resourced to ensure the agencies are supported to become strong;
- f. Further to the above, the #imatter campaign was then developed to ensure the leadership of women during crisis does not get lost; ELNHA focused on ensuring that those affected by crisis contribute and lead the process of addressing those challenges by placing women at the center.



Akello (not real names) with her son was one of the beneficiaries of the humanitarian action fund implemented in Kotido District

- g. Collaboration within the Oxfam confederation: Oxfam at global level complimented ELNHA efforts in country with global advocacy on C4C and grand bargain commitments. Oxfam negotiated spaces at global conferences to show case the role of refugees, to speak about the realities of crisis affected people and advocate for inclusive and flexible partnership practices. It is therefore paramount that INGOs and donor representatives who have headquarters outside Uganda or have member organizations like Oxfam, were on the same page. There was a lot of learning shared within the confederation. With this learning, making internal flexibilities to work with local actors and meet their expectations was smoothened.

## 7. MAJOR LEARNINGS

### 7.1 MAJOR LEARNINGS

- a. **Trust:** to be successful with LNHA's, staff and the organizations have to exercise a high level of trust. Oxfam through ELNHA mapped out areas of potential risk and responded with
  - PSEA trainings for all
  - Supporting the development of safeguarding policies
  - Guiding the local actors on establishing feedback mechanisms
  - Supporting the development of policies
  - Allocating enough funds for internal cost recovery
- b. **Accept to Learn:** Oxfam organized quarterly reflection and learning events internally and externally. This created fora for feedback and honest conversations between the LNHA's and Oxfam but also across each other. It also provided for budgets for platforms and consortia to learn, develop documentaries and share them. During annual reflections, these would also be shared.
- c. **Working Groups/Platforms:** Joining the cash working group, leading the charter for change working group and supporting the national and regional humanitarian platforms. By actively taking part in these spaces, the LNHA's became visible and relevant. CAFOMI as a chair of the National humanitarian platform got elected to sit at the CRRF steering committee and the chair of the C4C got invited to join the grand bargain workstream on localization.
- d. **Project Adaptation:** Oxfam integrated adaptive programming within the ELNHA model so that new revelations and partner request could be integrated within the project. This consideration became even more relevant when Covid-19 hit as the LNHA's were more organized and made requests for adaptation of the program and requests for flexibility. The program was then able to integrate gender-based violence to enable some LNHA's such as AHEDI consortia to address the emerging GBV needs in refugee settlements.
- e. **Invest in Real Time Reviews:** this process enabled peer organizations to learn from each other but also get more acquainted with humanitarian response using the core humanitarian standards. The process was always participatory, LNHA's would guide each other on how to improve and the practice was highly appreciated by the LNHA's implementing various grants
- f. **Competent and Knowledgeable Staffing:** The ELNHA team was willing to learn and support the LNHA's on the learning journey. Additionally, they were grounded in what was required and supported in making localization easy to measure. So, capacity strengthening took a more coaching and mentoring approach than in class.



## 7.2 CHALLENGES AND ADAPTATION

- a. **Consortium Member Selection:** while the model of consortium approach was highly appreciated by the members, LNHAs that picked weak members eventually did not achieve benefits of working in a consortium. Hence before one engages LNHAs in consortium, training on consortium building and management would make the program more effective.
- b. **Bank Accounts Being Closed Due To Inaction:** This was as a result of some organizations having not used their organization accounts for a longer time. When contracting LNHAs, ensuring that the accounts are active before funds are transferred will reduce on time spent waiting for the account to be reactivated.
- c. **Blocking Access of Funds:** Due to the anti-money laundering policy currently active in Uganda, RLOs transfer of funds were withheld by banks until the purpose and source of funds were well guaranteed. Organizations and donors intending to collaborate with RLOs needed to ensure that dialogue with banks happened before disbursements of funds so that the time taken between when funds are released to the organization is reduced which consequently affects start and end time of projects.
- d. **Limited Opportunities for Peer Learning among Refugee-led Organizations:** There was great need to strengthen the refugee networks, systems, and internal governance structures so that stronger consortia and actors can learn from each other and support each other in preparing to receive funds but also in managing resources.
- e. **The Governance of Refugee Led Organizations is Still Weak:** This is because they still experience short term funding. The RLOs can still benefit from increased investment in staff capacities to enable them to deliver on their mandate better.

## 7.3 CONCLUSION

Through the ELNHA project model, Oxfam ensured a shift from sub-contracting relationships with local actors where the INGO/Donor maintains a high degree of control to a progressive increase in decision-making power to LNHAs. Additionally, more mutuality in the relationship was well integrated in ELNHA practices which led to good success. Capacity strengthening took on a more collaborative and trusting approach ; to mobilize resources and support, accompany and enhance necessary technical and advocacy skills of, and as defined by, local and national actors. It is recommended hence by ELNHA that humanitarian actors, whether local or international, should develop partnership mechanisms that support capacity strengthening in the long term. LNHAs should integrate the humanitarian mandate and principles within their mission and institutional plans. They should strengthen their leadership skills, financial autonomy, and capacity to scale up their operations, as well as promote a culture of accountability and transparency which contributed to the biggest successes of ELNHA.

ELNHA model can be scaled. The voice, strength and space of local actors when embraced by all can bring about change in the humanitarian cycle. Capacity strengthening of LNHAs is possible most especially when it is combined with the views of local actors. ELNHA embraced a 360 degrees capacity strengthening through a collaborative approach, ensuring that systems, policies, and staff were highly anchored in the principles as guided by the C4C commitments. Through regular learnings, exposure, provision of letters of recommendation and recognition of the work of LNHAs across the humanitarian eco system, the role of local actors was made visible. Oxfam highly invested in peer support and real time reviews to improve transparency and equality. The access to funds for LNHAs enabled them to make decisions independent of Oxfam.

Investing in strengthening the capacities of refugee led organizations made collaborations on any response more realistic. The highly desired face of women leaders during crisis was critical during implementation and women led organizations played a critical role in ensuring ELNHA was successful. Covid-19 lockdown measures left workers unable to reach the settlements in Uganda, working with various LNHAs including refugee led organizations living in the same settlements maximized the resource envelop that had already dwindled following the reduction of food rations to refugees. Making resources available to RLOs to respond, recover and build back put vulnerable and affected communities back on a trajectory of gaining control of their economic and social livelihoods.







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