



PAPER 7

Roadmap to localization

1 Introduction

Since world humanitarian summit, many organizations are now gearing up the strategies to make changes in organizational policy on "Localization". It's a way that ensures efficient, effective and sustainable process of delivering assistance, acknowledging and prioritising locally-led humanitarian responses. It endorses "Saving life", "Dignity to people", "Equity" and "redistribution of wealth".

The concept of Localization visualizes greater ownership, improved community engagement, response on time and judicious use of resources. It helps to address the appropriateness of the response. One of the most significant contribution of localization would be "easy and quick coordination mechanism".

2 Body

2.1 Major stakeholders in localization

Increasing trend of natural disaster in historic time line has compelled the humanitarian actors to improvise the response approach every time. It has been also learned that each humanitarian response is unique in nature and demands for more capacity at local level. As such it's worth acknowledging the role of local bodies who can lead the localized humanitarian response. Among many such entities, national government, community, national NGOs, networks, CBOs and other civil society organizations are major stakeholders whom the international humanitarian community can count upon.

2.1.1 National government

Local and National government are the primary stakeholders to any humanitarian response. It's the national government who declare the event as an emergency and activates its units to safeguard the human rights by saving lives, damage assessment, life saving basic needs of people, protection from physical harm and ensures safety procedures. As representatives of people & elected by people, any government at national level has the biggest infrastructure and resources to support people who need support. As such, it would not be wrong if affected population rely highly on national government to act quickly and expect to get the services at critical time for saving their and loved one's life.

2.1.2 Community

Resilience of community to face the aftermath of disaster and capacity to bounce back to their normal life is of paramount importance. It has been observed in many disaster response programs that those communities face less loss in terms of life, livelihood, assets, infrastructure and health who are better prepared. They can also build back better the loses as compared to those communities who are less prepared and resilient. Community can play a significant role in addressing the diverse needs of their own people in a much better way.

2.1.3 National /Local NGO, CBOs

NGOs functioning at the national and local level mostly stay close to people and well informed about the local culture, the choices of people in terms of their food, clothes, shelter, seasonality of basic needs of people, local administrative structures, languages and day to day functioning of people. As disasters directly impact the day

to day functioning of the society, the role of National and local NGOs is crucial to make the response appropriate and relevant. They also help in quick mobilization of people for an effective, efficient and timely response.

2.1.4 Media and other civil society organization

Recent years have seen unique and proactive role of media and other civil society organizations in reaching out to affected people during disaster. Being experts in specialised services, the role of media has been acknowledged by all in establishing effective communication. Other specialised services such as legal support, repatriation, protection from trafficking and Psycho-social are also part of civil society mandates and works impressively well.

2.1.5 Networks

Effective collaboration, coordination and mutual agreements by many organizations in form of a network supports humanitarian response to be more accountable. It prevents duplication and brings more transparency in response. It also acknowledges to avoid transience state and usher sustainable efforts.

Overall, "Localization" benefits the affected population as it is more appropriate, relevant, timely, increased local capacity and better resource management that leads to need based, culturally appropriate well coordinated timely response that makes way to recovery and sustainability.

2.2 Global overview on localization

As reported and highlighted during the World Humanitarian summit (WHS), its estimated only 0.2% of humanitarian funding goes directly to national NGOs. Many local stakeholders are not sufficiently equipped to meet the expectations in terms of policy level changes, system requirement, local guidelines and procedures. However, there are other factors also that influences the low absorption capacity which are as follows.

- Concept is new and taking time to gear up.
- Multiple channels of financial decision making
- Lack of system for raising sufficient money
- Reliability can be an issue.
- Lack of capacity building components in humanitarian response
- Lack of technical knowhow.
- National actors are also affected and often pass the decision-making power to newly recruited people from outside.
- Lack of skills for donor compliance.

There are still some big questions to lead the localization process, such as "Are the local actors ready and capable to adhere the basic minimum requirements of humanitarian response?" Whether national governments are equipped enough to guide a quality humanitarian response? "Is the decision making at local level powerful enough and equipped to ascertain the community readiness to move from the relief operation to early recovery".

2.3 Required Shift in the approach

Making the localization process work, it needs a shift in its approach. World Humanitarian Summit has opened up the door and out of 51 commitments, 2 of the commitments of WHS focuses to invest more on local resource and decision making. It also aims that National and frontline responders are the intended direct beneficiaries of the Grand Bargain with a global target of at least 25% of humanitarian funding to local actors 'as directly as possible' by 2020. It important that developing and applying a 'localisation' marker to measure direct and indirect funding to local and national responders. To make it realistic, it required specific attention on following domains as well

- Identify and strengthen Leadership at local level
- Understand existing organizational policies, scan the gaps and develop plans to make adjustments and improvisation
- Appreciate the importance of system development and its usage.

- Invest resources and energy in knowledge building of the staff. Competency of staff will play pivotal role in localization process
- Engage organizational staff and experts in development of appropriate tools for program design, implementation, M&E, Accountability, Human resource and emergency capacity building (ECB).
- Engage organizational leadership and management team in building Networks across the territory. It will help in quick launching of disaster response and wider, less duplicated coverage.
- Local organizations need to develop Emergency preparedness and response plans (EPRP) as part of organizational preparedness to respond. It helps in ascertaining the different disaster risk, its likelihood to impact and also the intensity. It also supports organizations to plan logistics, management responsibilities, new business development, human resources, communication and leadership dimensions for a quality response. The preparedness plan keeps updated information on possible relief items and its source of availability.

3 Summary and Conclusion: Organizational Roadmap

To make a road ahead for localization, we need to pave the way and this leads in developing a specific roadmap. It needs to depict the areas of support that local actors might need from INGOs/Donors such as knowledge, skills, attitude and systems at local level for improvisation. The next layer of localization requires an extensive consultation process including the national authorities to draw a picture on shifting paradigm of response. Local assessments would support in developing action plan to change the procedures that align legal and administrative prerequisites. Capacity building efforts would be the next layer to realise localization. The engagement of media and finally the donors would establish a link of communication. Alongside, donors are also required to change the way of working as we expect many reports, data, resource allocation so internal work would increase possibly dramatically. Step by step process to realize localization would be as follows

- Study organizational leadership and identify discrete leadership style. Accordingly, areas of further quality enhancement will be ascertained.
- Conduct implementing partner's capacity assessment on humanitarian response. It will highlight the existing systems, policies, procedures and knowledge that need improvisation.
- Identify the critical gaps in partner's humanitarian response and jointly prioritise them for making changes
- Develop a framework that provides integrated approach that needs supports from Donor.
- Consultative meeting with various stakeholders
- Time bound plan to invest resources to make local organizations ready.
- Execute strategic capacity building plans for improving organizational response strategy
- Develop emergency preparedness and response plan
- Hands on support to execute technical standards.
- Hands on support in developing policies, systems and mechanism that supports quality response.
- Exposure to front line actors for preparing them to address complex disasters.
- Acknowledge leadership skills at local level by respecting their personal abilities

Endnotes

¹<http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/GHA-Report-2015 - Interactive Online.pdf>