



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**



# LOCALISATION AND THE AUSTRALIAN NGO COOPERATION PROGRAM (ANCP) 2019-20

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## INTRODUCTION

One of the key themes of the 2020 ANCP Annual Reflections Workshop was localisation and this publication draws together a range of case studies to demonstrate how the ANCP is working towards localisation. Noting the partner base between AHP and ANCP, some of the case studies represent AHP programming.

Australian NGOs have strong local partnerships which can identify local needs and respond to the social and economic impacts of COVID-19. Since the pandemic broke out, donors and stakeholders world-wide have recognised that NGOs, with their strong local capabilities and partnerships, are at the front lines of the COVID-19 battle.

The ANCP is a unique global program that supports trusted Australian-based international development NGOs (ANGOs) through flexible annual grants for effective development projects overseas. This inherent flexibility allows all ANCP projects to support the priorities in *Partnerships for Recovery*. In 2019-20, 237 projects (or 60%) integrated COVID-19 specific activities into their original project designs.

This publication draws together a range of case studies provided by NGOs to demonstrate how the ANCP is supporting localisation efforts. The Humanitarian, NGOs and Partnerships Division's approach to localisation is set out in a Policy Note at Annex A.

## LOCALISATION AND THE ANCP

While the language of localisation emerged through the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit and Grand Bargain, the ANCP has been supporting localisation efforts for some time using different terminology. COVID-19 has shown that localisation is particularly relevant to development programs with a blurring of lines between humanitarian support and development cooperation programs.

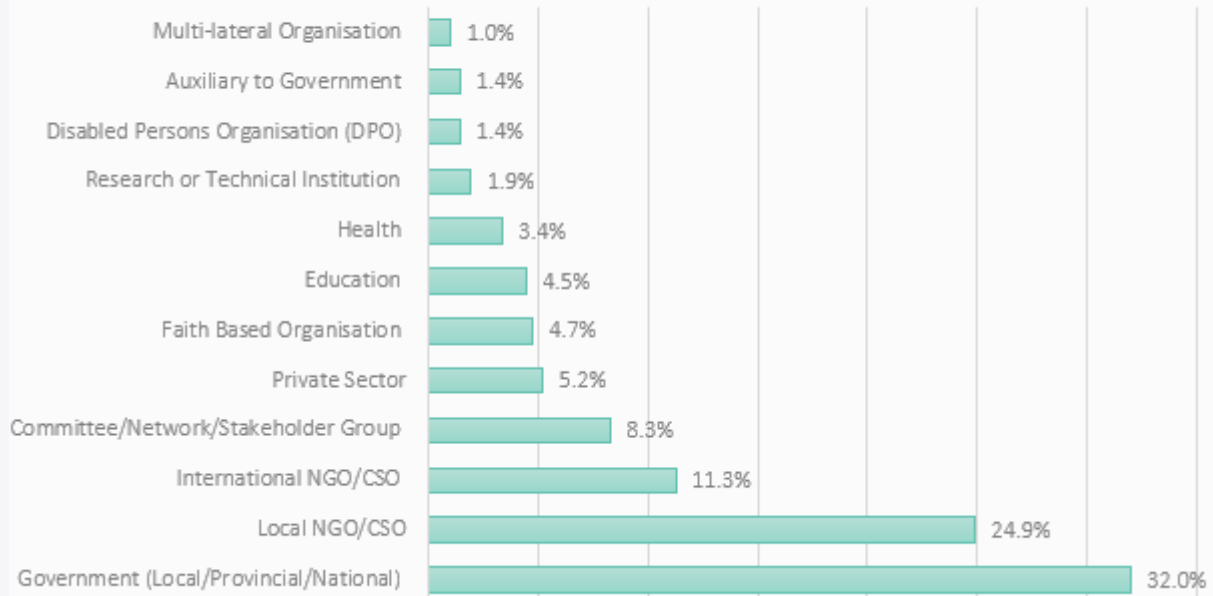
DFAT's up-front due diligence process for Australian NGOs, [Accreditation](#), tests organisations' development approaches and partnerships, among other criteria. A number of intermediate outcomes in the [ANCP Program Logic's](#) also support localisation including: quality relationships with in-country partners, support for locally-led development processes and a commitment to strengthen the capacity of in-country partners and civil society more broadly.

The flexible nature of the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) has supported the rapid adaptation of 60% of existing projects to focus on COVID-19. Since March 2020, Australian NGOs have been working directly with local people and organisations through the ANCP to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and implement programs to respond to the social and economic impact of the pandemic. This is in addition to existing ANCP programming that supports health, stability and economic recovery in line with *Partnerships for Recovery*.

Australian NGOs have strong links with local implementing partners in the ANCP, the majority of which are local NGOs, disabled peoples' organisations (DPOs) faith based organisations and the private sector (see Table 1). They are identifying community needs in areas such as water and sanitation, food security and livelihoods, in an inclusive way to ensure responses meet the needs of women, children and people with disability.

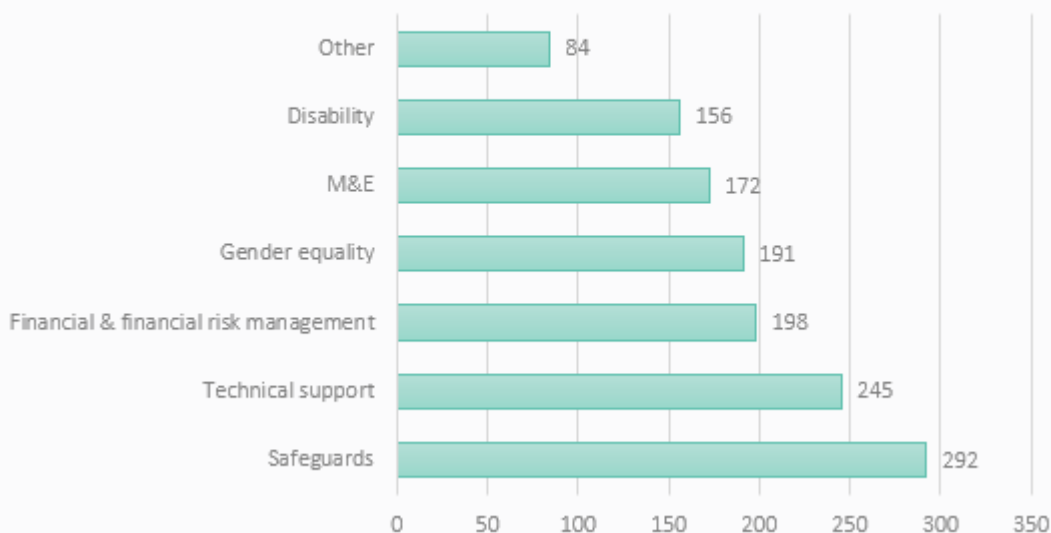


### 2019-20 Implementing Partners by type



Another key strength of the ANCP is a commitment to building the capacity of in-country implementing partners and communities. By improving the technical and non-technical performance of local partners, ANGOs can assist them to achieve their objectives, become more financially and technically independent, and sustain their activities beyond the cessation of ANCP and ANGO assistance. Table 2 outlines the number and type of capacity building projects in the ANCP in 2019-20.

### 2019-20 number & focus of capacity building projects



## NI-VANUATU WOMEN LEADING COVID 19 RESPONSE AND RESILIENCE EFFORTS

### Background

In Vanuatu, ActionAid is working in partnership with Women I TokTok Tugeta (WITTT) to support women's leadership in preparing for and responding to disasters and climate change. WITTT is a locally led women's collective started after Tropical Cyclone Pam and has now grown to a network of over 4000 women leaders who are actively engaging in decision-making in their communities and who were highly effective in responding to COVID-19 and TC Harold this year.

On 25 March 2020, women leaders from the WITTT network, supported by ActionAid, attended a World Health Organisation and Vanuatu Ministry of Health training on managing the local COVID-19 response in Vanuatu. The women quickly mobilised and within a day of receiving training, they gathered their communities to convey coronavirus health messages through a creative and engaging role-play of their own design. They demonstrated effective handwashing techniques, cough and sneeze etiquette and, resourcefully, used their one-metre arm span to show social distancing.

The community leaders were happy with the fact that they were seeing familiar women leaders explaining to them facts on COVID-19 using their own language. They expressed after the meeting that was an indicator that WITTT was a much-needed platform in the community.

Local women are uniquely placed at the centre of community life carrying the bulk of caring responsibilities. When they are supported to lead crisis prevention and response, they are not only effective and galvanising leaders – ensuring everyone in their community is protected – they also create new spaces for women to lead, taking important steps towards gender equality and social justice. In this way, emergencies can become opportunities for change which is vital in a country where women continue to have no representation in the nation's Parliament.

### What issue was being addressed?

The training was beneficial to developing a coordinated community response, although it also highlighted the challenges that communities across Vanuatu face to put key preventative measures in place.

This enabled the WITTT leaders to participate in community early warning and preparedness to address COVID-19. The communities had not received facts on COVID-19 at that time and the awareness raising sessions led by the community leaders assisted them in dealing with rumours and misconceptions about the Pandemic. The awareness raising involved disseminating government verified facts, things to do and what to do. They were also able to distribute Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials developed by the Ministry of Health for communities.

Government representatives were also present in the meeting and witnessed first-hand how effectively the community women leaders were able to conduct the awareness raising. They expressed this during the feedback session and recommended that the approach continues.

During the awareness raising session the communities were able to communicate some challenges that were going to limit their prevention and resilience efforts including lack of access to clean water and food insecurity.

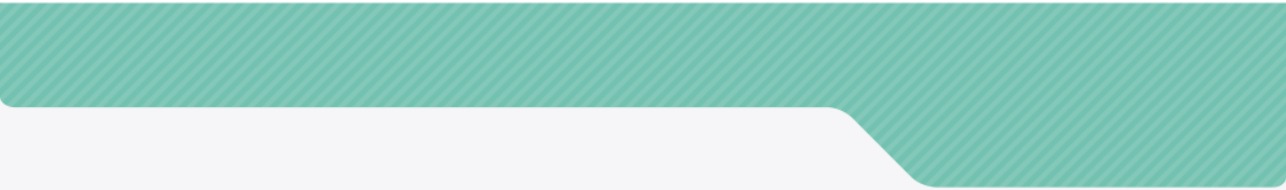
## What did your organisation do?



Anne Pakoa presenting vital COVID-19 health information to local Ni-women at a Train the Trainer workshop, June 2020

The training was successful because these women were prepared and active as leaders. The content of the training was placed in capable hands. Anne Pakoa, who leads Vanuatu Young Women for Change, ActionAid's partner organisation, says that giving the responsibility of health messaging to women leaders is an innovative action and one that these women are more than capable of.

"I met these women leaders two years ago and I saw the same women the other day during the Training of Trainers (ToT) training and they've come up a long way. They stood up, they spoke confidently, they aired their issues, they spoke about the actions that they are taking at the local level to ensure their communities are safe, how they are able to influence their chiefs, their husbands and the male cohort in their communities to be able to work together to combat COVID-19. It's amazing. If we continue to embed these trainings and make sure that we have these powerful networks of women in all of the six provinces of Vanuatu, I think we are going to take this country very far economically and socially as well," Anne says.



In times of crisis women take on the burden of care to look after their communities' most vulnerable members, including children, the elderly, the sick and injured. This experience means women understand their community's needs, making them effective leaders who promote the interests of the whole community. However, women in Vanuatu have traditionally not been given the chance to lead during times of crisis, compromising the quality of the humanitarian response.

ActionAid's training workshop also had a focus on inclusion of a diverse group of women through WITTT Sunshine. Sunshine is a platform in WITTT for women with disabilities to self-organise and work together towards their collective agency with the specific objective to elevate their leadership and protection during crisis.

## What was the outcome?

The main outcome was an effective local network carrying out awareness on COVID 19 and dissemination of communication risk messaging which has been instrumental in reaching the communities quickly and at a large scale.

A key learning is the importance of preparedness and long-term commitment to building women's network and leadership capacity.

## Did anything else contribute to the result?

This project builds on several years of DFAT investment under the Shifting the Power Coalition to support Pacific women's leadership in humanitarian action and disaster preparedness.

ActionAid Vanuatu (AAV) has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Ministry of Health that enables a strong collaboration and access to timely information and technical support. By putting information and technology in the hands of women leaders, they have been able to lead early warning and crisis prevention efforts

## How do you know?

Monitoring data, feedback reports and acknowledgement by government of WITTT's role in disseminating messages effectively to communities across Vanuatu.

## What's next?

In Vanuatu, women have stepped up to become trusted sources of information about the COVID-19 virus. In the process of doing so, these women have established themselves as leaders in times of crisis – a shift in social position that extends beyond this specific health crisis.

*"The community leaders were amazed to see how the women had prepared. We had one day of training and then we rolled out the demonstrations the very next day – it was all the time we needed because we already had a lot of the knowledge and the networks were ready to go. These efforts are a powerful demonstration of women-led localisation in practice."*

Flora Vano, AAV Country Manager

## COLLABORATIVE & LOCALISED PARTNERSHIPS: ENHANCING COMPLEMENTARITY THROUGH THE ANCP & AHP

“I personally felt that there was more consultation between the various humanitarian actors during this response to COVID-19 and TC Harold. Everybody’s opinions and efforts were considered and acknowledged. There is sense of ownership within the Gender and Protection cluster. There is no language barrier because all are Ni-Vans; so, everyone expresses their views freely especially women. This is so empowering.”

Member of the Provincial Gender and Protection Cluster

### Background

In collaboration with Anglican Overseas Aid, the Anglican Church of Melanesia Vanuatu implemented gender and protection response activities as part of the Church Agencies Network - Disaster Operations (CAN DO), Australian Humanitarian Partnership (AHP) Tropical Cyclone Harold response in Vanuatu, from April to June 2020. The Anglican Church of Melanesia Vanuatu mobilised a team comprised entirely of local faith actors. Faith actors responded to gender and protection needs of affected communities. The Anglican Church of Melanesia Vanuatu’s years of experience as implementing partners of ANCP enabled an effective acceleration of key ANCP project activities to underpin their response to the humanitarian crisis. Faith actors previously trained in safeguarding, gender and protection and monitoring and evaluation rapidly drew on this existing capital to deliver training to the wider response team.

This was not a uniquely selected project with the intention of trialling a ‘localisation’ approach. Rather, this locally-led response demonstrated the normal operational model that the Anglican Church of Melanesia Vanuatu and Anglican Overseas Aid have built throughout their long-term partnership.

Leadership, Partnerships, Coordination and Complementary were the localisation indicators strongly demonstrated throughout the response<sup>1</sup>.

### What issue was being addressed?

The Anglican Church of Melanesia Vanuatu responded to the increase in family violence and safeguarding risks resulting from the impacts of Tropical Cyclone Harold. As local faith actors, the Anglican Church of Melanesia Vanuatu’s Gender and Protection response team are existing influential mobilisers within affected communities.

<sup>1</sup> Measuring Localisation: Framework and Tools, HAG, December 2019



## What did your organisation do?

The Anglican Church of Melanesia Vanuatu and Anglican Overseas Aid co-designed the response. The Anglican Church of Melanesia Vanuatu held leadership and final decision-making power on response outcomes, activities, activity budget allocation and geographical scope. Anglican Overseas Aid provided technical advice, support, and administrative functions.

The Anglican Church of Melanesia Vanuatu consulted with the Vanuatu Government's Gender and Protection Cluster to obtain accurate and up-to-date national domestic violence referral pathways. The information obtained was used to develop Information Education Communication materials with referral and protection service provision information.

The response team facilitated community outreach, needs assessments and vulnerability analyses, with a focus on people with disability and female headed households. The team reached 759 Households on the severely impacted island of Espiritu Santo. The team targeted rural areas, facilitating awareness sessions on disability inclusion and trauma healing activities for affected children. A community-based complaints mechanism was also developed and operational. Households were provided with critical information on protection and reporting services. Carers were provided with Gender and Child Protection and Disability Caregiving Pastoral Guides, accompanied by psychosocial support (PSS) and pastoral care.

The Luganville Drop-in centre, established through long-term ANCP investment, was operational throughout the response. The centre provided psychosocial support and the provision of referrals to the Vanuatu Police Family Support Unit, Women's Centre and Rural Health Centre.

## What was the outcome?

During the response teams' provision of PSS and dissemination of awareness materials, one response team met *Linda*<sup>2</sup> a single mother from Mango community, rural Santo.

*"The activities and awareness have greatly educated me and changed my outlook to life. Now I know that I am created equal and special and that no one has the right to harm or abuse me or my child. People need mental healing, pastoral care and spiritual strengthening activities through visitations that help ease stress that could otherwise lead to violence and abuse."*

Access to PSS and information on life saving protection and reporting services for people living with disability and vulnerable women and girls is limited in Vanuatu. Church leaders' existing trust and legitimacy within affected communities saw high engagement with PSS from affected communities.

During the Gender and Protection Cluster's lessons learnt workshop in Luganville, the Anglican Church of Melanesia Vanuatu response coordinator mobilised members to put forward a recommendation for all humanitarian actors to establish a community-based complaints mechanism in future responses. The Cluster Director put forward the recommendation to the National Disaster Management Office.

A small number of the response team members experienced stress and trauma arising from the fact that they themselves were directly impacted by Tropical Cyclone Harold. Anglican Overseas Aid supported the Anglican Church of Melanesia Vanuatu to develop a comprehensive safety and wellbeing plan for the remainder of the response. The wellbeing plan included appointing a female and male wellbeing focal points. Focal points encouraged personnel to access psychosocial support and a daily well-being checklist including supervision.

<sup>2</sup> Name has been changed to protect identity.

Long-term partnerships founded on the values of complementarity and accompaniment require ongoing commitment and investment of time and resources. The challenges are not specifically realised during a response. The ongoing investment of resources over the course of the partnership are both challenging and rewarding and enable an effective, locally-led response.



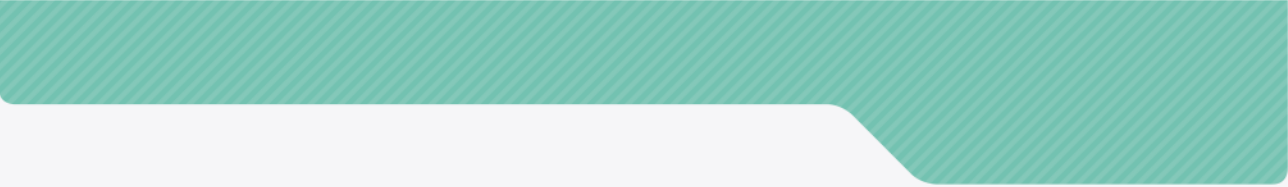
Child trauma healing activities facilitated by the Anglican Church Vanuatu Gender and Protection Response Team in rural communities, Espiritu Santo.

## Did anything else contribute to the result?

Through collaboration with the National Disaster Management Office and Gender & Protection Cluster, the Anglican Church of Melanesia Vanuatu response team mobilised within days of the activation. The response team were able to provide pastoral care and PSS to over 100 of the most vulnerable households in rural areas. Church leaders also provided critical information to women and persons with disability on protection and support services.

## How do you know?

A Monitoring Evaluation & Learning (MEAL) framework was designed and developed by Anglican Overseas Aid in consultation with the Anglican Church of Melanesia Vanuatu. The Anglican Church of Melanesia Vanuatu facilitated Gender and Protection Focus Group surveys, Gender and Protection Key Informant Interviews and Most Significant Change Stories to gather data from affected populations.



The formal MEAL framework's data collection methods, complemented by informal communication between the Anglican Church of Melanesia Vanuatu and Anglican Overseas Aid on a weekly basis, provided ongoing evidence of the response's impact and effect. This approach enabled rapid adaptations throughout the response, and as needed.

## What's next?

Anglican Overseas Aid & the Anglican Church of Melanesia Vanuatu leveraged the ANCP and AHP supported initiatives to replicate the Santo response on the Vanuatu island of Ambae, with funding from other international partners. On Santo, the Luganville Drop-in-Centre is now self-sufficient and has become a core part of The Anglican Church of Melanesia Vanuatu's community outreach program. The Anglican Church of Melanesia Vanuatu and Anglican Overseas Aid are continuing to focus on strengthening community-based complaints mechanisms.

This response demonstrated that long-term partnerships are crucial to strengthening technical capacity of civil society organisations. Partnerships that are collaborative and complementary provide opportunity for the development of robust systems and processes that are locally led and owned. In times of crises, CSO's with functioning mechanisms have the opportunity to take ownership and leadership. As stated by a member of the Gender and Protection Cluster "there is sense of ownership, this is so empowering".

This methodology is an important learning for the ANCP and broader Australian Aid program to advance localisation and contribute to the realisation of DFAT's Partnerships for Recovery Policy principles.

## ELEVATING LOCALISATION TO CONSORTIUM STRATEGY | WHEN LOCAL PRIORITIES INFORM ANGO STRATEGY

### Background

CAN DO is a consortium of eight Australian church-based agencies seeking to collaborate and coordinate in disaster management to enhance community resilience to disaster. CAN DO recognises the significant role of local faith actors in humanitarian response, and we seek to support local faith based organisations to lead responses in their local context. CAN DO is an Australian mechanism – we do not seek to replicate in other countries but to support existing local church structures already responding to humanitarian crises and to improve coordination within the humanitarian system.

The CAN DO Consortium is made up of: Caritas Australia (Lead), Act for Peace, ADRA Australia, Australian Lutheran World Service, Anglican Board of Mission, Anglican Overseas Aid, Transform Aid International and Uniting World.

### What issue was being addressed?

As our understanding of localisation has grown, CAN DO have intentionally challenged ourselves to improve our localisation practice and increase the extent of partner leadership in the Australian based consortium. This means ensuring all partners feel comfortable adding their voice to discussion, providing opportunities for partners to directly feedback on consortium partnerships, and finding ways for partners to lead not only program design, but to have a role in decision making and to inform the strategic priorities of the Australian consortium.

### What did your organisation do?

In place of the CAN DO annual member forum, CAN DO held a workshop series online in late 2020. While the decision to hold online was due to COVID-19 restrictions, we found that there was a far higher representation of partners, as the online forum made it more accessible. The forum was facilitated with support from the Humanitarian Advisory Group, and almost entirely focused on localisation.

Objectives of the workshop series were threefold:

- To support local partners to identify their own priorities for collaborative work together (including identifying how CAN DO can support of this).
- To seek insights and feedback from local partners, regarding CAN DO's impact on them, for both learning and our accountability to partners.
- Based on these partner insights, revise CAN DO's strategy and ways of working going forward.

To achieve these objectives the workshop series needed to authentically practise localisation while also enquiring about localisation. The series was structured into two parts – the first series, and the majority of workshops, were locally led and incorporated various localisation strategies and inquiry methods.

Workshop 1: Co-launched by Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC). The PCC were engaged in the design and also co-launched the workshop series, setting the vision for all CAN DO members and local partners.



Workshops 2 & 3: 4 Pacific Country Forums. CAN DO supported 4 country-based workshops (PNG, Solomon Islands, Fiji, Vanuatu) entirely for local partners, and a fifth workshop for partners across other Pacific countries together with their ANGO counterparts. While CAN DO provided a broad structure for the workshop to support key objectives, there was minimal CAN DO member or expatriate presence in these forums. Country based workshops were run by local facilitators, held in local language, and utilised culturally appropriate methodologies including visual and storytelling.

Additionally, in these forums, partners were invited to provide feedback on their partnership with CAN DO using multi-method approach – participatory inquiry and anonymous survey (38 local partner responses). Each were structured using HAG localisation framework to establish an aligned evidence base.

Workshop 4: Partner Presentations. Following the country workshops, local partners presented to each other and CAN DO members on their priorities and their perspective of CAN DO's impact on them. This forum was entirely delivered by local partners.

The remaining two workshops were for CAN DO members to revise our own strategy, in a way that puts local priorities and partnerships at the centre. This recognises our role as an Australian based mechanism, which seeks to be led by and accountable to, local partnerships & priorities.

## What was the outcome?

Leadership, active engagement and rich insights from local partners to inform the following:

- Local collaborations (local partners collaborating together on projects) reflecting and learning to set/co-design their own agenda and priorities.
- Establish evidence to form a baseline and design localisation indicators (and targets) based on local partners feedback on their partnership with CAN DO and priorities from their perspective.
- Inform revision of CAN DO strategy documents.

While the strength of partnership with CAN DO was affirmed, local partners raised the importance of continuing to consider the following:

- Addressing root causes (of for example, power dynamics, climate change) identified by local actors
- Strengthening the role of local and traditional knowledge
- Continuing to identify and strengthen local capacity in disaster management and humanitarian response
- Improving locally led decision making structure and improving financial distributions/equity
- Ensuring there is no dependence on CAN DO.

CAN DO members were encouraged by the level of contribution and deep insights from partners. There was a strong collective agreement to re-focus our strategy to further and deeper pursuing localisation.

Reflections from Local Partners on CAN DO's approach to localisation:

*"CAN DO has done well by creating a platform for Faith based organisation such as ourselves. and other FBO to collaborate. and continue the good works."*

Local partner response in localisation survey

*"Inclusiveness. Involving local partners in the decision making and implementation."*

Local partner response in localisation survey

## Did anything else contribute to the result?

CAN DO respects and maintains bilateral partnerships which contributes to a strong sense of trust and accountability. Disaster READY has supported local collaborations through co-delivery of projects.

## How do you know?

Insights and feedback from local partners through the localisation survey and local forums; engagement and written feedback with/from Australian members, workshop co-facilitation by HAG.

## What's next?

CAN DO is in the process of significantly revising our core strategy documents (Roadmap and Theory of Change) to embed localisation more holistically across our strategy. For instance:

- Improving the integration of Australian partnership and local partnership outcomes in our consortium Theory of Change so that our work has a greater emphasis on supporting local priorities.
- Outcomes of our theory of change will closely reflect localisation dimensions: coordination & partnership, learning & strengthening (capacity), advocacy & influence; alongside locally led programs.
- The Theory of Change will seek to articulate both transformative intent of outcomes as well as the practical steps required to progress towards these; and integrate localisation indicators.

The localisation survey and partner feedback provided an initial evidence base on CAN DO's accountability to partners – increasing local voice, feedback and insights from the perspective of partners.

Reflections from Australian Members on our localisation strategy:

*"[An] exciting flow on effect from this workshop and the way it was organised, was seeing clearly how we as CAN DO have shifted, and how we're now speaking much more comfortably from a decolonising, listening and learning perspective. We look forward to us all working together to embed modes of working into the consortium that reflect this shift."*

Assoc Dir. International Programs (Pacific), Uniting World

*"Act for Peace is very excited about the direction CAN DO is taking and the opportunities ahead of us, particularly around continuing to prioritise our partners as leaders."*

CEO Act for Peace

## FIJI CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATION EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

### Background

The Fiji National Cluster System has always been relatively strong in terms of coordination during humanitarian response. The Fiji Council of Social Services (FCOSS) is represented on the National Disaster Management Council and in the Inter-cluster meetings and is the co-lead of the Communications and Engagement Sub-group of the Communications Cluster. It is mandated to coordinate Fiji civil society organisation (CSO) humanitarian response. That said, the ability of FCOSS to fulfil its role has varied over time, particularly at district level where coordination between the first responders that FCOSS represents and district Emergency Operating Centres (EOC) is critical to meeting beneficiary needs. FCOSS was included in the Australian Humanitarian Partnership (AHP) Disaster READY initiative to bring it to a level that would allow it to fulfil its coordination mandate at district level. Since 2018, it has worked with ChildFund Australia and other Plan International Australia consortium members to put systems and process in place that has allowed to effectively respond to Tropical Cyclones Tino, Sarai, and Harold, and COVID-19.

### What issue was being addressed?

Prior to its involvement in AHP, “FCOSS was just another CSO voice at National Disaster Council level with very little capacity to coordinate CSOs for humanitarian action that was not meeting the expectations of government or Fiji civil society.”<sup>3</sup> FCOSS did not have the resources, systems or processes in place to fulfil its CSO coordination mandate during times of humanitarian response. Importantly, there was very little understanding as to how FCOSS could coordinate CSO first responders and how first responders would link with the district level Emergency Operating Centres (EOC) that provide overall coordination of a response at the local level. Consequently, FCOSS lacked legitimacy and often had to defer to ANGOs or ANGO affiliates who had the resources to prepare for and respond to disasters, and a strong history of doing so.

### What did your organisation do?

In 2019, FCOSS with support from ChildFund Australia, developed a draft CSO Emergency Response Protocol. The purpose of the Protocol is to aid in the coordination of CSO first responders and to link CSO first responders to district level EOCs. The Protocol is to be used throughout cyclone season when most emergency response to natural disasters occur. In late 2019/early 2020, Fiji was hit by Tropical Cyclone Tino and Sarai, which allowed the Protocol to be piloted. Based on the draft document and the pilot, 5 internal FCOSS consultations were carried-out to develop a final draft. The final step has been to engage all Fiji humanitarian actors on the final draft. To that effect, 2 national consultations were carried-out in partnership with UNOCHA and the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) in October and November of 2020. Based on feedback from attendees, the Protocol will be finalised.

ChildFund Australia has supported FCOSS on this journey through: 1) financing the position of FCOSS CSO Humanitarian Coordinator which has been central to the development of the Protocol; 2) participating in the

<sup>3</sup> Vani Catanasiga, FCOSS Executive Director

CSO Humanitarian Review of the Natural Disaster Management Act, which recommended the development of the Protocol; and 3) contributing technically to the development of the Protocol.

## What was the outcome?

In line with the Protocol, in the aftermath of Tropical Cyclone Harold, 7 FCOSS groups were invited to coordinate with 7 district level EOCs in the Northern, Central and Western Divisions to carry-out awareness raising on water borne disease as per the EOC emergency operation plan. This represents the first time that such coordination has taken place between district level EOCs and FCOSS. It has been reported that through this coordination, levels of goodwill between EOC members and FCOSS groups has improved, resulting in provincial administrators and district officers allowing FCOSS to use local government assets such as office space to hold meetings.

The key learnings have been that:

1. an organisation must develop clear strategy and process when wanting to achieve significant change. Engagement with the EOCs, as per the Protocols, started with the revision of the FCOSS constitution so as to place FCOSS groups at the centre of the organisation and to provide them with greater autonomy to develop their DRR committees and DRR plans. It then progressed to a CSO Humanitarian Review, the 5 internal FCOSS consultations and the 2 national consultations;
2. ANGOs need to understand their value add in such a locally led process such as the development of the Protocol, and to acknowledge that when consultations of the described nature occur, their level of input needs to be calculated if the integrity of the process and the credibility of the local facilitator such as FCOSS is to be maintained;
3. local civil society needs its own spaces so local partnerships, community leadership and community initiatives can emerge;
4. FCOSS needs to be more gender and disability inclusive generally and when leading such processes. It has taken steps through updating its constitution and forming relationships with the Fiji Disabled Peoples Federation and the Rainbow Pride Foundation who represent people with disability and gender and sexual minority groups throughout Fiji, respectively. FCOSS now needs to operationalise this inclusion focus through the development of policy and in-house capacity.

## What's next?

Based on feedback from the 2 national consultations, the Protocol will be finalised and will be socialised throughout the membership of the 12 FCOSS groups and among provincial administrators, district officers and EOCs in 2021. In addition, FCOSS will develop community engagement standard operating procedures given that this is where it sees its emergency preparation and response strength, in addition to coordination. Improved knowledge and skills in this area will allow FCOSS to better coordinate with and complement the preparation and response activities of district level EOCs.



## **ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNANCE FOR RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT: THINKING AND ACTING TO CREATE TRANSFORMATIVE, SYSTEMS-LEVEL CHANGE FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES.**

### **Background**

Traditionally, Oxfam's resilient development initiatives have focused on community-based adaptation and disaster risk reduction. These programs have increasingly shifted their focus to also address the root causes of risk and vulnerability by engaging with governance systems and using influencing as a strategy to affect change at scale.

### **What was the issue being addressed?**

The use of localised influencing in Oxfam's resilient development programs was often intuitive and not part of the original design. For example, after Vanuatu's 2015 Tropical Cyclone Pam, response and recovery projects started focussing on coordination and facilitation of national networks with the aim of influencing government recovery actions to include community voice and priorities in decision making. To understand what localised transformative and systems-level change looks like for resilient development, Oxfam Australia undertook an ANCP-supported learning inquiry drawing on lessons from a variety of contexts spanning the humanitarian development nexus.

### **What did your organisation do?**

Oxfam undertook the first phase of the learning inquiry by exploring influencing tactics within programs in Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands, Bangladesh and Pakistan. This involved: an internal and external literature review on governance and influencing; three workshops and semi-structured interviews with 34 Oxfam staff from Australia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Asia and Pacific regional offices; and two sense-making and feedback reflective sessions with expert informants within and outside Oxfam. This phase of the learning inquiry identified three 'lenses' for analysis:

- Levels of governance: representing where Oxfam is seeking to influence and strengthen governance within resilient development programs.
- Domains of change: understanding what outcomes might contribute to local resilient development.
- Influencing tactics: understanding how Oxfam and its partners are seeking to bring about systemic change for improved localised governance within resilient development programs.

The second phase of the learning inquiry (June-September 2019) aimed to better understand accountable governance structures in resilient development and how this type of programming contributes to transformative and systems-level change.



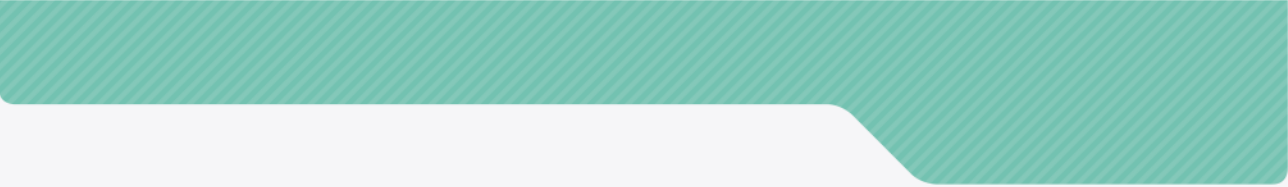
Community disaster committee members clear a drain in Bari Colon slum, Bangladesh.

## What was the outcome?

The learning inquiry concluded that key to Oxfam's success in local accountable governance is through our role as a convener in bringing local stakeholders together, brokering agreements and creating spaces for policy dialogue. Managing complex relationships was found to be key to credibility but this requires trust, collaboration, resource and time investments.

The learning inquiry also recognised the importance of adopting adaptive strategies for working with diverse local governance structures to build connections across systems and forge multi-stakeholder partnerships to amplify change-efforts. For example, Oxfam in Vanuatu linked informal urban settlement dwellers to the village disaster and climate change committees, private sector suppliers and government departments leading to effective collective action on issues of water, waste and electricity provision.

Transformational change may be more iterative and adaptive, it requires supporting flexible, strategic and forward-looking locally-led programs with innovative and more frequently and systematically applied approaches to monitoring, evaluation, reflection and learning. For example, Oxfam in Bangladesh demonstrated this adaptive programming approach in the evolution of their urban resilience program from reducing urban flooding from blocked drains, to addressing household rubbish disposal, collection and faecal sludge management, evolving later to work on citizen rights and responsibilities of city-wide waste management. This shows a shift from short-term interventions to transforming more fundamental, systems-based issues, with a focus on accountable urban governance in partnership with the local administration.



The enquiry helped Oxfam build its evolving hypothesis for transformative, systems-level change while ensuring Oxfam's roles in systems are best utilizing its strengths to enable the desired change. The learning inquiry found that influencing accountable governance for resilient development is context dependant and dynamic so there is no one fixed model or approach; however, this framing may help guide decisions on possible entry points, features, mechanisms and influencing tactics that can be used to bring about desired transformative changes.

*"If you look at economic empowerment without looking at climate change or look at climate change without looking at the barriers to economic justice you won't have as big an impact."*

Bangladesh Interview participant

## What's next?

Oxfam Australia plans to use the findings to shape the design and adaption of new and future resilient development programming within the ANCP portfolio. Key priorities will be to shift our thinking and practice with regards to how to create change at scale; move beyond the boundaries of 'projects' to applying system thinking, matching program designs with the aspirations for complex social change; understand & adapt to complexity accounting for multiple systems shifts and changes; working with a diverse range of partners; and finally, Oxfam must embed a continuous learning cycle that asks "how change happens" recognising that disruption will always occur so resilience must continually be built in response to a changing context.

## STRONGER, MORE RESPONSIVE, AND MORE CAPABLE; STRENGTHENING LOCAL CAPACITIES FOR CHANGE

### Background

Tearfund works through local community development partners, and through the partnership seeks to see those organisations develop their own effectiveness. Tearfund has been learning from its capacity strengthening initiatives since 2011 when the Small & Emerging Partners Initiative (SEPI) received ANCP funding. The SEPI evaluation (2015) affirmed the ways in which Tearfund's partners had been strengthened, and also stated:

Future collaboration could focus to a greater extent on the human systems approach, increasingly recognizing the importance of more subtle aspects of organisations such as shared values, leadership and power dynamics, networking, self-reflection, agility, motivation and the balance between coherence and diversity, which are all related to long-term sustainability.

This recommendation has been incorporated into current capacity-strengthening efforts and into thinking about partnership with local organisations more generally.

From November 2019 to February 2020, Tearfund managed on behalf of the Integral Alliance a series of Partner Listening Forums in Nepal, Ethiopia, Haiti, The Philippines and Iraq to understand what local partner organisations felt about the localisation process that they had experienced. While partners were appreciative of Integral Alliance members' commitment to, and progress towards localisation, there was still room for improvement in several areas. Key statements were heard from local partners around:

- Control and decision-making over programming, design and use of funds
- Representation in decision-making, especially in humanitarian response
- Funding and finance; assistance in securing funding from different sources, and the need to fund organisational costs
- Capacity strengthening; should be longer-term, and more appropriate to the needs of local organisations
- Compliance and reporting; places a heavy burden on local organisations and should be made more efficient especially at the time of disaster response
- Risk; international partners should explore ways of risk sharing, rather than the risks being passed solely to the local partner.

"Through timely support & Coaching from PPOSI-TEAR-Aus, SaCHA organization and people enabled to fulfil their development plan for sustainable change!...SaCHA has been developing and staff members have gained much skills with building their capacity and enabled to serve more effectively responding communities issues in participatory way maintaining humanitarian standards."

Imroze Goel (Head of SaCHA)

### What issue was being addressed?

Capacity building is not a new focus for international NGOs. The challenge is to recognise and strengthen pre-existing capacity within local organisations to support them as they seek to re-engage with their identity,



values, connection to communities, cultural appropriateness and passion that led to their founding in the first place. This re-engagement will improve their effectiveness, their organisational sustainability and strengthen good practice and systems<sup>4</sup>.

Traditional capacity building tends to focus primarily on organisational systems, technical abilities and capacity assessments that look at functional aspects of organisations. However, the core principles of community development: empowerment; self-determination; collective action, are helpful for thinking about a person-centred approach that supports a group of people to pursue the change they want to see.

While not focusing on the HAG localisation framework the People & Partners Organisational Strengthening Initiative (PPOSI) aligns strongly with it in three key areas:

- Partnership - particularly giving increased power and decision-making to local actors and being responsive to their own priorities and strategic focus areas
- Capacity - using a partner-led capacity strengthening and assessment approach that leads to contextually appropriate and partner focused partner development plans.
- Funding.

## What did your organisation do?

Through the ANCP project “People & Partners Organisational Strengthening Initiative (PPOSI)” Tearfund has worked with partners through a facilitated series of workshops which explore organisational history, strengths, and future vision and result in identifying organisational development priorities. A partner owned and led process follows this with support from Tearfund to achieve those priorities.

The initial workshop serves as a way of creating space to explore organisational identity. Facilitated activities, which cover organisational history, values (both explicit and implicit), identity, current capacity and future directions act as a self-assessment and informs a capacity assessment process. Capacity is assessed around 5 domains of capacity to<sup>5</sup>:

- Adapt
- Commit & act
- Achieve coherence
- Relate
- Carry out technical tasks

A Partner Development Plan is developed as a result of this workshop. This is a flexible, adaptive and sometimes emergent plan outlining some areas for organisational development (OD) assistance. It is reviewed and updated throughout the PPOSI journey and is responsive to the changing contexts of PPOSI partners. Tearfund supports the plan through specific funding grants, mentoring or coaching of senior staff as they work on areas of organisational strengthening, linking the partner with other providers who can train, support or develop areas within the plan. PPOSI’s theory of change argues that by developing these five areas of capacity the partner will be more effective in their work in communities.

<sup>4</sup> As a signatory to the Charter4Change, an initiative of international and local NGOs to bring about change in the humanitarian system to enable more locally-led responses, Tearfund has committed to supporting partners “to become robust organisations that continuously improve their role and share in the overall global humanitarian response.” <https://charter4change.org/>

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.managingforimpact.org/sites/default/files/resource/ecdpm\\_study\\_on\\_capacity\\_change\\_and\\_performance.pdf](http://www.managingforimpact.org/sites/default/files/resource/ecdpm_study_on_capacity_change_and_performance.pdf)

## What was the outcome?

SaCHA Pakistan began with PPOSI in 2017. SaCHA had a long history in TB control as a service provider, but with the support of PPOSI they have effectively moved towards a more community-focused model of health promotion and community development. Their former TB control work has been handed over to the Government.

Using a River Journey exercise, and another organisational assessment tool they were able to identify key events, challenges, joys and changes within their organisational journey and then define their objective for organisational change and the steps that they would need to take to achieve it.



SaCHA's "River Journey" exercise helped them explore their organisational values and history.

These changes covered areas of both organisational and personal change: systems, structures and people.

Three years on, and they have been able to change their structure from a clinical and medical focused organisational structure to a community field-based one better suited to the new approach that changed from a clinical model to one of community empowerment and group-based development.

Rather than changing staff to suit the new model, they provided training to help the staff change. They have become adept at community-based and participatory approaches and involve the community in decision-making about their work and the project design.

PPOSI, with ANCP funding, has been able to support SaCHA through such ways as providing the initial workshops, staff training to develop technical skills, strategic planning, development of HR systems, exposure visits to learn from another organisation who had transitioned from a clinical model to a community-based one, and assistance in incorporating mental health inclusion within their programming.

## Did anything else contribute to the result?

Common to working within any system there are a number of factors that bring about change. As well as the input and support from PPOSI the following factors were influential in SaCHA's change:

- A well-respected and motivated staff member was appointed to lead the organisation, bringing energy and vision for the changes in strategy and working approach that had already been proposed, an openness to ideas and a commitment to the values and people of SaCHA.
- Two senior members of SaCHA attended Tearfund's regional workshop (2019) (also ANCP funded) and peer learning opportunities that prompted thinking around a range of technical and organisational areas.
- Support from other donors and partners to change direction and contributions to their growth

Good relationships with communities and feedback from them on how the work could be made more effective.

## How do you know?

Since SaCHA commenced its PPOSI journey, there have been two review periods with SaCHA staff as well as reporting after each significant activity was completed. There is regular communication with SaCHA leadership through email, skype and WhatsApp, and through their regular project reporting.

## What's next?

The ANCP funded evaluation of PPOSI occurring in November 2020 will be key in assessing the extent of change within partners, and how the project modifies and adapts in its next phase.

## ANNEX 1: HUMANITARIAN, NGOS AND PARTNERSHIPS DIVISION LOCALISATION POLICY NOTE

Localisation will help to drive more effective humanitarian action by empowering local leadership to deliver assistance that is locally informed and led.

**Definition:** For Australia, localisation means recognising, respecting and strengthening leadership and decision-making by national and local actors in humanitarian action, in order to better address the needs of affected populations.

Localisation is identified in *Partnerships for Recovery: Australia's COVID-19 Development Response* as a way DFAT needs to work differently (page 15):

*We will also explore new models of delivery. Many established development programs have had their operations disrupted by movement and travel restrictions. While this has constrained the capacity of many delivery partners, it also provides an opportunity to forge new relationships and novel ways of working. **We will place a strong focus on the localisation of our assistance** through partner government systems and local organisations in both the response and recovery phases. This will ensure our efforts are informed by local knowledge, support local priorities, and contribute to local capacity and accountability.*

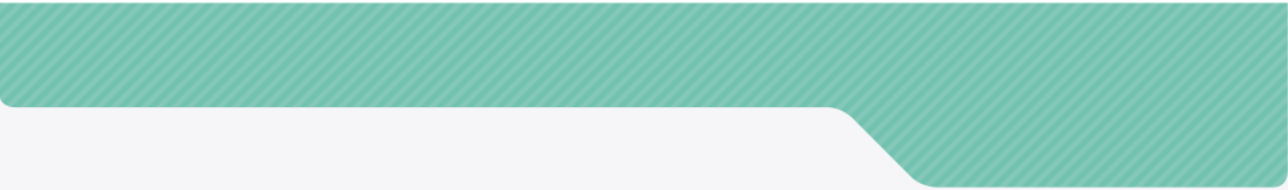
**Localisation can generate better results and value for money.** Affected people and local partners are best able to articulate their needs, and strengthening their agency in decision making drives more relevant and effective aid. Locally sourcing aid supplies often represents better value for money and supports local economies and business. Importing humanitarian supplies can sometimes have a negative impact on local markets making it hard for local businesses to compete fairly. Local goods and services are more familiar to affected people and can often be made or procured in sufficient quantities and at a lesser cost than importing supplies.

**Localisation is an important part of Australia's commitment to strengthen global institutions and the broader humanitarian system, in line with the 2016 Grand Bargain<sup>6</sup>.** DFAT plays an active role in shaping the practice of global institutions. For example, our advocacy on disability drew on lessons learned as an evidence base to share with like-minded donors and organisations to strengthen disability-inclusive development. Our enhanced focus on localisation similarly involves collecting and sharing evidence to strengthen practice more broadly. In turn this shapes our engagement with implementing partners, the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream, regional institutions, other donors and stakeholders.

**The approach to localisation must be contextual** – with promoting affected people's agency at its core. Our approach is informed by contextual analysis. In much of the Indo-Pacific, localisation involves supporting governments and national institutions to meet needs, with DFATs implementing

<sup>6</sup> Australia is a signatory to the Grand Bargain, which is an agreement between some of the largest donors and humanitarian organisations to get more means into the hands of people in need and to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action.





partners providing complementary services. In complex displacement contexts, conflict-sensitivity and protection issues may mean internationally mandated organisations play a necessary role (though nonetheless opportunities to promote the agency of affected people are sought).

**HPD will promote an “if not, why not?” approach** in line with the principle “as local as possible and as international as necessary”<sup>7</sup>. HPD programs will consider and take forward opportunities for more localised approaches where it is feasible to do so. For example, we can strengthen local capacity by building more equal partnerships. This involves better reflecting the goals and ambitions of local partners and shifting power to local and national actors in our work. In other situations, for example where local organisations are unable to deliver timely lifesaving assistance, an international response is necessary. Taking an “if not, why not?” approach has been highly successful in promoting the use of cash to more effectively address humanitarian needs and give people more choice and control over their own lives. Cash is an increasingly sophisticated and widely accepted practice.

**Localisation is most powerful when it complements** other elements of DFAT’s support and reform objectives. HPDs approach emphasises the connection between localisation and other themes, for example:

- Effective localisation often involves supporting the leadership of local women’s and disability people’s organisations in humanitarian action to support their role as first responders.
- Localisation involves greater participation of affected people in decision making and access to accountability mechanisms, such as complaints mechanisms and perception surveying, to drive better practice including protection outcomes.
- Working with local government partners requires consideration of development, humanitarian and peace/ political connections to strengthen institutions and systems, build resilience and support stability. This involves HPD working closely with bilateral development programs to have a joined up approach to support partner governments.
- Quality funding is critical to localisation. We can support this by funding local organisation core costs, as well as programming costs, so they can strengthen their capacity and become more established and independent. Critical to this is encouraging multilateral partners to pass on flexible, multi-year funding through local systems to local partners.

<sup>7</sup> The Secretary-General called for humanitarian action to be ‘as local as possible, as international as necessary’ at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016.