

NGO RESOURCE CENTER

LOCALIZATION STRATEGY

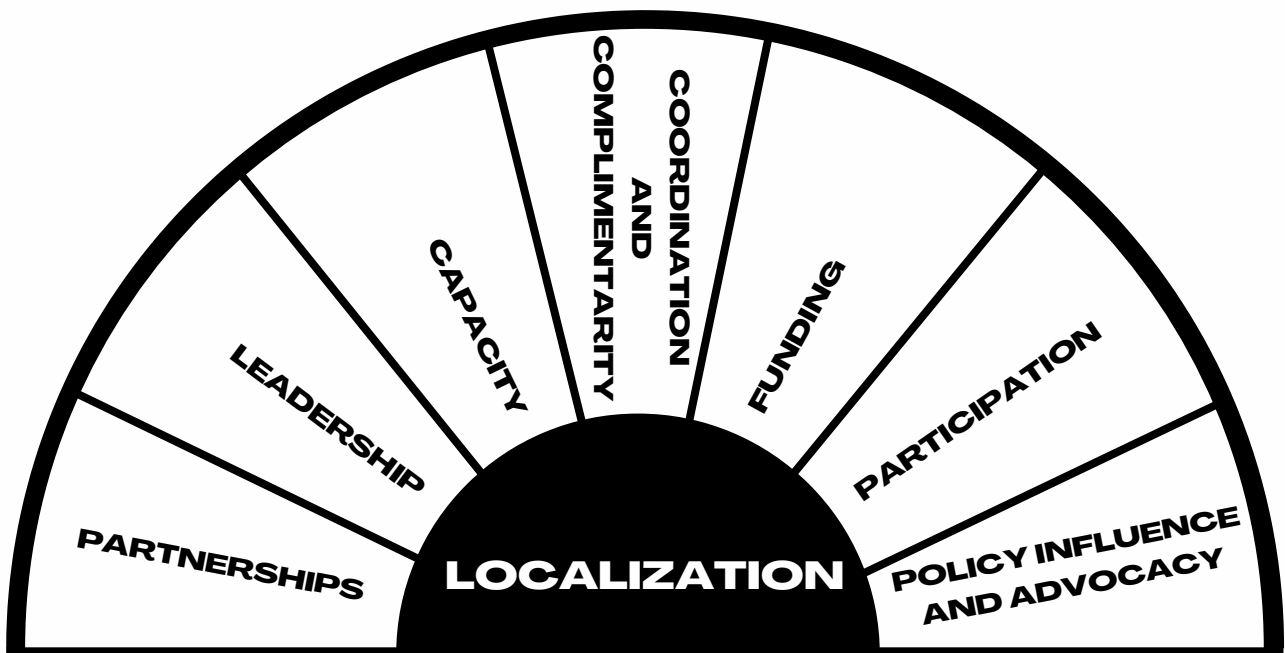
2024-2026



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INTRODUCTION

This NGORC strategy document outlines the organization's priorities for facilitating, enhancing, and supporting the localization of the humanitarian response in Ukraine. It highlights actions needed within seven domains: Partnership, Leadership, Coordination and complementarity, Funding, Capacity, Policy influence, and Participation.



As a Ukrainian baseline has been established within the seven domains, the effectiveness of strategy implementation will be measured through annual reports and the overall progress within these areas, ensuring effective implementation and accountability of NGORC.

NGORC sees localization leading to more effective and efficient humanitarian support systems in Ukraine. This actionable strategy aims to address current inequalities, contradictions, and structural problems within the Ukrainian response. Correspondingly, the strategy needs to give special attention to the areas where localization evidence is the weakest. Nonetheless, it is essential to consider the strong interlinkages between different domains and the direct impact one domain might have on another.

We see that there remains a significant gap between global localization commitments and their implementation or accountability in practice. It is important for us to stress and implement accountability mechanisms in all domains.

This strategy encompasses the years 2024-2026.

PURPOSE

The strategy aims to highlight and guide the actions and initiatives of the NGORC within the overall humanitarian system to enable a more locally-led humanitarian response that is critical to addressing future challenges and focusing on the NGORC approach. While this strategy captures recommendations for humanitarian implementers and donors towards strengthening the leadership of local/national actors in humanitarian action, it primarily focuses on what concrete action and advocacy NGORC should concentrate on.

NGORC localization aims to ensure that aid is effective, efficient, and sustainable, meets the needs of affected communities, and addresses global structural imbalances.

OUR BELIEFS

Humanitarian action should be as local as possible and as international as necessary. The role of international organizations in partnerships should be one of gap-filling, knowledge transfer, and complementarity—a positive role that enhances, not replaces, existing local capacity and is more effective and efficient.

We believe that shifting power and addressing structural imbalances, including resources, capacity, and ownership to national and local actors, will result in more timely, appropriate, and effective outcomes for those in need. NGORC believes that quality partnerships are key to localization. True partnerships mean long-term engagement, acceptance of strengths and weaknesses, and knowledge transfer in both directions. All are made possible through trust. A global reform needs a humanitarian system for increased relevance today and tomorrow.

Furthermore, we believe that every context is unique and requires tailored support based on a thorough understanding of how to work with local and governmental actors in a complementary manner.

We do not believe in localization for the sake of localization and recognize the strengths and weaknesses of both national and international organizations. Still, we work to create a level playing field, equity, and efficiency within the humanitarian response in Ukraine.

As one of the founding members of the Alliance of Ukrainian Civil Society organizations, we are dedicated to advocating for the principles of localization. The Alliance aims to strengthen the independence and leadership of local and national actors, aligning with our belief that empowering and addressing structural imbalances will lead to more effective and efficient outcomes for those in need.

VISION

The Ukrainian humanitarian response became the first globally successful localized response. It is entirely led and implemented by local and national actors in accordance with humanitarian best practices, which are also seen as global best practices.

MISSION

Holistically enhance the role of local and national actors through a quality partnership with all relevant stakeholders, especially donors, INGOs, and L/NNGOs, through a determined and unwavering approach.

DEFINITIONS

Localization is an international commitment recognized by the international community (donors and humanitarian actors). It is defined as a "process of recognizing, respecting and strengthening the independence of leadership and decision-making by national actors in humanitarian action, to address the needs of affected populations better."

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

PARTNERSHIPS

Adequate and quality partnerships between international, local, and national actors are often seen as crucial to localized humanitarian response. Many participating international actors and donors recognize partnerships as a significant part of their approach to humanitarian programming.

- NGORC will work to enhance and advocate for relevant due diligence processes, which balance operational and procedural capacities and where purely formalistic and bureaucratic assessments are avoided. In addition, promote and share knowledge about joint reciprocal due diligence evaluations.
- Work to enhance possibilities of direct communication and dialogue between L/NNGOs and donors.
- Ensure that independence and self-determination of national and local actors are respected within areas of Governance and Internal Procedures.
- Promote transparency within partnerships, including the sharing of full project documents.
- Require and promote shared decision-making within the framework of project cooperation.
- To facilitate dialogue between partners, create and promote regular communication and mechanisms, such as mutual project meetings or email updates.
- Strengthen partnerships with international organizations with a strong localization approach and/or striving towards institutional reform.
- Support international actors with their phase-out planning and operational phase-out.
- Create conditions for sustainability and development by promoting and implementing long-term projects and partnerships.
- Always work on strengthening partners' capacity and be open to learning through dual knowledge transfer.
- Advocate for and promote accountability mechanisms to ensure quality partnerships, including recruitment practices within partnerships.

LEADERSHIP

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) stresses that humanitarian leadership should be inclusive, representative, gender-balanced, accountable, and supportive of the entire humanitarian community. National actors should have equitable opportunities with international actors and among their own peers to take on leadership and co-leadership roles at both national and sub-national levels, including as part of strategic advisory groups and coordination mechanisms.

- Work to strengthen the role of local Ukrainian organizations, including our own, and our involvement in the decision-making process on a national and international level.
- Prioritizing the inclusion of diverse local community stakeholder input in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of projects.
- Promote national ownership of coordination mechanisms and facilitate their actualization.
- Ensure that localization approaches actually lead toward locally led implementation.
- Take a clear and vocal leadership role within all relevant fora.

COORDINATION AND COMPLIMENTARY

Coordination within a humanitarian response is critical to promoting efficiency, effectiveness, and overall success of operations and delivery of humanitarian assistance, as well as promoting a principled approach that indeed contributes to long-term recovery. Related, efficacy and efficiency draw from ensuring complementarity, avoiding duplication and replacement, ensuring a balance between local and international action, building on respective strengths, and maximizing comparative advantages to benefit all.

- Support existing local and national networks to avoid establishing new parallel structures.
- Ensure that Ukrainian legislation, tax processes, and context (language, culture, etc.) are considered at all points.
- Support the phase-out of internationally imposed coordination mechanisms.

FUNDING

Quality funding – flexible, predictable, and multi-year funding – is currently recognized as critical to improving the humanitarian system overall and specifically for enhanced and effective localization within any humanitarian context. Furthermore, the funding of indirect costs links directly to an organization's sustainability and institutional quality and the possibility for it to participate in coordination and influence humanitarian policy and decision-making – all critical factors for effective localization efforts.

- Advocate for fair funding distribution: 70% of institutional funding is provided for L/NNGOs, whereas 50% is direct funding.
- Ensure that funding quality is given equal attention as quantity, and stand up for less experienced partners in their negotiations with donors and intermediaries.
- NGORC should strive to receive direct funding to ensure independence in all actions.
- Retain and maintain qualified human resources and ensure that recruitment within partnerships is restricted.
- NGORC will continue to share and promote transparent and equitable mechanisms for sharing overhead costs among all stakeholders involved within a partnership.
- Ensure that the total costs of partner activities are supported.
- Promote and ensure that funds for support and care services, such as insurance, security measures, and psychological assistance, are included in project budgets.

CAPACITY

Capacity strengthening should be considered «a deliberate process that supports the ability of organizations and networks to institutionalize new or improved systems and structures and individuals and groups to acquire or improve knowledge, skills, or attitudes necessary to function effectively, achieve goals, and work towards sustainability and self-reliance.»

- Implement, support, and promote the capacity and sustainability of local and national organizations. Ensure that capacity strengthening/knowledge transfer plans are tailored, contextualized, mutually agreed upon, with clear objectives, and long-term based on project and institutional needs.
- Support capacity dual knowledge transfer with partners and capacity strengthening of international organizations when relevant, especially on localization-related issues.

POLICY INFLUENCE AND ADVOCACY

Local and national actors should be involved in influencing/feeding ideas into developing humanitarian policies and planning processes in Ukraine, ensuring relevance and contextualization and leading to a better humanitarian response.

- Take practical steps to enhance input towards Humanitarian Policy and standards and facilitate local partners to provide feedback on a national and international level.
- Facilitate the participation of Ukrainian organizations in high-level international meetings, including direct meetings with donors.
- Facilitate and promote the involvement and participation of L/NNGOs in all aspects of the humanitarian program cycle (analysis, strategic planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation).
- Promote the inclusion of L/NNGO organizations in the IASC humanitarian response architecture at the national and sub-national levels and facilitate feedback processes.
- To facilitate the translation of key humanitarian documents and standards into Ukrainian to be available as a reference.
- Facilitate connections between L/NNGOs partners to allow for collective advocacy.

PARTICIPATION

National actors need to participate in programming and discussions with international actors during implementation to better understand the affected population's needs and priorities. Engaging with the local communities and providing consultation on the ground will promote efficient programming activities and responsible funding use.

- Facilitate local partners to actively participate in meetings, communication, and coordination with donor agencies or other opportunities where they can be a voice of their communities.
- Ensure and facilitate the enhanced capacity of L/NNGOs to conduct needs assessments and monitoring, taking into account the opinions of their beneficiaries and local communities.
- Always ensure the inclusion of local communities and consider the opinions of local partners.