



# LOCALISATION PILOT MODEL IN UKRAINE

## **Reflections from the Global Cash Trainer of Trainers**

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COLLABORATIVE CASH DELIVERY (CCD) IS A NETWORK OF 14 OF THE LARGEST INTERNATIONAL NGOS WHO COLLECTIVELY DELIVER OVER \$1BN IN LAST MILE CASH AND VOUCHER ASSISTANCE EVERY YEAR.

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# OVERVIEW

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The aim of this document is to give an overview of one of the Localisation Models implemented in Ukraine along with the successes, challenges and reflections for recommendations for future localisation endeavours. However, it tends to focus on the Cash Capacity Strengthening and cash implementation components of the model as these are the areas I had most oversight of and insight into.

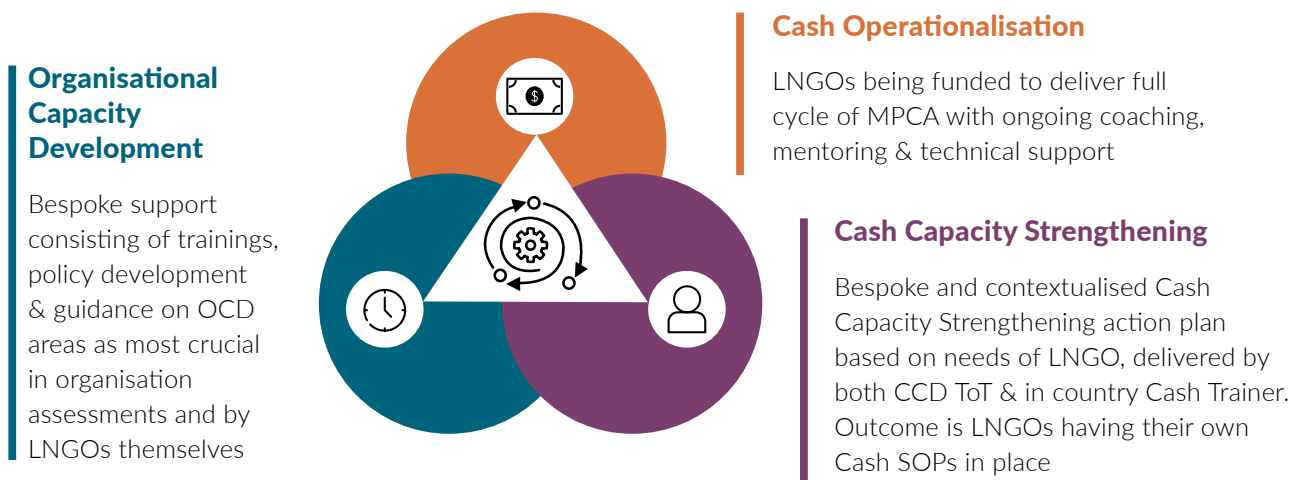
# THE MODEL & INTENDED OUTCOME

This Localisation model in Ukraine was one of four localisation models designed and tested under the CCD project funded by Disasters Emergencies Committee (DEC) Collective Initiatives. These models intended to achieve the following outcome; Local humanitarian actors have the institutional and technical capacity and funding to effectively and efficiently respond to conflict related humanitarian needs in Ukraine, Poland and Romania through quality cash programming in line with international humanitarian standards. With two specific outputs:

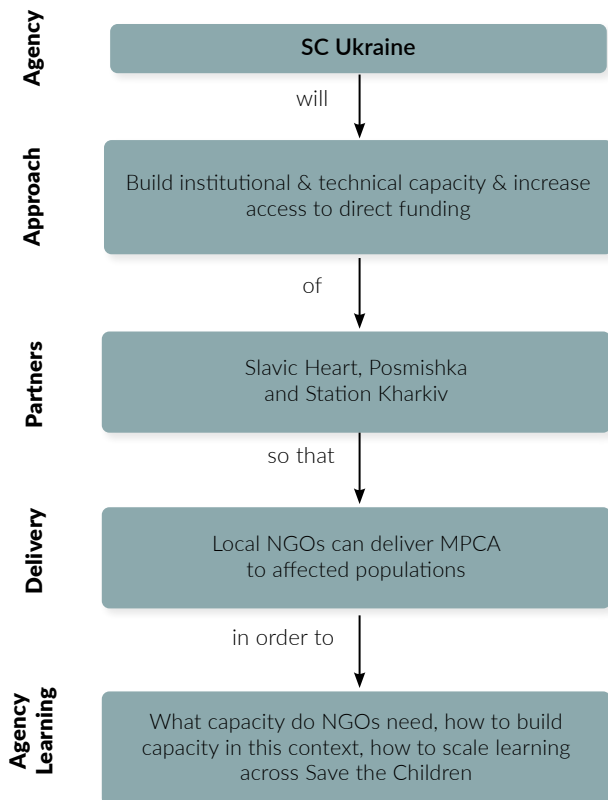
- 1 Local humanitarian actors have strengthened institutional capacities** to lead the humanitarian response with a focus on cash programming.
- 2 Partners have the staff, knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs)** to deliver locally-led, quality cash programming.

This model comprised of Cash Technical Capacity Strengthening, Organisational Capacity Strengthening and funding to directly implement CVA. This cash capacity strengthening work was being delivered in advance of and simultaneously with MPCA cash delivery and Organisational Capacity Development support. The figure below illustrates the three components of the Localisation Model.

## Localisation in Action: Capacity building to achieve Locally Led Humanitarian Action



In this model, the Cash Technical Capacity Strengthening was led by the CCD's Global Cash Trainer of Trainers and support by an in-country Cash Trainer recruited by Save the Children Ukraine. Whilst the Organisational Capacity Strengthening and contracting and management of the CVA implementation components would be led by Save the Children Ukraine, with support from CCD where requested.



The collective learning of all four models also intended to inform how:

- INGOs and donors can support local leadership models for diverse local actors
- Cross-fertilisation of ideas from different agencies can support development of new partnership models
- INGOs can shift power and accountability to local actors
- To develop evidence-based localisation models that can be scaled through CCD.

# HOW IT WAS IMPLEMENTED

The project started in January 2023, from August 2023 to June 2024 Cash Capacity Strengthening and Organisational Capacity Strengthening support was provided. The intention was that this work would begin in April 2023, but the Global Cash Trainer of Trainers was not in place until June 2023 and the in-country Cash Trainer joined Save the Children Ukraine in September 2023. Nonetheless, implementation started by holding kick off workshop with SCI and partners in Ukraine in July 2023, the Global Cash Trainer of Trainers then conducted Cash Capacity Assessments for each organisation and began developing cash capacity strengthening materials and plans for partners. When the in-country Cash trainer joined SCI in September 2023 the Global Cash Trainer of Trainers began training them up as a cash trainer and provided ongoing training, mentoring, coaching to them to support the local partners. This model intended to not only build local organisations' Cash Technical Capacity, but also to build capacity to build capacity of local organisations in Ukraine. Since September 2023 Trainer has been increasingly involved in directly training, coaching, mentoring and providing ongoing trouble shooting support to the 3 LNGO partners. In January 2024 all 3 partners began implementing their cash projects as well as actively participating in training, mentoring, coaching and sharing experiences across organisations for mutual benefit.

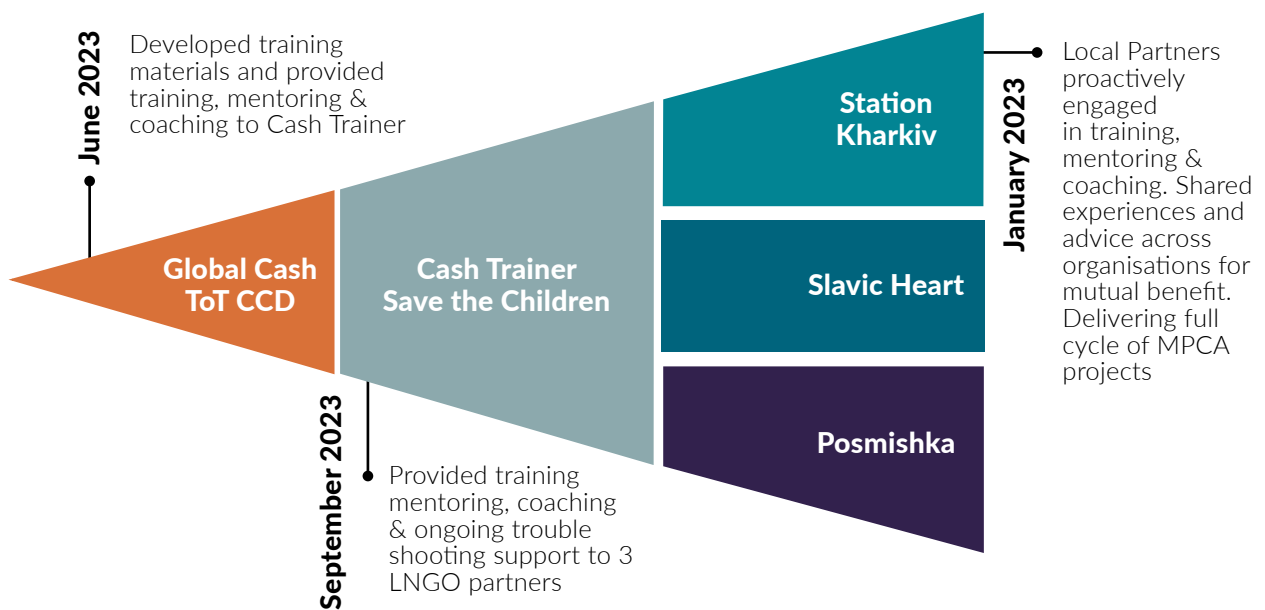
The Cash Capacity Strengthening began with conducting Cash Capacity Assessments for each LNGO to inform their cash capacity development plans, ensuring that assumptions were not made about level of knowledge and capacity and that the support offered was relevant to the needs of each organisation.

## Cash Capacity Strengthening Phases



The Cash Capacity Strengthening involved in person training sessions on CVA, online training sessions, practical guidance, mentoring and coaching, as well as sharing of ready to use tools and ongoing troubleshooting support. The Cash Capacity Strengthening began before Cash Operationalisation but continued alongside to enable real-time learning and support programme quality. A core part of the Cash Capacity Strengthening was the development of Multipurpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), an initial template with guidance was shared with partners who were then given support to develop their own. After a few rounds of feedback and discussion each partner completed their own MPCA SOP that was reviewed by both the CCD Global Cash Trainer of Trainers and in country Cash Trainer. Additional training was provided on the CWG endorsed De-duplication platform (Building Blocks) as well as Market Monitoring training provided by REACH with the intention for partners to participate (where appropriate) in the Ukraine Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI).

### The Cash ToT Model in Ukraine





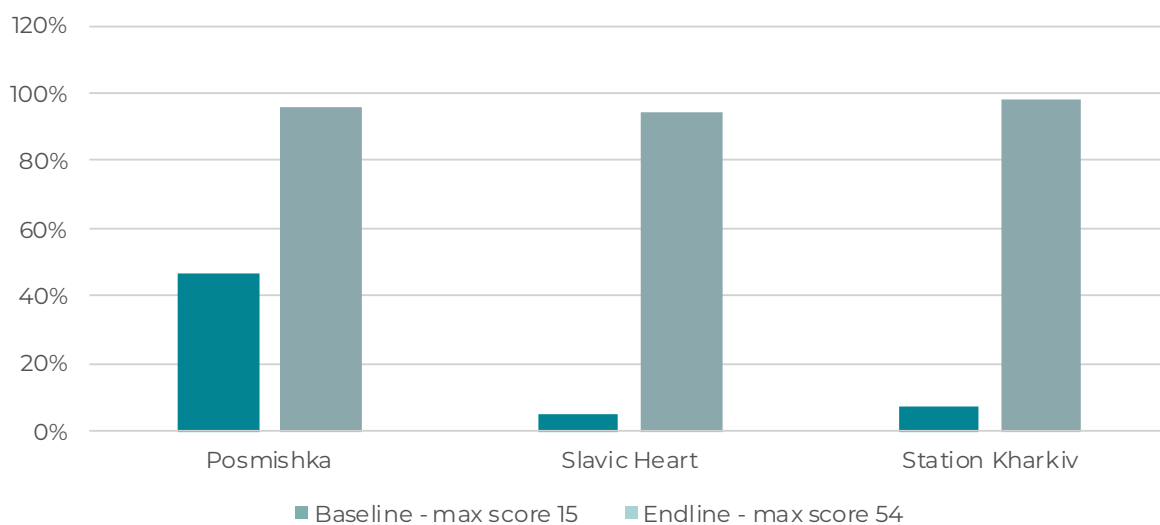
In addition to the Cash Capacity Strengthening, Save the Children International also arranged and provided organisation capacity development activities, tailored to the needs and preferences of each organisation. These included First Aid training, Security training and the Humanitarian Leadership Academy's Humanitarian Operations Programme (HOP) which covers the essential elements of setting up and running a humanitarian response. Additional training and coaching on MEAL aspects of CVA by the CCD's MEAL Manager, topics included Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDMs), logical frameworks, indicators and qualitative data analysis.

The LNGOs went through Save the Children's partnership process, this included Partnership Capacity Assessments and other partnership requirements. The overall project was funded by two different funding streams within DEC, Collective Initiatives designed to fund transformative Humanitarian initiatives, and the Ukraine Response designed to fund immediate and life-saving humanitarian projects. This meant that Save the Children International required each partner to sign two separate contracts, one for the Capacity strengthening components, and one for the MPCA Operationalisation or MPCA projects. The DEC contract with Save the Children UK was signed in January 2023, with the intention of kicking off and signing contracts between Save the Children International and their local partners in the second quarter of 2023 with the projects running up until the second quarter 2024, allowing for recruitment delays this was adjusted to August 2023, the intended end date was not amended, resulting in reduced implementation time. The contracts between Save the Children International in Ukraine and their local partners were signed in September 2023, November 2023 and February 2024.

# IMPACT

Cash Capacity Assessments were completed at the beginning of the project by the Global Cash Trainer of Trainers, and then at the end of the project by the in-country Cash Trainer who was trained in a new CCD Harmonized Cash Capacity Assessment tool<sup>1</sup> by the CCD Global Cash Trainer of Trainers. These assessments, along with feedback from partners and observations of the Global Cash Trainer of Trainers regarding the Cash Capacity of the local partners are outlined below showing the impact of this project on local partners' Cash Capacity and understanding of whether partners now have the staff, knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) to deliver locally-led, quality cash programming.

The below graph shows the Cash Capacity Assessment scores for each partner at the beginning and end of the project. Whilst it is important to note two different Cash Capacity tools were used at the beginning and end so not directly comparable, the score difference is still indicative of the progress made.



At the outset, all three local partners had previous experience of cash projects, with all having been working in the humanitarian sector in Eastern Ukraine since 2014. Much of their experience was limited to being implementing partners focussed on data collection including conducting registrations. Involvement in design and decision making with partners had been limited, which in turn limited the local partners' experience, knowledge and skills of large parts of the CVA project cycle and unequal power dynamics. For example, local organisations being told when cash is feasible, rather than leading or being consulted and included in that decision.

1 [https://www.collaborativecash.org/\\_files/ugd/eba6ae\\_a27d3358280b4585a486714378c076d5.pdf](https://www.collaborativecash.org/_files/ugd/eba6ae_a27d3358280b4585a486714378c076d5.pdf)

Despite not being appropriate to directly compare baseline and endline scores, it is significant that all partners scored noticeably higher in the second or endline assessment, this is complimented by feedback from participants of trainings as well as senior management from the LNGOs sharing that in their view this project has made significant impact and led to their organisation's increased capacity in Cash and Voucher Assistance.

'Thanks to this project, our fund has already changed for the better because we gained the necessary knowledge during the training phase. That is why I think that, over time, we will become even better in this field'.

- Staff member from Posmishka

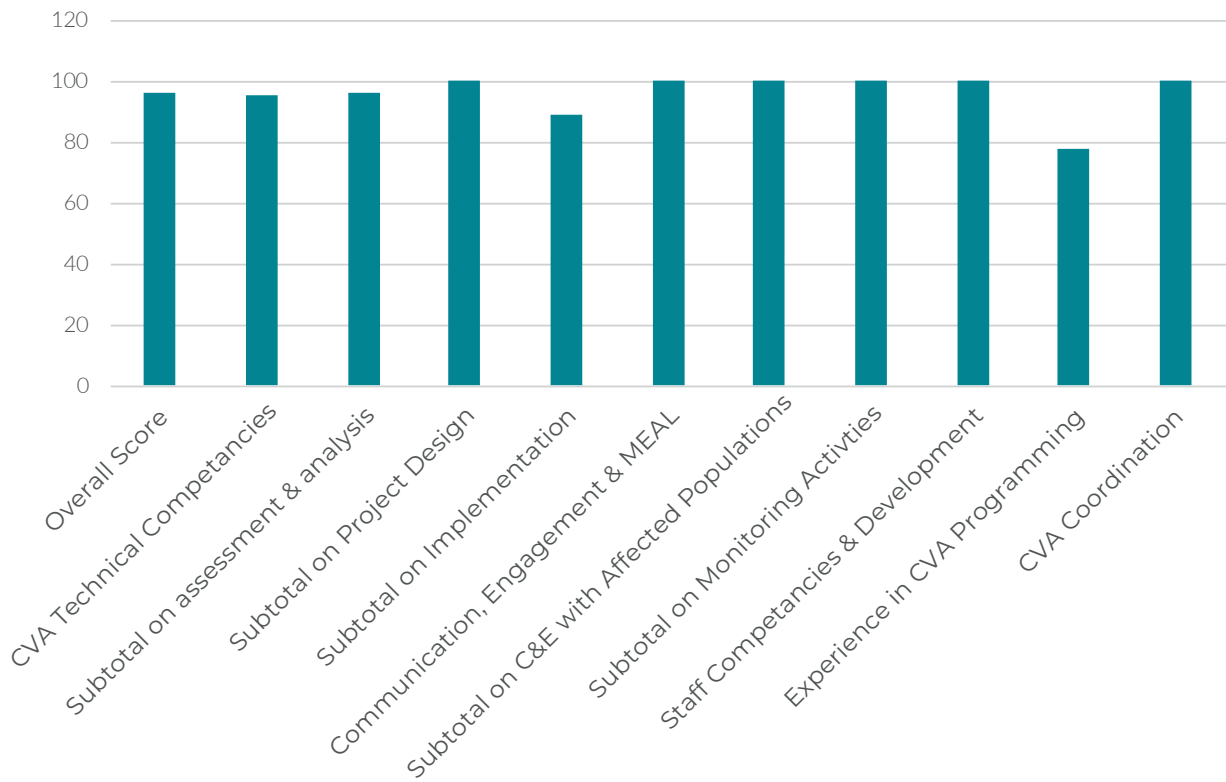
In addition to the scores and feedback, all partners have now completed a MPCA project which they had involvement of each step of the project implementation, and with cash technical support, have developed MPCA SOPs to ensure they are able to build organisation cash capacity as well as individual staff knowledge and enable them to build in learning from this project and them ready to implement future MPCA projects.

'The training also helped us enhance our knowledge of CVA and make it more comprehensive and holistic. With new staff joining our team, they also participated in the training and gained a complete understanding of the cash cycle and the specifics of CVA'.

- Staff member from Slavic Heart

The final CCA's did consistently highlight across all partners that significantly improved in the areas of CVA Coordination, with all three partners being active members of the Ukraine Cash Working Group by the end of the project. However, the lowest scores were consistently on the section of Experience in CVA programming. This makes sense as it covers the parts of the CVA project cycle that partners had no previous experience of, nonetheless the average score being over 70% shows the progress and effective of the Cash Capacity Strengthening and highlights the importance of linking training with ongoing support and Cash operationalization or the opportunity for local organisations to learn by doing and cement and demonstrate their increased capacity through implementation.

## Average Final Cash Capacity Assessment Scores - Competency Breakdown



# SUCCESSSES

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- All 3 LNGOs delivered full cycle of CVA in MPCA projects, reaching their pre-agreed targets and demonstrating their capacity to deliver cash, additionally, the PDM data indicated that the cash assistance was delivered in a safe and accountable way according to the sampled cash recipients and confirmed cash is the preferred modality for the crisis-affected populations in the project areas
- All 3 LNGOs involved in the project developed high quality MPCA SOPs ready to be used in future projects to enable continued quality implementation, building organisational cash capacity not just staff technical knowledge
- Positive feedback received from LNGOs on overall project, approach and specific cash trainings and cash capacity strengthening activities
- All three LNGOs reported and demonstrated increased Cash Technical Capacity
- Taking time to understand existing knowledge and capacity of organisations before designing training and providing bespoke training with ongoing support was shown to be an effective approach to building capacity
- All partners confirmed significant shift in ways of working resulting in LNGOs taking on more elements of the project and embedding capacity building into each step of the project

# CHALLENGES & BARRIERS

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- Delays in recruitment and lack of clarity in understanding the project and model, as staff were recruited across a long timeframe it was not possible to have a detailed project kick off where everyone involved in the project could get on the same page and into the details of how to do it
- Trying to do something different when systems, ways of working, processes and people are set on business as usual requires additional effort in influencing/ being persistent/ re-explaining the objective of the project etc. As it is essentially going against the grain or swimming against the current, more time, energy, effort and resources are needed as well as senior level support and endorsement of the project
- Lack of involvement of LNGOs in designing the project and in their inclusion in the project, not sure the project was fully explained at the outset, rather focus was on MPCA implementation not Localisation, which L/N NGO partners' feedback negatively impacted their motivation
- Recruitment delays meant that time initially intended to build the capacity of and train in country cash trainer was lost
- Multiple funding sources created additional administrative burden on Save the Children International and LNGO partners, as well as creating more space for complexity and confusion
- Aim of the project to do partnership differently was challenged by going through existing or business as usual processes and functions
- Delays in signing contracts and other delays experienced by CCD and Save the Children International reduced the implementation time for the overall project as well as the amount of time for LNGOs to deliver their MCPA projects, increasing stress and reducing capacity and time for capacity strengthening

'International donors need to trust local humanitarian organizations a little more and listen to the opinions of local organizations that operate directly here all these years.'

– Staff member from Station Kharkiv

# RECOMMENDATIONS

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## **1 Allow more time to enable capacity strengthening**

Ongoing and practical capacity strengthening support through technical trainings, coaching and mentoring works, but is time intensive allow more time for these activities before, after and during the Cash operationalisation to have more impact and not put unmanageable demands on LNGOs and their staff.

## **2 Focus on areas of most impact for OCD**

Organisational Capacity Development is a vast area, being led by LNGO priorities and needs is important, but we need to acknowledge what we can reasonably deliver on, for most impact on ability to deliver quality Cash assistance, focus on areas that directly connect to that such as ensuring knowledge of and put in place policies and procedures for accountability to affected populations including feedback and response hotlines, financial management, HR, MEAL, safeguarding and Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA).

## **3 Balance bespoke trainings with being structured in Cash Capacity Strengthening approach**

This project was intended to be flexible and responsive to needs to LNGOs in terms of Cash Capacity Strengthening, there are positives to this as it meant support was given based on what was needed, but the downside is that participants and LNGOs did not know the time commitment required from them at the outset. Find a balance between regimented pre-existing materials and being completely ad hoc and responsive, build this into the Cash Capacity Strengthening Planning process

## **4 Ensure that all involved, INGOs and LNGOs know, understand, and sign up to in tangible terms the aims, commitment, and objectives of this project**

At times it was not clear if LNGOs knew about the additional workload involved until after the project was being implemented meaning they could not plan for and allocate adequate resources.

**5 Ensure dedicated human resources for cash capacity strengthening activities to be based in country**

Building capacity to build capacity at the local level is needed, as working with LNGOs with a coaching and mentorship approach with the explicit aim to build their capacity is not part of how many INGOs currently approach partnerships with LNGOs. Recommendation is at least one full time cash trainer, being trained and supported by Global Cash Trainer of Trainers.

**6 Consider what we, as INGOs could do differently**

This project focussed on building the capacity of LNGOs to tackle barriers to localization, but it would be beneficial for INGOs to review their current practices at a programmatic and operational level to consider how they could do things differently to enable and support localisation objectives or to ensure equitable partnership principles are at the core of how they partner with LNGOs. For example, pass on donor flexibility, Indirect Cost Recovery (ICR) and mitigate the impact of delays on partners.



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