A Mapping Exercise:
South Sudan Localisation Funds, Forums and Platforms

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Acknowledgements

1. Introduction

Trócaire is interested in building its evidence-based advocacy to support the journey to localisation in the countries in which it operates. In South Sudan, Trócaire works in partnership with CAFOD (CTP) and is supporting localisation efforts. In order to support this work and stock-take on what is going on in South Sudan, Trócaire commissioned merl to undertake a mapping exercise to explore the funds, forums, platforms and working groups actively working on localisation. The purpose of the mapping is to support CTP in making decisions around where they should focus their energy around localisation, given the different networks they are involved in, and to provide a useful document to share with key stakeholders in South Sudan to reflect on what is happening already in the localisation landscape.

This was a desk-based review, relying on information publicly available online and a small number of key informant interviews. It does not seek to evaluate particular initiatives, but rather to provide **a broad mapping of the landscape of 'localisation' forums in South Sudan** in order to inform further advocacy engagement and to promote collaboration. The focus is on collective spaces, platforms and funds that are currently and actively working on localisation and locally led aid, rather than on the initiatives, programmes or commitments of individual organisations or time-limited consortiums or projects. The mapping is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather to bring together some of the most prominent funds, forums and platforms. A more in-depth assessment or comparison of different platforms and approaches, as well as more detailed, place-based mapping in specific parts of the country, would be useful areas for further study.

The mapping consists of four sections: a brief overview of the methodology, the five key themes identified, an overview of the collective platforms, funds and forums in South Sudan, followed by an in-depth review of each. The mapping finishes with a summary of recent key literature and a list of additional research on South Sudanese localisation.

2. Methodology

This document is based on a rapid, desk-based mapping exercise which took place in May–June 2024. The mapping explored six research questions:

1. What are the key platforms/ groups where localisation discussions and activities are happening?
2. Who is leading them and who is involved?
3. Where are they active?
4. What are their primary objectives/ main activities?
5. How do these forums interact and link with each other?
6. What gaps in advocacy for localisation in South Sudan exist?

The mapping was developed through:
● **A desk-based review** of key academic and grey literature and website content on localisation and different funds, forums and platforms in South Sudan.

- **Key Informant Interviews** with five key informants embedded within one or more forums in South Sudan.
- **Validation meeting** with key organisations that participated in the mapping exercise.

3. Mapping Overview

Collective Spaces:

Advocacy Platforms:
- NGO Forum Localisation Working Group
- Charter for Change South Sudan Working Group
- Local Leadership Lab (NEAR Network)
- Grand Bargain National Reference Group

Funds:
- Local Response Pooled Fund
- Start Hub South Sudan
- South Sudan Humanitarian Fund
- IOM Rapid Response Fund
- South Sudan Protracted Crisis Joint Response
- South Sudan Reconciliation, Stabilization and Resilience Trust Fund

Clusters and Coordination Mechanisms:
- South Sudan HCT localisation strategy
- Education cluster localisation working group
- WASH cluster localisation thematic working group
- FSL cluster localisation task force
- Flagship Initiative (OCHA)

Background and themes from the mapping

Over the last decade, there has been a significant focus on 'localisation' and locally led aid amongst humanitarian actors in South Sudan. Many donors, UN agencies and international NGOs operating in the country are signatories of relevant global commitments, including the Grand Bargain and the Charter for Change. Despite this, **evidence of change in practice is limited.** Direct funding to South Sudanese organisations remains a very small proportion of total humanitarian assistance, and South Sudanese organisations continue to struggle to access multi-year, flexible funding and support for core costs.[1] South Sudanese NGOs predominantly receive funding as subcontractors to international organisations, with decisions made and agendas set by international agencies.[2] Changes in practice appear piecemeal, with little sign of structural or systemic change to power imbalances within the humanitarian sector in South Sudan, or of a shift to more transformative, genuinely locally led approaches.[3]

We identified five key findings from this mapping exercise:

1. **There are many initiatives promoting 'localisation' and some momentum, often driven by the same individuals and organisations.** This means that momentum for change is dependent on those individuals and organisations, and can vary over time as people move on or funding ends.

2. **Coordination and linkages between these funds, forums and platforms is largely informal,** often depending on particular individuals or organisations being part of multiple forums. As a

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[1] CAFOD and Development Initiatives, 2023. 'Food insecurity in South Sudan: Financing to local actors'.

[2] Kemmerling, 2024. 'Spotlight on Humanitarian– Development– Peace Nexus Implementation in South Sudan: Localisation from a Decolonial Perspective'

[3] See, for example, Kemmerling, 2024. 'Spotlight on Humanitarian– Development– Peace Nexus Implementation in South Sudan: Localisation from a Decolonial Perspective'; CAFOD and Development Initiatives, 2023. 'Food insecurity in South Sudan: Financing to local actors'.

result, there is a high risk of overlap and duplication, of siloed working and piecemeal (rather than systemic) change.

> Exercise caution when setting up new initiatives, projects or platforms related to 'localisation'. Instead, seek to understand and build on what already exists, to foster better coordination and collaboration between different platforms, and to create clearer follow-up mechanisms and accountability processes for commitments and strategies that have already been made. Within action plans for spaces that exist, focus on creating linkages and coordination across and beyond these platforms and forums.

3. **Power dynamics within these spaces remain very unequal,** despite the increased representation of South Sudanese NGOs within various humanitarian response structures, including as members or co-leads of clusters and funding mechanisms. South Sudanese NGOs can be concerned that if they are too critical, they risk losing funding, or being 'blacklisted'. Research by InterAction, for example, found that some South Sudanese NGOs reported being censured by donors, UN agencies or INGOs for speaking out too frequently or vehemently.[4]

> Support South Sudanese-led efforts for change in the humanitarian system, including South Sudanese-led funding platforms and advocacy initiatives. At the same time, address barriers to meaningful and equitable participation in humanitarian coordination and leadership structures. Ensure representation of South Sudanese organisations in leadership and coordination structures is not tokenistic, including by reflecting on and seeking to challenge power dynamics within these spaces.

4. **It takes time and resources to engage.** There are financial costs associated with leading or participating in coordination structures, which are difficult to cover for organisations without access to flexible, core organisational funding.[5] Lack of office space, internet connectivity, and funds to support participation in in-person meetings, as well as language barriers (with meetings typically held in English) all undermine participation in coordination structures.[6]

> Ensure South Sudanese organisations, especially those who are leading or chairing advocacy groups or coordination structures, have the resources they need. This might include support for internet connectivity, travel and staff costs.

5. **Platforms are largely based in Juba, with limited outreach beyond the capital**, and little engagement with the wider South Sudanese civil society landscape beyond national NGOs. This reflects the wider centralisation of the humanitarian response structures in the capital: a 2022 Peer-to-Peer evaluation noted that resources remain 'locked up' in Juba, *"disconnected from*

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[4] InterAction, 2023. '[Report of InterAction's Mission to South Sudan](#)'.
[5] Trocaire, 2023. '[Women-led Organizations: Leadership in GBV Coordination Resource Package](#).'
[6] Trocaire, 2023. '[Women-led Organizations: Leadership in GBV Coordination Resource Package](#).'

field realities and the important differences between states".[7] As a result, South Sudanese actors participating in these platforms are generally relatively well-established national NGOs with a presence in the capital.

> Ensure that 'localisation' efforts do not unintentionally reinforce marginalisation or unequal power dynamics in the aid system or in wider South Sudanese society. Consider how spaces for advocacy around localisation and locally led aid can be made more inclusive and accessible, so that a broader spectrum of actors, including a more diverse array of South Sudanese civil society groups, can participate in leading and shaping the 'localisation' debate in South Sudan. This might mean hosting meetings in a broader range of locations, and in different languages, as well as collaborating with local civil society networks, actors and initiatives in different parts of the country.

Suggested areas to explore further:
- How could links to wider civil society networks be created and sustained, including those outside the capital (without co-opting these networks)?
- Power analysis of different spaces in order to enable participation and leadership of local organisations, exploring the barriers to local actors having decision-making power in those spaces (going beyond participation and having a seat at the table).

The remainder of this document provides an overview of key platforms, forums and funds intended to promote 'localisation' and locally led aid in South Sudan.

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[7] IASC, 2022. 'Peer-2-Peer Project Mission Report: South Sudan'.

4. Key platforms, funds and forums: who, what and why

This table responds to the key questions guiding this mapping exercise. It seeks to identify the main platforms, groups and funds in South Sudan working explicitly on localisation, with the aim of identifying possibilities for collaboration and reducing duplication. It includes their leadership, membership and key objectives. It is based primarily on information publicly available online, supplemented by a small number of interviews. The platforms and funds are not listed in any particular order. Further detail can be found in .

Name and website (w)	Leadership	Membership	Type	Objectives
South Sudan NGO Forum Localisation Working Group (LWG) W: southsudanngoforum.org	Chaired by Women for Change (WFC) Co-chaired by Save the Children	Localisation Working Group includes NNGOs (7), INGOs (5), UN agencies (2), donors (2) and the NGO Forum Secretariat.	TYPE: advocacy platform 📢	To consolidate, coordinate, improve and support the advocacy activities of the NGO Forum membership and all relevant stakeholders working to promote localisation in South Sudan through activities aimed at enhancing coordination, information sharing and learning among stakeholders. This includes: ● Forging a joint NGO voice on localisation in South Sudan, including coordinating different initiatives ongoing under 'localisation' and supporting development of HCT strategy. ● Building a strong NGO advocacy voice to national and international platforms, including around multi-year and increased funding, and participation in coordination mechanisms. ● Increasing NGO understanding, including by developing tools to track progress towards localisation.[8]
Charter for Change (C4C) South Sudan Working Group W:	Chaired by Child's Destiny and Development Organization (CHIDDO)	C4C network in South Sudan includes NNGOs (71 endorsers) and INGOs (21	TYPE: advocacy platform 📢	To bring together C4C signatories, endorsers, and allies with the aim of promoting and practically implementing the C4C in South Sudan; and to identify ways to shift the power

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[8] South Sudan NGO Forum, 2023. 'Localisation & Partnership Working Group (LWPG): Terms of Reference (ToR)'.

		signatories)		to local and national actors, in alignment with the eight commitments of the C4C.
charter4change. org	Co-chaired by CTP.			
Local Response Pooled Fund (LRPF) W: www.lrpf.org	Led by Global Aim South Sudan (national NGO)	NNGOs (nearly 200 NNGOs as members).	TYPE: fund 💰	To operationalise the Grand Bargain commitment to localisation by increasing national NGOs' direct access to funding and their involvement in decision making.[9]
Start Hub South Sudan W: startnetwork.org /network/hubs	Led by Titi Foundation (national NGO) with CTP (international NGO) as fund custodian	Membership and steering committee include NNGOs (5) and INGOs (5).	TYPE: fund 💰	Globally, the aim of Start Hubs is to shift resources, decision making and power closer to those dealing with crises at the frontline.[10] The South Sudan Start Hub is focusing on four thematic areas: humanitarian funding being more locally led; innovation; advocacy; and anticipatory action and early warning.
Grand Bargain National Reference Group W: reliefweb.int/rep ort/world/grand-bargain-guidance-note-national-reference-groups-enarid	Currently dormant	INGOs, NNGOs, donors and the Government of South Sudan.	TYPE: advocacy platform 📢	To be a national-level consultative forum for humanitarian stakeholders, led by local and national actors, and to support action to promote the Grand Bargain framework.[11] This is currently dormant but there is a plan to re-establish it. The inclusion of government actors would make this different from other existing localisation forums in South Sudan.
NEAR Network Local Leadership Lab (LLL) W: civicus.org/inde x.php/what-we-do/strengthen/l ocal-leadership-labs	Led by Amalna South Sudan (national NGO)	NNGOs (11)	TYPE: advocacy platform 📢	Local Leadership Labs are an initiative of the NEAR network and CIVICUS (whose role is as catalysts and connectors).[12] They aim to tackle barriers *"preventing governments, donors and other stakeholders from adopting and delivering on commitments that recognize, enable and resource diverse local civil society groups as key development actors in their own right"*; and to support *"radically inclusive spaces where local*

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[9] LRPF, n.d., 'About us'

[10] Start Network, n.d., 'Hubs'

[11] Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), 2022. 'National Reference Groups: Guidance Note'.

[12] CIVICUS, n.d., 'About the Local Leadership Labs (LLL)'.

				civil society groups can drive, alongside other key actors and decision-makers, the development of context-appropriate policies and solutions".[13]
South Sudan Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) Localisation Vision and Strategy W: reliefweb.int/report/south-sudan/localisation-vision-strategy-humanitarian-country-team-south-sudan	The HCT is chaired by the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC).	HCT includes UN agencies (10), INGOs (5), NNGOs (2) and observers (2). The HCT Localisation Strategy was drafted by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the NGO Forum, CHIDDO, CTP, and DanChurchAid (DCA).	TYPE: Coordination mechanism 💬	Vision is that "*national and local humanitarian actors are enabled and capacitated to take on a greater role in leading humanitarian action in South Sudan, with a reduced need for international support, unless overwhelmed by crisis.*" Priority areas are: ● Equitable partnership ● Capacity sharing ● Inclusion and participation ● Resources and funding.
South Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SSHF) W: www.unocha.org/south-sudan/about-south-sudan-humanitarian-fund	Led by UN OCHA. Two national NGOs have representation on the advisory board.	UN agencies, INGOs and NNGOs.	TYPE: fund 💰	To support life-saving and life-sustaining activities while filling critical funding gaps; to promote needs-based assistance in accordance with humanitarian principles; to strengthen coordination and leadership through the function of the humanitarian coordinator and by leveraging the cluster system; to improve the relevance and coherence of humanitarian response by strategically funding priorities as identified under the humanitarian response plan (HRP) and to expand the delivery of assistance in hard-to-reach areas by partnering with NGOs.[14]
Flagship Initiative W: www.unocha.org/flagship-initiative	UN OCHA		TYPE: pilot programme / change process	Aim globally: To deliver solutions and build resilience by ensuring the priorities of crisis-affected communities drive humanitarian assistance.

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[13] CIVICUS, n.d., 'About the Local Leadership Labs (LLL)'.
[14] UN OCHA, n.d., 'About the South Sudan Humanitarian Fund'.

Food Security and Livelihoods (FSL) cluster Localisation Task Force (LTF) W: fscluster.org/south-sudan-rep	FSL LTF to be chaired by AidLink Organization (NNGO) and Action Against Hunger (INGO), with members of the Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) and oversight from the FSL cluster national coordinator.	LTF to include the cluster national coordinator, 2 SAG members, 1 INGO, 3 NNGOs and 1 WLO. Election process currently underway.[15]	TYPE: Coordination mechanism	Localisation is one of the four pillars of the global Food Security Cluster 2023-2025 strategy. As of 2024, the FSL Cluster South Sudan is establishing a Localization Task Force, aiming to: ● Promote active participation of communities and local actors (CBOs, NGOs, local authorities and private sector) in the project life cycle of FSL programmes. ● Advocate for a training project that will address the key institutional capacity gaps of NNGOs.[16]
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) cluster Localization Thematic Working Group W: response.reliefweb.int/south-sudan/water-sanitation-hygiene	Currently chaired by Nile Sustainable Development Organization (NSDO), an NNGO. Co-chaired by Food and Agriculture Development Agency (FADA), an NNGO, and Action Against Hunger, an INGO.	Localisation TWG membership comprised of NNGOs (7) and INGOs (4).[17]	TYPE: Coordination mechanism	The aims of the WASH Localisation TWG are: ● To strengthen the institutional capacities of local actors to better respond to WASH in emergency and development ● To increase the visibility and participation of WASH local actors in RRF and other funding mechanisms ● To enhance networking and principled partnerships between WASH Cluster members ● To advocate for WASH local actors to access minimum 25% direct humanitarian and development funding.[18]
Education Cluster Localisation Working Group	Cluster is co-led by UNICEF South Sudan, Save the Children, and	The South Sudan Education Cluster as a whole has 67	TYPE: Coordination mechanism	The South Sudan Education Cluster identified localisation as a priority in its 2023-2025 Strategy, and has developed a localisation action plan.[20]

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[15] South Sudan FSL Cluster, 2024. 'Localization Task Force Presentation'.

[16] South Sudan FSL Cluster, 2024. 'Localization Task Force Presentation'.

[17] WASH Cluster South Sudan, 2023. 'Terms of Reference for the WASH Cluster Localization Technical Working Group, South Sudan.'

[18] WASH Cluster South Sudan, 2023. 'Terms of Reference for the WASH Cluster Localization Technical Working Group, South Sudan.'

[20] Education Cluster South Sudan, 2023. 'South Sudan Education Cluster Strategy 2023- 2025'.

W: response.reliefweb.int/south-sudan/education	UNKEA South Sudan	members (63% national). The Strategic Action Group (SAG) has 10 members: 4 NNGOs, 4 INGOs, and two UN agencies.[19]		The aim of the localisation action plan is to increase local actors' opportunities and capacity for funding, participation and decision making in education in emergencies coordination and response.[21]
[IOM Rapid Response Fund (RRF)](southsudan.iom.int/rapid-response-fund) W: southsudan.iom.int/rapid-response-fund	International Organization for Migration (IOM)	INGOs and NNGOs. Organisations seeking funds must be endorsed by a cluster.	TYPE: fund 💰	The RRF aims to enable a rapid humanitarian response to external shocks resulting from natural and man-made disasters in South Sudan and Abyei. It addresses only very acute emergencies, and partners must be endorsed by clusters.[22]
South Sudan Protracted Crisis Joint Response W: https://dutchrelief.org/south-sudan-protracted-crisis-joint-response-2024-2026/	Led by Help A Child (international NGO) and co-led by UNIDOR South Sudan.[23] Previously Save the Children (to 2023)	16 organisations involved in 2024-2026 (9 NNGOs and 7 INGOs).[24]	TYPE: fund 💰	The SSJR aims to provide emergency humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable people affected by the crisis in different parts of South Sudan; working across Food Security and Livelihoods, WASH, Multi-Purpose Cash, Nutrition and Protection Support. Funding is provided on a multi-year basis.
Care International Women Led Organisations Network	CARE International	As of 2021, the network included 32 women's rights organisations.	TYPE: network and fund 💰	This was a four-year project supporting women-led organisations (WLOs) and networks in South Sudan. Grants were provided to WLOs for core funding to spend as organisations wished, to strengthen their organisations, work and advocacy. Organisations were selected by a WLO-led Strategic

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[19] Education Cluster South Sudan, 2023. ['South Sudan Education Cluster Strategy 2023- 2025'](#).
[21] Ibid.
[22] IOM RRF, ['Presentation to partners on the RRF Pre-Award Processes'](#), 22 Feb 2023.
[23] Help a Child South Sudan, n.d., ['Leading the South Sudan Joint Response'](#).
[24] Dutch Relief Alliance, n.d., ['South Sudan Protracted Crisis Joint Response 2024-2026'](#).

				Advisory Committee, not by CARE.[25] By the end of the project, 48 grants had been provided to 30 WLOs and three networks, ranging from 30,000 to 160,000 Canadian dollars. This included WLOs located in more rural areas.[26]
South Sudan Reconciliation, Stabilization and Resilience Trust Fund (RSRTF) W: https://mptf.undp.org/fund/ssr00	Launched by the United UNMISS and the UN Country Team (UNCT). Managed by UNDP.	Steering Committee chaired by the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General, the Humanitarian Coordinator, and UN Resident Coordinator and includes representatives from the UNCT, UNMISS, donors and NGOs.[27]	TYPE: fund 💰	The RSRTF is a multi-donor trust fund intended to support peace and stability in South Sudan. It has adopted an area-based approach and is currently working in four parts of South Sudan. The RSRTF adopted a localisation strategy in 2023.

5. In detail: Platforms, funds and forums

South Sudan NGO Forum Localisation Working Group

The South Sudan NGO Forum Localisation Working Group (LWG) was established in 2020 to promote a strong, coordinated, unified NGO voice on issues related to the Grand Bargain, the Charter for Change and localisation in South Sudan. It had been relatively dormant until 2023, but has been revitalised and is now playing a central role in the development of the HCT Localisation Strategy and forthcoming Action Plan.

The objectives of the NGO Forum LWG, as set out in its Terms of Reference (ToR), are to:
- **Forge a joint NGO voice on localisation in South Sudan,** including by coordinating with different initiatives related to 'localisation' to prevent duplication, developing a shared understanding and strategy on localisation, developing an action plan and supporting the roll-out of the HCT localisation strategy.

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[25] CARE International, 2021. 'Women and girls in South Sudan offer a path to a brighter future if they are properly supported, says CARE'.
[26] Government of Canada, 2023. 'Project profile — Women's Voice and Leadership - South Sudan'.
[27] South Sudan RSRTF, n.d., 'Governance arrangements'.

- **Build a strong NGO advocacy voice**, including by conducting joint advocacy to national and international platforms, leading advocacy initiatives for effective and equitable participation of local actors in humanitarian coordination and decision-making mechanisms, influencing donor policies to achieve multi-year and increased financing of at least 25% of humanitarian funding to local and national actors, and increasing inclusion and participation of local actors in humanitarian decision-making bodies.
- **Increase NGO understanding and capacity,** by supporting the development of tools to track progress towards localisation commitments, providing a networking, learning and experience sharing platform, and addressing impediments to greater localisation.

The NGO Forum LWG is accountable to the wider membership of the NGO Forum. It is composed of five NNGOs, five INGOs, two donors and two UN agencies. The Chair and Co-Chair are elected by the WG members and serve for six months at a time. Meetings are held monthly, in Juba and online.

Charter for Change (C4C) South Sudan Working Group and Network

The C4C is a collaboration between international and national NGOs seeking to change the way the humanitarian system operates to enable a more locally led response. It was initiated in 2015, and officially launched at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016. International NGOs who sign up to the C4C commit to change the way in which they work across eight key areas.[28] Local and national organisations can join the C4C as endorsers, committing to hold international NGO signatories to account. Globally, the C4C has been signed by 39 international NGOs, and endorsed by over 640 local and national organisations from 57 countries.[29] At the 2020 C4C Annual Meeting, attendees agreed on the need to shift the C4C's centre of gravity to the country level, including by supporting and strengthening country-level platforms for change.[30]

The South Sudan C4C Working Group was set up in 2020, and Terms of Reference for the wider C4C South Sudan Network were drafted and presented in 2021. The C4C South Sudan *Network* is composed of C4C endorsers, signatories and allies in South Sudan, and the C4C South Sudan *Working Group* is a smaller group elected from this wider network. There are also five sub-thematic working groups covering quality partnership, capacity strengthening, direct funding, harmonisation, and tracking country-level progress.

There are currently 71 South Sudanese NGO endorsers of the C4C, and 21 international NGO signatories. However, only a relatively small number of these are actively involved in meetings.

The core roles and functions of the C4C in South Sudan, as set out in the ToR, are:

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[28] The C4C's eight commitments are: 1) Increase direct funding to L/NNGOs; 2) Reaffirm the Principles of Partnership; 3) Increase transparency around resource transfers to L/NNGOs; 4) Stop undermining local capacity through poaching L/NNGO staff; 5) Emphasise the importance of national actors to donors; 6) Address subcontracting and ensure equal decision-making; 7) Robust organisational support and capacity strengthening; 8) Communicate about partners to the media and the public.
[29] https://charter4change.org/
[30] Charter for Change, 2020. 'Annual Meeting 2020 Communiqué'.

- **The promotion of localisation and the Charter for Change:** this includes mobilising South Sudanese NGOs, CSOs and CBOs to endorse the C4C, encouraging international NGOs to sign up, and holding signatories and endorsers to account through an annual reporting tool.
- **Improved and more equitable coordination:** this includes mapping endorsers, signatories and allies, as well as spaces of local and national actors' engagement, and supporting endorsers to have increased representation in coordination mechanisms; as well as supporting and connecting local and national NGOs with advocacy, funding, collaboration and locally-driven capacity strengthening opportunities.
- **Increasing voice and influence of local and national actors:** this includes ensuring that the voices of local and national actors are heard and responded to by the Government of South Sudan and by international actors; promoting leadership of local and national actors in coordination and decision-making spaces; and influencing donors, the UN, international agencies and the Government of South Sudan to fulfil the commitments of the Grand Bargain and the C4C.
- **Advocacy and evidence-based learning on localisation:** this includes undertaking advocacy for the inclusion and increased participation of local and national NGOs in humanitarian action; linking the South Sudan Working Group to the global C4C group to influence advocacy; and engaging in evidence-based research, learning and dissemination of findings on relevant topics.
- **Monitoring and accountability:** this includes monitoring progress against the eight C4C commitments annually; monitoring trends on the localisation of aid; and sharing tools, news, stories, resources and lessons learned related to localisation.

An achievement of the C4C in South Sudan has been the instigation of a capacity strengthening fund for endorsers, which seeks ways to make capacity strengthening more locally led. This fund is overseen by a steering committee of five South Sudanese NGOs who make decisions on the application process and on successful applicants.[31] Seed funding was originally provided by DCA and Christian Aid. Eight South Sudanese NGOs (all C4C endorsers) received training on human resources, procurement, finance and management, and in-kind support, including projectors, laptops, computers and furniture.

Local Response Pooled Fund (LRPF)
The LRPF is a locally led funding platform and network. It was established by local and national NGOs in collaboration with the NGO Forum, with support from Save the Children South Sudan, and was officially launched in 2021.[32] Its aim is to operationalise the Grand Bargain commitment to localisation in South Sudan by increasing national NGOs' direct access to funding, and their involvement in funding decision making. It is governed by a steering committee, elected from a pool

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[31] C4C South Sudan Annual Meeting Summary, 2023.
[32] Local Pooled Response Fund (LRPF), n.d., 'What is LRPF?'

of national NGOs. The LRPF began with 11 organisations in a loose network,[33] and had 196 registered national constituent organisations by 2023.[34]

The LRPF approached Save the Children to partner with the fund and provide technical support. Save the Children's role is as a guarantor, host agency and advisor.[35] The LRPF has a statute of operations that regulates Save the Children's involvement; the agreement was made to mitigate power imbalances and to ensure ownership of decision-making processes by the LRPF.[36] There is a "2025 exit strategy", according to which Save the Children will "offboard" the partnership. The aim is that the LRPF will be able to receive money directly from donors, with all funding decisions made by South Sudanese actors.

The LRPF has so far secured funding from the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) and the Centre for Disaster Philanthropy (CDP). Since 2021, the LRPF has raised 1.7 million US dollars, and is expected to receive up to five million dollars by 2025.[37]

Start Hub South Sudan

The Start Network is a network of local, national and international NGOs. It runs the global Start Fund, established in 2014, which aims to provide rapid funding in response to crisis alerts. Since 2020, the Start Fund has been incubating national and regional hubs, with the aim of shifting power, resources and decision making closer to those at the frontline of responding to crises. Start Network hubs control their own resources and define their own responses.[38]

The Start Hub in South Sudan was set up in late 2022 and is in the incubation and exploration phase. It has a membership of five INGOs and five NNGOs that also currently comprise the Steering Committee for the Hub, who are in the process of establishing governance systems and ways of working. It is led by Titi Foundation, a South Sudanese NGO. CTP is acting as the fund custodian while NNGO members go through the Start Network's due diligence processes. The idea is that this will be a fully locally led fund, managed and with decisions made by South Sudanese organisations.

The Hub has a focus on women-led organisations and is working across four thematic areas: locally led funding, innovation, advocacy, and anticipatory action and early warning. At present, the Hub has one funded programme, a community-led innovation programme, being implemented by Titi Foundation and CTP.

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[33] Save the Children, 2023. 'Local and National Actors at the Forefront of Humanitarian Responses - Localisation case study'.

[34] Save the Children, 2023. 'Local leaders at the forefront of humanitarian response in South Sudan'.

[35] Save the Children, 2023. 'Local and National Actors at the Forefront of Humanitarian Responses - Localisation case study'.

[36] Save the Children, 2023. 'Local leaders at the forefront of humanitarian response in South Sudan'.

[37] Save the Children, 2024. '"Localization in action" as Save the Children allocates 26% of its total budget to local partners'.

[38] Start Network, n.d., 'Hubs'.

Grand Bargain National Reference Group

The Grand Bargain is an agreement between many of the world's largest humanitarian donors and aid agencies, intended to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian aid delivery and to get more aid into the hands of people in need.[39] It was launched in 2016 at the World Humanitarian Summit. It currently has 67 signatories including 25 member states, 26 NGOs and 12 UN agencies. The original Grand Bargain agreement had ten workstreams, including one on localisation. Signatories agreed to channel 25% of humanitarian funding to local and national responders 'as directly as possible' by 2020. In 2021, the Grand Bargain 2.0 was agreed, narrowing the ten workstreams down to two 'enabling priorities': one around quality funding, and one around local leadership and participation of affected communities. National Reference Groups (NRGs) were proposed as part of the Grand Bargain 2.0 framework. They are intended as national-level consultative forums to promote action around the Grand Bargain.[40]

A South Sudan Grand Bargain NRG was set up in 2021 by five South Sudanese NGOs. This was dropped due to a lack of time amongst members and is currently dormant. There are discussions about reviving the group, in part, because of the intention that it would be a localisation platform that would include the Government, unlike other localisation platforms and forums.[41] The aim is that it will be a fully locally led platform.

South Sudan Local Leadership Lab (LLL)

Local Leadership Labs (LLL) are a new initiative seeking to promote locally led development, by *"tackling some of the barriers (political, technical, behavioural) preventing governments, donors and other stakeholders from adopting and delivering on commitments that recognize, enable and resource diverse local civil society groups as key development actors in their own right."*[42] The intention is that it will support radically inclusive spaces where local civil society groups can drive the development of context-appropriate policies and solutions.[43] CIVICUS and the Network for Empowered Aid Response (NEAR) are the catalysts and connectors in the initiative, with a role that includes providing financial support and non-financial accompaniment. In South Sudan the LLL is convened by Amalna, a South Sudanese NGO, and has 11 members.

South Sudan Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) Localisation Strategy

The South Sudan HCT Localisation Strategy was the result of a 2022 Peer2Peer (P2P) review of the South Sudan humanitarian response, which was critical of the current approach to localisation and partnerships in South Sudan, and called for a new approach. The findings of that review are summarised in section 6, below.

Following this review, the HCT reached out to a small number of organisations (FAO, the NGO Forum, CHIDDO, CTP, and DCA) that were active on localisation in South Sudan and asked them to draft a

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[39] IASC, n.d., 'The Grand Bargain (Official Website)'.
[40] IASC, 2022. 'National Reference Groups: Guidance Note'.
[41] Interview, 11 May 2024.
[42] CIVICUS, n.d., 'About the Local Leadership Labs (LLL)'.
[43] Ibid.

strategy on behalf of the HCT. A survey was distributed to a range of stakeholders, which led to an initial draft of a strategy document. This document was separated into a strategy and an action plan. The strategy document was agreed and published in 2023 (available [here](#)), and the action plan is currently being developed.

South Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SSHF)

The SSHF is the main humanitarian pooled fund in South Sudan. It was established in 2012. In 2023, it allocated $55.6 million to 33 partners, across 56 projects.[44] The proportion of funding going to local and national NGOs has fluctuated considerably: rising from 12% in 2016 to 29% in 2018,[45] before falling again to 26% in 2020[46], 16% in 2021[47] and 18% in 2022.[48] In 2023, this fell to its lowest level in several years, with 9% of funding going to national NGOs, compared to 61% to UN agencies.[49] The SSHF attributes this to *"the nature of emergency response in 2023, which required quick response capacity, operational presence and demonstrated capacity in large-scale emergency response, ability to pre-finance and quickly scale up operations in the identified locations"*, which 'locked out' many national partners.[50] Of 57 grants made by UN OCHA in 2023, 12 went to South Sudanese NGOs. $20 million of SSHF funding was channelled to IOM across eight grants, representing over a third of SSHF funding for the year.[51]

In 2020, management of the SSHF was transferred from UNDP to UN OCHA. As a result, SSHF partners needed to meet OCHA's more stringent requirements and assessment processes, based around a risk-based grant management approach in which new and existing partners are assigned a risk rating.[52] Under the new system, many NGOs were considered high-risk, imposing higher compliance demands. Some NNGOs were eliminated from the SSHF partner pool as a result.[53]

To access SSHF funding directly, NGOs must have participated in rolling years' Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) and have a budget expenditure for the past 24 months of at least $200,000, which excludes many South Sudanese organisations.[54] A move by UN OCHA to shift SSHF funding towards fewer, larger-scale, multi-sectoral projects has meant fewer South Sudanese organisations are able to access SSHF funds. However, organisations that are able to access this funding describe it as transformative.[55]

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[44] UN OCHA, 2024. ['South Sudan Humanitarian Fund Annual Report 2023'](#).

[45] UN OCHA, 2019. ['South Sudan Humanitarian Fund Annual Report 2018'](#).

[46] UN OCHA, 2021. ['South Sudan Humanitarian Fund Annual Report 2020'](#).

[47] UN OCHA, 2022. ['South Sudan Humanitarian Fund Annual Report 2021'](#).

[48] UN OCHA, 2024. ['South Sudan Humanitarian Fund Annual Report 2023'](#).

[49] UN OCHA, 2024. ['South Sudan Humanitarian Fund Annual Report 2023'](#).

[50] UN OCHA, 2024. ['South Sudan Humanitarian Fund Annual Report 2023'](#).

[51] Sida, L., et al., 2024. ['Flagship Initiative First Year Learning Report (March 2024)'](#).

[52] InterAction, 2023. ['Report of InterAction's Mission to South Sudan'](#).

[53] InterAction, 2023. ['Report of InterAction's Mission to South Sudan'](#).

[54] CAFOD and Development Initiatives, 2023. ['Food insecurity in South Sudan: Financing to local actors'](#).

[55] CAFOD and Development Initiatives, 2023. ['Food insecurity in South Sudan: Financing to local actors'](#).

According to the foreword to the 2023 Annual Report by the Humanitarian Coordinator, a new eligibility process is underway, aimed at increasing the number of local and national NGOs eligible for SSHF funding.[56] In 2024, the SSHF plans to increase the number of national NGOs eligible for funding through *"capacity assessments, building the capacity of the national organizations, increasing the visibility for national organizations, and developing a clear localization strategy for the Fund"*.[57]

The SSHF advisory board is chaired by the Humanitarian Coordinator and has representation from two national NGOs (currently The Rescue Initiative-SS (TRI-SS) and STEWARDWOMEN), alongside two international NGOs (Save the Children International and Oxfam), two UN agencies (UNICEF and WFP), two donors (the Netherlands and Switzerland), two 'co-opted experts' and the SSHF/OCHA.[58]

Flagship Initiative (FI)

The Flagship Initiative is a three-year, multi-country pilot programme, launched in 2023 by the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC). It proposes a 'radical shift' in humanitarian coordination and response, by centring the views and priorities of affected communities. It seeks to systematically engage communities by 1) localising humanitarian decision-making; 2) empowering local partners; and 3) putting community priorities at the heart of humanitarian programming.[59]

South Sudan is one of four pilot countries. According to the OCHA Head of Office, the strategy for the Flagship Initiative in South Sudan is for *"a well-tailored response and coordination that addresses the priorities and needs of the people in a particular context and location. The idea at its simplest is to organise at the sub-national level the main actors who can contribute to the solution of the problem affecting the community."*[60] In South Sudan, the initiative is being piloted in Wau (Western Bahr-el-Ghazal), Bentiu (Unity) and Malakal (Upper Nile).

A shift towards area-based coordination is a core element of the FI in South Sudan. Decentralised coordination is being piloted in each of the three locations, with the intention being to roll this approach out gradually to the whole country.[61] The FI built on and overlapped with a shift towards area-based coordination that was already underway. The pilots followed a recommendation from the 2022 Peer2Peer mission report for coordination to be decentralised to the state level.[62]

Under the Flagship Initiative, action has taken place across five pillars (across all four pilot countries, with detail below from South Sudan):
- **Systematic and participatory community engagement:** in South Sudan OCHA has conducted 50 consultations with communities in the four areas where the initiative is being piloted.[63]

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[56] UN OCHA, 2024. 'South Sudan Humanitarian Fund Annual Report 2023'.
[57] UN OCHA, 2024. 'South Sudan Humanitarian Fund Annual Report 2023'.
[58] UN OCHA, 2024. 'South Sudan Humanitarian Fund Annual Report 2023'.
[59] UN OCHA, 2024. 'Flagship Initiative: Reimagining Humanitarian Action (Status Update One: February 2024)'.
[60] Sida, L., et al., 2024. 'Flagship Initiative First Year Learning Report (March 2024)', P23.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid.
[63] UN OCHA, 2024. 'Flagship Initiative: Reimagining Humanitarian Action (Status Update One: February 2024)

- **Area-based, decentralised humanitarian coordination:** in all pilot countries, OCHA staff have been deployed to sub-national offices closer to communities, local actors and local authorities. In three parts of South Sudan, OCHA has reinforced area-based leadership and encouraged area-based planning among its partners.[64]
- **Prioritisation of programmes that incentivise and support local initiatives:** in all pilot countries OCHA has sought to engage local and non-traditional humanitarian partners in the new decentralised humanitarian coordination architecture. In South Sudan the OCHA team has held 'sensitisation sessions' with all levels of government and international and national humanitarian actors, to *"build consensus around the need for a more local and context-specific approach to humanitarian response".*[65]
- **Getting funding directly to local organisations and crisis-affected people:** in South Sudan OCHA is *"exploring ways to embed the modality that the Flagship initiative enables to inform country-based pooled funds' allocation strategies"* and donors *"continue to consider increasing funding to enable localization".*[66]
- **Humanitarian planning and programme organised by community priorities:** in South Sudan, OCHA and FAO signed a partnership agreement in January 2024 to *"collaborate on engagement with communities to promote food security and livelihoods through localization."*[67]

A learning report notes that during the first year, the Flagship Initiative suffered from a lack of conceptual clarity and under-resourcing, leading to *"uncertainty over the ability of the Initiative to deliver, especially given its high profile"*; but that the Initiative does *"finally look poised to start delivering".*[68] In its first year, it has remained *"largely an initiative of UN leadership and OCHA".*[69] Indeed, awareness of the FI within South Sudan may be limited. An InterAction mission report from 2023 states that *"news or involvement with the FI does not appear to have trickled down to or throughout the South Sudan humanitarian system"*, and that few of the people InterAction spoke with were familiar with it.[70] More generally, the findings from the first year of the FI include that the humanitarian system *"is rigid and unable to adapt to context if communities needs and priorities differ from the standardised aid on offer"*,[71] and has highlighted *"deep dissatisfaction with the way that international humanitarian assistance is conceived of and is delivered."*[72]

IOM Rapid Response Fund (RRF)
The RRF is a grant mechanism managed by IOM, with funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance. Grants are intended to

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[64] UN OCHA, 2024. 'Flagship Initiative: Reimagining Humanitarian Action (Status Update One: February 2024)
[65] Ibid, P12.
[66] Ibid, P14.
[67] Ibid, P16.
[68] Sida, L., et al., 2024. 'Flagship Initiative First Year Learning Report (March 2024)', P2.
[69] Ibid, P5.
[70] InterAction, 2023. 'Report of InterAction's Mission to South Sudan', P8.
[71] Sida, L., et al., 2024. 'Flagship Initiative First Year Learning Report (March 2024)', P2.
[72] Ibid., P3.

enable immediate response to acute emergencies, and are short-term, typically lasting around three months.

The RRF is open to both national and international NGOs. In line with the localisation agenda, the South Sudan RRF has shifted in recent years from funding primarily INGOs to primarily NNGOs. For example, in 2015 the RRF channelled $9,433,584 to INGOs (86%) and $1,515,004 USD (14%) to NNGOs. In 2020, $10,083,225 went to NNGOs (73%) and $3,704,765 (27%) to INGOs. By 2022, the percentage share going to NNGOs had increased further, with $5,994,142 (95%) going to NNGOs and $327,264 to INGOs (5%), though the overall total amount of funding had fallen.[73] In 2022, the RRF sub-granted 22 national organisations and one international organisation.[74]

Reconciliation, Stabilization, and Resilience Trust Fund (RSRTF)

The RSRTF is a multi-donor initiative launched in late 2018, by the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT). Since then, it has received contributions of $115,726,598 from eight donors.[75] It seeks to promote *"integrated violence reduction programming across the 'Triple Nexus' of humanitarian, development, and peace areas"*, working across three pillars: reconciliation, stabilisation, and resilience.[76] It has adopted an area-based programming approach, seeking to reinforce *"sustainable and inclusive community driven programmes that strengthen existing capacities at national and local levels"*.[77] It works in four areas: Southern Central Equatoria State; central Southern Jonglei State and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area; Unity State (Koch and surrounding counties); and Greater Tonj in Warrap State.[78]

In 2023, the RSRTF initiated a localisation strategy.[79] It has taken steps to address the lack of donor capacity to manage funding for many small, local organisations, including expanding its staff *"to strengthen its own administrative and managerial capacity to work with and support local organisations on their bids for funding."*[80] The RSRTF has also made it mandatory for applications to include an NNGO partner as a member of a consortium; not only as a sub-grantee but to be incorporated into all stages of the work.[81]

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[73] IOM RRF, 'Presentation to partners on the RRF Pre-Award Processes', 22 Feb 2023.

[74] IOM, 2023. 'South Sudan Rapid Response Fund (RRF) Factsheet'.

[75] United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund for Reconciliation, Stabilization and Resilience in South Sudan, 2024., 'Annual Report 2023'.

[76] South Sudan RSRTF, n.d., 'South Sudan RSRTF: Collectively building peaceful and resilient communities in South Sudan'.

[77] South Sudan RSRTF, n.d., 'South Sudan RSRTF: Collectively building peaceful and resilient communities in South Sudan'.

[78] United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund for Reconciliation, Stabilization and Resilience in South Sudan, 2024., 'Annual Report 2023'.

[79] United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund for Reconciliation, Stabilization and Resilience in South Sudan, 2024., 'Annual Report 2023'.

[80] SIPRI, 2023. 'Financing Food Security: Promises and Pitfalls of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus in South Sudan'.

[81] See, SIPRI, 2023. 'Financing Food Security: Promises and Pitfalls of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus in South Sudan', and Chan and Schmidlin, 2023. 'Towards a conflict-sensitive HDP nexus in South Sudan: A collection of lessons'.

Clusters

Several clusters and working groups in South Sudan have introduced new positions, initiatives or working groups intended to promote localisation, and have incorporated localisation into their strategies. Cluster initiatives related to localisation include:

- The **South Sudan WASH Cluster** developed a localisation strategy in 2023, through a consultative workshop including 10 INGOs and 36 NNGOs. It has established a Localization Thematic Working Group (TWG), which is chaired by an NNGO, and co-chaired by an INGO and NNGO. According to the TOR, the TWG membership consists of seven NNGOs and four INGOs.[82]
- The **South Sudan FSL Cluster** is setting up a Localization Task Force (LTF) as of Spring 2024. This aims to promote active participation of communities and local actors in FSL programmes, and to advocate for a training project that will address institutional capacity gaps of NNGOs. The election process for the LTF is currently underway.[83] The FSL Cluster has also established an NNGO Co-coordinator position within the wider cluster.[84]
- The **South Sudan Education Cluster** included localisation within its 2023-2025 strategy. The Cluster SAG has identified enhancing capacity, participation and leadership of local actors in education in emergencies coordination as a priority, and a localisation action plan has been developed. Four state-level coordination roles are occupied by national organisations.[85] Since 2023, the Education Cluster has had a co-leadership role for a national NGO, currently Universal Network for Knowledge & Empowerment Agency (UNKEA). Funding for the role was provided first by Save the Children and then by Education Cannot Wait.[86]
- The **South Sudan Shelter and Non-Food Item (SNFI) Cluster** has established a role for a national NGO Focal Point. The SAG for the cluster comprises 2 INGOs, 2 NNGOs and 1 UN organisation. 52% of cluster partners are NNGOs.[87]
- The **South Sudan Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Sub-Cluster,** part of the protection cluster, has a process underway to address the lack of WLOs in GBV coordination mechanisms in general, and in leadership and co-chairing roles in particular. A resource package has been developed, based on the experiences of WLOs in leadership and coordination roles, with the aim of improving the experience of WLOs in leadership positions.[88]
- The **South Sudan Cash Working Group,** part of the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG), is currently co-chaired by OCHA, IOM and Catholic Relief Services (CRS). An 'NNGO trainee seat'

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[82] WASH Cluster South Sudan, 2023. 'Terms of Reference for the WASH Cluster Localization Technical Working Group, South Sudan.'

[83] South Sudan FSL Cluster, 2024. 'Localization Task Force Presentation'.

[84] South Sudan FSL Cluster, 2021. 'An Update on Localization In South Sudan & The Role of NNGO Co-coordinator'.

[85] South Sudan Education Cluster, 2023. 'South Sudan Education Cluster Strategy 2023-2025'.

[86] Save the Children, 2023. 'A national organization co-leads the South Sudan Education Cluster for the first time'.

[87] South Sudan Shelter and NFI Cluster, 2023. 'Shelter & NFI South Sudan Strategy 2023-2025'.

[88] Trocaire, 2023. 'Women-led Organizations: Leadership in GBV Coordination Resource Package.'

has been created to strengthen the capacity of an elected local organisation to fully assume a co-chair role in the future.[89]

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[89] OCHA, 2024. 'South Sudan Cash Working Group Terms of Reference'.

6. Key Document Review (most recent and relevant reports)

| Document	Key findings and points for advocacy	Notes on platforms, working groups and initiatives related to localisation, with a focus on inclusivity and power
IASC, 2022. Peer-2-Peer Project Mission Report: South Sudan.	● A decade into independence, "capacity building" efforts for national NGOs have had inadequate results, and international humanitarian actors *"have not empowered national NGOs in any consistent way."* (P10). A new approach to localisation and partnership is required. ● There is no common understanding of 'localisation' in South Sudan, which is often reduced to discussions around fluctuations in the share of funding to national NGOs through the SSHF. ● The humanitarian community in South Sudan needs a new partnership model, with the NGO Forum, WFP/UNICEF/UNHCR and INGOs taking a *"consistent, harmonized and targeted approach to providing similar mentorship, accompaniment, and other support over several years."* (P11) ● This should go beyond how national NGOs can be better implementing partners and instead should consider how national NGOs can be sustainable independent actors. In addition, localisation *"should not just be a transfer of risk to national actors to work in areas where internationals consider the situation below minimal security standard."* (P10). ● A new partnership model should incorporate 'ground rules' for effective consortium to ensure best practices are applied. This could also include introduction of a localisation marker in programmes, aiming at national entities increasing their role in direct implementation and receipt of international funding beyond the SSHF. ● Donors should also review opportunities to create funding streams with less stringent requirements for NNGOs as a complement to the SSHF.	● Coordination structures need to be reviewed for simplicity and inclusivity. The same humanitarian, peace and development actors are multi-tasking between different meetings. This could be avoided by minimising the number of coordination structures. ● National NGOs, particularly women-led organisations, voiced strong feelings about the lack of real inclusion in decision-making structures. There is *"a massive gap in perception about the nature and quality of the cooperation between national NGOs and international actors (whether they are national or international staff). International actors think the relationship with local actors is adequate, whereas many national NGOs characterize it as extractive or transactional."* (P10). ● Humanitarian coordination structures are still too centralised, with significant resources 'locked up' in Juba, disconnected from field realities and the important differences between states. Responsibility needs to be decentralised to the state level, and the relationship between Juba and 'the field' needs to be reset. ● There is an over-concentration by the UN and NGOs in Juba. Linkages between the Juba-based ICCG and state-level ICCGs are weak. ● Juba and state-based actors reported centralised decision-making and poor information sharing. This may result in part from reduced cluster funding. State-level clusters feel they do not get adequate attention and support from Juba.
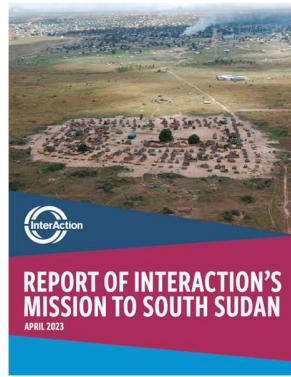
  REPORT OF INTERACTION'S MISSION TO SOUTH SUDAN APRIL 2023	● INGOs and NNGOs feel that the humanitarian coordination architecture is dominated by UN agencies and that they are not adequately informed, included or consulted. ● InterAction noted a striking lack of attention to Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) during its mission, as well as a *"lack of self-reflection and ownership of stakeholders' own roles in the current humanitarian landscape (or dysfunction thereof)"* (P7) ● Various changes associated with the shift of the SSHF from UNDP to UN OCHA management in 2020, including more stringent assessment processes and demands, have made this funding more difficult to access for South Sudanese NGOs. More generally, donors in South Sudan (as in other settings) have been imposing higher funding thresholds and more stringent risk management processes. NNGOs are widely seen as higher-risk than INGOs, resulting in larger portions of funding being managed by intermediaries, and in these intermediaries generally working with South Sudanese organisations they already know and trust.	● Analysis of the January 2023 Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) Contact List showed that of 60 contacts listed for the clusters, 75% were UN employees, 22% were INGO employees, and only 3% were NNGO employees. ● Women-led organisations and other organisations led by and supporting persons with diverse identity characteristics were even more poorly represented in decision-making bodies. ● NGOs (international and national) frequently reported that they did not feel their voices were listened to or their recommendations acted upon, with UN agencies often making decisions without consulting implementing NGOs. When NGOs raised issues or complaints they felt this had no impact on the outcome. ● Some NNGOs reported being censured by donors or intermediaries (the UN or INGOs) for speaking out too frequently or vehemently. ● News about the Flagship Initiative (FI) does not seem to have trickled down to or throughout the South Sudan humanitarian system, despite a state intention for the FI to be "field-driven". Few representatives InterAction spoke with were familiar with it. As a result, the FI *"fails to be field-driven in practice"*. (P8) ● NGO stakeholders often expressed that they were not given sufficient orientation to their roles or time before important decision-making sessions, such as the HCT, to consult with NGO constituencies fully and fairly, meaning that inputs were sometimes disjointed or not robust. In response OCHA has established an HCT onboarding programme for seatholders. ● Few NGOs had heard of the Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, the Grand Bargain NRG, or the FI. Most NGOs and some UN focal points felt *"left out, disconnected from, and frustrated by the number of initiatives being pushed on South Sudan"* (P9).
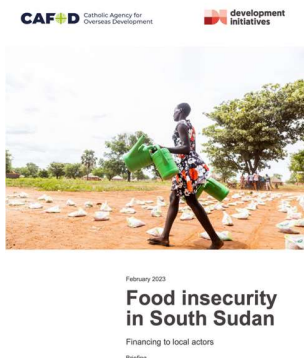
CAFOD and Development Initiatives, 2023. Food insecurity in South Sudan: Financing to local actors	- Little has changed since the 2016 'Missed Out' report, which found that the contributions of local and national actors (LNAs) to humanitarian action in South Sudan were constrained by numerous barriers. - In South Sudan, between 2017 and 2022, direct localised food sector funding was around $19.7 million, or 0.4% of all food sector funding during this period. Another $50.5 million was channelled to local actors indirectly (including through pooled funds). - LNAs are excluded from critical processes and from access to funding, while being called upon to provide baseline information and to implement food sector programming, and their role in decision-making is still limited. - Since 2019, less than 2% of food sector funding has been disbursed to local and national actors. Barriers to funding for immediate needs include long application times and the need to translate into the donor country's language. - Tracking of indirect funding is incomplete: over 90% of direct funding reported to FTS lacks further information on where resources may have been subsequently passed to another organisation. - To LNAs in South Sudan, localisation is not just about programmatic co-design but also access to and control over funding. - Since the Grand Bargain, only three of the top five donors (Germany, the US and UK) have committed any money directly to LNAs in South Sudan (0.1%, 0.6% and 2.1% respectively of their individual food sector expenditures to South Sudan). - Lack of overheads and the reimbursement process are barriers to delivery - organisations are reluctant to invest in work if it puts them at financial risk. *"The instability that results from both precarious financial arrangements and insecure staffing means that LNAs are not able to operate effectively or fully realise benefits. These half measures may be contributing to*	- Interviewees in South Sudan said the amount of support LNAs receive from pooled funds depends on the commitment of fund managers to the localisation agenda. - Relatively few local actors have the opportunity to lead or be active in clusters. - The food security and livelihoods cluster was the first to take up local organisations in a coordination role, but its originating coordinator has since stepped down. - OCHA's move to shift the SSHF towards funding fewer, large-scale projects resulted in reduced support to LNA and reduced scope for them to lead SSHF projects. - There is competition amongst all actors, at every level, for a limited pool of funding. - Amongst interviewed LNAs, interventions were *"seen as largely donor-driven, with inadequate consultations of the affected or vulnerable communities"* (P22).

	overall cycles of crises: a local organisation that provides food relief but cannot conduct resilience-building activities leaves the community continuously vulnerable to the next shock." (P24). ● Funding for local actors in South Sudan is short term, making it hard to realise long-term impacts from projects related to resilience building against food insecurity. ● *"Six years on from the Grand Bargain, the case of South Sudan suggests that in the worst emergencies and in the most extreme fragile contexts, donor and intermediary organisations are hesitant to trust local actors as capable, knowledgeable and effective."*(P31)	
Trocaire, 2023. [Women-led Organizations: Leadership in GBV Coordination Resource Package](link) 	● Focuses on the experience of Women-Led Organisations (WLOs) in taking on leadership positions in GBV coordination mechanisms in South Sudan and Somalia.	● WLOs face structural barriers to participating in and leading coordination mechanisms. ● Men remain at the forefront of coordination and leadership structures even on issues that disproportionately affect women, such as GBV. GBV coordination mechanisms are often male dominated. ● Patriarchal norms including negative stereotypes of women's leadership are often perpetuated. There has been some resistance to WLOs' leadership in existing GBV coordination structures. ● Lack of access to flexible, core organisational funding limits WLOs' participation in and leadership of coordination structures. There are financial costs associated with leadership of coordination structures, which are often too high for WLOs to cover with their own funds. ● When WLOs are present in GBV coordination meetings, the meeting environment does not provide a welcoming space for women to fully participate. There is also an assumption that those who are new to a space have the background information on topics being discussed and so adequate context is not given.

		- Lack of office space and internet connectivity, as well as funds to support participation in in-person meetings, limit WLOs' participation. - Language is another barrier, with meetings and documentation typically in English. - Women face multiple burdens on their time, including from household, community and work-related roles, which can hinder participation in coordination structures.
Trocaire, 2023. Case Study: Women for Change (WFC) 	- Case study of a South Sudanese Women-Led Organisation (WLO) taking on leadership of a sub-national GBV Working Group. - This led to benefits for GBV survivors and community members, for other GBV actors, and for the organisation itself. Relationships between the organisation and different actors in the community and at the State level have been strengthened.	- Women-led organisations face added pressures when assuming coordination roles. They face expectations that they will have resources to support GBV survivors, which they might not have; leadership in GBV coordination should therefore be accompanied by sufficient funding to engage in GBV programming initiatives. - The organisation's heightened visibility in the state as a result of their role in the working group has led to requests to carry out more programming in the state.

7. Additional documents and research on locally led aid in South Sudan (last five years)

Title	Year	Link
South Sudan Localisation Framework (developed through the Accelerating Localisation through Partnerships programme)	2019	South-Sudan-National-Localisation-Framework_final-1.pdf (care emergency toolkit.org)
Accelerating Localisation through Partnerships: Recommendations for operational practices that strengthen the leadership of national and local actors in partnership-based humanitarian action in South Sudan.	2019	Accelerating-localisation-research-summary-SouthSudan.pdf (careevaluations.org)
Pathways to localisation: A framework towards locally led humanitarian response in partnership- based action	2019	pathways-to-localisation-report-oct2019.pdf
Bridge builders: Strengthening the role of local faith actors in humanitarian response in South Sudan	2019	https://res.cloudinary.com/tearfund/image/fetch/https://learn.tearfund.org/-/media/learn/resources/reports/2019-tearfund-bridge-builders-en.pdf
Localising humanitarian aid during armed conflict: learning from the histories and creativity of South Sudanese NGOs	2019	https://www.lse.ac.uk/africa/assets/Documents/South-Sudan-NGO-Full-Report-Report.pdf
Localisation and conflict sensitivity: Lessons on good practice from South Sudan	2021	www.csrf-southsudan.org/repository/localisation-and-conflict-sensitivity-lessons-on-good-practice-from-asouth-sudan
Making Localization Work: The Everyday Practice of Three NGOs in South Sudan and Northern Uganda	2021	www.frontiersin.org/journals/political-science/articles/10.3389/fpos.2021.716287/full
International Organisations and "Local" Networks: Localisation and Refugee Participation in the Ethiopian-South Sudanese Borderlands	2022	academic.oup.com/rsq/article/41/1/1/6460231
Localisation: Views from South Sudan	2022	Localization-SouthSudan-4.29-final.pdf (tufts.edu)
Faith in localisation? The experiences of local faith actors engaging with the international humanitarian system in South Sudan	2022	jhumanitarianaction.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s41018-021-00113-8

Localisation in practice: Facilitating equitable partnership in humanitarian project management	2023	[Centre for Humanitarian Action: Localisation in Practice - Facilitating equitable partnership in humanitarian project management](#)
Localisation Vision & Strategy: Humanitarian Country Team, South Sudan	2023	[HCT SSD Strategy_Localisation_HCT endorsed 21 Sept 2023 (southsudanngoforum.org)](#)
Women-led Organisations: Leadership in GBV Coordination Resource Package	2023	[www.trocaire.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/WLO-Leadership-in-GBV-Coordination-Resource-Package-1.pdf](#)
NGO-isation, Local Faith Actors and 'Legitimate' Humanitarian Action in South Sudan	2023	[www.manchesterhive.com/view/journals/jha/5/2/article-p40.xml](#)
Flagship Initiative First Year Learning Report (OCHA)	2024	[Flagship Initiative First Year Learning Report (March 2024) - Colombia|ReliefWeb](#)