MENA AAP Reference Group Localization

UNHCR MENA Regional Bureau-Protection Service

CBP / AAP Unit

Tuesday 29 April 2025

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Agenda

1. Synergies between AAP and localization
2. Presentation of the draft UNHCR Localisation Guidelines 2
3. Field testimony – Mauritania
4. Q&A

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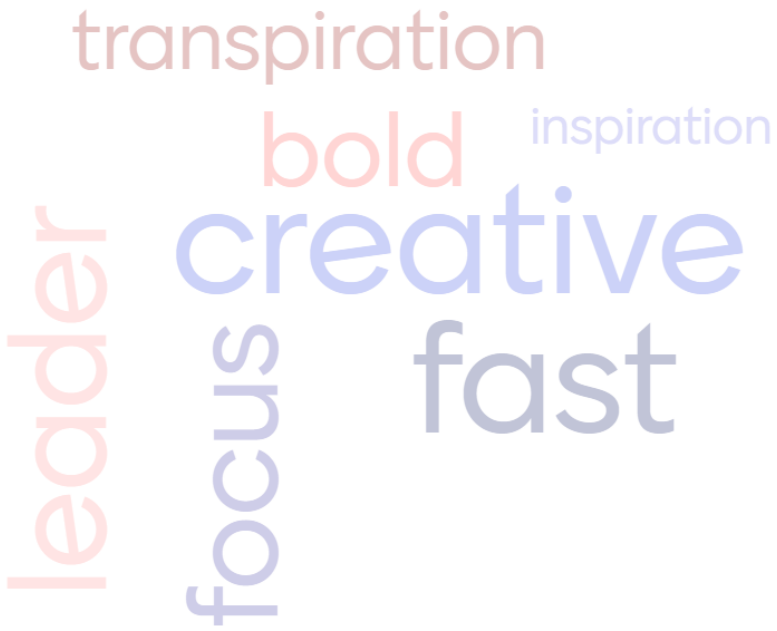
Mentimeter

What words or phrases come to mind when you think about the localization?



UI

Menti

Localisation

Choose a slide to present

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Mentimeter

Which of the following do you think is the biggest challenge in localizing humanitarian efforts?

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Limited funding for LNAs	Political and legal restrictions	Capacity and expertise of LNAs	Lack of coordination with international organizations

UI

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Localisation

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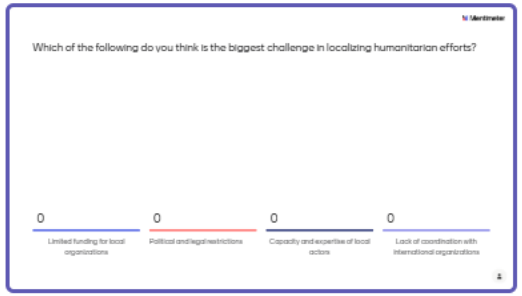

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UNHCR Guidelines on Localization Partnering and engaging with local & national actors

Consultation with MENA Regional Bureau

Nadja Kristina Guggi - Localization Specialist / DER

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1. Overview of UNHCR Localization efforts

I. Policies and guidance

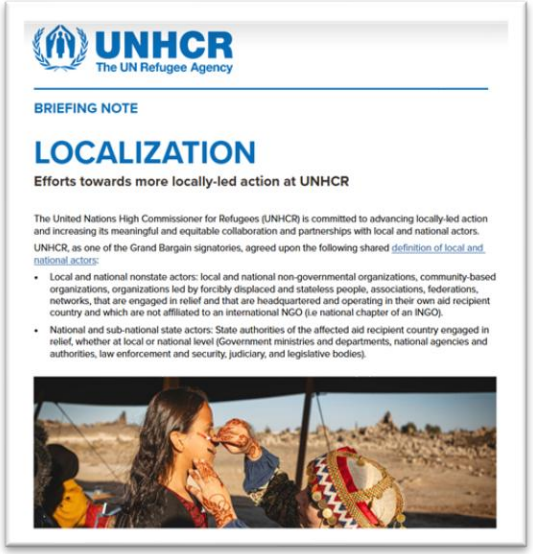
- Mainstreamed: Programme Manual, IDP 5-year Strategic Plan, Sustainable Responses, etc.
- UNHCR Localization Briefing Note & Grant Agreements Briefing Note
- Localization in UNHCR-led coordination structures and global/regional events
- *To be published:* Guidelines on working with organizations led by displaced and stateless persons; and complementary piece on W(R)LOs

II. Inter-agency collaboration

- Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms
- PSEA Community Outreach and Communication Fund
- Chair of Funding Board of UN Women Peace and Humanitarian Fund
- Grand Bargain: Community of Practice on Localization

III. Global Fora

- Multi-stakeholder Pledge on Advancing Localisation in Displacement and Statelessness Responses
- GRF 2023: 328 refugees and 120 RLOs delegations, briefing session, joint refugee statement, side-events, speaking roles
- Global and Regional NGO Consultations



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BRIEFING NOTE

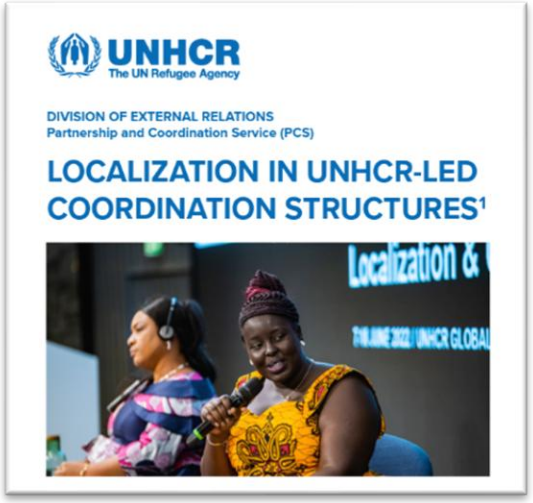
LOCALIZATION

Efforts towards more locally-led action at UNHCR

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is committed to advancing locally-led action and increasing its meaningful and equitable collaboration and partnerships with local and national actors.

UNHCR, as one of the Grand Bargain signatories, agreed upon the following shared definition of local and national actors:

- Local and national nonstate actors: local and national non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, organizations led by forcibly displaced and stateless people, associations, federations, networks, that are engaged in relief and that are headquartered and operating in their own aid recipient country and which are not affiliated to an international NGO (i.e national chapter of an INGO).
- National and sub-national state actors: State authorities of the affected aid recipient country engaged in relief, whether at local or national level (Government ministries and departments, national agencies and authorities, law enforcement and security, judiciary, and legislative bodies).



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DIVISION OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS
Partnership and Coordination Service (PCS)

LOCALIZATION IN UNHCR-LED COORDINATION STRUCTURES[1]

1. Overview of UNHCR Localization efforts

IV. Partnerships and funding

- 2024 figures:
  - 87% of UNHCR's partners were local or national
  - 59% of partner funding went to local partners
  - (*2023: 24,4% of programme expenditures)*
  - 37% of RRP partners were local or national
- Grant Agreements for RLOs/CBOs
  - 443 agreements (up to USD 12,000) for a total of USD 2.9 million signed since 2021
- Refugee-Led Innovation Fund
  - 26 projects funded (up to USD 45,000) in 2024, technical and mentoring support
- NGO Award
  - RLOs (2020), WLOs (2022), organizations working with/for or led by People with Disabilities (2024) (USD 15,000 and visibility)

2. Localization Guidelines: Process

Sep – Dec 2023 External consultations

- Regional & Global NGO Consultations 2021-2022
- Regional NGO Consultations 2023 (Europe, Americas, Asia)
- ICVA Consultations with INGO & LNGOs 2023
- Multistakeholder Pledge on Localization 2023

Sep 2023 – May 2024 Policy and document review

- Localization in UNHCR policies and guidance
- External reports and strategies (Member State strategies, research, guidance, mappings, etc.)

Jan – May 2024 Internal consultations

- 16 HQ units, 7 RBs, 15 COs
- Focus on challenges and lessons learned, local implementation, promising practices, etc.

June – Dec 2024 Drafting of chapters and further consultations/exchanges

- Consultation of Advisory Board on RLO engagement, selected donors and UN agencies
- Finalization of first draft

Jan – May 2025 Feedback rounds, revisions and finalization

- 2 rounds of feedback (HQ, RBs, COs)
- Consultation sessions with COs and RBs (per region)
- Revisions, finalization, approval

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2. Localization Guidelines: Chapter elements

- Reference to existing policies and guidance
- Recommendations: What can UNHCR staff do?
- Things to consider (depending on context)
- Promising practices (UNHCR, inter-agency, and others)

2. Localization Guidelines: Overview of chapters

1

Conceptual framework

- What? Why? How? Who?
- Key behaviours and attitudes
- General considerations

2

Key steps for strategic planning on Localization

- Planning for Localization (in PLAN, GET, SHOW phases)
- Mapping, Vision,
- Partner selection for funded partnerships
- Monitoring and evaluation

3

Emergency Preparedness & Response Coordination

- Contingency and emergency preparedness
- Coordination structures (RCM & Clusters)
- Disengagement

4

External Relations

- Advocacy & government engagement
- Events & consultations
- Information-sharing and dissemination
- Media & visibility

5

Capacity-sharing

- Capacity sharing needs assessments
- Development of plan
- Implementation and monitoring
- Internal learning on localization

2. Localization Guidelines: Discussion

Key questions

1) Are the guidelines comprehensive?
2) Are the guidelines applicable and user-friendly?
3) What promising practices and tools / templates etc. can you share to inspire others?

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Your Voice on Localization: Reflections from the Field

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Réseau de protection communautaire de la région MENA - Mauritanie

- **Nom et Prénom:** Abdallah Ag Mohamed
- **Statut:** Refugié
- **Titre:** Président de l’Association SOS Nomade et Coprésident du Réseau de Protection MENA.
- **Type d'organisation:** Initiative communautaire(organisation dirigée par les réfugiés).
- **Pays:** Mauritanie
- **Rôle: Communautés desservies:** Encadrement des enfants, gestion des espaces amis d’enfants, sensibilisation, mobilisation, information, identification de VBG et référencement.
- **Année de création:** Crée en 2009 au Mali pays d’origine et réactivée en 2019 ici au camp de réfugiés maliens en Mauritanie.
- **Services fournis:** Education et Protection à travers (Sensibilistion, mobilisation, information, identification et référencement).
- **Membres du réseau de protection communautaire :** 13 mars 2024

Défi ou problème identifié

- **Accès aux données**

les informations ne sont pas centralisées ou sont difficiles a accéder, entraînant des retards dans l'intervention.

- **Identification des vulnérabilités**

Les populations les plus vulnérables, comme les enfants en danger ou les personnes déplacées, ne sont pas toujours visibles dans les systèmes d'information existants.

- **Coordination des acteurs**

Les différents intervenants (ONG, gouvernements, agences internationales) peuvent manquer de coordination, ce qui peut réduire l'efficacité des interventions.

Suggestions

- **Collecte de données géo-localisées**
- **Utilisation des technologies**
- **Renforcement de la coordination**

Possibilités de collaboration:

- **Au niveau local:** Partenariats avec des ONG locales; Groupes de discussion communautaires ; Formations et ateliers
- **Au niveau national:** Coordination entre acteurs , Plaidoyer , Collecte et partage de données
- **Au niveau international:** Reseaux de connaissances ; Collaborations transnationales; - Formations et conferences

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Principaux résultats

- Renforcement de l'autonomie, Amélioration de l'accès aux services, Développement économique local, Soutien à la protection des droits, Durabilité des interventions humanitaires, Réponse aux besoins spécifiques .

- Renforcement des Capacités Locales, Financement de Projets Locaux, Soutien à l'Innovation, Coordination et Partenariats , Suivi et Évaluation, Sensibilisation et Plaidoyer, Soutien Psychologique et Social .

- Exemple: Association SOS Nomade une initiative communautaire dirigée par des réfugiés, qui a bénéficiée deux fois des subventions du PAA MENA.

- Renforcement des ressources financières, Amélioration de la qualité des services, Expansion des programmes, Stabilité et pérennité, Capacité de plaidoyer, Création de partenariats .

- Soutien aux personnes vulnérables, Conseils et sensibilisation à la santé, Accès aux soins, Éducation, Protection et formation, Programmes culturels et artistiques, Environnement, Soutien aux droits de l'homme plus particulièrement des enfants, Plaidoyer politique, Programmes d'engagement civique.

Prochaines étapes

- Collaboration intersectorielle
- Renforcement des capacités locales
- Utilisation de la technologie
- Intégration des considérations de genre et de diversité
- Approches basées sur les droits,
- Réponses adaptées aux contextes locaux .

Prochains projets en tant que coprésident du réseau MENA pour promouvoir davantage la localisation au sein du réseau et au niveau national:

Etre engagé, disponible, volontaire pour atteindre les objectifs fixés en collaboration avec les collègues et membres.

From Words to Action

Things to **do:**

☑ Map LNA capacities — don't assume gaps
☑ Use "capacity-sharing" not "capacity-building"
☑ Adapt support to LNA goals, culture & context

Things to **avoid:**

❌ Overlooking local voices in planning
❌ Treating capacity-sharing as a box to tick
❌ Imposing complex tools where simple ones suffice

Support with resources, logistics, and follow-ups

Include mentoring and coaching

Offer info sessions on UNHCR systems & coordination

Coordinate with partners, academia, private sector

Include LNAs in **training design**

Invite LNAs to deliver trainings (e.g. local customs, contexts)

Promote **shadowing & peer learning**

Include fundraising, leadership, advocacy

Provide tech support to access e-learning

Prioritize **PSEA, gender, and inclusion** in all trainings

Use **Grant Agreements** to fund capacity initiatives

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MENA AAP Grant Implementation

Key Elements	2021 - 2024	2025
Open call for applications by the MENA Bureau	✓	✓
MENA AAP Reference Group Endorsement	✓	✓
Direct Implementation and MENA Bureau OL	✓	✗
Small Grant agreement signed by Operations	✗	✓
Operations absorb MENA Grants in their 2025 OL	✓	✓
MENA PROSPECTS budget for JOR, LEB, EGY, IRQ	✓	✓
Alternative fund sources for other MENA countries	✗	✓
Technical support by the MENA Bureau AAP RG and operations	✓	✓
Narrative Report at the end of the implementation	✓	✓
Grantees become MENA Community Protection Network members	✓	✓

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Grant agreements resources for UNHCR

- UNHCR/AI/2023/05/Rev.1 Administrative Instruction on Procedures on Partnership Management
- The Programme Handbook: Programme Cycle (unhcr.org) (GET 2).
- Repository items:
  - Standard Operating Procedures for Grant Agreements
  - Grant Agreement Partner Eligibility Checklist
  - Grant Agreement Partner Registration Form for Cloud ERP
  - Grant Agreement Template
  - Grant Agreement Concept Note Template
  - Grant Agreement Final Narrative Report

Grant Agreements resources for Partners

The following are list of recourses available for Grant Agreement partners on the UNPP:

- eLearning module [GET 2 content], including Grant Agreements
- Grant Agreement Concept Note Template
- Code of Conduct Template
- Grant Agreement Template (watermarked with DRAFT)
- Grant Agreement Final Narrative Report

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Chapter 5 of the MENA AAP Toolkit: Organizational learning and adaptation

Tool 5.1.3 – MENA AAP Grant for Community and Grassroots Organizations

Organization: UNHCR

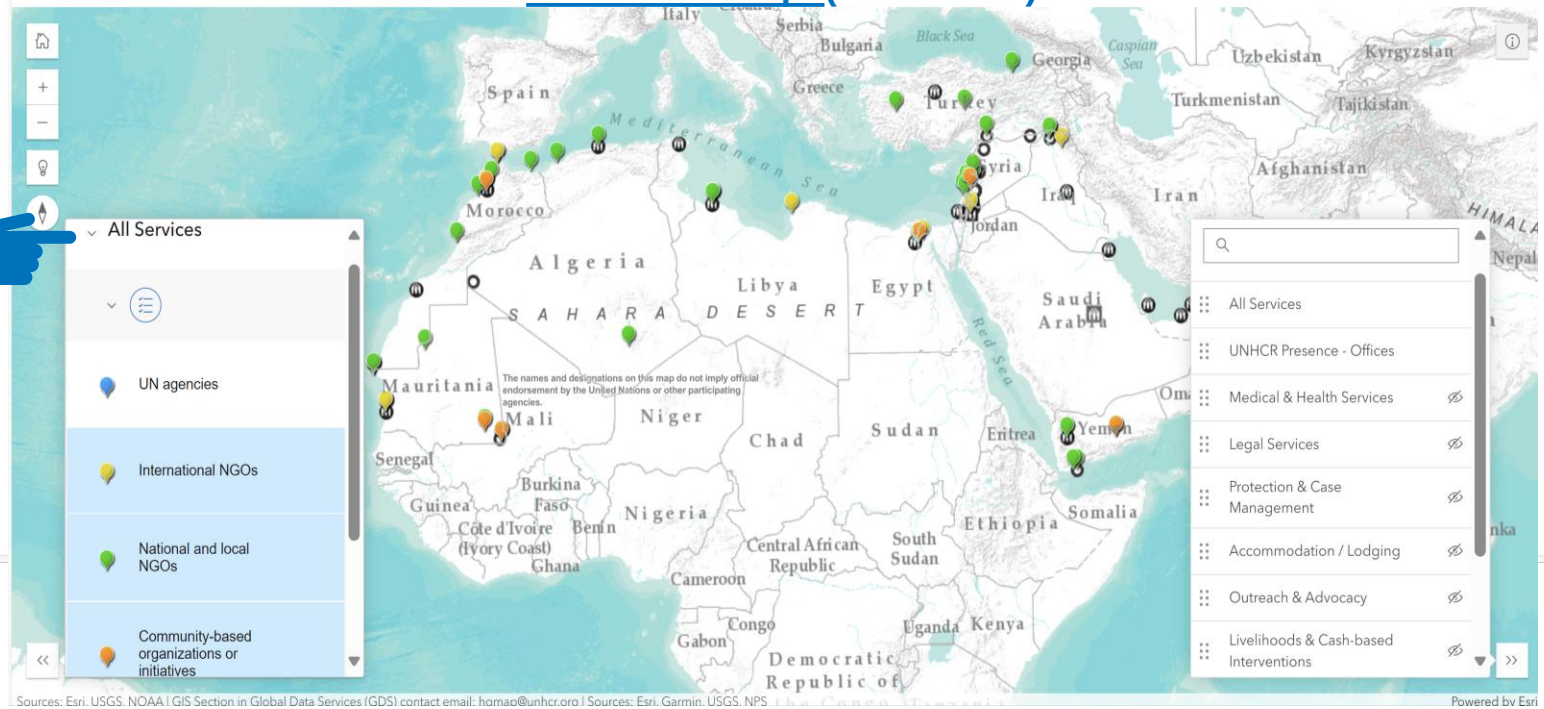
Link: MENA CBP-AAP Grant Summary and Tools

The Network Portal

Operational Data Portal | SITUATIONS | COUNTRIES | REGIONS | PARTNERS | Search | EN

Other members include NGOs, UN agencies, and national entities. The Network is key to identify information needs and preferences, communication trends and community dynamics across the region. The Network facilitates the disclosure and identification of international protection needs, specific needs, protection incidents, and serious human rights violations. It aims to increase access to protection and multisectoral support for the most vulnerable populations, people on the move, and those in hard-to-reach areas. The Network aims at increasing outreach at any particular location, or through activities such as awareness-raising in a manner that underscores the age, gender and diversity (AGD) policy, human rights and community-based approaches fostering an environment free of discrimination and persecution, and one that promotes inclusion and specialized protection. The Network map below--currently hosted by UNHCR in beta form--allows for quick and secure identification of participating organizations' services and target populations (e,g. by gender, age, displacement status, and vulnerabilities) as a means to promote safe disclosure and referrals among partners, including community-based organizations, civil society organizations, faith-based organizations, NGOs, national institutions, and UN agencies.

The Online Maps(EN- FR-AR)



MENA Community Protection Network

Working Group chairs

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

UNHCR MENA

UNHCR Regional Bureau for the Middle East & North Africa in Amman

Key Contacts

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Training Materials

Lesson 1. Disclosing and Identifying international protection needs in the Middle East and North Africa

Download | View | 21.48 MB |
Download Count: 339

Introduction to Disclosing and Identifying

MENA Community Protection Network | supported by UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

Guiding statements:

- *Build it with LNAs, for LNAs, and beyond.*
- *Visibility isn't one-size-fits-all. Proceed with care.*
- *As local as possible, as international as necessary.*
- *Empowered LNAs = stronger, more resilient local response ecosystems.*
- *Empowerment happens when we learn from each other — not just about each other.*
- *Localization means LNAs aren't just implementers — they're also decision-makers, shaping priorities and leading responses.*

THANK YOU!

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