CSOs' Initiative for the Localization and Optimization of Response in Yemen

Initiative's members Minutes of meeting (Annual Meeting 27 February 2023)

Minutes:

Meeting Minutes	
Meeting Place: Virtually Online	**Date/Time:** Tuesday 02/27/2023 10:00 AM 01:00 PM
Meeting Inviter:	AbdulQawi Hajeb, Localization Program Manager, Tamdeen Youth Foundation
Preparation and Organization:	AbdulQawi Hajeb, Tamdeen Youth Foundation Muna Al Hammadi, Nabd Development Foundation
Meeting Type:	Annual Meeting

Agenda:

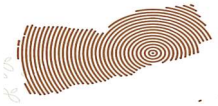| Topic	Duration	Time	Speaker
Welcome / Introduction	15 minutes	10:00 - 10:15 a.m	all
Introducing the initiative and the level of achievement in 2022 plan	30 minutes	10:15 - 10:45 a.m.	Abdulqawi Hajeb (the initiative)
Members Interventions Update	30 minutes	10:45-11:15 a.m.	all
Baseline report	20 minutes	11:15- 11:35 a.m.	Eman Ismail (ICVA)
Challenges and difficulties	15 minutes	11:35-11:50 a.m.	Mona Al Hammadi (Nabd Foundation)
Recommendations (group discussion with members)	30 minutes	11:50- 12:20 p.m.	all
Summary of key outcomes	15 minutes	12:20-12:35 p.m.	Abdulqawi Hajib - Muna Al-Hammadi
Recommendations	25minute	12:35-01:00 p.m.	Wameed Shaker (Itar Foundation)

Participants:

M	Representative	Organization	Phone	E-mail
1	Eman Ismail	International Council of Voluntary Agencies		eman.ismail@icvanetwork.org
2	Abdul Qawi Hajeb	Tamdeen Youth Foundation	775268588	a.hajeb@tamdeen-ye.org
3	Mona Salah Al Hammadi	Nabd Development Organization	777922615	malhammadi@ndeoye.org
4	Saleh Mahfoudh Salem	Basma Foundation for Child Development and Women	771820216	ins.basma@gmail.com
5	Dalia Qassemi	Hodeidah Girls Foundation	777573271	daliaq4@gmail.com ;
6	Abdurrahman Aish Sanah	Democratic school	771566104	demoschoolyemen@gmail.org
7	Wameed Shaker	Itar Foundation for Social Development	777712203	w.shakir@itar.ngo
8	Sarah Hamdi	Deem for Development Organization (DEEM)		sarah@deemyemen.org
9	Nabil Mansour Al Abbasi	Neda'a Foundation for Development	771708449	nalabasi@gmail.com
10	Uday Sharaf Al- Hamli	Sustainable Development Foundation	774029650	odai.alhamli@sdfyemen.org
11	Ibrahim Mohammed	Medical Mercy Foundation		ibrahim.ma@medmercy.org
12	Hind Nasser Saleh Al Ghushaimi	Ramz Development Foundation	776087381	info@rdfyemen.org
13	Fawzi Al Shami	<mark>Adar Al Arabeya Foundation</mark>	773880078	fauzi1975@gmail.com
14	Waleed Ahmed Ali	Sada Foundation for Building and Development	733331706	walid@sada-sfbd.org
15	Seba Jabbar	Itar Foundation for social development	774739797	s.jabbar@itar.ngo
16	Ibtisam Ali Mohammed Qassim Al Sharafi	Itar Foundation for Social Development	772999970	e.ali@itar.ngo
17	Basheer Ali Saifan	Qudrah Organization for Sustainable Development	771092248	basaifanye @gmail.com
18	Shehab Muharram	Save the Children - Yemen	777018185	shehab.moharam@savethechildren.org
19	Redha Qusaila	Nabd Development Organization		rqusailh@ndeoye.org
20	Ashraf Abdel Majeed	Nahda Makers Foundation		ashraf.abdulmajid@nahdamakers.org
21	Mohammed Abdullah	Nahda Makers Foundation		mohamed.abdullah@nahdamakers.org
22	Fatima Al Kebsi	Enjaz Foundation for Development	772100190	kibsi.fatima@gmail.com

Overview:

1. **Introducing the Localization of Humanitarian Action and Optimization of Response Mechanisms Initiative:**

This initiative was titled "Localization and Optimization of Response Mechanisms in Yemen" where the "Localization" simply refers to "as locally as possible, and internationally as necessary". While the Response of Response Mechanisms refers to "bridging humanitarian response, development and peacebuilding" and "towards a new way of action" as stated in the Grand Bargain, and as defined at the 2016 Humanitarian Summit.

2. **Initiative's launch, endorsement and current structure:**

The initiative was launched in August 2021 by 9 civil society NGOs, led by Tamdeen Youth Foundation, endorsed by 80 national and local CSOs across the country and from different sectors. Currently, the initiative has 40 active members, a steering committee and an advocacy task team established from 12 active members.

3. **The initiative's financial and technical support**

During 2022, Tamdeen Youth Foundation, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) and the Humanitarian Advisory Group (HAG) supported the initiative.

4. **Localization Initiative Program 2022 Objectives:**

This initiative is essential for both local and international actors as it promotes the localization of humanitarian commitments in the Grand Bargain, the Charter for Change agenda, and the localization of development. It calls for strengthening the enabling environment for civil society in Yemen to be able to participate effectively in the response. The initiative's program during 2022 aims to:

- ➢ Building common understanding and research-based knowledge about localization, local actors, operational and organizational environment of CSOs, networking and coordination with all local and international actors
- ➢ Developing an operational localization strategy, joint advocacy and action plans to localize and optimize response mechanisms in Yemen;
- ➢ Advocating and strengthening the voice of local actors, CSOs and the collective voice;
- ➢ Building the capacity and confidence of local CSOs to influence humanitarian and development action in Yemen.

5. **The most important achievements during 2022:**

The following are the most important achievements by all members of the localization initiative during 2022:

1.1 **Awareness, networking and coordination**: Several introduction and awareness meetings were carried out promoting the concept of Localization, its importance, and the promotion of its commitments in the Grand Bargain, the Charter for Change and the OECD recommendations in order to create a common understanding with all stakeholders including government agencies and international actors. Coordination was also made

with the official authorities to avoid any risks to the research and the initiative teams. It was also emphasized that the Localization initiative promotes and does not conflict with national policies. Coordination and consultation was made with the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) and the Humanitarian Advisory Group (HAG) as well with the NEAR network to conduct a localisation performance measurement in Yemen's for the first time. A research team representing Itar Foundation was selected, and the study plan was made until the end of January 2022.

1.2 **Contextualization measurment framework and Data Collection Tools:** Performance Measurement Framework and Research Tools were discussed and contextualized to the local context in collaboration with local actors, ICVA, HAG and NEAR. Members of the initiative participated in the development of the framework, which was reviewed with a number of civil society organizations and presented to government agencies until the end of February, 2022. The study plan was reviewed and team was trained until the end of February 2022.

1.3 Baseline Study: The baseline study to measure the performance of Localization in Yemen was carried out through the in country consultant Itar Foundation and with the support of ICVA, HAG and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC). More than 80 national and local CSOs, governmental and international organizations participated in the study and concluded with the preliminary version of the Baseline Report on the Localization Performance Indicators in Yemen on July 2020. The final version was co-reviewed by members of the Initiative as well as NEAR Network until the end of August 2020. The final version is visually designed and translated into English until September 2022.

2.1 Plans and strategies: Three proposals for localization in Yemen were co-designed with three international bodies (SCI, OXFAM, DRC) and submitted to the European Union. The proposals took place from February to August 2022.

Concept notes were accepted but full proposals were not accepted. As part of the institutional support of Tamdeen Youth Foundation, the Danish Council approved small grant for the activities of the Localization initiative. 2 consultants were hired to develop a operational and advocacy strategy. Moreover, 10 consultative workshops were held with various local actors in Yemen, and 60 participants of local actors participated in the workshops, 45% females from different groups and sectors and from different regions of Yemen (30 national and local SCOs and 15 government agencies).

These activities took place from September to December 2022. The consultation workshops resulted in a list of localization priorities in Yemen, a matrix of challenges and recommendations, a stakeholder analysis, a general framework for the localization strategy, and a preliminary draft of localization advocacy.

3.1 International Networking of the Localization Initiative: The initiative was networked with international networks specialized in localization, and enhanced the size of local members involved in localization activities in Yemen. The initiative is active members in several localization networked in such as (ICVA, C4C, NEAR, VENRO).

Many local actors have been involved within these networks and have been involved in various events and workshops on localization at local, regional and international levels. The Initiative became a member of NEAR Executive Board of the Middle East.

3.2 Strengthen the structure of the Localization Initiative Network: The number of applications for the Localization membership which were accepted during the year reached to 45 applications from different parts of Yemen and from various groups and sectors. About 40 members participated actively in diverse activities and events related to localization whether by the localization team or by our international partners. A reference committee of members of the initiative was formed to participate in planning, follow-up and advising the Initiative's executive team.

The committee meets regularly, organizes and follows up on the Initiative's plan and shares updates and reports on the members' web pages or publishing on Relief web. A request was made for the NEAR network to coordinate the expansion of the national reference group with the international donors and UN organizations. Formulating the NRG was discussed also with OXFAM to nominate representative from the international NGOs.

4.1 Advocacy and influence: The initiative or its members have issued numerous statements and participated in several advocacy campaigns locally, regionally and internationally. The initiative actively participated in raising the voice of local actors about the localization in Yemen to international networks and events by the response actors globally. The initiative also participated in the events of the partner networks such as C4C, ICVA, NEAR, AWG Yemens, VENRO, HCT, EU, etc.

An advocacy team of 12 CSOs has been formed. The teams' terms of reference were established and the team was involved in the advocacy training. Representatives were nominated to represent the initiative and civil society organizations' in the International Advocacy Group. The delegated members regularly attend any meetings or events of the International Advocacy Group.

A WhatsApp group was created which include local and international actors involved in the response. Many promotional messages, lobbying and advocacy for localization, and sharing the most important developments, documents, events opportunities for CSOs' and the localization efforts locally and globally are constantly being shared. This resulted to expansion of platforms and diversity of channels to advocate for localisation and spreading awareness and knowledge on localisation. Many of the Initiative's members or other actors have worked on special platforms on their pages to advocate for localization and promote awareness of the concept of localization, the recommendations of the Grand Bargain, the Charter for Change and the OECD recommendations.

6. Next Activities Plan:
1. Finalizing the localization strategies and action plans.
2. Review the strategy with local and international actors and identify roles and responsibilities.

3. Improve governance of the Initiative, coordination mechanisms and cooperation among all members regarding localization, and completion of the establishment of the National Reference Group.

4. Establish the localization platforms

5. Train the advocacy team and produce advocacy materials and collective campaigns for the localization in Yemen.

6. Strengthen the localization network and build more confidence among and for the localisation members in Yemen and activate the role of local actors in leading the response by integrating them into localization, networking and integration programs and events into national coordination mechanisms and groups (Clusters, Taskforces, HCT, NRG) and with international localization networks such as (ICVA, NEAR, VENRO, Grand Bargain, C4C ... etc.)

7. Follow-up and monitor the implementation of the strategy and measure indicators of localization in Yemen.

7. The Key Challenges Summarized with the Recommendations are:

1. Lack of resources for the initiative.

2. Politicizing and deprivation of the localization initiative and concept and attempting to over control.

3. Duplicating efforts by some international actors, not focusing on supporting existing structure.

4. Scattered efforts, inflexible work and time spent collecting signatures for data issued by the Initiative's members.

5. Legal working environment and public policies hinder the initiative's governance and formal registration.

8. Recommendations:

1. More advocate for securing adequate resources and in time for the initiative

2. More coordination and delegating tasks to active members, and members will assist to achieve them as possible.

3. More communication, awareness and influence with the competent authorities by the members of the initiative, especially the leaders of the member foundations.

4. Integration of more actors in the official and influential parties in the Initiative's activities. More coordination with international actors, especially UNOCHA and EU, to consolidate and focus efforts and take advantage of diversity and multiplicity of efforts.

5. Having Terms of reference, media plan and terms of reference to be discussed and approved by the members, in which the Initiative's management is authorized to sign on to the members' statements contained in the media plan. Expanding the participation of the most actors and promising actors in the localization initiative, which can provide the initiative with different ideas. Preparing a charter of honor or code that regulates and defines the duties, rights and roles of members of the initiative.

6. Further governance of the initiative, coordination of efforts, inclusion of various actors and inclusion of actors from different regions and levels.