CID - PIANGO Localisation Workshop Report

August 2019

Funded by New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade

CONTENTS   PAGE

Executive Summary

In May 2019 the Council for International Development (CID), in partnership with the Pacific Islands Association of Non-governmental Organisations (PIANGO), implemented a Localisation Workshop to facilitate a localisation dialogue for CID members.

The outcomes of the Localisation Workshop indicate that at an intellectual, and ethical, level the New Zealand international development sector understands the concept of localisation and recognises it to be a consequence of the evolution of the international development and humanitarian sectors. This, coupled with the fact that the Council for International Development Annual survey of the Sector indicates that approximately 80% of CID members have partnered with a Pacific partner, appears promising.

However, several blockages to progress exist resulting in a lack of momentum and little urgency to substantially change operating models and behaviours. 64% of CID members have not signed any localisation commitment. 49% of members have worked with local partners on only 1-5 activities, and the traditional business model for international non-government organisations remains mostly unchanged. Members are also struggling to establish baselines in order to measure progress.

The workshop outcomes highlight that the Australian Council for International Development would like to work with Pacific Islands Association of Non-governmental Organisations and Council for International Development to develop a Regional Roadmap for localisation across the Pacific - a 'Pacific Charter for Change'. Next steps are identified including: collaborating with Australian Council for International Development and Pacific Islands Association of Non-governmental Organisations to develop a regional Charter for Change; exploring the potential for research with Humanitarian Advisory Group in New Zealand; monitoring and evaluating New Zealand's localisation activities; implementing a baseline survey on CID members and their localisation work; establishing a CID/PIANGO Chief Executive Officer group; finding ways to socialise the localisation agenda to partners and potential donors; and establishing a New Zealand sector-wide working group to guide the sector.

Section 1: Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to document both the outputs of the Council for International Development (CID) workshop on Localisation (held on 30/31 May 2019) and the recommended next steps towards localisation within the international development sector in New Zealand and the Pacific.

Section 2: Background and Context

Since 2015, the international development and humanitarian sectors have been highly active with dialogues, workshops, research reports and conferences focused on Localisation.

The term seems to have been derived from the World Humanitarian Summit, and while it appears it is practised more widely in development than in humanitarian circles, the humanitarian sector is catching up. The World Humanitarian Summit and Grand Bargain gave the topic momentum and many international actors have signed up to the reforms of the Grand Bargain. Discussions have focussed on agreeing definitions and funding commitments rather than on how to implement practical change and role model good practice. Paradoxically a lot of the theory is coming from international actors rather than being developed by local partners.

Four years on, progress is genuinely mixed. Globally national actors are more aware of the reform commitments they can expect internationals to deliver on, and humanitarian pooled funds have increased allocations and capacity support to local and national recipients. In the Asia-Pacific region, national governments are taking leadership of disaster preparedness and response, and there is a greater onus on international actors to target response, use local processes and groups to implement responses, and to build resilience between emergencies. There is also a move in the regional Pacific humanitarian architecture to put in place better coordinated systems and approaches to address the impact of disasters. The CID Annual Survey of the Sector this year showed some positive signs of localisation: roughly 80% of members have partnered with the Pacific partner (whether government or community organisation), and funding to the Pacific has increased by 6%, with a greater focus on building resilience to climate change events.

However, the survey also indicates that a there is a lack of certainty about the definition of localisation amongst CID members, and that partnerships are not necessarily devolving decision-making or resources to locals in a transformative way. 49% of members have worked only 1-5 activities with local partners. The traditional business model of the international non-governmental organisation (INGO) remains mostly unchanged. CID

members are concerned about the burden placed on local partners to fulfil overly burdensome due diligence processes for government donors but are unclear as to how best to manage accountability back to themselves as partners and to donors. There is also a challenge to find the right local partners. There is little evidence of systematic measurements of progress towards localisation, or evidence that the change is real. There is a familiar sense of being stuck within a system that for the most part, continues with 'business as usual'. Yet the topic consistently resurfaces as a priority area for action with a range of actors across Asia and the Pacific.

In order to take meaningful strides towards addressing this, a one-day workshop was proposed to facilitate a structured, focused discussion to identify steps towards a collective approach for a systemic shift to strengthened leadership and decision-making of local and national actors in the Pacific region.

A similar 'dialogue' was facilitated for the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) and Pacific Islands Association of Non-governmental Organisations (PIANGO) in January 2019.

Section 3: Process

The one-day workshop referred to above was viewed as being an important stride into a journey towards deeper understanding and better adoption of practices to support localisation.

The implementation of the workshop involved a four-step process:

Step 1 - Pre-workshop survey to identify current thoughts and practices

Step 2 - One-day workshop to facilitate initial dialogue about localisation

Step 3 - Articulation of the current situation and the sector challenges for localisation

Step 4 - Identification of next steps to overcome challenges and work towards localisation.

A pre-workshop survey (Step 1) was implemented to identify the baseline, and subsequently a one-day workshop (Step 2) was designed to build on former workshops and events on localisation in New Zealand and in the Pacific. The workshop was a practical exploration of how localisation can be supported and practiced, together with the implications for New Zealand based non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and for donors such as Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade (MFAT).

The workshop was designed and implemented in partnership with PIANGO, and the facilitator was Selina Kuruleca. Selina works as a consultant with PIANGO and has a background in conflict mediation and resolution, in post-emergency psychological services, in mental health and in localisation. She has facilitated localisation workshops across the Pacific and has hosted workshops for many organisations including the WHO, the World Bank, UNFPA, Red Cross, and many NGOs, corporate and government departments. Representatives from ACFID also provided updates on their journey towards enabling localisation and presented through skype/zoom technology.

The workshop was held in both Auckland (30 May 2019) and Wellington (31 May 2019). Participants were representatives from CID Members, MFAT, PIANGO Team and the CID Team. It provided a forum to:

- Share latest research and experiences
- Define localisation
- Explore real-life development and humanitarian examples, and identify what works and what does not
- Deal openly with perceived challenges, e.g. whether localisation is a genuine threat to funding
- Look at how to manage risk
- Identify how far along we are on the journey and what has been done to date
- Define what needs to change
- Look at how to measure localisation
- Provide background materials, online resources, tools and policy templates.

As such, the stated outcomes were to:
- Agree a shared understanding of localisation, and what works, what doesn't
- Propose a roadmap for change
- Identify key actions and responsible actors for making change
- Identify ways to manage risk and accountability, and to monitor localisation.

Section 4: Process Outcomes

4.1 Pre-workshop Survey (Step 1)

Key findings from the pre-workshop survey are presented below.

1. 11 organisations completed the survey.
2. 64% of responders reported that their organisation has not signed any localisation commitment.
3. One organisation had signed the Charter for Change.
4. One organisation had signed the Grand Bargain.
5. The main steps which organisations have taken to progress localisation (in order of frequency) are:
    - Promote more local and national actors into decision making position
    - Increase funding to local partners
    - Review programming and localisation practices
    - Develop exit strategies/transition plans
    - Assess organisational business plan.
6. 60% of responders believe some progress has been made towards localisation in their NGO, in the INGO sector in NZ, in MFAT and with other donors.
7. 80% believe "some progress" has been made by the Development sector globally.
8. Significant changes identified to support localisation were:
    - Identifying and recruiting local consultants and programme officers
    - Commitment to increase humanitarian funding to Local NGO
    - Technical advice and surge capacity all moving towards localised staff.
9. Significant barriers to localisation within organisations included:
    - Finding suitably qualified local staff and capacity of local partners (especially to physically handle the financial transactions in a consistent manner)
    - Donor requirements
    - Mistrust.

When these results were presented for discussion, the workshop participants articulated a positive desire to get this right, but a recognition that the sector is not sure how to do it in a common way. It was observed that transformation is required, and not a 'tweaking' of practices.

4.2 Workshop (Step 2)

4.2.1 Workshop Dialogue

The workshop was an initiation of the journey towards localisation, and value was gleaned predominantly through the process of sector dialogue. While the pace, depth, and ease of

dialogue at the two workshops (Auckland and Wellington) were very different, the outcomes were similar. A short summary capturing key points follows.

Participants at both workshops found it challenging to collectively define localisation succinctly. PIANGO shared that they used the Australian Red Cross 2017 definition:

> *"A process of recognising, respecting and strengthening the independence of leadership and decision making by national actors in humanitarian action, in order to better address the needs of affected populations."*

While this definition may indicate what localisation is, there remains a need to clearly articulate localisation processes in humanitarian and development activities, and then agree on how it should be measured in the Pacific, and how will Pacific stakeholders know that development actors are changing practices.

PIANGO shared a presentation about its work in this area (refer Appendix 1) and shared that its Pacific members had clearly articulated that what the Pacific wants is not going to be decided outside of the Pacific, and that it is important to the Pacific to:

- Regain dignity
- Provide thought leadership
- Rewrite their futures
- Engage intergenerational processes
- Processes should be "As local as possible and as international as necessary".

Views were expressed among participants that:

- There must be agreement between governments before momentum can be gained
- Localisation is different within different areas
- Several participants felt their organisations were following a localisation agenda.

There was agreement with the Pacific Priorities put up by PIANGO and support for the framework presented (Leadership, Participation, Coordination and Complimentary; Partnerships, Capacity, Funding). One organisation explained how their branch in the Pacific has been set up as independent and will be able to secure contracts in its own name, but

still remain part of an INGO; this organisation in Vanuatu applied for funding to MFAT, through the High Commission, and was successful.

It was agreed that an important component is to assist develop local NGOs – for Pacific by Pacific, and several participant organisations shared meaningful examples of how this is being done as case-studies. One participant organisation shared that a local woman in Bougainville started health programmes which now covers 95% of the population. Another organisation outlined how they are focused on developing local workforce.

While it was acknowledged from the case studies discussed that organisations are struggling to establish 'baselines' in order to measure progress, it was observed that it is important to involve local partners in the measurement of progress.

In a Plenary session, key issues were discussed such as: Next steps; What we need to avoid; How it changes the way we work; Challenges; and Priorities.

Thoughts expressed included:
- Donor reporting needs to be more flexible to reflect the ways of working and communicating with our local partners
- The funding model might need to be reviewed (and the role of the INGO reconsidered, e.g. still in in the car but not in the driving seat)
- If the funding model cannot be changed, then we need to revisit how we work with partners
- The difficulties in measurement without indicators - and the importance of lasting partnerships, an enabling environment and accountability.

4.2.2 Current State
Participants identified the following characteristics of the current state:

What is working well	What is not working well
Developing a culture of humility and building relationships Recognition that we all have different perspectives and understandings Real readiness to change Sharing voices Sense of need for equal partnership Recognition of importance of interpersonal relationships	Power and balance (funding, governance) Ability and willingness to invest in governance Mutually accountability Priorities not aligned Funding - carrot and stick

4.2.3 ACFID Update

ACFID held a similar dialogue in January in Australia, whereby the dialogue was facilitated on localisation at a country level, a programmatic level, and an organisational level. It appears in Australia localisation was perceived as a threat to power and only about ¼ of the sector has established a roadmap or strategy to support localisation. However, in response to this, a localisation working group has been established to develop an Australian roadmap for change and despite a false start (as the group tried to develop a practice paper and then recognised there was not much practice to document) it has since made significant progress. Discussion was also made as to how the language should be changed from 'localisation' to 'locally led'. ACFID would like to work with PIANGO and CID for collective efforts to develop radical transformational processes to enable localisation, and to develop a Regional (Pacific) Roadmap for localisation - a 'Pacific Charter for Change'.

4.2.4 Possible Next Steps Discussed

PIANGO was clear that the era of capacity development is over, there is already enough capacity in the Pacific.

The opportunity that lies ahead is to be more transformative and ambitious in our actions; for joint action, between PIANGO, ACFID and CID; this need to be Pacific led, and perhaps there could be a Pacific Charter for Change.

Questions which arose from discussions included:

- Are we all on board (as a sector) with what localisation is?
- Should it be radical or incremental?

- What are good/bad examples?

- Who is informing how we judge what is good or bad?

- How do we deal with power imbalances?

- What is the MFAT position, and how do we as a sector support the transition?

Possible next steps identified through discussion were:

- Research with HAG in New Zealand

- Leverage learnings from examples across the world

- Set up a localisation 'Working Group' similar to that in Australia through ACFID

- Establish organisational baselines and encourage open transparency with partners and monitor each year

- Agree on common purpose

- Keep it simple and keep it moving

- Talk with key partners and ask how they want to measure performance

- Set up a CID/PIANGO CEO group

- Promote a Pacific Union, rather like a European Union.

Section 5: Current Situation and Challenges for Localisation (Step 3)

From the workshop it appears at an intellectual and ethical level the sector understands the essence of localisation and recognises that the vision and process of localisation is an inevitable consequence of the evolution of the international development and humanitarian sectors.

However, there is a lack of momentum and some sector members appear a little dazed by the implications. There is no urgency to change operating models and behaviour and, while there is an acceptance and understanding that things should change, several blockages are present. For example:

- the linkage between localisation and how it transforms business as usual is little understood;
- there is no collective understanding of localisation and the protocols supporting localisation, whether it changes in different environments, and how it is defined in the environments in which we work;
- the system (i.e. the funding and policy established for the sector) does not currently acknowledge, enable, incentivise or demand localisation sufficiently;
- while the sector knows of, and has an appreciation of, the importance of localisation, the required pace of change of change, and the factors determining the necessary pace, is not well-understood. Is this something that needs to happen quickly or incrementally? How is this decided? What is appropriate, and how would we recognise localisation being implemented at an appropriate pace?

Sector actors recognise the signals but seem unsure whether to 1. get behind the imperative and lead the way for change, 2. continue as usual and play a watchful wait and see game, or 3. continue as usual and ignore any signs of needing to change until necessary. Intrinsically it is known that there are implications at programmatic, organisational, sector and funding levels.

Questions which need to be addressed for, and by, the sector are:
1. What are the influencers of localisation?

2. What are the actor roles of localisation?

3. What global examples can we leverage?

4. What does localisation mean in the different geographic environments in which we work?

5. What protocols support localisation?

6. When will government funding change to support localisation, and in what way?

7. How does localisation impact and change our 'business as usual' – what does it mean for INGOs, for programmes, and for reporting?

8. How is appropriateness of timing determined?

9. How do we gather evidence and measure localisation and progress towards localisation?

10. What should we ideally be doing differently now; in the short-term future; in the medium-term future; and in the longer term?

Section 6: Recommendations for Next Steps Towards Localisation (Step 4)

Given the information contained in Section 5 above, recommendations for next steps towards localisation are presented below.

6.1 Regional Alignment

There is a need for regional alignment, achieved through collaboration with ACFID and PIANGO, and the development of a Charter for Change. New Zealand can learn from ACFID's journey. It is important to explore how this links and supports the Pacific Reset Agenda.

ACTIONS:

Establish regional group.

6.2 Research

ACTIONS:

Explore potential for research with HAG in New Zealand

Identify, collate and leverage learnings from examples across the world.

6.3 Monitoring & Evaluation

There is a need to gather evidence and develop a way to monitor and evaluate New Zealand's localisation activities. Baseline data is required, including organisational baselines. Open transparency with partners should be encouraged and monitored each year; it is necessary to talk with key partners and ask how they want to measure performance.

ACTIONS:

In FY 2019/2020 implement baseline survey on CID members and their localisation work in New Zealand and abroad: who is doing what where and how much of it is localised; how is it being measured.

Use baseline to inform the agenda for CID over the next 12 - 18 months, locally and abroad.

Capture 1 - 3 CID members and 'map' their localisation journey.

6.4 Leadership

ACTIONS:

Establish a CID/PIANGO CEO group.

6.5 Advocacy

ACTIONS:

Find ways to socialise the localisation agenda to partners and potential donors.

6.6 Working Group

ACTIONS:

Establish a New Zealand sector-wide working group (including MFAT) to guide the sector in addressing the set of 10 questions and support the above actions.

CID would like to thank MFAT for the funding for this workshop and report and thank PIANGO for their partnership.