

# ADRA NORWAY LOCALIZATION STRATEGY 2023-2028

ADRA Norway Localization Strategy	
Version	Board Review
5.0	06.03.2023

## Background

Localization is not a new concept, having been debated by local, national, and international governments, non-governmental organizations (NGO) and civil society organizations (CSO) for half a century. Localization deals with the process of building greater engagement of local actors, NGOs and CSOs in humanitarian, development, and peace action, recognizing their important role as decision-makers and influencers in their own communities, ensuring greater involvement in coordination, and accessing a greater share of aid funding.

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Norway strives to catalyze structural changes, tackles injustices and empowers local partners. This is carried out by collaborating to improve education access, reduce poverty and food insecurity, improve mental health, enhance adaptation to climate change, respond to humanitarian crises, strengthen inclusion, and build social cohesion and resilience.

In line with Christian values, ADRA Norway recognizes and respects the inherent dignity and value of people and partners as active participants rather than passive recipients. ADRA Norway recognizes that transformative, sustainable changes must be driven by an effective civil society where committed change agents drive demands for accountability and for democratic, inclusive, and human rights-based alternatives encompassing a just distribution of resources.

Recognizing, respecting, supporting, and strengthening local civil societies and their leadership are key tenets of ADRA Norway's localization strategy. This is implemented by reinforcing rather than replacing national and local systems and building on local knowledge, capacities, and values. Localization and civil society partnership is a fundamental pillar of ADRA Norway's strategy 2021-2025<sup>1</sup>.

ADRA Norway contributes towards localization within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by supporting initiatives to "leave no one behind"<sup>2</sup>, work differently with local systems through nexus<sup>3</sup> approaches, investing in local capacity building, working for equality and non-discrimination and to cultivating active and meaningful participation<sup>4</sup>.

As a member of an international non-governmental federated network, ADRA endorsed the Grand Bargain<sup>5</sup> and the Agenda for Humanity<sup>6</sup> arising from the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016. Along with donors, governments, and NGOs, ADRA committed to localization, making humanitarian action "as local as possible and as international as necessary"<sup>7</sup> with the intent of improving the effectiveness, efficiency, appropriateness, sustainability, and quality of humanitarian response to people in need.

## Commitment to Localization

ADRA Norway is committed to pursuing a strategy for localization by:

1. Recognizing the value of local capacity, culture, language, and knowledge
2. Working with the right actors that represent the interests of communities
3. Understanding the local political economy

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<sup>1</sup> [ADRA Norge](#)

<sup>2</sup> [UNSDG 2030-agenda/universal-values/leave-no-one-behind](#)

<sup>3</sup> [UNICEF - development-nexus](#)

<sup>4</sup> [UNSDG | 2030 Agenda - Universal Values](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Grand Bargain](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Agenda for Humanity](#)

<sup>7</sup> [ODI - as local as possible](#)

4. Understanding that partnerships and resources strengthen, validate, and legitimize local actors
5. Involving local actors (i.e., local CSOs, local interest groups, host local and national government bodies) as equal partners in needs assessment, planning, coordination, and evaluation processes
6. Securing multi-year funding for local CSO organizations working in development and humanitarian contexts, including adequate support for capacity building and administrative costs
7. Using local languages where possible in documentation and coordination processes
8. Confronting all forms of discrimination, racism, prejudice, and notions of superiority within society
9. Committing and communicating Norad's *Principles for Civil Society* in the respective areas of sustainability, inclusion, partnership, legitimacy, accountability, cost-effectiveness, and context sensitivity.<sup>8</sup>

## Partnership Localization Model

ADRA Norway's programs engage a variety of stakeholders and promote effective public-private and civil society partnerships. ADRA Norway builds strong partnerships based on shared values, mutual accountability, and respect. ADRA Norway seeks to collaborate with others, to participate meaningfully in coalitions and networks and to be a catalyst and broker for bringing different actors together, including CSOs, the private sector, governments, faith groups, institutions, and academia.

ADRA Norway consistently implements through local ADRA country partners, who have roots in local societies, in long-term sustainable partnerships, to build capacity, share values, and improve quality in programming. Therefore, the ADRA country partners are ADRA Norway's link to the targeted population, civil society groups and local authorities and institutions.

ADRA Norway works to ensure inclusion of local NGOs and CSOs throughout the program cycle to enhance local participation and decision-making. These partnerships may be based on access, representativeness, special interests, or expertise of local organizations. Local special interest organizations such as organizations for persons with disability, women's organizations, education CSOs and youth organizations are examples of grassroots organizations that offer a strong value addition and contextual knowledge and capacities. This model is cost-effective and ensures that the programs are contextually relevant, adapted to needs and more effective, impartial, and inclusive.

ADRA Norway's partnerships facilitate innovative programming in regional and international working groups. This cooperation is intended to empower local actors to be more effective in local settings. This includes, but is not limited, to the following:

1. Cooperating in technical learning labs on education, gender and inclusion, monitoring and evaluation, accountability and learning, finance and investment, marketing and development.
2. Strengthening the ADRA Accreditation and Licensing program in design, process and outcomes to support the capacity of ADRA country partners in influencing global standards and policies to ensure accountability of offices throughout the network.
3. Engaging in joint regional and international advocacy campaigns.
4. Collaborating with relevant ADRA offices in the north with similar partnership interests in co-financing, sharing technical expertise and support building of ADRA country partners.

## Localization Priority Action Plan

ADRA Norway will continue to strengthen localization through the following priority action steps:

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<sup>8</sup> [Norad - support to civil society](#)

1. Advocating the importance of localization in various ADRA fora to ensure integration as a cross-cutting strategic priority.
2. Engaging in dialogue on localization globally, nationally and with partners by learning from the ongoing localization work in the sector and develop case studies on localization in practice.
3. Building ADRA Norway's own capacity to form partnerships and work with local partners throughout the program cycle.
4. Conducting mapping of potential local strategic partners to build sustainable relationships with local NGOs and CSOs that are legitimate, inclusive, effective, conflict sensitive and share ADRA Norway's development and values.
5. Raising awareness and sensitize ADRA Norway staff on the principles of partnership, especially in relation with local actors.
6. Developing a joint localization partnership strategy translated into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between ADRA Norway and partners to better institutionalize localization, setting benchmarks, defining roles and responsibilities, and monitoring and documenting its advancement on localization.
7. Doing research on the benefits of localization to humanitarian and development response's effectiveness, local economies, ecological systems, practices, communities, and societies.
8. Evaluating how localization relates to our mission and business model as an organization.
9. Developing a programmatic approach for monitoring localization effectiveness in ADRA's humanitarian and development partnerships and in program implementation.
10. Shifting ADRA Norway's capacity to focus more on training of trainers, coaching, mentoring and secondment of key staff to local actors.
11. Prioritizing and scaling up institutional support building component to enable local actors to move from short-term project-based approach to long-term sustainability by building up capacity in areas such as finance, logistics, administration, governance, fundraising and reporting.
12. Adapting funding modalities by ensuring grant flexibility with the possibility to further support institutional capacity strengthening, and incentivize collaborative and principled partnership approaches, rather than sub-granting.
13. Developing mechanisms to support locally led initiatives.