DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL

Localisation of Protection Programming in Garissa & Turkana, Kenya

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FOREWORD

Refugees, who have been forced to flee unsafe, life-threatening environments, find themselves in situations where their protection is, again, under threat. This research focuses on the north-eastern and north-western refugee camp settings in Kenya – contexts meant to offer refuge, but which are accompanied by a rise in incidents, insecurity and threats, as our 2023-24 research shows. Protection response is more than ever needed, alongside durable solutions and integration efforts planned by the Government of Kenya and key stakeholders, from the national to the local levels. This includes the need to focus on refugees' safety – whether economic, material or legal – and on their freedom of movement. The protection of refugees in Kenya is a critical and urgent issue which this report addresses – through the actions that can be undertaken by local actors.

A priority: to localise protection programming in Kenya's refugee hosting area

On June 20, 2024, to mark World Refugee Day, we gathered to explore the localisation of protection programming through a roundtable discussion with refugees, practitioners and donors. This event, held in Nairobi, presented the key findings of the report and addressed the rising protection challenges in Garissa and Turkana and the critical role local actors played in addressing these.

One prominent theme that emerged - during the study and the event – was the need for direct funding to local actors. Repetitive capacity building without actionable support is insufficient. Local organisations need financial resources to implement and sustain their initiatives effectively. As one participant powerfully stated, "For how long will capacity building go on? We need to consolidate and see the next steps, moving from capacity building to action."

Achieving localisation requires involving local actors in decision-making processes from the very beginning of project design. Engaging local actors from the start ensures that those experiencing the challenges first-hand can shape and drive initiatives, making interventions truly responsive to community needs. This commitment underscores the importance of having local actors lead, not just participate in protection programming.

However, localisation cannot happen without addressing the severe restrictions on movement and registration faced by refugee-led organisations, and other groups, whether registered or unregistered. Described by one participant as living in an "open-air prison," these restrictions severely limit their ability to attend essential training, collaborate with peers, and fully participate in the humanitarian ecosystem. Effective advocacy is needed to ease these barriers and empower local actors.

The potential for private sector partnerships to enhance infrastructure and provide material support was another significant opportunity discussed. Access to basic tools and resources, such as laptops and office spaces, remains a challenge for many local organisations. Private sector partnerships could bridge these gaps, providing much-needed support. One panellist pointed out, "We are building capacity, but without the tools and materials necessary to improve."

Finally, the event and this report emphasise the need to move beyond tokenistic collaborations to having local actors lead decision-making processes. Protection programming must be inclusive and cater to the diverse needs of all community members, especially those marginalised such as LGBTQI+ individuals and people with disabilities.

Refining protection strategies: A way forward led by local actors

As we move forward, these insights will be integral to refining protection strategies. This updated report reflects these perspectives, offering a roadmap for more inclusive and effective humanitarian responses for DRC as well as donors and other international institutions. The success of protection programmes depends on continuous learning, adaptation, and collaboration with local actors to assess, address, and prevent protection risks.

This report aims to build a protection response that respects and uplifts the voices of local actors, ensuring their expertise and experiences guide collective efforts. Feel free to get in touch with us for any questions, insights, or feedback you may have on this report.

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TERMINOLOGY

COLLABORATION	In the context of this study, collaboration refers to the collaboration between a humanitarian organisation and local actors (defined below). Collaboration refers to the joint work of these actors to "improve the response times and increase the welfare of the affected population."[1]
LOCAL ACTORS AND SYSTEMS	DRC takes an expansive definition of local actors and systems as having both public and private sector components, which include local and national civil society actors such as community-based organisations, local and national authorities, and private sector actors.[2]
LOCALISATION	There is no single definition of localisation. In the humanitarian sector, the term refers to the strengthening of local responders to lead and deliver humanitarian aid, in a "spirit of partnership [that aims to] reinforce rather than replace local and national capacities,"[3] DRC's localisation principle — known as Go Local — aims to support "local actors for sustainable humanitarian response, development, and peacebuilding."[4]
PARTNERSHIP	Partnerships in the context of this study refers to the partnering of a humanitarian organisation with local actors as operational partners, implementing partners (IPs), or consortium partners, whereby they are bound by partnership agreements that "include roles and responsibilities of both parties, shared risks and mitigation measures."[5] Partnerships can also include "longer-term strategic partnerships with complementarity identified before crises."[6] Partnerships are a formalised "relationship between international humanitarian actors (especially international NGOs) and local and national actors (especially local and national NGOs), whereby the international actors work with, support and resource their local and/or national partners to design and implement humanitarian preparedness and response programming."[7]
PROTECTION	Protection includes "[a]ll activities aimed at ensuring full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law, i.e. human rights law, international humanitarian law and refugee law."[8]
PROTECTION RISK	Refers to actual, as well as potential, exposure of the affected population to violence, coercion, or deliberate deprivation. A protection risk is broken down into three components: the protection threats, the individual, household and community vulnerabilities to the threat and their capacity to cope with it.
SELF-PROTECTION	Refers to what people do to ensure their own protection from violence, coercion and deliberate deprivation that occurs at an individual, community, household and/or other subgroup level.

1 Ertem et al., 2010.
2 Danish Refugee Council (DRC), "Go Local Principle Paper," forthcoming.
3 IASC, 2020, "The Grand Bargain in Practice: Mercy Corps' holistic localisation benefits affected people in Syria."
4 DRC, n.d., "Organisational Principle 2 (Go Local) – Summary."
5 IASC, 2020, "Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream: Guidance note on partnership practices for localisation."
6 Ibid.
7 Action Aid et al., 2019, "Accelerating Localisation through Partnerships – Recommendations for operational practices that strengthen the leadership of national and local actors in partnership-based humanitarian action globally."
8 IASC, 1999, "Protection of Internally Displaced Persons," Inter-Agency Standing Committee Policy Paper, pp. 4. The definition was originally adopted by a 1999 Workshop of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on Protection.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AGD Age, Gender and Disability
BIMS Biometric Identity Management System
CBO Community-Based Organisation
CSO Civil Society Organisation
DRC Danish Refugee Council
DRS Department of Refugee Services
EAGL East Africa and the Great Lakes
FCDO Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)
FGD Focus Group Discussion
FGM Female Genital Mutilation
IASC Inter-Agency Steering Committee
IFRC International Federation of the Red Cross
INGO International Non-Governmental Organisation
IO International Organisation
IPA Individual Protection Assistance
KII Key Informant Interview
KPI Key Performance Indicator
LGBTIQ+ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer and other sexuality & gender diverse people and communities
LPMF Localisation Performance Measurement Framework
MHPSS Mental Health and Psychosocial Service
NGO Non-Governmental Organisation
PSEA Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
PSS Psychosocial Support
RCK Refugee Consortium of Kenya
REHORI Refugee and Host Resilience Initiative
RELON Refugee-Led Organization Network of Kenya
RLO Refugee-Led Organisation
SRH Sexual and Reproductive Health
VSLA Village Savings Loan Association

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

METHODOLOGY & OBJECTIVES

Within the context of commitments to durable solutions, since the World Humanitarian Summit 2016 and the Grand Bargain, there have been increased calls for those who are closest to crises to have more control of resources, increased agency and greater decision-making powers. **The process of "localisation" aims to create more equitable, power sharing and decision-making systems that support those in need of protection**.

The protection of refugees in Kenya is a critical issue with a significant number of refugee men, women, children and youth in protracted displacement, due to conflict, violence, natural disasters, and other factors. Kenya is host to two of the largest refugee camps in the world – in Garissa and Turkana counties, known as Kenya's marginalised counties in the arid and semiarid land regions. Localisation holds the potential to foster sustainability by enabling an environment where vulnerable communities, like those affected by displacement, are able to handle challenges, thereby promoting local ownership and strengthening self-protection capacities.

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) recognises the importance of localisation in protection programming by understanding that while international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) have both the funds and the expertise needed to undertake advocacy activities, local actors – ranging from governmental actors, to civil society organisations (CSOs) and community based organisations (CBOs), formal and informal groups and committees, as well as the private sector - are equally well-positioned to carry the voice of the local community into the appropriate advocacy settings because of their deep knowledge of their community's challenges and proximity to the community. DRC enshrined localisation in its strategy through the "Go Local" principle, which aims to engage local partners through "principled, equitable and collaborative partnerships [...] in pursuit of a relevant, effective and sustainable response."[9] DRC Kenya has articulated broader localisation objectives through DRC's strategic priorities for 2023, which include aims to strengthen DRC Kenya's collaboration with local actors, foster synergies around programming and advocacy, and promote the protection of rights and peaceful coexistence in displacement-affected areas.

The study focuses on the localisation of protection programming in Garissa and Turkana counties – and seeks a deeper understanding of the opportunities available and entry points for engagement with local actors supporting refugees and host communities. The research seeks to map out localisation efforts in Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps, identifying entry points to new collaborations and engagement for more localised protection outcomes and draw out key information and recommendations from the challenges and lessons from international and local actors.

This study comes at a crucial time, with only one a few months left to achieve the Grand Bargain goals. Samuel Hall, a local research organisation in Kenya, was commissioned to conduct this research study with the objectives and research questions illustrated below.

Entry points for protection programming	Understand Local Actors and Barriers to their Involvement	Translate learnings into actionable insights
What entry points and opportunities exist for stronger engagement on protection programming between DRC Kenya and local actors in Garissa and Turkana counties?	*Which actors and activities are currently in place to address the protection needs identified by local actors?*	*How can DRC strengthen its existing engagement with local actors?* *How can DRC better support local communities' protection? What is DRC's value added?*

9 DRC, n.d., "Organisational Principle 2 (Go Local) – Summary" pp. 1.

KEY FINDINGS

1. LOCALISATION AT A TIME OF INCREASING PROTECTION NEEDS

This research reveals a situation of heightened protection risks and a need for increased protection responses in both Garissa and Turkana counties. All local actors interviewed shared concerns over the rising numbers of violent incidents and a drop-in security levels in both counties. DRC works closely with law enforcement and Kenya police, alongside the Refugee Consortium of Kenya (RCK) to ensure legal resolutions are achieved, survivors are protected, and perpetrators are held accountable, but the demand for protection is rising with a disturbing surge in violent episodes.

Given this context, the success of protection programmes depends on continuous learning, adaptation, and collaboration with local actors to address protection risks, such as sexual exploitation, abuse, and child protection through awareness campaigns and preventive measures. This calls for close collaboration with local NGOs, community-based organisations, and government agencies to leverage local expertise and resources. To effectively localise responses, it is imperative to acknowledge and address the unique protection profiles and priorities of each country.

2. COLLABORATION BETWEEN DRC AND LOCAL ACTORS AROUND THE DUAL OBJECTIVE OF PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

While the local actors interviewed feel better equipped to intervene on prevention and identification themselves, they recommend that DRC continues leading on response and mitigation directly, while jointly working on protection coordination, referrals and resource mobilisation.

Local actors identified the following activities as areas for collaboration with DRC:

- Violence against women and girls
- Legal aid, rule of law, and the peace and security agenda
- Child protection and youth inclusion
- Diversity inclusion

3. LOCAL ACTORS' ADDED VALUE IN LOCAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMING

Local actors' added value is seen in their capacity to understand and discuss protection issues, operationalise referral services, and improve access to programming. Local actors succeed in trust building as they can overcome language barriers and relate through their own lived experiences of protection issues. Their work is largely complementary to gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and DRC's case management services.

For local actors, protection programming entails vigilant monitoring of refugees' safety and rights, as articulated by a stakeholder in Kakuma. They expressed that this begins with comprehensive education for children, youth and adults, and extends to the responsibility to uphold and monitor rights. Local actors are crucial in these critical situations, such as when individuals are wounded, or discriminated against, as they can swiftly intervene to stop the harm – even if incidents go unreported. In Kakuma, numerous CSOs have been established to station representatives in the camp, like block leaders, as well as women and children, to prevent undesirable behaviours such as fighting or harm. These actors engage in counselling and resolving family disputes.

Protection goes beyond prevention and response; it is fundamentally about proactive mitigation for local actors:

- Educating the community on self-protection measures
- Linking the community to referrals

4. DRC's ADDED VALUE IN LOCAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMING

Local actors view DRC's added value to be among different areas: prevention and identification, response and mitigation, and assessment and monitoring. **Local actors and DRC align on humanitarian principles and protection standards.** They both perceive the importance of localising protection programming through existing and strengthened community dialogues, and stronger monitoring**.** Working with those closest to the most vulnerable, local actors witness the necessity to build **women-led networks**, and to work with community-based women's organisations as essential actors in localised protection programming.

Case management remains the key strength of DRC's protection programming. One of the most urgent aspects – as viewed by local actors – is the need for DRC to show that it can effectively close protection cases, either through formal channels or alternative channels. They recognise DRC's strength in the development and implementation of dispute resolution mechanisms, especially given the lack of more effective formal mechanisms. However, they also note that oftentimes, the dispute resolution process does not take into consideration the survivor.

"Local actors need to lead in campaigns to support survivors of domestic violence, gender equality…and prevent it. These organisations enable women to assert their rights and obtain the assistance they require."
– KII DRC

5. NINE MAIN GAPS AND OBSTACLES TO LOCALISATION TO BE ADDRESSED

The report details nine gaps to be prioritised to reduce and remove barriers to the localisation of protection programming:

Gap 1: A networked approach
Gap 2: Funding
Gap 3: Freedom of movement
Gap 4: Capacity building
Gap 5: Trust building and shifting mindsets
Gap 6: Private sector involvement
Gap 7: Government involvement
Gap 8: Beyond case management
Gap 9: Infrastructure for localisation

DRC's strategy in Kenya will need to be tailored to address, remove and reduce these nine gaps. This also entails monitoring localisation and protection outcomes and setting key performance indicators. Out of these nine gaps, several are detailed in this summary (please refer to the main report for a full discussion on all gaps).

6. A NETWORKED APPROACH

Community leaders emphasised the importance of collaborative efforts within a network to advance protection across various contexts. Respondents in Dadaab, for example, asked for shared and cross-learning with actors in Kakuma. Community leaders see protection as being achieved through a series of preventive actions that require a collective undertaking. Respondents in Dadaab and Kakuma consider that localisation requires collaborating between community-based informal group, registered civil society groups and external players in maintaining the community's safety and wellbeing. These are the connections or networked approach that they find to be currently lacking.

To address this gap in community involvement, one of the main suggestions made is to develop norms and guidelines for community peace and security, to discourage and resolve disputes and confrontations while encouraging communal harmony. Only after localised standards have been established at the community level, can the efforts of the police force, local NGOs and international NGOs become effective in addressing issues such as GBV, counselling, child protection and general wellbeing.

Respondents suggested strengthening the network of support by:

- Funding initiatives through both external support and community donations
- Accessing specialised services through stronger referral systems
- Gaining knowledge through cross-border and multi-sited learning

7. FUNDING FOR LOCALISATION

Local actors feel that funding streams are too slow to be able to respond to the specific cases they can assist. They also consider that those who hold the funds, in a partnership, also hold the power. In most situations, while there may be partnerships between INGOs and local partners, INGOs are the ones holding control over the funds, and receiving the funds directly.

Local actors request that DRC and partner INGOs link them directly with donors, and help them build a direct line of communication and relationship with donors. For instance, when donors do visit the refugee camps, local actors feel this happens only "once in a while, for 30 minutes", and in a group meeting where they do not have the opportunity to directly expose certain issues or cases, or work with them on possible solutions forward. They would prefer donors to get to know them better, to build trust in their capacity and systems, and to encourage donors to invest in them. They are conscious that this relationship requires nurturing, over time.

8. FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AS A REQUIREMENT

Without freedom of movement, local actors cannot access training provided by DRC in counties such as Nairobi, or go meet counterparts in Kakuma, where protection activities are more evolved, or even further abroad in the region, in Uganda or Tanzania. Although the Government of Kenya passed a new Refugees Act in 2021 to ease the freedom of movement, this has not yet translated into practice for local actors. Local actors believe DRC and other INGOs can advocate not only for their registration and recognition as CSOs but also to provide their founders and staff with documentation to be able to move out of the camps.

9. GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT IN SUPPORT OF LOCALISATION

A**s part of the networked approach, a central actor that CSOs/CBOs would like to engage more with – and obtain registration and movement passes from – are local government actors.** As confirmed in interviews with the Department of Refugee Services (DRS), local and national governments are key to referral pathways, service mapping – including child services and women's services – and are the protection leads in camp settings.

DRS' role in registering newly arrived refugees and providing their legal documentation touches on some of the greatest sources of anxiety, discrimination and violence for refugees. These legal gaps need to be addressed for refugees to be referred to services, for their businesses to be supported, and for their movement passes, travel documents and police clearance certificates to be provided.

CSOs would like to act as legitimate partners of local and national governments, including in providing temporary shelters and safe spaces, addressing complaints raised by refugees, and monitoring protection at large. The monitoring recommendation was raised given the concerns with the Kenya police on issues of GBV. Local actors would like to work more closely with UNHCR and other agencies to address the cases of police officer corruption, which often discourages survivors from reporting cases, and advantages the perpetrators who are ready to pay to solve a dispute.

10. INVESTING IN COMMUNITY DATA & PARTNERING WITH LOCAL ACTORS TO LISTEN TO PEOPLE'S NEEDS AND LEARN FROM THEM

Actors interviewed reject the idea that there is data fatigue. On the contrary, their fatigue lies in the fact that they do not feel listened to or that their responses generate feedback and action. At a basic level, "they don't feel treated as human beings", stated one key informant in Dadaab. A simple best practice to address this gap is practising meaningful engagement; meaning actively listening to people's needs, and engaging their participation and inputs to build a strong relationship at the grassroots level with the existing community leaders who hold key community information.

Pre-existing community structures are also well equipped to provide stronger monitoring. For instance, block leaders play an important role in ensuring the safety and security of refugee's communities. When problems or concerns occur, members of the community can report to them, for necessary action. This system of block leaders is an excellent means to preserve community protection and security, but also monitoring their rights over time.

ROADMAP AHEAD FOR DRC

The key is to create better understanding and greater visibility for local partners. While DRC is at its infancy in terms of localisation of protection programming, commitments have been made and will be clarified in a localisation engagement plan or strategy to be communicated to stakeholders and adapted for each county, as required. DRC's value-add to the Dadaab and Kakuma refugee protection programme comprises technical competence, advocacy influence, resource mobilisation capabilities, and good coordination.

There is a consensus on areas that DRC should hand over to local actors but that there are mostly areas that will involve joint collaboration and continued direct implementation to strengthen protection outcomes. These collaborations will emphasise capacity building, technical support and secondments, donor and policy engagement, as well as community engagement and even a greater emphasis on monitoring and learning. Overall, local actors agree that jointly working with DRC on advocacy and protection programming and on enhanced referral services will be a strategic and effective strategy to address the complex concerns confronting vulnerable populations in the refugee community. Together they mapped the key barriers to be removed or reduced to facilitate localisation, all of which have been detailed in this report with a roadmap ahead. In both counties, DRC will need:

- **An engagement plan** for more clarity over the communication with communities, but also about DRC's plans with regards to local actors more generally. This engagement plan will need to include a statement on DRC's localisation approach as well as a community engagement plan.
- **A mapping of local actors** from the various camps, an expansion of its local partners, with a more diverse representation of marginalised communities.
- **A resource mobilisation plan** to fill funding gaps and enhance the space for local actors on resource mobilisation, introducing partners to funding networks and diversifying funding sources.
- **A capacity building plan** to address technical skills gaps among local actors and DRC staff, with on-the-job training to fill the gaps and key performance indicators (KPIs) as well as secondments to facilitate learning on procurement, implementation, and financial systems.
- **Adequate accountability systems** through different partnership models - at the project level, transformative partnership level, and networks/collectives with different levels of accountability.

To move localisation forward, given the nascent and progressing state of engagement by DRC in Kenya, a **localisation performance measurement framework can be adopted and adapted from existing resources.** The NEAR network provides such a framework to evidence progress towards achieving localisation commitments. The main report suggests the key indicators for an adapted framework for DRC and concludes on the need to integrate a research and learning partner to 1) provide visibility of actions taken on the ground and 2) on measurement and monitoring of the localisation commitments.

INTRODUCTION

i. Background, objectives, and scope

The protection of refugees in Kenya is a critical issue with a significant number of refugees in protracted displacement and whose rights have not been fulfilled. Kenya is host to two of the largest refugee camps in the world – in Garissa and Turkana counties, which are known as Kenya's marginalised counties in the arid and semi-arid land regions.

Since the World Humanitarian Summit of 2016 and the Grand Bargain, there have been increased calls for localisation: calling for those who are closest to the crises to have more control of resources, increased agency and greater decision-making power. This process of localisation aims to create more equitable, power sharing and decision-making systems that support those in need of protection. Localisation holds the potential to foster sustainability by enabling an environment where vulnerable communities, like those affected by displacement, are able to handle challenges, thereby promoting local ownership and strengthening self-protection capacities.

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) advocates for the importance of localisation in protection programming by understanding that while international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) have both the funds and the expertise needed to undertake advocacy activities, local actors – ranging from governmental actors, to civil society organisations (CSOs) and community based organisations (CBOs), formal and informal groups and committees, as well as the private sector - are equally well-positioned to carry the voice of the local community into the appropriate advocacy settings because of their deep knowledge of the community's challenges and proximity to the community. DRC enshrined localisation in its Strategy 2025 through its "Go Local" principle, which aims to engage local partners through "principled, equitable and collaborative partnerships [...] in pursuit of a relevant, effective and sustainable response."[10] DRC Kenya's programme has articulated broader localisation objectives through its strategic priorities for 2023, which include the aims to strengthen DRC Kenya's collaboration with local actors, foster synergies around programming and advocacy, and promote the protection of rights and peaceful coexistence in displacement-affected areas.

The present study focuses on the localisation of protection programming in Garissa and Turkana counties – and seeks a deeper understanding of the opportunities available and entry points for engagement with local actors supporting refugees and host communities. The research seeks to map out localisation efforts in specifically in Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps, identifying entry points to new collaborations and engagement for more localised protection outcomes and draw out key information and recommendations from the challenges and lessons from international and local actors.

This study comes at a crucial time, with only a few months left to achieve the goals of the Grand Bargain. Samuel Hall, a local research organisation connecting the voices of communities with changemakers for more inclusive societies, was commissioned to conduct this research study with objectives outlined below.

Objectives of this research

To identify entry points and opportunities for stronger engagement on protection programming between DRC Kenya and local actors in Garissa and Turkana counties, with four priorities:

1. **Enhance DRC's understanding of local actors** through an actor mapping exercise
2. **Identify areas of need and/or saturation in protection programming** through an activity mapping exercise, including self-protection mechanisms of local communities.
3. **Understand potential benefits and challenges** of engagement between international organisations (IOs) and local actors.
4. **Translate learnings into actionable insights** for DRC through a recommendations report and uptake workshop.

[10] DRC, n.d., "Organisational Principle 2 (Go Local) – Summary" pp. 1.

ii. Research framework and methodology

This section outlines the overall methodological approach for the research, including research questions, approach, sampling, and research tools. This study builds on existing information as well as interviews and consultations to address information gaps and respond to one main research question driving this study:

> What entry points and opportunities exist for stronger engagement on protection programming between DRC Kenya and local actors in Garissa and Turkana counties?

Based on this question, three key themes led the data collection and subsequent analysis:

- **Localisation** including an actor mapping to identify key actors in each context
- **Protection** programming including an activity mapping to identify roles and responsibilities
- **Opportunities and entry points** for stronger engagement with local actors on protection.

Table 1 provides an overview of the questions and tools used to investigate these themes. The research themes have been drawn from best practices in actor mapping, which highlight the role of actor mapping in supporting systems thinking and practice across four dimensions: context, connections, patterns, and perspectives.

The approach was qualitative, integrating a short e-survey with DRC staff in a first phase, followed by more extensive field-based and remote interviews. The starting point was a desk review of the available literature and documentation provided by DRC, but also collected by Samuel Hall. Additional data was collected throughout the duration of the project to respond to the research questions, through key informant interviews, workshops with local actors and partners, and validation workshops with DRC staff.

Research was conducted in-person in Garissa and Turkana counties — focusing on Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps — and remotely with DRC staff. Three data collection tools were developed for this study: an online survey, key informant interviews (KIIs), and partnership monitoring workshops.

Table 1: Proposed Research Questions and Associated Research Tools

Key Questions for the Research	Research tools			
	E-survey	KIIs	Partnership Workshops	Desk Review
THEME 1: CONTEXT: UNDERSTANDING THE GENERAL LANDSCAPE				
How does DRC define localisation and local actors? What types of local actors does DRC work with, or could DRC work with to reinforce protection programming?		x		x
What is the knowledge on the range, role and capacity of local actors working on protection, from the formal (i.e. registered organisations/entities) to the informal?		x	x	
Are DRC and local actors' definition of protection aligned?	x	x		
THEME 2: CONNECTIONS: THINKING ABOUT THE NETWORKS AND HOW ACTORS RELATE TO ONE ANOTHER				
What network(s) of local protection actors can be identified in the two counties? With which other levels, if any, do these actors work, and in what arrangements?		x	x	x
What modes of collaboration and/or partnership do local actors prefer?		x	x	x
What forms/arrangements of collaboration/partnership does DRC pursue or envision in its protection / localisation strategies?	x	x		

THEME 3: PATTERNS: WHAT WORKS IN THE SYSTEM, AND WHERE ARE THERE GAPS/BLOCKAGES?				
What local protection activities are currently in place, and do they address the protection needs identified by local actors?	x	x	x	x
What case studies of local engagement for protection programming can be identified, with what lessons learned?	x	x	x	x
What activities are DRC engaged in? Where are there gaps in DRC's protection programming, and what barriers cause these gaps (e.g., lack of funding, access, or trust from local communities)?	x	x		
THEME 4: PERSPECTIVES: CONSIDERING WHO/WHAT IS, HAS BEEN, OR SHOULD BE INVOLVED				
How can DRC strengthen its existing engagement with local actors? Where are there entry points for new or extended local engagement on protection programming?	x	x	x	x
Are DRC or other actors' protection activities in Garissa and Turkana having unintended negative effects (e.g., causing / exacerbating inter- / intra-community tensions, exposing people to harm through data collection / storage)? How might these effects be mitigated?	x	x	x	x
How can DRC better support local communities' self-protection activities and capacities?-What programming elements / strategies can DRC consider to reinforce self-protection?	x	x	x	x
To what extent does DRC maintain value-add in direct implementation? Are there particular activities or locations where direct implementation is preferable for protection outcomes?		x	x	

Research Tools

Desk and Literature Review

The initial desk review informed the Inception Phase of the study and enabled the research team to define and sharpen the tools for the data collection process, identify potential survey, KII, and workshop respondents.

Online Survey

Internal participants included staff based in Nairobi's East Africa & Great Lakes office, Garissa and Dadaab offices, and Turkana - Kakuma, Kalobeyei, and Lodwar offices. External participants included local actors with a focus on Dadaab, Kakuma and Kalobeyei, including representatives of civil society and community-based organisations, community representatives, and authorities from the local level who are familiar with refugee protection programming. The survey was delivered via an online survey tool designed to assess:

- Knowledge, attitudes, and practices
- Activities, both actual and envisioned
- Entry points for strengthening current local protection programming.

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

KIIs informed the analysis before, during and after fieldwork, and explored questions of access, obstacles, and political and socio-economic dynamics surrounding civil documentation.

The research team conducted KIIs with:

- DRC staff in Nairobi, Turkana and Garissa offices/sub-offices
- Government officials
- Committee and self-help group representatives
- Civil society organisations (CSOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs)
- Private sector representatives

The criteria used to include respondents as key informants was their capacity to meet three criteria:

- Knowledge on matters of local protection;
- Active participation in community meetings, dialogues, or committee work; and
- Considerable and proven interaction with local protection actors and community members, and the ability to respond to community/individual protection needs.

Partnership monitoring workshops

The workshops were conducted in person with local protection actors in Garissa and Turkana. The main focus of the workshops was to identify opportunities and constraints to localise protection programming. The workshops served as an opportunity to discuss a roadmap for DRC's engagement of local protection actors, in that they:

- Examined how partnerships have progressed over time (the evolution of partnerships);
- Identified a set of minimum requirements and key principles for partnerships; and
- Benefited from local partners' recommendations for future engagement.

Case Studies

The research team and DRC jointly agreed to identify two case studies per county:

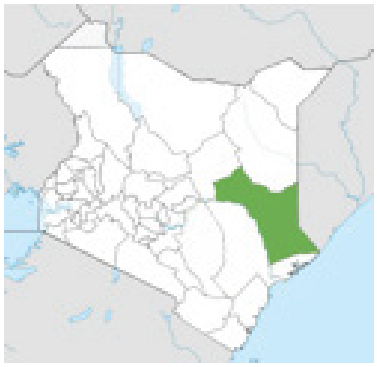
- One case study of a local actor that DRC is recommended to partner with / expand its partnership with;
- One case study on a sub-group of the population that DRC should be paying closer attention to.

The decision was made jointly to focus on LGBTIQ+ community members and RLOs in Kakuma. The research team surpassed the initial targets for sampling and was able to include more participants in the study.

Table 2: Research Tools and Sampling Target

Tool	Target Group	Location	Total
E-survey	Internal: DRC staff based in Nairobi, Garissa, and Turkana; and external: local protection actors based in Garissa and Turkana.	Online	30
Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)	Internal: ● DRC staff in Nairobi, Turkana, and Garissa ● Authorities at camp levels ● CSO and CBOs ● Private sector	Garissa, Turkana, and online	30
Partnership Monitoring Workshops	Local protection actors – two workshops, one in each location (October 2023)	Garissa and Turkana	20
Case studies	Case studies with local protection actors	Garissa and Turkana	5

TURKANA



GARISSA

iii. Evidence base: review of the literature on localisation and localised protection programming

Localisation — practical and operational challenges While there is a consensus on localisation as a "spirit of partnership [that aims to] reinforce rather than replace local and national capacities,"[11] how this understanding translates into practical application is less clear. This lack of clarity is partly due to differing definitions of local actors, as well as differing conceptualisations of what practices and processes should be included in a localisation agenda.[12]

[11] IASC, 2020, "The Grand Bargain in Practice: Mercy Corps' holistic localisation benefits affected people in Syria."
[12] Atputharajah, A and Wanga, J., 2020. "The Impact of Resource Dependence on the Localization of Humanitarian Action: The Case of Kenya" Local Engagement Refugee Research Network Paper No. 10.

According to its own localisation agenda, known as the **Go Local Principle**, DRC defines localisation as the need to support "**local actors for sustainable humanitarian response, development, and peacebuilding**."[13] Through this study, the research team aims to assess how this definition may apply to protection programming in Garissa and Turkana specifically, to develop operational recommendations for DRC Kenya moving forward.

While the general principles and effects of localisation are — when robustly applied — positive, the actual evidence supporting these assumptions is limited.[14] The desk review revealed multiple barriers to the localisation agenda in the humanitarian space, including:

- **The risks — real and perceived** — involved in engaging local actors (e.g., perceived cultural differences, capacities, or value systems).[15]
- **The lack of strategic thinking when approaching local partnerships**, leading to insufficient guidelines and tools for ethical and empowering engagements.[16]
- **The necessity for reflection on and restructuring of the governance of international humanitarian organisations**, which currently reinforces the position, power, and necessity of larger actors — particularly I(NG)Os — and therefore mitigates serious engagement with exit strategies.[17]

Who qualifies as a local actor?

While there is general agreement that local actors include community-based organisations and local civil society and authorities, there remain vague classifications. An increasing number of non-profits operate at local, national, and even regional or international levels, muddling their positionality relative to local actors. El Taraboulsi et al. (2016) resolve this incoherence by defining localisation as "the process of having a humanitarian response owned in part or whole by a national and/or local constituency well-versed in the needs and socio-cultural context of the area in crisis."18 Thus, the 'locality' of an actor can be determined by not only their geographic presence, but also their close familiarity with the context, needs and preferences of local communities, and their (at least partial) ownership by those communities. DRC takes a broad definition of local actors as having both public and private sector components, which include local and national civil society actors such as community-based organisations, local and national authorities, and private sector actors.19 Notably, DRC seeks to engage both registered and unregistered local actors; the implications and added considerations of this dual engagement will be explored in this study.

Who qualifies as protectable and capable of protecting?

As the study focuses on the localisation of protection programming, it is necessary to define i) what protection programming entails, and ii) who such programming targets and covers. DRC follows the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASC) 1999 definition of protection, which includes "[a]ll activities aimed at ensuring full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law, i.e. human rights law, international humanitarian law and refugee law."20 In its protection programming, DRC incorporates child and gender lenses to strengthen its impact on more vulnerable communities.

However, just because individuals may need protection does not mean that they do not have the capacity or agency to engage in self-protection — an important framing given by DRC in the Inception Phase of this study. In line with the suggested benefits of localisation in humanitarian programming generally, increasing the involvement and capacity of affected communities in their own protection efforts allows for better needs-targeting and may yield higher programme participation due to increased access and trust.

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13 DRC, n.d., "Organisational Principle 2 (Go Local) – Summary."
14 Barbelet, V., Davies, G., Fint, J., and Davey, E., 2021. "Interrogating the evidence base on humanitarian localisation: A literature study." *HPG literature review*.
15 Atputharajah, A and Wanga, J., 2020.
16 Healy, S. et al. :Working with local actors: MSF's approach." Humanitarian Practice Network.
17 *See*, e.g., Sandvik, K. and Dijkzeul, D. "Humanitarian governance and localization: What kind of world is being imagined and produced?" *Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) Blog,* 2019]; Atputharajah, A and Wanga, J. "The Impact of Resource Dependence on the Localization of Humanitarian Action The Case of Kenya" Local Engagement Refugee Research Network Paper No. 10 – July 2020; Emmens, B. and Clayton, M., 2017. "Localisation of Aid: Are INGOs Walking the Talk?" *Shifting the Power*; Roepstorff, K., 2020. "A call for critical reflection on the localisation agenda in humanitarian action'. *Third World Quarterly* 41(2): 284–301. 18 El Taraboulsi, S., Schell, J. and Gorgeu, R., 2016. "Localisation in Humanitarian Practice." International Council of Voluntary Agencies. Emphasis in the original.

19 Danish Refugee Council (DRC), "Go Local Principle Paper," forthcoming.
20 IASC, 1999, "Protection of Internally Displaced Persons," Inter-Agency Standing Committee Policy Paper, pp. 4. The definition was originally adopted by a 1999 Workshop of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on Protection.

In the context of displacement, **refugee-led organisations (RLOs) engaging in self-protection work struggle to gain recognition and to access funding for their work**. To support self-protection efforts, it is recommended in the literature for refugee agencies to conduct systematic mapping of refugee-led and community-based organisations to identify entry points of collaboration.[21] The present study incorporates an actor mapping activity to address precisely this need in the context of protection in Garissa and Turkana.

Important to this study is **the consideration of "collective protection," referring to the strengthening of the social fabric of [a] group or community**, increasing their visibility and workspace, and the development of their capacities to defend their rights as a group, understanding that they are not only individual subjects of protection but also agents of their protection."[22] This is particularly important in the case of self-protection of vulnerable refugee communities and groups in Kenya, as Pincock (2021) has found that the self-protection efforts of LGBTIQ+ refugees in Kenya have crossed the boundaries of "refugee passivity" and are therefore rendered unprotectable.[23]

Table 3: Key findings from the Literature Review

Theme	Details
Localisation	While the concept of localisation is agreed upon, how localisation is understood in practice varies due largely to differing understandings of local actors and the processes / practices entailed by localisation agendas.
Local actors	Definitions of local actors are broad and may be confusing in operational contexts. One helpful way to think of local actors is not only as geographically based in the target community, but also their close familiarity with the context and needs / preferences of local communities, and their (at least partial) ownership by those communities.[24]
Gaps in the literature	Insufficient engagement with local actors in the context of Kenya, and their perspectives / preferences on engagement with international organisations.
	The literature calls for a "systematic mapping of RCOs [refugee-led community organisations] in order to identify opportunities for collaboration."[25]
	Limited evidence on the positive effects of localisation on the quality and impact of humanitarian programming.[26]

TAKING STOCK: LOCAL PROTECTION EFFORTS IN GARISSA & TURKANA

DRC's vision and core principles provide guidance to working with local actors to facilitate durable solutions. The organisation's global strategy is built on two core principles:

- **Implementation in partnership with and in support of local actors and systems** as the main modality of practice *unless* there is justification for direct implementation
- **Direct implementation by DRC when it is appropriate and adds value,** based on analysis.

DRC applies a systems lens to its work that requires, as recommended in this study, an intentional localisation design. This study synthesises local partner perspectives on these principles, on when they believe – and when DRC staff believe – activities can be handed over, implemented jointly, or directly implemented by DRC.

In Kenya, DRC has engaged with local actors, notably in its work on resilience building since 2017, policy and advocacy with the Refugee Consortium of Kenya (RCK) since 2010, and on land governance issues since 2020. However, **the specific engagement between protection programming and local actors is still in its infancy** – efforts began in March 2023, culminating in a series of workshops in October 2023 in Nairobi to set the organisation on a roadmap towards localisation. At the time of this report, the localisation conversation is in its early stages, with the aim to slowly and steadily implement protection activities with local actors.

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21 Betts, A., Pincock, K. and Easton-Calabria E. "Refugees as Providers of Protection and Assistance." University of Oxford Refugee Studies Centre: RSC Research in Brief 10, December 2018.
22 Zero Tolerance Initiative, n.d., "Collective Protection Resources."
23 Pincock, K., 2021. "UNHCR and LGBTI refugees in Kenya: the limits of 'protection.'" *Disasters,* 45: 844-864.
24 El Taraboulsi, S., Schell, J. and Gorgeu, R., 2016. "Localisation in Humanitarian Practice." International Council of Voluntary Agencies. Emphasis in the original.
25 Betts, Pincock, and Easton-Calabria, 2018.
26 Barbelet, V., Davies, G., Fint, J., and Davey, E., 2021. "Interrogating the evidence base on humanitarian localisation: A literature study." *HPG literature review*.

This will entail a hybrid system, a step by step and gradual approach to localisation and to committing to local actors' role in upholding protection standards.

i. In their own words: localisation of protection programming

This first section focuses on understanding the knowledge, attitudes and perceptions related to localisation and building a stronger understanding of preferred mechanisms around local protection efforts. An important caveat to bear in mind, throughout this report, is the fact that investing in localised protection programming requires funding. This comes at a time when humanitarian funding for the protection sector in Kenya has been on the decline for years. The limited resources are therefore not sufficient to provide service delivery and capacity strengthening. Investments in local capacities should not come at the expense of service delivery and should be matched by resource commitments from funding sources.

Key findings of this first section include the fact that:

1. **Case identification, referrals and incident reporting need to be reinforced** as local actors still feel insecure or under-capacitated in reporting sensitive cases and being able to follow-up and close cases.
2. **Empowerment of local community-based organisations (CBOs) and CSOs is a necessary step** for localisation. While some have evolved from the status of self-help group and CBOs to CSOs, a stronger investment is needed in creating a network of protection actors.
3. **Knowledge sharing and joint work on prevention, response and monitoring is needed**. While DRC may be leading on some activities, a joint approach is preferred, in order to equip organisations with the necessary skills and knowledge and to create broader awareness among all kinds of stakeholders.

"More involvement — in the refugee context. Mostly the refugee CBOs or woman-led organizations are not engaged in decision-making; and they are the ones from the community, they're the ones who have the exact information and the real story, but still, they're not engaged in the decision-making for the community."
KII Dadaab

What is localisation and what is protection?

For local actors, localisation is about three core features:

1. **Decentralisation** of decision-making power and funding streams
2. **Empowerment** of local community-based and specifically women-led groups, with a strong link between protection and livelihoods
3. **Investments in knowledge sharing and capacity building**, expanding the conversation and the connections locally through a networked approach

For local actors, it is essential that protection is not seen as a black box where a large range of activities are included. It is also essential to be aligned and to have a common understanding of protection around:

1. **Safety and security**: ending violence, and discrimination
2. **Fulfilment of human rights**: free expression of one's identity and legal support to access rights.

These broad protection goals include very practical considerations for local actors, from having access to airtime for communication in case of an emergency, to securing documentation for refugees to access jobs and obtain the right to move away from camps, alongside transportation to basic services, markets and other service providers. These are all still missing and specific subgroups feel further discriminated against as a result.

Under the broad definition of protection as "a set of activities and/or interventions that are aimed to safeguard the rights, safety, dignity and wellbeing of individuals within a community affected by conflicts, and displacement", **local actors seek to specialise their activities on specific protection risks such as sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), early and forced marriages, acts of physical violence and of persecution, where they can also more tangibly monitor progress and track rights**.

The urgency of localisation at a time of increasing protection needs

The interviews portrayed a situation of heightened protection risks and the need for protection response across both Garissa and Turkana. Although these were not confirmed by all – notably with divergences between government and other local actors – the context is, for different reasons, a concerning one. All local actors interviewed are worried of the rising numbers of incidents and a drop-in security levels in both counties.

DRC works closely with law enforcement and Kenya police, alongside the Refugee Consortium of Kenya (RCK) to ensure legal resolutions are achieved, survivors are protected and perpetrators are held to account. Yet the demand is rising, in a context where communities' security situation has deteriorated substantially, with a disturbing surge in violent episodes, including fatalities. Respondents reported having directly witnessed the loss of multiple lives in the last week or month preceding the interview, with reports of four to eight people being victims of such brutality in a short time span in Kakuma.

The situation has deteriorated, owing mostly to an increase in criminal activity, such as armed robberies and violent crimes committed by unknown individuals. This was confirmed by Kakuma's Lutheran World Foundation staff who witnessed an upsurge in protection concerns about GBV within the camp in recent months.

Given this context, the success of protection programmes depends on how continuous learning, adaptation, and collaboration with local actors is used to address protection risks, such as sexual exploitation, abuse and child protection through awareness campaigns and preventive measures. This calls for close collaboration with local NGOs, community-based organisations, and government agencies to leverage local expertise and resources. To effectively localise responses, it is imperative to acknowledge and address the unique protection profiles and priorities of each country.

In both locations, particular groups, such as women and LGBTIQ+ people, face frequent and unique forms of discrimination, violence, and threats to their safety. For instance, women's needs include having access to safe and dependable transportation options, especially when travelling alone, and LGBTIQ+ individuals require support groups and spaces where individuals can seek protection if they ever feel threatened or frightened.

IN TURKANA

Protection risks and incidents are on the rise, with respondents explaining that "dread and despair are spreading", with a "disturbing surge in violent episodes", noting that the "community's security situation has recently deteriorated substantially"[27] . These comments were based on key protection risks shared throughout the course of the research, with specific mentions of incidents in the interviews conducted, such as, with woman recently killed, with motorcyclist shot to death, a young man killed through stabbing and knife wounds or an upsurge in GBV within the camp more generally. Respondents in Turkana highlighted their concern over the lack of protection structures – for instance the lack of protection centres – and legal gaps, specifically the lack of rule of law and representation. Respondents reported that there are no more protection centres, and that the ones that existed before no longer offer any protection services, leading to a deterioration of protection in Kakuma. They questioned:

- The role of the police in protection efforts
- The unwillingness to report incidents
- Case management as an overly complex and inconclusive system and called for more investment into individual protection assistance (IPA) which many saw as potentially more effective.

IN GARISSA

Residents in Dadaab camps felt the dwindling of resources and the direct impact on their protection levels. One local actor described the current protection situation in Dadaab as "pathetic", referring to tensions caused by recent ration cuts on the food basket distribution, the continued poor and low quality of education, and shortages in water, and overall, in funding. They also perceive a gap in the mindset of organisations.

- Local actors do not feel as if they are taken seriously, they state being often seen as exaggerating their protection needs.
- There is an unhealthy climate of competition, and a climate where incidents involving perpetrators often remain inaudible and invisible. Particularly, incidents that involve religious actors are kept quiet.
- The fate of the LGBTIQ+ community is not seen as being taken seriously, as they are instead "seen as a curse" or "as if they are pretending" and not really at risk of harm.

ii. Activity mapping

What is required to localise protection programming in this context?

Given the definitions and context above, local actors reiterated the need to ensure that any collaboration between DRC and local actors is framed around **the dual objective of preventing and responding to protection risks –** and the various forms of harms, abuse, violations of human rights that refugees and host communities face both during and after emergencies. Overall, local actors suggested aligning collaboration across prevention and identification, response and mitigation, and joint assessments.

While the local actors interviewed feel, at this stage, better equipped to intervene on prevention and identification, they recommend that DRC continues leading on response and mitigation directly, while jointly working on protection coordination, referrals and resource mobilisation. This is summarised in Table 4, where local actors' distinction between the three phase of interventions is illustrated.

27 All quotes are attributed to our qualitative interviews with refugees in Turkana who wished to stay anonymous.

Table 4: Proposed phases of interventions and responsibilities

PHASE 1. Prevention & Identification	PHASE 2. Response & Mitigation
Social & behavioural change, sensitisation and awareness raising: Participatory approaches, listening to the communities, exploring solutions together, mentorship, mediation, conflict resolution.	**Protection response**: - Case management -Individual protection assistance (IPA) **Specialised services** to include: - A link between livelihoods and protection; - Support to self-protection strategies
Community based protection through community structures, safe homes or shelters, community mobilization, awareness raising on GBV prevention and response; **conflict resolution and mediation.**	**Referral pathways** to be strengthened through health and psychosocial support (individual and group support).
Identification & targeting with a focus on age, gender and diversity **inclusion.** A key focus for local actors is ensuring there is a mapping of local actors, of protection risks and of at-risk subgroups.	**Protection advocacy and trainings** to strengthen: -Rule of Law -Legal interventions
PHASE 3. Assessing & Monitoring	
Protection Coordination and monitoring (understanding, keeping track of, and monitoring trends such as rape, defilement, GBV, insecurity, child protection, injustice and the specific needs of LGBTIQ+ refugees) **Resource mobilisation** for protection and for durable solutions	

Local actors interviewed specifically identified the following activities as areas for collaboration between DRC and local actors:

1 **Violence against women and girls**
SGBV, domestic violence, FGM
Psychosocial support and livelihood support
Safe haven and shelters

2 **Legal aid, Rule of Law, Peace and Security Agenda**
Citizenship and rights
Police and DRS addressing survivors' need for justice
Creating awareness on the new Refugee Bill and opportunities for economic inclusion

3 **Child Protection & Youth Inclusion**
Education
Life skill training, mentorship programmes
Community fora, discussions on protection, access and trust building

4 **Diversity inclusion**
Services for LBTQI+ hosts and refugees
People with disabilities

Local actors feel equipped to intervene on these activities for sub-groups that they can identify and refer to DRC with a strong focus on women, children and LGBTIQ+ community members. Local actors interviewed in both locations see themselves as complimentary in strength and added value to DRC.

All informants agree that a key weakness of the system is the lack of capacity to target the most vulnerable groups. When asked in the survey if "target groups face any obstacles in accessing protection services from DRC", the responses highlight barriers and gaps in:

- Accessing subgroups, like LGBTIQ+ and minorities (such as Somali Bantus who lack representation)
- Supplying adequate human resources, noting a high and untenable case worker vs survivor ratio
- Building trust and ensuring confidentiality, which are both needed to establish strong relationships
- Raising awareness, with insufficient awareness of response mechanisms
- Delivering cash assistance, and linking livelihoods to protection mechanisms

Local actors are often a key part of referral pathways towards medical or legal assistance, as well as emergency support for those experiencing violence; while they may feel more equipped to directly respond to and provide livelihoods support, community-based protection and protection monitoring. Throughout the survey, questions were asked to delve into protection activities and the levels of capacity for each.

Which protection activities do local actors lead on / work on and are strong in?
Survey answers included:

- **Phase 1: Prevention and identification**
  - GBV prevention and basic GBV response
  - Life skill training, life skills mentorship programme
  - Community engagement forums and sensitisation fora on gender-based violence (GBV) and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA)
  - Awareness raising, community engagement, and focus group discussions

- **Phase 2: Response and Mitigation**
  Child protection and advocacy, child labour prevention programme
  - Coordination meetings and referrals
  - Livelihood and environmental work
  - Safe havens and shelters (in Kakuma)
  - Youth, peace and security activities focusing on the inclusion and participation of young people as key in building and sustaining peace and security

Phase 3: Assessing and Monitoring
- Mentorship follow up sessions

Local actors' added value is seen in their capacity to understand and discuss protection issues, operationalise referral services, and improve access and trust building as they can both overcome language barriers, and relate through their own lived experiences of protection issues. Their work is largely complementary to GBV prevention and DRC's case management services.

For local actors, protection programming entails vigilant monitoring of refugees' safety and rights. They expressed that this begins with a comprehensive education provision for children, youth and adults, and extends to the responsibility to uphold and monitor rights. Local actors are crucial in these critical situations, such as when individuals are wounded, or discriminated against, as they can swiftly intervene to stop the harm – even if incidents go unreported. In Kakuma, numerous CSOs have established station representatives in the camp – block leaders, women and children – to prevent undesirable behaviours such as fighting or harm. These actors engage in in counselling and resolving family disputes.

Protection goes beyond prevention and response; it is fundamentally about proactive mitigation for local actors. This is often the central element in their work, focusing on:

- **Educating the community on self-protection measures**, how to protect themselves and their property. For local actors, creating a safe environment where individuals may live and work without fear of violence is the essence of protection, and is closely linked to the capacity to protect themselves.
- **Linking the community to referrals**, but also to the police and to legal authorities. Local actors accompany them to various places, such as the chief officer's office, the police stations, and legal offices, to obtain for them a lawyer, a right to representation in the court, particularly for women who may be in a difficult situation.

Some of the strongest gains by local actors have been made by working through a networked, and collective approach. Two were specifically named in Kakuma:

- The African Human Rights Coalition giving food relief specifically to the LGBTIQ+ community
- The Refugee-Led Organization Network of Kenya (RELON), which provided paralegal training in Nairobi and Kakuma for local actors. They have led to renewed capacity for paralegal clinics.

"Kakuma is generally insecure, so when you report a case, the police listen but consider it is a part of life in the camp and hence do not prioritise taking action. Sometimes they receive more serious cases, like of murder, so they end up dropping your case." – KII, local actor, Kakuma

What is the added value and strength of DRC in their view?
Survey answers included:

- **Phase 1: Prevention and identification**
  - Dispute resolution/mediation
  - Enhancing community-based structures and investing in local actors to enhance prevention with the community.
- **Phase 2: Response and Mitigation**
  - Livelihood activities, trainings and support to economic wellbeing
  - Prevention of and response to SGBV and violence against women and girls
  - Provision of psychosocial support and counselling sessions to GBV survivors
  - Developing referral pathways

- Phase 3: Assessing and Monitoring

- -Ensuring that cases can be closed to address one of the key concerns and issues of trust that remain with individuals and community members.

Local actors and DRC align on humanitarian principles and protection standards. They both perceive the importance of localising protection programming through existing and strengthened community dialogues, and a stronger emphasis on monitoring**.** Working with those closest to the most vulnerable, the most marginalised, local actors witness the necessity to build on **women-led networks**, and work with community-based women's organisations as an essential actor in localised protection programming.

"Local actors need to lead in campaigns to support survivors of domestic violence, gender equality…and prevent it. These organisations enable women to assert their rights and obtain the assistance they require."
– KII DRC

DRC staff mentioned the need to fill the gap through partnerships where DRC may lack adequate capacity such as on child protection interventions in Dadaab, where DRC does not have the capacity to implement full scale child protection management. While in Kakuma, DRC is implementing child protection interventions, in Dadaab, the organisation does not maintain child protection capacity. For this reason, it will be key to find areas for **enhancing participatory approaches in protection programming**. Community leaders interviewed have developed and applied participatory approach where they listen to the community needs first considering areas of high priority and sharing these needs with the partners for action and intervention.

"In prevention you interact much more with the community, in public places, mass awareness, focus group discussions, gender clubs, having activities like engaging in accountable practices. These are activities that can be easily implemented by local actors. Response is a bit more sensitive: having individual counselling sessions with the clients; they share a lot of personal information, to enable us to provide our services to them, to support them, so they can be able to find solutions to their problems. Most of the times, the information shared is very sensitive, and needs to be kept confidential. The GBV response aspect could do harm if it is localised, because of issues of confidentiality and the way the survivors are handled. It will take quite some time for an RLO to be able to provide case management and psychosocial support to the survivors."
– KII DRC

One of the most urgent aspects – as viewed by local actors – is the need for DRC to show that it can effectively close protection cases, either through formal channels or alternative channels. They recognise DRC's strength in the process of development and implementing dispute resolution mechanisms, as local actors pointed to the lack of more effective formal mechanisms to sort out protection cases. However, **they also note that often, some dispute resolution processes do not take into consideration the survivor.**

In Dadaab, Garissa, for example, there are community-based dispute resolution mechanism referred to in Somali as "*Maslaha*". In cases of rape, for instance, the issue will be resolved in and by the community. The survivor is normally not present, only the perpetrator, and the respective families. The case is usually discussed and may lead to compensation for the family of the survivor, to prevent the perpetrator from being put in prison. The outcome often does not take into consideration the survivor, as it is focused on the perpetrator. At the same time, more formal mechanisms also often fail survivors as, for instance, court processes are lengthy and police officers are not supportive. As DRC has gender desks at police stations, one possibility may be to strengthen response, both at the formal and customary levels. Community leaders interviewed in Dadaab stated that their main role is to resolve conflicts and disputes, and to link with NGOs to get programmes on the ground; however, they often recognise a lack of linkage between the two sides – the dispute resolution, and the interventions. They often do not relate to the same case.

There is a definite need for greater shared responsibilities and collective work in Dadaab to mobilise community resources and facilitate the link between protection cases and the outcomes and support that can be provided to the survivors directly.

In Kakuma, Turkana**,** the same gaps were seen, and new ones presented to the research team. One of the gaps raised by LGBTIQ+ community members was the fact that there is no protection actor present in Kakuma to provide extra protection for shelters. While IRC has safe havens, and DRS also has access to those, they only seem to operate on the rare cases taken to them. The lack of a formal mechanism for LGBTIQ+ members to be enrolled in a shelter programme is lacking. DRC is, at the time of writing, trying to support this community's members through psychosocial support.

iii. Actor mapping

There are many CBOs and women's led organisations in both Dadaab and Kakuma. However, **CBOs consider there is a tacit discrimination from the INGOs' side with regards to which local actors they work with**. The note a dual trend– one being based on identity or religious affiliation, and the other being based on the lack of formality of some of these CBOs. As a result, one of the **barriers to localisation** discussed in this section focuses on the diversity and registration of CBOs. However, one of the **entry points** highlighted focuses on the recognition, by INGOs, of the need to work with local organisations that are women-led and/or women-focused.

"I believe I've already mentioned that so far but of course, I'm not the only one with a CBO; we are very many. Especially, we are women, and you know women are the eyes of the community nowadays. They will feel your pain compared to men, and the most population are women". – Local actor KII, Dadaab

There is a need for a comprehensive actors mapping, to be updated regularly in Kakuma and Dadaab. This mapping should include local actors, international actors and existing referral mechanisms. Part of the constraints in ensuring the local protection system works is having information and sharing information among key actors. At the moment, CSO/CBOs do not know the appropriate contacts for reaching out or reporting cases. Participants mention that getting an appointment with protection officers can be difficult, and that beyond the police, often, survivors of GBV and other types of violence do not know where to seek help. The prevailing confusion results in a lack of reporting of cases. Some CSOs might know of cases but might not know what to do or who to turn to report such sensitive protection cases.

"Yes, I have some reservations about the localisation approach taken by some organisations, particularly in terms of how successfully they cooperate with and engage local players in protection initiatives. One major challenge is the need for a more thorough mapping of community actors and resources. Understanding the local landscape and finding possible partners among local organizations, especially refugee-led groups and civil society, is critical for effective collaboration." – A faith actor based in Kakuma

The actors that are well known are for the most part those who intervene in education and legal assistance. Key organisations active in this area are the Refugee Consortium of Kenya (RCK) and Kituo Cha Sheria, who also work with local actors and organisations on the ground. DRC can and should further expand these partnerships. In the case of RCK, this would mean expanding the partnership on awareness raising activities to give information directly to the communities on resolving legal issues in courts, and localising protection activities. DRC also plans to work in 2024 with *Haki na Sheria* in Garissa, on a range of protection issues from GBV, to public interest litigation, child protection issues and resolving in the courts questions of citizenship for children born of Kenyan citizens and refugees. In the coming year 2024, DRC will also be looking to work with three more local actors in Turkana, notably with regards to provision of services to the LGBTIQ+ community. One is called Ngouno LGBTIQ+ Farmers (case study 1), and the other is Life Development Protection. At the time of this study, DRC was yet to conduct due diligence to enable the partnership forward.

The gaps revealed for mapping actors relate to:

- **Emergency information** and a hotline to connect people and organisations for action
- **Psychosocial support**
- **Legal advice and representation**, along with community-based relay for legal representation, to support the work done by RCK and NRC's Information Counselling and Legal assistance (ICLA) teams.

Table 5: DRC local partners in Garissa and Turkana

DRC's TURKANA partners	DRC's GARISSA partners
- APAD / AICCAD **- NEFED** **- SAPCON** **- REHORI**	**- RRDO** **- HALGAN** **- MONIQADOW** in Ifo camp **- Pastoralists Girls Initiative** **- RCK**
Future partners: **- Ngouno farmers** **- Life development protection** **- Kalobeyei Initiative for Better Life** (KI4BLI)	Future partners: **- HaKi na Sheria in Garissa** **- Nyota self-help group**
Faith based organisations: - Churches and CBOs occasionally handle rape cases through prayers in the hope that the survivor may find healing through faith-based activities. However, it will be crucial to create links and referrals between faith actors and legal actors to curb the number of incidents and create referral systems. This is particularly necessary yet sensitive because interviews reported incidents involving clergymen or other pastor-type figures. - Work with religious leaders to support reporting of cases, beyond the taboo and trauma. **Community structures** -CBOs -Self-help groups and informal women's led groups	
Common partners across contexts	
Government -Department of Child Services -Department of Refugee Services (DRS) -Police forces: The skills of police staff require investments as they may lack formal education and associated conflict-resolution capabilities. While they are frequently chosen by the community and hired by the DRS, they require protection training. The lack of training can cause security officers to take bribes, jeopardising the integrity of the court system and affecting trust in the system. Refugees will also need to be informed not to resort to informal payments to seek justice.	

Internally, DRC can reinforce its linkages between the protection team and the economic recovery unit, to advance localisation. A key request from local actors has been to reinforce the link between livelihoods and protection, to reduce or remove barriers to financial independence and inclusion. Currently, DRC works with numerous local actors for emergency response and protection but also through its economic recovery unit. In Kakuma and Kalobeyei these relationships are particularly advanced. There are local partners, such as Solidarity Initiative for Refugees, in Kakuma, and Development Protection, which work with the economic recovery unit on questions of debts, among others.

At the level of authorities, local actors requested for DRC to strengthen its work and advocacy with the Department of Refugee Services (DRS) and with the police through the DRC gender help desks. All actors recognise that the position of the DRS is critical in the field of protection programming. They are mandated to manage and harmonise the services provided by numerous agencies within the camps, with a primary focus on protecting refugees' rights and well-being. Within the framework of DRS on the broader scope of protection programming to address the needs of vulnerable populations such as women and children, as well safeguarding the safety and dignity of refugees, interviews highlighted a specific focus on the prevention of GBV, child safety programs, and access to legal documentation and services. Interviews with DRS Kakuma highlighted a possible entry point:

"We continuously seek out holes in the present landscape of protection services. Our goal is not just to coordinate the work of many organizations, but also to identify places where refugees' needs are not being handled adequately. These gaps serve as focal points for our strategic planning, helping us in developing and implementing efforts to fill these gaps." – DRS Kakuma

Such rationale provides an opportunity for pursuing joint mapping and capacity building, to bring together DRS, CSO/ CBOS and international actors around a common objective and a collective vision. The Department of Refugee Affairs (DRS) acts as a government institution within a structured framework defined by national policies and laws and has to be involved as a result. Strengthening DRC's collaboration with DRS is a priority to negotiate the complexities of working with government norms and regulations, but also in ensuring that key local actors can obtain registration and be admitted to partner, locally, on referral services, protection monitoring and other activities. It is critical to work with DRS more closely to understand the procedures and requirements for acquiring government licences and approvals, and to support local actors. At the same time, DRS in Kakuma requested that DRC utilises their experience in "ensuring that humanitarian operations respect and adhere to official guidelines. This involves establishing strong communication channels with government officials for dealing with refugee-related concerns in a timely and efficient manner."

To hold this collective vision, interviews revealed that a number of obstacles will need to be addressed:

- **Limited disclosure on protection issues:** While community-based actors highlight a worsening protection context, authorities gave a positive reflection of the protection situation in Kakuma and Kalobeyei, which may not have accurately represented the entire range of protection issues. It raises concerns regarding the openness and thoroughness of information exchange on crucial protection issues, both of which are necessary for efficient protection programs.
- **Underrepresentation of local actors: T**he interviewee with DRS did not appear to give local actors, including CBOs, enough credit for their contribution to protection efforts. This could indicate that their vital role on community-level protection is not acknowledged or perhaps not understood.
- **Concerns regarding possible information shortages or challenges in the gathering and interpretation of protection data:** The lack of explicit allusions to recent cases involving the deaths of refugees could suggest a limited understanding of or access to these events. These gaps have the potential to present serious problems since they could make it more difficult to address urgent protection needs or imply a reluctance to recognise certain problems affecting the community.

In its selection of partners and local actors to work with, DRC will have the unique opportunity to connect actors – from the ground to the government. One of the critical entry points will be with the LGBTIQ+ community. The first case study, below, introduces one of the recommended partners for DRC in 2024.

The case studies in this report are drafted in the voices of local representatives, to convey their message, in their voice.

CASE STUDY 1. NGOUNO FARMERS

'90% of the Times, I Am Not Safe': Navigating Challenges & Solutions for The Protection of LGBTIQ+ Refugees in Kakuma, as told by a representative of Ngouno Farmers

« When I speak about protection, it takes me back to where it all started. Many of us left our home countries to seek safety and came to Kenya to seek asylum and obtain protection. We left our home countries because of persecution based on our sexual orientation, which hindered our hopes to live a good life. Many others are still coming because of the recent passage of a bill concerning LGBTIQ+ in Uganda. The law states that whoever is caught faces the death sentence.

I arrived in 2014 amidst a wave of state-sponsored cruelty against the LGBTIQ+ community. I am thankful to the Government of Kenya that has provided us refuge. Unlike other agencies that require prior appointments, the Department of Refugee Affairs (DRS) in Kenya has maintained and continues to maintain an open-door policy, granting us access without the need for advance arrangements. However, despite this, I must admit that I do not feel safe 90% of the time. The reality in Kakuma Refugee Camp, where I reside, presents significant protection challenges. We lack dedicated protection centres, and the one that once provided support is now defunct. Beyond physical safety, ensuring our protection presents its complexities.

- **LGBTIQ+ individuals struggle to have their health concerns prioritised in a crowded camp** like Kakuma, as the camp hospitals serve both the host community and refugees. Upon arrival at the hospital, our details must be recorded before receiving medical attention, leading to long waiting times.
- **Psychosocial support, too, remains elusive**. While some international organisations, such as the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), assessed the LGBTIQ+ community, many protection concerns remain unresolved. Emergency information sharing is not effectively managed, and access to legal advice and representation remains challenging.
- **We have had many physical assaults**; there were cases where one lost an eye, someone was shot, and someone was burnt. Reporting incidents to the police is often the sole recourse, with limited, sometimes biased media coverage. In 2020, an attempt on my life was terrible: a locally made petrol bomb was thrown into my compound, which I reported to the police. The problem here is that the only thing you can do is to report, nothing more.
- **Access to livelihood often exposes our community to discrimination**, especially transgender individuals. Some organisations ask intrusive questions that deter many from seeking help or employment.

To compensate for these challenges, I've undertaken several self-protection measures, including keeping five dogs, erecting a fence, and housing two to three people with me to maintain security, even in my absence. I've established connections with the police, community block leaders, and security leadership. However, obtaining proper individual, community, and systemic protection remains an ongoing challenge. As a leader, while I advocate for security, I also advocate for access to necessities such as food, communication, and water, as these are intrinsically linked. These are essential security measures because running out of water could force me to venture outside, making me vulnerable to attack.

Taking Matters in Our Own Hands

In light of this in 2019; we found the Ngouno organisation to create a safe haven for members of our community. At Ngouno, we rear chickens and grow vegetables to secure some income. I first started Ngouno project as a solo endeavour, inspired by my passion for crop farming. The seed of this idea was planted back in 2018 during a camp I attended, where I honed my farming skills and found ample time to nurture my agricultural interests. The journey of Ngouno wasn't a swift one; it evolved gradually over time.

During my time at the camp, I received monthly earnings, accumulating to a total of 3,000 Kenyan Shillings. With this initial capital, I made my first move by purchasing 30 one-day-old chicks. I fed them with kitchen leftovers from local restaurants until they matured at three months old before selling them. As time went on, I welcomed new members to join the project, although I soon realised that it was more efficient to train fresh recruits rather than retaining them.

The COVID-19 pandemic restricted our movement, but it also provided us with an opportunity to enhance our poultry farming practices. We subsequently introduced turkey farming into our operations, utilising their faeces as valuable manure. We also embraced a climate-smart approach known as vertical farming. Today, our primary areas of operation include poultry farming and vermiculture.

When it comes to our team, Ngouno operates more like a training program, where we educate individuals interested in farming for a two-month period and then empower them to initiate their own farming ventures. However, we face significant challenges in Kakuma. The local climatic conditions are not conducive to farming, and water scarcity remains a constant issue, albeit one we strive to mitigate. Limited capital has been a hindrance, and we have not been able to scale our programmes.

The attitude towards the environment poses another significant challenge, as many people in the area are pastoralists and may not fully appreciate the importance of the Ngouno project. Unfortunately, we've also faced discrimination due to our sexual orientation, leading to distressing incidents such as the poisoning of our chicks, dogs, and cats last year.

Currently, we are working to purchase chicken feed to increase production, with plans to sell in December. This initiative has also helped us address issues related to food shortages and nutrition. However, we do not have much reliable external support. Mostly we rely on voluntary contributions.

We Have The Solutions; But We Need The Support

The challenges faced by LGBTIQ+ individuals are extensive. Some refugee and community-based organisations are working on the ground to provide safe spaces, skills-based programmes and referrals, but they need help with operational challenges. **The lack of proper documentation** further hampers our efforts, as many organisations require specific documents like refugee documents or mandates that are not readily accessible to everyone. **Immediate needs such as food, communication, and access to water require attention**. Implementing livelihood or cash-based programs could provide a crucial lifeline while we await more permanent solutions. However, access to such provisions is inconsistent and depends on the UNHCR's budget allocations.

The private sector has a role to play in addressing these challenges. They can support referral cases and contribute to livelihood programs like the agriculture project we are running. More advocacy and comms support are also needed to make these initiatives available to a larger group of people. Capacity building is crucial; LGBTIQ+ individuals are active in various sectors and can engage in research and income-generating activities. They can potentially be critical players in any sector, but their skills still need to be explored. Assessing their abilities and providing training would be invaluable in helping them understand their rights and navigate these challenges. The private sector should consider working with them directly.

To address protection concerns effectively, agencies should establish feedback mechanisms that empower victims. Currently, such mechanisms are lacking, leaving cases of harassment unresolved. Concerns regarding health and education are also unmet. Finally, we should be able to become key players in activities that support us. If external support is provided, it should not be overly bureaucratic. For instance, our organisation needs more essential equipment like computers and printers, hindering our work.

We also need direct involvement in decision-making processes rather than relying on intermediaries who may only sometimes act in our best interests. We need to live life like everyone else. As leaders, people depend on us for solutions, but we also face our challenges. Sometimes, we lack the necessary information, but we will continue to advocate and remain hopeful. »

LOCAL PERSPECTIVES & PATTERNS TO BUILD ON FOR LOCALISED PROTECTION WORK

A consensus emerged that localisation of protection programming requires activities targeted at:

- **Supporting and advocating for the prevention and response to protection issues** faced by at risk groups such as women and girls in situations of SGBV, domestic violence and female genital mutilation (FGM), which also touch on issues of child protection.
- **Empowering less privileged community members socio-economically, through livelihoods and through decision making,** to provide them with space to intervene, with the life skills needed to also build their financial capacity – whether through tailoring carpentry, or with the right tools and equipment. Community members need to consider alternative sources of livelihoods, including in the agricultural sector, through links to irrigation schemes and piping of community settlements. This will need to include **financially supporting organisations, self-help groups, village savings and loan associations (VSLAs)** through start-up funds and loans, to help youth and women to start and grow their small-scale businesses. This will also require the provision of mentorship programmes, connecting umbrellas of organisations locally, whether formal or informal.
- **Investing in educational support to institutions within each community,** for smooth and continuous as well as alternative learning for school drop outs, investing in the girl child and addressing social norms and culture. This will need to **include youth-based organisations in conflict resolution and mediation,** and linking the humanitarian and development nexus to peacebuilding, recognising the inclusion and participation of young people in sustaining peace and security.

However, to reach this agenda, respondents identified a number of gaps, challenges and barriers to be removed or reduced to support a localisation agenda for protection programming. These are discussed in this section, alongside lessons learned and entry points to strengthen self-protection.

The section details nine main gaps identified by respondents as being obstacles to localisation. The nine gaps to be prioritised for removal and reduction are:

Gap 1: A networked approach
Gap 2: Funding
Gap 3: Freedom of movement
Gap 4: Capacity building
Gap 5: Trust building and shifting mindsets
Gap 6: Private sector involvement
Gap 7: Government involvement
Gap 8: Beyond case management
Gap 9: Infrastructure for localisation

DRC's strategy in Kenya will need to be tailored to address, remove and reduce these nine gaps. This also entails monitoring localisation and protection outcomes and setting key performance indicators (KPIs).

i. Identifying gaps, challenges and barriers to localised protection programming

Gap 1: A Networked Approach

Community leaders spoke of the need to work collaboratively, within a network that can advance protection across contexts: respondents in Dadaab asked for more shared and cross-learning with actors in Kakuma, for instance. Community leaders see protection as being achieved through a series of preventive actions that require a collective undertaking.

Respondents in Dadaab and Kakuma consider that localisation requires collaborating between community-based informal group, registered civil society groups and external players in maintaining the community's safety and wellbeing. These are the connections or networked approach that they find currently lacking. To address this gap in community involvement, one of the main suggestions is to develop norms and guidelines for community peace and security, to discourage and resolve disputes and confrontations, thereby encouraging communal harmony. Only after localised standards have been established at the community level, can the efforts of the police force, local NGOs and international NGOs become effective in addressing issues such as GBV, counselling, child protection and general wellbeing.

How to form multiple alliances with diverse groups?

- **Funding initiatives through both external support and community donations:** Community leaders send written requests explaining the initiatives they hope to carry out for the sake of their community's safety and wellbeing to a diverse range of NGOs. Having clearer guidelines on how to share such feedback and initiative was requested. At the time same, community members will not wait and will also seek their own funding for such initiatives through grassroots campaigns, urging community members to contribute small amounts of money, whatever they can afford to sustain activities.
- **Accessing specialised services through stronger referral systems:** Community- based organisations would like to refer cases to organizations that specialize in specific areas of expertise. In cases of GBV, for example, DRC is often the go-to support sought in both Dadaab and Kakuma. This has happened as community knowledge has significantly risen, and community members are now aware that they can seek assistance from the DRC.
- **Gaining knowledge through cross-border and multi-sited learning:** Organisations in Kakuma spoke of representatives travelling to Tanzania and Uganda to investigate possible collaborations and linkages to improve their protection work. This has increased their capability by enabling them to coordinate and work with other community-based groups in other locations. As a result, for them, localisation of protection programming also goes through greater multi-sited learnings.

Gap 2: Funding

To build a networked approach, funding gaps must be filled. However, local actors do not feel capable or empowered to change current funding decisions as they are not the ones either deciding on funding or deciding on the types of partnership agreements, they can enter. Communities have been mobilising their own resources, through group contributions or community-based resource mobilisation. However, this is not enough and funding gaps prevail.

Local actors consider that funding streams are too slow to respond to specific cases they can assist. They also consider that those who hold the funds, in a partnership, also hold the power. In most situations, while there may be partnerships between INGOs and local partners, INGOs are the ones holding control over the funds, and receiving the funds directly.

"We are partners, but DRC has the funds, and we are implementing activities using the funds given to us. It would be better if we could receive the funds directly. For example, if I need to do an activity tomorrow, I may not get the funds on time. It will take time to process administrative requirements. I might wait for one month. If we could get direct funding, we could reach more targets and address protection needs in a timely manner. When we need transport, like today, when we want to send people to do public awareness on SGBV or early marriage or FGM, the issue we face is that there is no transportation allowance. Most of our work is on a voluntary basis. If we could get funds directly, we could reach more targets and you know, a lot of things might change."

– Local actor KII, Dadaab

Local actors request from DRC and INGOs to link them directly with donors and help them build a direct line of communication and relationship with donors. When donors visit the camps, local actors feel that this happens in a group meeting where they do not have the opportunity to directly expose certain issues or cases and work with them for possible solutions forward. They would like donors to get to know them better, to build the trust in their capacity and systems, and to encourage donors to invest in them. They are conscious that this relationship requires nurturing, over time, but it has to start somewhere.

Local actors have built strong relationships with the community because they address the community needs through participation and assessment, and they invite donors to take a similar approach with them. If donors interact and discuss with local actors the issues affecting them, learning will go both ways. Yet, local actors have limited access to meeting donors. They understand that there is currently a widespread donor fatigue in all protection projects, from refugees' education, health to water and sanitation needs. But they also know that the Government of Kenya cannot alone address those gaps.

"We meet with the donors only when they pay us a visit on a very specific occasion. In that meeting not, everyone is allowed to express their ideas, a community representative will address their issues affecting the community. We would like to directly meet with the donors if possible."
– Local actor KII, Kakauma

Gap 3: Freedom of Movement

Without freedom of movement, local actors cannot access trainings provided by DRC in counties such as Nairobi, or go meet counterparts in Kakuma, where protection activities are more evolved, or further abroad in the region, in Uganda or Tanzania. Although the Government of Kenya has passed a new Refugees Act in 2021 easing freedom of movement, this has not yet translated into practice for local actors. Local actors believe **DRC and other INGOs can advocate not only for their registration and recognition as CSOs but also provide their founders and staff with documentation to be able to move out of the camps.**

"We have CBOs outside Dadaab who have more experience, like in Kakuma, where there are more of them. Some groups in Kakuma, Ifo and other Dadaab camps are getting direct funding, and they have a lot of ideas because they started their CBOs a long time ago. If we could get documentation or IDs, to go outside the country to see what's going on, or to meet with the donors directly, we could expand our work. But in Dadaab everything is restricted. I'm the director of the CBO and unless I get travel documents for that day, I cannot go and do what I want. This month, on the 28th, we have an RLO meeting in Kakuma. I was invited and I'm the only one who has been invited. The main gaps for us are both the funding, and the restriction of movement."

– Local actor KII, Dadaab

Gap 4: Capacity Building

In the case of protection programming, because of the over-reliance on case management, human resources have become a key constraint. All stakeholders interviewed agree that offices require more human resources given multiple constraints noted in both Garissa and Turkana: overstretched resources and staff, insufficient debriefing sessions for staff, and practices that go against minimum standards for the wellbeing of staff.

Local actors appreciated the trainings they received on advocacy, leadership, volunteerism, child trafficking and earlier marriage. Respondents recognised that a lot more capacity building is needed for person-to-person interventions, over sensitive cases, especially for those in protracted situations. In Kakuma, for example, the needs are very high, and the number of staffs does not match the rising needs. While it is recommended that one case worker handles 25 to 50 cases maximum, the current average in Kakuma ranges between 100-150 cases per case worker. As a result of the huge workload, the turnover is also very high.

DRC staff further highlighted the need to enhance capacity to:

- **Assess and monitor the added value of collaboration and the impact of localisation on protection outcomes.** For example, on GBV response, it begins from proper identification of a particular case, into case management. We have to ensure that every step is correct to avoid doing more harm to the beneficiaries vs. alleviate their suffering. We must look at the impact that this will cause beneficiaries. Build capacity in specialized protection areas, while also exposing them to best practices when it comes to prevention.
- **Identify and advocate for greater prevention of protection risks.** Communities equally agree about their need to strengthen resources and capacities to identify protection needs and gaps.
- **Build collaboration, partnership and networks.** There is a space to collaborate on advocacy
  - Prevent and manage GBV
  - Awareness campaigns, educating the community
  - Provide psychosocial support
- **Listen and receive feedback:** feedback mechanism that gives the survivor a way forward. As of now we don't have such a thing: you report a case of harassment, and nothing is done and the harassment doesn't stop.
- **Address breakdowns in the referral pathways:** Concerns on health and education are not yet met. As DRC is not a health and education partner, referrals are made to an appropriate partner. In the event that the referral is not addressed, the survivor will be likely to return to DRC for follow-up support. This breakdown in the referral pathways needs to be addressed with the support of local actors.

Gap 5: Trust Building and Mindsets

Local actors understand the need to work in collaboration but question whether this understanding is mutual and reciprocated by international organisations' staff members. They consider that INGOs lack trust in them and are not ready to take measured risks to work together. *"There is a low regard for CBOs and they feel they are largely considered to be made of incompetent teams"*, worsened by the fact that *"there is unclear and inadequate data sharing by INGOs".*

The lack of trust has created an environment where protection risks increase and go unchecked. In the words of LGBTIQ+ community members, the dominant narratives, mindsets and lack of understanding of their legitimate concerns and fears is a barrier to their protection:

"Some organisations' staff think we are pretending. They think it is a curse on us, and religious players in this community think we are the ones promoting the curse that was pronounced in the bible. Others take it like it is a joke for survival. Others have gone ahead to misuse our members to check whether what they imagine is true i.e. luring transgenders to places they can check whether they are female or male. They have a hidden agenda."

– KII, Kakuma

Conflict between the RLOs/CBOs were also raised in a competitive environment where local actors are seen as challenging each other. Overall, checking that there is a diversity of community representatives, and the right focal points to access communities will matter.

Gap 6: Private Sector Involvement

A lack of understanding of the possibilities in working with the private sector has led to an under-reliance on the private sector as an actor for protection programming. When asked to identify private sector partners, DRC staff did not know or could not answer the question. One specifically commented that they could not see any private sector actor who could contribute to DRC's protection programming.

This is a key issue to resolve as many of the local actors, from the community, mentioned the **need to involve the private sector. They mentioned the telecom sector, as well as the agribusiness and food sector.** In Dadaab: Safaricom for internet provision and communications services, Spartan for non-food items and Eden consultancy for debriefing and mental health services. In the area of security and protection, the security company G4S was suggested to be able to discuss with local actors and authorities the requirements for guaranteeing the safety and security of all.

"The private sector has a role to play and they can support referral cases. They can also support our livelihood programmes. We need more support to extend our programme to a larger group of people. There is also a protection angle. Capacity building is very important - we have people who are energetic, but they do not do anything productive because they have no skills. The skills I have attained in agriculture and in law as a paralegal have helped me a great deal. The private sector can also come in to bridge the gap in health service delivery - they can opt to directly target [the] LGBTIQ+ community."
- Ngouno Farmers representative

Gap 7: Beyond Case Management

Local actors realise they do not have the capacity of DRC for undertaking case management processes, but they also consider there is currently an over-reliance on case management, and perhaps not sufficient support to individual protection assistance- a process that is not applied in Kakuma, for instance. DRC staff and local actors would equally like to see the organisation being able to address a specific concern and close a file, resolving the protection issue at hand through targeted, individual interventions.

The current bottleneck is that case management requires a high level of expertise and is very sensitive - handled incorrectly, it could undo any work in trying to enhance protection outcomes and could cause harm. Repeatedly, in interviews for this study, stakeholders shared their concern that local actors could not guarantee the level of confidentiality and anonymity required in case management. If the approach is too "local", if local actors, perpetrators and victims all know each other personally, as they are either family members or neighbours within the same locality, it will become very hard to ensure that survivors of GBV can safely report abuses. As a result, this could lead to:

- Community members not willing to present themselves or their cases to these local actors, and
- GBV survivors not wanting to reveal their cases to staff who know them.

Inclusivity and neutrality issues reveal a lack of trust of refugees by refugees. Local actors confided that in some cases, community workers who support them in the identification of cases were rejected by refugees. During the process of identification, some of the refugees and asylum seekers reportedly did not want to be handled by or disclosed to another refugee, out of fear that the information would spread in the community, causing them harm, shame and stigma. Recognising this reality, local actors suggested to remain in charge of prevention, while they build processes and skills to ensure confidentiality.

Gap 8: Government Involvement

As part of the networked approach, a central actor that CSOs/CBOs would like to engage more with – and obtain registration and movement passes from – are local government actors. As confirmed in interviews with DRS, local and national government are key to referral pathways and service mapping – including child services and women's services – and are the protection leads in camp settings.

DRS' role in registering newly arrived refugees and providing their legal documentation touches on some of the greatest sources of anxiety, discrimination and violence. These legal gaps need to be addressed for refugees to be referred to services, for their businesses to be supported, for their movement passes, travel documents and police clearance certificates to be provided.

CSOs would like to act as a legitimate partner of local and national government, including in providing **temporary shelters and safe spaces**, **addressing complaints** raised by refugees, **and monitoring protection** at large. The monitoring recommendation was raised given specifically the concerns with the Kenya police on issues of GBV. Local actors would like to work more closely with UNHCR and other agencies to address the cases of police officer corruption, which often discourages survivors from reporting cases, and advantages the perpetrators who are ready to pay to solve a dispute.

Gap 9: The (infra)structure – working space needed for local actors

Local actors do not have the basic structures or equipment to work effectively and to lead on interventions. DRC and international actors have better offices, with the right professional environment and infrastructure, while CBOs/CSOs have committees or community structures that are strong. The chain of block leaders, chairpersons, neighbourhood leaders creates a coherent community structure that plays a major role in localising protection. However, to work more with a network of such local leaders, to educate the community against harmful self-protection mechanisms, to support others with psychological first and reporting, then local actors will required to be able to respond at a scale. In Dadaab, key informants requested that DRC and others provide material support, to have a common location for their coordination, and to plan their activities. In Kakuma, it was suggested that co-sharing of offices could be a practical way forward to work with local actors, in an office environment, and use that to establish systems and guidelines on better working together.

CASE STUDY 2. HALGAN, Dadaab – "We are the eyes of the community"

Halgan was founded in 2017 as a self-help group in response to an increase in SGBV cases in the camps. We work with women and adolescent girls, sharing the effects of GBV, FGM, early marriage. We talk to them, we advise them, we tell them the way forward and how can they live in the community, how they can present themselves and so on and so forth. Now our target is the new arrivals in Ifo 2 (camp), and also there is an IGA program (Income Generating Activities) which we are planning to start in the first week of October with UNHCR budget.

Lessons learned and best practices

Evolution from informal self-help group to a registered organisation. We started off as a self-help group so there are plenty of changes. When we were a self-help group most of the work we were doing was on a voluntary basis, there was no capacity building. There is more capacity building for us from the partners, like now we partnered with DRC, there is a lot of capacity building going on like there was five days of training this week which we have finished today. Before, there was another training, there is what we call, monthly capacity building with HR, with the finance, with the supply chain. We have really improved and changed and now the community knows us very well and what we're doing.

We have been trained in whatever we are doing. We have GBV officers, we have the HR, we have the finance, we have the different structures, which the partners have as well and we have been trained and we have the knowledge.

Presenting to donors and connecting with partners. We have learned in case donors come, how you can present something so that they accept your activities and fund you directly, the way you can approach them, the way you can share with them what you have done, the evidence, the documentation, and everything. We are connected with most of the partners, like DRC, UNHCR. We are engaged in meetings unlike before when we were a self-help group — there was not much work. It has changed totally now.

Capacities

Referrals. We are the people from the community. We are the eyes of the community. DRC, for example, they will come in the morning and go back, and they cannot get the exact information and the real story of what's going on in the community. We are the eyes for them. We do referrals on a daily basis in case of anything the community will share with us then we will share with DRC and the partners we work with.

Counselling and sensitisation. Our main mandate is talking to the community on the effects of GBV, FGM, early marriage. In our community, in terms of FGM, it's very high. So, we go from block to block in case we see those cases, we talk to the parents, advise them — in case they refuse we refer to the government, the concerned partners. So, we do great things in terms of protection, because like you went to block level and you heard that there is FGM going on, we share with DRC, with the police and we protect that girl, if it were to happen at that moment. The same applies to early marriage, the same applies to some mothers who are having problems. So, our main aim and what we normally do is like prevention, intervention, and mitigation. And that makes us very special.

Gaps, challenges and barriers to localisation

Monitoring. But if it were not for Halgan, they could not get the information and it seems like since we have started these mitigations, the GBV cases, the early marriage, the FGM is not the way it was. It has reduced nowadays because we are from the community and we know what has happened today in the community. I'm in the block now, but DRC, they will come in the morning and go back, and they don't know what has happened and how the situation is. Yeah, so we play a great part in the protection in the community.

Training women. I believe I've already mentioned that so far but of course, I'm not the only one with a CBO; we are very many. Especially, we are women, and you know women are the eyes of the community nowadays. They will feel your pain compared to men, and the most population are women. We have some who have been trained before we registered as a CBO who are training in GBV prevention; yeah even some groups who are members and who used work in the community sector for DRC are now working with us and they were being trained and you know, they know how to deal with that incident which has happened or what's going to happen. So, most of us, we have the counsellors, we have everybody in the group.

As I told you before, we do what we call skills training. And we have some mothers who are, you know, widows who are single mothers who we train in their skills and they're doing their own work in the market and you know, before they were not even getting their daily bread, but now their life has changed totally.

Funds go through DRC. DRC supports us in capacity building. Although you know, we should implement directly— now we are partners, but it's DRC who has the funds and we are implementing the activities. But it could be better if we get the funds directly. Because like if I need to do an activity tomorrow, I may not get that funds I need by tomorrow. It will take time for processing, for doing this, and that. It will happen that I might wait for one month. So, if we could get direct funding, we could reach more targets. We need transport, like in case today we will send people to do public awareness in SGBV or early marriage or FGM. But the issue here is there's no transport funds. Most of our work is like voluntary basis. So, I think if we could get more funds or we are funded directly, we could reach more targets and you know, a lot of things might change.

Gaining experience from Kakuma based CBOs and from trainings in Nairobi.

- CBOs outside Dadaab have more experience, like Kakuma, we have a lot of them. you know, we have some groups within Kenya like Kakuma, Ifo and other Dadaab camps and it's like they're getting direct funding and they have a lot of ideas because they started their CBOs a long time ago.
- We also need the capacity building although DRC is doing that most of the time - there is a work plan we shared with them. They do capacity building, although it's not every now and then because even themselves they're engaged. there are some capacity building trainings which happen outside the county like in Nairobi, which some of us wish we could now attend and see how there are other ideas and you know, how these guys are working and we even may gain some ideas from them. Yeah, so if it could, DRC and the partners could do advocacy for Dadaab people so that they attend the forums, and the discussions for CBOs outside the county and country - it would be great.

Documentation and the right to travel. So, if we could get documentations or IDs from them, they use what we call CTDs — passports that some of them even go outside the country to see what's going on, like, they will sometimes meet with the donors directly. But in Dadaab everything is restricted. Like I'm the director of the CBO and unless I get travel documents for that day, I cannot go and do what I want, like, this month on the 28th, we have an RLO meeting in Kakuma. I was invited and I'm the only one who has been invited and there's another CBO called DRA, we are going to attend that meeting. Now the main challenge or gaps; the first thing as I told you is the funding, and the second thing is that restriction of movement and also you know, the main thing is the funding. If you don't have capital in hand, you cannot do whatever you want.

Funding is number one; even capacity building we need it because you know, learning or getting knowledge will last. You know, even if you have good knowledge, you will still meet somebody who is more knowledgeable than you, so still we need the capacity building to continue and also, we need funding.

Decision making from proposal writing to monitoring. In the refugee context, mostly the refugee CBOs or women-led organizations are not engaged in decision-making. And they are the ones from the community, they're the ones who have the exact information and the real story, but still, they're not engaged in the decision-making for the community. So, we need in case of anything, when proposal writing, when planning, when the budget comes, everything — the people from the organisations should know we are the eyes of the community. We want them to work hand in hand with us so we can reach where we're going to.

ii. Lessons Learned & Best Practices

The lessons learned and best practices are presented across the stages of programming – from pre-design, to monitoring. These provide guidelines to follow for localising protection programming at each stage.

PRE-DESIGN PHASE

Community data: partnering with local actors to listen to people's needs and learn from them Data has been collected from the communities already. Actors interviewed reject the idea that there is a data fatigue. Where their fatigue lies is in the fact that they do not receive any feedback, and do not feel like they are actually listened to, "they don't feel treated as human beings" in the words of one key informant in Dadaab. A simple best practice then is meaningful engagement, active listening of people's needs, and engaging their participation and inputs, in order to build a strong relationship at the grassroots level of the existing community leaders who have the community information. When planning, they need to be involved as well.

Setting standards for data protection: Some refugee families are concerned about the information registered in databases. Such concerns were raised since the start of the pilot repatriation programmes to Somalia in 2014, and have endured since. Anecdotes were shared about families who had been considered for resettlement and later had been informed that the database showed that they had gone back to Somalia, which they stated was not the case. Such issues over databases and information systems have caused confusion, stress and disappointment, as well as mistrust. There are additional reasons to improve refugee data protection. Following ever joint verification exercise in the gamps (which have happened in 2009, 2013, 2016, 2018 in Dadaab for instance), information is gathered and used to inform solutions. Refugees have also over time been registered in the Biometric Identity Management System. Access to such data will need to be protected and safeguarded in a context where the numbers of local actors involved may expand.

DESIGN PHASE

Referrals: Recognising when local actors lack sufficient expertise or resources
There are some referral mechanisms and service mappings that are conducted, jointly, with DRC through assessments and mapping of activities with other protection actors. Local actors recognise when they do not have the expertise to handle a case or situation. In such cases they can provide community safe home arrangements and temporary shelters to GBV survivors experiencing violence while they await a long-term solution to their problems. This is done by the community members and then referred to DRC. The way to sustain such good practices is to have a referral pathway, with all agencies together under one banner, and keep it up to date. There needs to be stronger communication on these pathways, as currently, some survivors resort to alternative dispute resolution methods because they do not know about referral pathways.

- **Helpline:** DRC has a helpline telephone number that can be dialled in case of problems and in that one can get support and referral. Reporting mechanisms toll calls help desk and staffs.
- **Reporting the incidents immediately to the police** to get hold of the perpetrator has been used as a self-protection effort

Awareness raising on mental health – assessing where local actors have stronger access and capacity to deliver mental health and psychosocial services (MHPSS): With cases of suicide in the camps, local actors have been more active in raising awareness on mental health. Through the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Working Group, a network of organisations has been working to raise awareness, share information on where to access support, with such international organisations as UNHCR, DRC, IRC, Save the Children, Terre des Hommes, RCK and Lutheran World Foundation, among others. Most partners have built over time a component of psychosocial support in their programming. Some have also reached out to local actors, such as religious leaders, to use prayers as a way to provide mental health support, strength and to fight depression, for example.

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

Empowering women: local actors to enhance the link between protection and livelihoods

Local actors emphasised the need to work with women-led organisations to empower women in refugee communities by providing training and resources for income-generation activities. This not only improved the economic self-sufficiency of women but also enhanced their self-protection by reducing their vulnerability and overall dependency. On example shared is that of Nyota self-help group, an umbrella group that is headquartered in Hagadera, and also based in Dadaab. Nyota members come from both refugees and host communities who unite in the Nyota self - help group in order support one another by exchanging, knowledge, skills and experience. Each group has a specific area of speciality, for example soap and shampoo-making. Their objective is to create an environment for local and refugee women that provides an opportunity to learn new skills and gain knowledge without external support from aid agencies or other institutions. Their second objective is to create a platform where refugee women can sell what they produce. As a group, they invest their energy and resources in making women more resilient and creating a safe space where women can make the changes they want to see. Through Nyota, they receive skills training, support groups, and help to generate income through the sales platform.

Community group-based revolving saving system and self-protection

In both Dadaab and Kakuma, community-based revolving and group-based saving systems are widely used for self-protection. In Kakuma, each home in one block contributes Ksh250 to fund the proper locking and fencing of community gates. This proactive technique is intended to deter foreign threats and improve overall community security. International organisations, such as DRC, working in Turkana may best support these self-protection activities by taking a community-centred approach. This method entails carefully listening to the community's concerns, respecting their local knowledge, and working together on protective initiatives. It also entails supporting community leaders with training and capacity-building activities, giving necessary resources such as funding for fencing materials, providing technical expertise as needed, and campaigning for the rights and protection of communities at all levels.

Community-led security measures to prevent and respond to protection risks

Community councils have developed preventative measures to reduce dangers, particularly at night. The community is strongly recommended to limit movement after 6 p.m., with the purpose of keeping everyone secure within their individual areas. Residents are also asked to take proactive measures to protect their local surroundings, such as strengthening fencing around their properties. The neighbourhood has established a habit of contacting adjacent security personnel, including community security staff and local law enforcement organizations, as soon as possible. These notifications are critical in ensuring that timely actions are made to address emerging security problems and that authorities are notified as soon as an incident occurs. This collaborative approach has been helpful in reducing violence and addressing concerns in our community.

Awareness raising by technical experts in key sectors – the example of doctors' impact on FGM

Respondents explained having learned significantly from their community doctors who have seen the effects of FGM, for instance. The doctors explain to the communities the effects of FGM on girls, especially during childbirth. Respondents agreed that there had been a decrease in the number of cases of FGM in the communities, possibly due to increased education from technical experts, because the community was able to understand the effects.

MONITORING PHASE

Community-based monitoring

Recognising their capacity and their self-protection capacity, community structures are also well equipped to provide stronger monitoring. For instance, block leaders play an important role in ensuring the safety and security of refugee communities. When problems or concerns occur, members of the community can report to them, for necessary action. This system of block leaders has proven an excellent tool for preserving community protection and security, but also monitoring their rights over time.

Monitoring and measurement, learning:

In terms of areas of expertise, local actors like the Kalobeyei Initiative has experience doing community level assessments and information dissemination. They support in engaging the youth, hard to locate community members and strategic leaders within the communities. Areas they can benefit from to strengthen monitoring systems include:

- **Strengthening of financial reporting systems**,
- **Tracking of levels of impact** on some projects
- **More functional systems** that make it easy for the community to report urgent cases and even follow up on referrals (e.g. toll-free contacts).

Evaluating the involvement of survivors in dispute resolution: One of the key gaps raised by local actors is the absence of survivors in the dispute resolution decisions that affect most closely their trauma and their lives. Good practices include raising awareness on GBV and the effects it has on the survivor in cases when the deliverance of justice is in question. A survivor might not even know what is happening because they have not been involved in the prior dispute discussions. Respondents reported many cases where the survivors said that they were not comfortable or felt mentally disturbed to see the perpetrators walking around freely in the community. If awareness raising is prioritised to help ensure justice is served, not as a means of seeking revenge, but to assure a survivor is able to effectively heal.

TOWARDS AN INTENTIONAL LOCALISATION DESIGN

DRC will need to practice an intentional localisation design, with implications both for its local partners and staff. Learnings from other regions, as illustrated in the work of the Humanitarian Advisory Group in the Asia Pacific, highlight the importance of localisation at three parallel and concurrent levels. To be meaningful and impactful, localisation will need to happen at three levels:

1.LOCALIZATION AT PROJECT LEVEL

Practices which are embedded within the **cycle of a project or programme** and are **time and output bound.**

2.LOCALISATION THROUGH TRANSFORMATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Practices within partnerships that enable decision making, capacity sharing and other practices that s**upport local and national actors' vision and priorities.**

3.LOCALISATION THROUGH NETWORKS & COLLECTIVES

Practices within and led by networks and collectives – groups of humanitarian organizations **working together in a larger, overreaching relationship.**

Table 6: Steps for an intentional localisation design

	MICRO / Project level	MESO / Transformative partnerships level	MACRO / Networks or collective level
1	**Links between protection and livelihoods**, cash assistance	**Guidance and training,** division of responsibilities	**Clearly defining roles** to build trust, develop a **model of 'task sharing'**
2	**Case management**, confidentiality etc.	**Trust building activities and sessions** - LGBTIQ+ trust gap - Address issues openly in problematic partnerships	**Clearer communication** and greater coordination - Consult CBOs on trainings and needs - Use coordination spaces to co-design projects
3	**Measuring the impact, adapting modalities to support self-help groups,** pilot and learn from these initiatives	**Advocacy** - Investing in digital advocacy and storytelling - Planning for joint and complementary advocacy efforts	**Harness local expertise and resources** - Have a stronger mapping of local actors -Use technology for protection

iii. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

There are multiple opportunities to seize, alongside threats to consider, when planning for greater localisation of protection programming. The analysis provided below provides a synthesis of the specific strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified in the research for Kakuma and Dadaab camps. These can provide a roadmap for improvements to be made in protection programming.

Table 7: SWOT analysis - KAKUMA

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
- Diversity and range of actors (CBOs, RLOs, NGOs and INGOs) involved in implementation of protection activities. - Contextual awareness: local actors have a solid understanding of protection needs - GBV protection working group: easy coordination with other actors in the sector. - Awareness of case management pathways and existing alternative resolution mechanisms - Existing community structures support awareness raising activities	-Limited funding to support protection - Lack of complementary pathways on protection - Lack of synergy amongst CBOs/RLOs - Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) gaps and the inability to evaluate impact of initiatives - Lack of follow up on reported protection cases -Underserved thematic areas i.e. social-emotional learning, and LGBTIQ+ rights Legal gaps and lack of representation: lack of legal recognition for special groups
Opportunities	**Threats**
- Ongoing attention on localisation agenda - Government led integration agenda - RLO/CBO community networks to be leveraged -Referral systems exist and can be enhanced - Targeted NGO approach on protection - RLO personnel with paralegal training/skills to be reinforced as relays	- Strict government laws and documentation requirements can be problematic - Lack of preparedness for natural hazards exacerbates protection risks - Lack of direct donor - CBO/RLO relationship - Closed-door camp policy: Administrative roadblocks and restrictions - Limited community consultation and feedback

Table 8: SWOT analysis - DADAAB

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
- Support system, and consistent refugee women mentorship and empowerment - Availability of psychosocial support - Cash transfer programmes - Availability of protected areas for refugees - Safe havens and transit areas	- Limited funding to support protection - Poor coordination leading to duplication - Trust and bias issues: Low regard for CBOs, perceived threats and competition, religious discrimination - Limited consultation with refugees and RLOs - Nexus gap
Opportunities	**Threats**
- Poverty alleviation initiatives - More women should be trained for women protection programmes - Leverage the knowledge, strength and experience of local organisations. - Revise partnership modalities - Conflict resolution: Empower and involve Assistant Kadhi courts in the camps - Uniformity of culture between refugees and hosts	- Security threats - Limited cooperation and communication - CBO voices with no communication channels - Manipulation, limited involvement - Trust and mindset issues - Poaching ideas from CBOs without giving credit - “Taboo” subjects like LGBTIQ+ conversations - Unreliable funding - Threat to longevity and sustainability

CASE STUDY 3. REHORI in Kakuma

The GBV prevention unit is the first unit at the DRC Kakuma office to partner with local actors, and piloting localisation of GBV programming in Turkana county. The unit is currently partnering with a local actor called the Refugee and Host Resilience Initiative (REHORI), a refugee-led organisation (RLO) in Kakuma. DRC is working with REHORI to enable them to take up the prevention activities that DRC has been implementing in GBV, directly involving the unit in operationalising the localisation process. Below are excerpts of the interview with the chairperson of REHORI, with insights for DRC's partnership strategy locally.

Lessons learned and best practices

REHORI is engaged in three core areas and focuses on both the host and refugee communities to address protection concerns, notably Gender-Based Violence (GBV). REHORI offers adult education on weekends and off-days, with a focus on empowering the elderly and assisting learners dealing with the Competency-Based Curriculum. REHORI also engages in agribusiness, practising climate-smart agriculture, with the goal of encouraging economic empowerment among people of the community, and linking protection with livelihoods.

REHORI prioritises the needs of specific groups, such as persons with special needs, such as those with physical or mental disabilities, in their protection efforts. In addition, REHORI focuses on aiding women who have been victims of GBV and women who are survivors of such situations. It's worth emphasizing that there are many adolescent mothers in the refugee camp, many of whom are in unusual family situations, notably in Kalobeyei.

Early and forced marriages. One of REHORI's primary goals is to address the specific issues that adolescent moms confront. The strategy is to actively reduce and prevent such concerns from developing in the community, by educating and empowering individuals, demonstrating to them how to seek help for themselves. REHORI equips communities to detect situations requiring action and to be aware of the relevant channels for obtaining legal aid.

Members of Sudanese communities came to REHORI's attention as they were prone to early forced marriages. Based on REHORI's support and advice, two girls obtained assistance from social protection authorities. They later decided to join the group and become advocates for others suffering similar difficulties. Their experiences demonstrated the significance of reporting such incidents. They obtained aid from the Child Protection Committee and were connected with social case management resources thanks to our assistance. These young females continue to be active members of the community. They have set educational and employment goals for themselves. REHOR was able to help parents comprehend the importance of education for their daughters through interactions with their families. In one case, thanks to our involvement, a girl who was about to be pushed into marriage now has the opportunity to fulfil her dream of attending university.

Capacities

Identification process: a well-established procedure for gathering cases. The community elders are the primary sources, with specific youth teams in Kakuma 1 and Kakuma 2 that use drama as a platform to address GBV. These youth teams actively seek out cases in the community that demand protection and utilise dramatic performances to advocate for them. Parents and community elders attend these events to better understand preventive actions against sexual harassment and other forms of GBV.

Youth teams: The Makuach squad from the Dinka community is particularly strong in its efforts to eliminate communal misconduct. They play an important role in identifying problems that are beyond their capacity to handle and reporting these cases to the proper authorities. However, there are times when they consult with community elders in order to address issues using local, traditional techniques. This is especially true in circumstances involving unplanned pregnancies and forced marriages.

Photo 1: Tacking gender-based violence through awareness-raising sessions. Photograph Courtesy of Alexandre Fahizi

Gaps, challenges and barriers to localisation

Rising protection needs. Protection has certainly surfaced as a big and pressing concern in Kakuma with the large number of adolescent moms, particularly from the Equatoria population. Addressing this complicated issue will necessitate a collective approach that will extend beyond the capacity of any single organization, whether it be the DRC, community leaders, or specific sectors. A more holistic strategy is clearly required, which includes continual training and education for our communities.

The situation in Kakuma has deteriorated, with daily reports of fatalities. This emphasizes the importance of a coordinated reaction. While religious leaders have made attempts to encourage people to cease the violence, block leaders and other community leaders must also be inspired and supported. Unfortunately, this is not always the case, as many leaders are confronted with substantial obstacles and even dangers. As an example, one of our Block 11 block leaders, David, unfortunately, died as a result of his leadership position in community protection. He faced threats from people who wanted to harm him for his efforts. Unfortunately, police officials have been slow to respond to these threats and bring the culprits to justice. This emphasizes the vital need in Kakuma for a united and well-supported approach to protection in order to end such violence and safeguard the safety of our community members.

Awareness raising: When we talk with local leaders, it becomes clear that there is a fundamental need for them to understand how we can all work together to protect individuals in the community. We empower everyone to act against the problems that are negatively harming our community by giving this education and training. It's vital to realize that Kakuma is home to several different groups, each with its own language and culture. To successfully address these concerns, we need the voices of all community members who speak different languages.

Including men: To address GBV, we launched the "Engaging Men through Accountable Practice" (EMAP) initiative, which is aimed exclusively at males. EMAP intends to facilitate frank dialogues among men about their experiences with GBV, recognizing that these concerns can affect them as well. EMAP contributes to policy changes that benefit the community by breaking the silence and creating debate.

Advocacy: There is room to strengthen collaboration between local actors like REHORI and DRC in the field of advocacy in Kakuma's protective space. **Funding imbalances** between international organizations and local community-based organizations (CBOs) are a source of concern. It is critical that CBOs have equal access to resources and funding opportunities as their international counterparts. Encouragement of community self-funding could be an effective technique for assisting local non-profits.

Capacity building and skill development: Collaboration should go beyond financial assistance and involve capacity-building and skill development to ensure that local actors are well-equipped to improve their services in accordance with international norms.

Decision making space: The "nothing for us without us" philosophy should lead these collaborations. Local communities, as the ultimate beneficiaries, have vital perspectives and solutions as well. As a result, foreign organizations should not only provide financial assistance to local players but also include them in decision-making processes. Instead of offering ready-made plans, the DRC should take a collaborative approach in which local actors are actively involved in planning and decision-making. This guarantees that the initiatives are more effectively implemented and align with the demands of the community.

Infrastructure and working environment: Local actors are frequently confronted with constraints such as blazing sun and poor infrastructure, which limit their ability to provide effective protection services. A better working environment, including well-equipped offices, would significantly boost their ability to respond to security threats quickly and efficiently.

CASE STUDY 4. She-Can Initiative, Kakuma

She-Can was introduced to the research team by REHORI. She-Can is a notable group in Kakuma 3, dedicated to tackling GBV issues. She-Can is a female-led initiative dedicated to increasing community awareness and addressing GBV cases. One important component of their work is fighting for the community's awareness and acceptance of underrepresented groups. She-Can is critical in teaching community members about LGBTIQ+ people and their right to choose their identity and orientation. This advocacy effort tries to combat discrimination and promote community inclusivity. She-Can's advocacy and awareness initiatives are critical steps toward fostering a more tolerant and accepting community climate in which every individual's rights and choices are respected and safeguarded. Below are excerpts of the interview with the co-founder of She-Can, with insights for DRC's partnership strategy locally.

« My name is Isra Yahya. I am a refugee, and the co-founder and director of SheCan Initiative. SheCan Initiative is a community-based organisation led by women. It was founded in March 2022 with the main objectives to empower women and give girls skills: life skills, sexual and reproductive health (SRH), self-hygiene and mental well-being. These are under the girl child skills that we are giving, we also have another which is child protection. As we are dealing with women and girls, we will find that in the process, there are girls who are under the age of 18, which we normally deal with, we make sure that they go through the child rights and the basics of the child and where a child can report once the child right is neglected."

Lessons learned and best practices

SheCan Initiative has a board of 18 members who are all registered refugees which comprise both females and males. SheCan has a physical office that is in Kakuma three. SheCan is led by women, and girls who have most of the members working have already gone through GBV cases.

- **Strong relationship with the community**. I say this because we have very few women-led organizations within the camp or the community. From the community I came from, we have been the first women-led organization in the camp.
- **Willingness to partner with DRC and international organisations** as communities perceive international organisations positively, and by association, our reputation can be enhanced by working with DRC. If SheCan partners with DRC then chances of getting clients will increase. This will also open up the door for other partners to come in. It will boost the skills that they may be the facilitators have, or it can also add more value in terms of operations that are then within the centre like the strategies maybe that have been used to reach out to in terms of protection maybe can be tainted after you partner and then you may find, there are better ways to handle this issue than it used to be.
- **Case management**. A partnership can provide us with skills to improve on case management, to solve conflicts between couples or protection issues faced by children, who may have been raped at home. With stronger skills, when information about specific incidents or risks reach us, we will be known how to solve these cases. It will benefit us to learn from DRC's case management approach. It will give us a way to learn from international standards on how to handle local protection issues.

Photo 2: Isra Yahya leading a session as part of her initiative. Photograph Courtesy of Isra Yahya

Capacities

- **Livelihoods:** We have livelihoods activities with women and the girls that go through our services, some of them have talents in making the beads, tailoring or any skill that they have, and we try our best to connect them with other people who need the same services.
- **Paralegal training and referral systems:** I work as a paralegal with RELON. It has made me confident to give sessions in the communities about legal aid. When I identify a lady or a girl who went through GBV issues through my work at SheCan, I direct them to RELON Kenya's caseworkers and legal officers who know where to link the people affected. We protect women and girls by referring GBV cases; once we get any, we refer them either to RELON, DRC, or IRC. We work together although we do not have a contract in order to do so. But most of the time when we find such cases, we refer to them.
- **Women's empowerment:** Working with SheCan does not only empower the community, but it also empowers the volunteers who are working at SheCan in their leadership journey.

Gaps, challenges and barriers to localisation

- **Gap in protection centres**: Previously, we had protection centres but currently, such services are no longer provided in the camp. Protection issues have become harder to address. Recently, a woman fought with her husband and ended up being beaten. She reported the case to the police and then the police took the husband to the cell but released him the next day. When he came back home, the woman was still unsafe and faced a high possibility of being beaten up again.
- **Victims and perpetrators live side by side:** In the same vein, you find that rape perpetrators return to the community. There is a high possibility of other girls being raped, on the way to school, or at home.

CASE STUDY 5. MONIQADOW, Dadaab

Moniqadow was formed as a women's group in 2018 and later registered as a CBO in January 2019.

Lessons learned and best practices

Registration and working towards integration through livelihoods: I had to travel to Nairobi to have Moniqadow registered and now I advise those intending to register organisations on how to go about the process. 80% of our employees are women, all under the age of 35 and that gives us the qualification of also being a youth organisation, in addition to being a women-led organisation. Our office is in Dadaab - we used to have one in Nairobi but we had to close it down because we could not sustain and as we decided to focus on refugees in the camps. Our Nairobi office was set up to target urban refugees who have more financial needs and bills to pay in the city. We supported them with capacity building and livelihoods, such as soap-making, avocado oil production, hence the “dow” part of the name of our organisation.

Capacity building: We work with the refugee community and our mission is to engage, capacitate and integrate refugees. For example, we have refugees from Somalia and South Sudan; they find it hard to integrate with others in the camp and with the host community. We recognise as well that Dadaab is made up of more than seven nationalities, so we make sure there’s inclusivity in our initiatives. We bring all the nationalities together. Our vision is to enable refugees to have access to opportunities that facilitate decent living in their communities.

Bridge: We are the bridge between international organisations and refugees. Some fund us directly, while some fund us through other organisations. In our programming, we arm refugees with entrepreneurial skills, we train women to make bar soaps, hair oil, and shampoos and they sell them, not as their own products, but under our brand.

Education: We believe in refugee education, so we source information on scholarships for refugees and share with the community. We also distribute educational materials. Here, for instance, we have worked with different universities within East Africa such as a university in Rwanda called ALU – African Leadership University.

Community based protection, and age, gender and disability mainstreaming.

- **Our community-based protection programming** deals with persons with disabilities, child mothers who are girls under the age of seventeen - seventeen and below, who have kids in the community. We do capacity building, we provide psychosocial support - though we’re not trained to provide counselling, so we often have to refer such cases.
- **We involve refugees in decision making from the beginning**. We are the eyes of the community when it comes to protection of women because we have so many cases of protection, but there is no follow-up.
- **We conduct follow-up and feedback for each case** that we refer. Some organisations ask us for referrals, but then they do not want us to follow up. That's a bit difficult for us. The Moniqadow team is diverse and highly educated so we are able to assess cases, assist and refer with the care that is needed in protection.

Capacities

Relations with donors: We've been working in Dadaab since 2018. We source for funding outside meaning we have a direct connection with donors. This is not the case for other RLOs but as Moniqadow, we have that opportunity. We are recognised. If we were to partner with DRC today, we would be able to bring funds to the table as well. We will even be able to attend the Global Refugee Forum - no other RLO will be able to. The soft skills that we'll bring to the table are the practical skills that we need in protection programming, and we are educated - I have an MBA and my team is made of graduates. They would give us the knowledge and capacity-build our staff, but we'll also contribute funding. We would make sure that the work we start together continues rather than just relying on DRC. Most of the RLOs here have never been funded by organisations outside Dadaab, but we've had the honour of having that.

Track record on partnerships: We have partnered with UNHCR distributing education materials, we have also partnered with the UN Refugee Commission Women, for the She Rise programme to increase the delivery and use of sexual reproductive health services among women in Dadaab. We've been funded by Glow Up Careers in Australia and had a back-to-school campaign where we partnered with Film Aid. The Slovakian Embassy also funded us for the Girl First programme in Nairobi. I'm sure there are some I've forgotten. They were all formal partnerships through applications and screenings. Everything was formalised from the beginning to the end.

Staffing: We have skilled project managers who can write proposals, and a good communications team that can write reports. If we were to partner with DRC, it would be a win-win arrangement. We should not only focus on funding, there are other soft skills that Moniqadow can bring to the table.

- We have learned to focus on and perfect documentation and also learned financial accountability.
- We have learned to be more organised and to outshine others when it comes to proposal writing.
- We can facilitate workshops, trainings and awareness raising sessions
- Protection programmes that target women and child mothers. We would set up a Moniqadow community help desk to get first-hand information and then refer them to DRC. Also, we'd target cases of GBV in the community
- Sensitising the community on GBV to prevent and reduce cases.

Gaps, challenges and barriers to localisation

Short timeframes: First, I'll say funding because most of the donors mostly fund short-term projects - three to six-month contracts. We are looking for long-term funding because with that you don't leave the project hanging, and you don't leave any gaps.

Volunteers: In terms of capacity building, we have some volunteers in Moniqadow; being in a camp setup, we have others who are not able to go through the education system. For capacity building, given the chance we'd love to have training on financial management, if the funds of an organisation aren't managed well, you'll have a problem. We only have one finance person but I'd love the rest of the team to be trained as well so that we don't always have to wait for one person to handle things.

Partnership vs. Funding: I can say that partnership is different from funding, it would also depend on what DRC, for example, wants, but we'd like a formal arrangement with an MoU so we can understand our different roles in the partnership - their part and our part. A longer-term partnership can also be accompanied by recognition of our organisations, on our respective websites.

Psychosocial support: We would like to improve our skills to provide psychosocial support; it is not easy to talk to and seek to help child mothers and survivors of GBV. We have received a tool from the Refugee Consortium of Kenya (RCK). The tool is a handbook on how to handle child mothers and GBV cases.

ROADMAP AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This final section presents a roadmap for each location and an overall framework to monitor and measure localisation efforts. The input has been derived from two workshops with DRC staff from Garissa and Turkana in October 2023, and presents a consensus on the ways forward, validated by staff.

i. Ways forward to localise protection programming in Dadaab

To address the gap in the number of local partners with whom DRC partners, DRC will need to identify, assess and partner with a larger diversity of local actors, with access to various groups and populations. DRC is limited to one RLO in 2023, which makes protection programming difficult given the rising needs. As part of this effort, DRC in Dadaab will need to map out in early 2024 additional RLOs to engage with – at the project level, transformative partnerships level, and at the network and collective level.

Once more partners have been identified, DRC can work on further building greater trust within communities and ensure that RLOs are aware of the need to ensure trust building within their organisations and with the communities. Recent allegations made against the local partner indicated that there is still resistance from within the targeted communities, and more investment will be needed in trust building: providing more information, transparently, and explaining the principles behind DRC's work with local actors.

The expansion of numbers of RLOs will need to come with a geographic expansion to cover Hagadera and Dagahaley camps, as currently DRC's local partner comes from Ifo 1. It will be critical for DRC to work with organisations from these respective camps. DRC needs to work with a wide variety of organisations that can provide self-protection capacities for communities, including empowering CBOs in marginalised communities not reached by other organisations.

DRC will also need to ensure its support includes investing in:

- **Self-protection capacities within marginalised communities** – such as the Somali Bantus. Representation of minority clan members in trainings and courses need to be reinforced.
- **Case management capacity**, **and specifically in psychosocial support (PSS).** DRC can, in parallel, seek to develop the capacity of RLOs on PSS by linking them with the right technical specialists and training programmes, while dividing up the current workload for RLOs to handle the lower risk and low priority cases, while DRC maintains the lead on the medium and high priority cases that are referred to them.

DRC will need to advocate for more operational budgets for local actors, alongside more dialogue, engagement and linkages with the authorities. This could mean the police, who will need to understand local actors' perspective of protection issues such as GBV, and the support they need from the police or the DRS for registration and facilitating freedom of movement.

A more balanced distribution of roles and responsibilities with local partners will also need to be agreed upon. During the localisation workshop held on October 2023, it was agreed that, in Dadaab, DRC will lead and gradually handover protection programming to local partners:

- DRC will lead on:
- Protection monitoring but discuss and triangulate data with local actors during workshop and other engagement sessions
- Developing a localisation performance measurement framework for Dadaab
- Protection coordination mechanisms. DRC has been taking the lead in coordination in Dadaab specifically on GBV. DRC community.
- Managing safe spaces given the sensitivity of cases
- Case management while looking at handing over gradually. Local partners will continue referring cases to DRC.

- DRC and local actors will jointly:
- Co-design referral pathways
- Map local protection resources
- In a networked approach, identify and bring on board more local actors

- Local actors will lead on:
- Community-based consultations, with the support of DRC. DRC currently facilitates monthly conversations, Community-based consultations, with the support of DRC. DRC currently facilitates monthly conversations, but these will need to move to the block-level.
- Community neighborhood forum meetings (currently led by DRC)
- Mentorship and awareness raising

In summary, in Dadaab DRC will need

- **An engagement plan** for more control over communication with communities
- **A mapping of local actors** from the various camps
- **An expansion of its local partners** in all camps and in different communities
- **A more diverse representation of marginalised communities** including Somali Bantus

ii. Ways forward to localise protection programming in Kakuma

The situation has evolved in Kakuma. DRC enhanced its protection monitoring in 2023 in both Kakuma and Dadaab. As DRC is planning to work jointly with local actors on protection monitoring, DRC staff will focus on looking at the current trends. These current trends are going to support DRC in informing decisions on programming. This is separate from MEAL that measures impact and outcomes; here the recommended focus is on identifying and analysing the trends jointly with the local actors. This effort will also require greater capacity building for local partners to conduct quality focus group discussions (FGDs), assessments and data collection to inform diversity inclusion, and drafting of reports to include advocacy points.

DRC will be able to use these trends analysis to advocate for

- **Local actors' presence at joint donor roundtables**, either on a quarterly basis or twice a year, to be able to address some of the identified barriers on funding and visibility.
- **Local actors' presence at coordination groups** where they are not currently sitting

DRC and local partners can better utilise community consultations and steering groups to have an expanded space for exchange, more exchanges also to increase awareness on service provision and referral pathways. DRC can also **benefit from local actors' activities on the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding (HDP) nexus.** It was highlighted that some local actors are already involved with the policy and holding community police dialogues, which DRC can tap into for its protection programming to be able to support issues that need the police's attention and action.

Overall, during a workshop held in October 2023, it was agreed that, in Kakuma:

- **DRC and local actors will work jointly on an integrated response:**
- Local actors will lead on community-based protection and livelihoods, shelter and safe haven.
- Local actors will continue providing safe shelters for the community, and DRC will support them in enhancing those services.
- DRC and local actors will work together to enhance frontline protection and conflict sensitivity training.
- DRC and local actors will enhance their conflict resolution and legal aid programming by:
  - Working with legal partners to provide more to the affected populations
  - Training on conflict resolution
  - Clearly splitting areas of responsibility
  - Extend the work of legal partners (both in terms of geographic coverage, with local actors providing community relays, and in terms of activities)
- **DRC and local actors will work jointly on resource mobilization, with**
  - DRC supporting local partners' profile and visibility with donors, alongside capacity building and greater linkages with funding networks. The goal will be for local actors to secure their own donor and direct funding to not be overly reliant on DRC.
  - Local actors can support DRC's outreach with foundations as new sources of funding for protection programming
- **DRC will directly implement / lead on:**
- Case management
  - We are going to maintain it but not fully – gradually we will work with the partners, to refer cases to DRC. We are going to capacitate/capacity build them on things like Psychosocial support
  - Psychological first aid
  - To have the capacity to handle the low priority cases through PSS in the community as opposed to DRC handling all caseload
- **DRC will handover on:**
- We will build a network of community-based protection
  - Local actors will lead on community-based protection sensitization, prevention and behavioral change. Building up a network for CBP in Kakuma
  - We have not yet reached the level on capacity building on RLOs on EMAP and SASA
  - The ECHO funding has one partner

In summary, in Kakuma DRC will need

- An engagement plan for more clarify over the communication with communities, but also about DRC's plans with regards to local actors more generally. This engagement plan will need to include a statement on DRC's localisation approach as well as a community engagement plan 45
- A mapping of local actors from the various camps
- A resource mobilisation plan to fill funding gaps and enhance the space for local actors on resource mobilisation, introducing partners to funding networks and increasing and diversifying funding sources
- A capacity building plan to address technical skills gaps among local actors and DRC staff, with on-the-job training to fill the gaps and key performance indicators (KPIs) as well as secondments to facilitate learning on procurement, implementation, and financial systems
- Adequate accountability systems through the said KPIs and joint collaboration; different partnership models can be envisioned - at the project level, transformative partnership level, and networks/collectives with different levels of accountability.

iii. Overarching – Setting KPIs and a Localisation Performance Measurement Framework (LMPF)

To move localisation forward, given the nascent and progressing state of engagement by DRC in Kenya, a **localisation performance measurement framework can be adopted and adapted from existing resources.** The NEAR network provides such a framework to evidence progress towards achieving localisation commitments. The aspiration of their framework is to provide a structure for various actors to use and apply in their setting. This will also respond to a **priority: assessing the impact of localisation, and the (positive or negative) changes in the effectiveness of the protection response by working through and with local actors.** Providing evidence and results will also support greater donor engagement and facilitate funding, in addition to facilitating learning. Based on the discussions to date and the findings of this study, we recommend the following key indicators to be adopted:

Table 9: Recommended Localisation Performance Monitoring Framework (adopted from the NEAR LMPF framework)

Partnerships	
Desired change	More genuine and equitable partnerships
Impact indicator	Expand partnerships with local actors across three levels: project, transformative partnerships, networks and collective levels.
KPIs	1. Quality of relationships 2. Shift from project based to other partnerships 3. Engagement of partners through the project cycle – from pre-design to monitoring
Funding	
Desired change	Improvements in the quantity and quality of funding for local actors Increased operational
Impact indicator	budgets for local actors and more flexible funding to allow them to respond more efficiently to identified protection needs
KPIs	1. Quantity of funding 2. Access to operational funds 3. Access to flexible funding streams 4. Greater visibility with donors
Coordination and complementarity	
Desired change	Greater leadership, presence and influence of local actors in coordinating protection response
Impact indicator	Stronger national leadership and coordination on protection 1.
KPIs	Protection coordination with local actors 2. Enhance referral mechanisms 3. Clarified and accountable division of roles and responsibilities 4. Mapping of local actors updated regularly
Participation	
Desired change	Fuller and more influential involvement of affected populations Affected
Impact indicator	populations shape and participate in protection response 1. Diversity in
KPIs	actors and expanded access/reach 2. Representation of women led organisations and LGBTQI+ organisations 3. Community engagement in protection mechanisms and greater trust 4. Greater links and trust between local actors – e.g. between CSO/CBOs and authorities
Policy, influence and visibility	
Desired change Impact	Increased presence of local actors in policy discussions and greater public recognition
indicator	Local actors shape protection priorities and receive recognition for this in reporting (internally within communities and externally with stakeholders)
KPIs	1. Joint advocacy plans 2. Engagement of communities in storytelling 3. Digital advocacy enhanced 4. Expedited registration and recognition, including facilitation of movement for local actors

CONCLUSION

While DRC is at its infancy in terms of localisation of protection programming, commitments have been made and will be clarified in a localisation engagement plan or strategy to be communicated to stakeholders and adapted for each county, as required. DRC's value-add to the Dadaab and Kakuma refugee protection programme comprises technical competence, advocacy influence, resource mobilization capabilities, and good coordination.

There is a consensus on areas that DRC should hand over to local actors but that there are mostly areas that will involve joint collaboration and continued direct implementation to strengthen protection outcomes. These collaborations will emphasise capacity building, technical support and secondments, donor and policy engagement, as well as community engagement and even a greater emphasis on monitoring and learning.

Overall, local actors agree that jointly working with DRC on advocacy and protection programming and on enhanced referral services will be a strategic and effective strategy to address the complex concerns confronting vulnerable populations in the refugee community. Together they mapped the key barriers to be removed or reduced to facilitate localisation, all of which have been detailed in this report with a roadmap ahead.

Next steps - Integrating a research and learning partner

As final remarks, the study concludes on the need to integrate a research and learning partner to support the ambitions and commitments made. The role of the learning partner can be twofold: 1) on visibility of the actions on the ground and 2) on measurement and monitoring of the localisation commitments.

The key is to create better understanding and greater visibility for local partners. All RLOs and CSOs speak about the need to develop stronger communications with communities (which they can lead on) but also stronger communications outwards with donors and other partners (which they need support on). One aspect for this is to look at digital advocacy and storytelling**.** Such initiatives are already ongoing and can be tapped into by DRC. One example is a storytelling series initiative with REFRAME (network of RLOs aiming to collaborate on storytelling, digital advocacy and advocate for localised funding largely through twitter advocacy - so a good digital comms effort). Samuel Hall conducted a training session with them and now various RLOs who are part of the network and joined the training are currently drafting stories about their RLOs; their impact, their personal journey and we will edit them and host them on our blog. The idea is to not just give training, but also an opportunity and a credible platform with an established readership to drive their work and message forward.

Another key area for is to bring a research and learning partner on board to support local partner organisations draft their digital advocacy strategies, focusing on participatory and localised advocacy including increasing hardware support.

This local partner can provide a **transparent reporting and independent monitoring process**, **both developing and finalising a localisation performance measurement framework, and communicate on its results** with communities, with partners, and with external stakeholders. This will facilitate a dialogue with partners on protection outcomes, with donors, as well as on the opportunity for greater learning and sharing of knowledge with the broader community of practice. A learning partner can further adapt the suggested LPMF in this study to each county and provide regular data to feed into the measurement framework, and engage in regular workshops with local partners to improve the state of collaboration. An external partner can ensure that the momentum is kept and that commitments are fulfilled, at a time where DRC and local partner staff focus on implementation.

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