



**Integrating Local Knowledge
in Humanitarian and
Development Programming:
Perspectives of Global Women Leaders**

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Executive Summary.....	4
Methods	6
Recommendations to Donors and Development Agencies	7
Results and Themes.....	9
Conceptualizing Local Knowledge.....	9
Defining local knowledge.....	9
Identifying local knowledge stakeholders	12
Challenges to sharing and receiving local knowledge	13
Local Knowledge in Practice	15
Approaches to designing programming based on the context.....	15
Balancing tensions that arise	17
Measures of success in integrating local knowledge	21
Experiences sharing knowledge with international actors	22
Annexes	28
Annex A Countries and Organizations Represented in the Study.....	28
Annex B List of Interviews	30
Endnotes	31



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Executive Summary

This report examines local knowledge integration in the context of global development and humanitarian aid work. It builds upon a recently published report by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) called [Integrating Local Knowledge in Development Programming](#).¹ That report sought to “share knowledge of how development donors and implementing organizations leverage local knowledge to inform programming.”² This study aims to extend the original methods to better understand grassroots actors’ own interpretations of local knowledge and its integration into programming in their communities. It examines the perspectives of 29 grassroots leaders from women-led organizations around the world, looking deeply at the ways in which they conceptualize local knowledge and local knowledge stakeholders, their approaches to designing their own projects based on local knowledge, and their experiences sharing knowledge with international actors and donors. This builds the broader evidence base on integrating local knowledge to incorporate the perspectives of grassroots actors into the same conversation as the original study.

Key takeaways from this research span two broad categories – how local leaders conceptualize local knowledge and what the effective use of local knowledge in practice looks like to them. Within these categories, interviewees explored the many challenges they face in identifying and sharing knowledge; their various approaches to designing projects based on local knowledge; some of the tensions they often find themselves balancing; unique ways of measuring the contribution of such knowledge to the success of an intervention; and experiences with and strategies for sharing their knowledge with non-local actors.

In terms of how women leaders tend to conceptualize local knowledge, the research reveals three distinct but interconnected definitions of the term: 1) knowing what a community is like; 2) knowing what a community needs and where the solutions lie; and 3) having a profound connection with the community. The first definition indicates knowing a community well enough to understand the dynamics within it. The second goes a bit further to say that local knowledge means knowing both the specific needs present in a community as well

as the relevant solutions for addressing them. As one respondent told us, “Contextual expertise is having experience in a certain context and being able to solve problems based on it.”³ And the third conceptualization indicates having a deeply rooted connection with the community or the grassroots. Some described this as “having your heart” in the community.⁴ Key to this third definition appears to be both *consistency* and the ability to perceive *change* over time. Interviewees said that local knowledge depends on people having gone through different “contexts, histories, processes, and experiences” together, and having learned from them collectively.⁵ Therefore, it is difficult, if not impossible, for international actors to acquire the same level of investment in communities that is quasi-synonymous with local knowledge unless they have lived, worked, and built relationships within them long enough to meet this consistency standard. Instead, this level of knowledge of a community and its context is fairly unique to local actors.

Understanding how local knowledge is defined is only the first step in conceptualizing it. Next comes

understanding the existing challenges that prevent it from being communicated and shared with non-local actors. Interviewees identified challenges such as lacking access to particular areas, being unable to openly discuss politically or culturally sensitive topics, and encountering tensions with Western/scientific knowledge. Perhaps most significantly, they noted that this local knowledge rarely gets shared effectively due to a lack of sufficient time, money, or resources. As one respondent said, “the issue is that there are many ways to produce knowledge, but for that knowledge to be known and valued needs a boost of resources and not all organizations have it. And if they are women’s organizations in the periphery, even less so.”⁶

Regarding the use of local knowledge in practice, respondents told us of their many approaches to designing programs based on their knowledge. Critically, they told us: “we don’t arrive anywhere to work; we are already there.”⁷ They said that any actor should already have an established presence in a community before doing work within it. Furthermore, it is imperative to conduct consultation processes and context analyses before entering; identify and partner with local leaderships that already exist; and work strategically with non-local actors. To ensure that the voices of all local knowledge stakeholders are heard in any development context, interviewees say it is necessary, first, to consult with multiple local actors, and second, to do so in a way that makes them feel safe and comfortable enough to share.⁸ And when working with non-local actors, they expressed with frankness and honesty their many considerations that go into navigating certain tensions that often arise, including managing relationships with technical “experts” while making known their own expertise; deciding whether or not to abandon funding opportunities that do not align with local priorities; and navigating tensions between voices seen as “elite” and those that represent the community.

When these women leaders were prompted to explain how they know when local knowledge has indeed been shared effectively, they pointed to international actors. To them, a huge measure of success is when international actors learn and behave differently or connect with the grassroots in some deeper way.⁹ It can also be seen in instances when good solutions to problems are clearly based on local knowledge. And

often it is when the gap between Western knowledge and local knowledge is bridged in some way, or when networks are formed among NGOs that all then understand the needs of local stakeholders as a result.¹⁰

Finally, the research explores women leaders’ experiences sharing their knowledge with international actors, digging into the attention they are paid, some of the good and bad practices for sharing that have been tested, and some of the specific donor practices they wish to see changed. While several interviewees expressed that they have noticed a gradual improvement in international actors’ engagement with them over time, many still cautioned that they are not always listened to, or that they are listened to but nothing comes of it afterward.¹¹ In the words of one leader, “when they want us to develop something for them, they listen to us very carefully. But in critical moments, we do not get listened to very carefully.”¹² This also relates to local organizations’ desire to see partnerships that are long-term and meaningful, that do not only emerge at certain moments in a project cycle. Then, in terms of donor relations, they consistently expressed the desire for more flexibility. They pointed out some contradictory dynamics among the funding scenario; for instance, while leaders in some regions expressed that donors are not willing enough to change what they have funded in the past – such as sewing and hairdressing workshops for women¹³ – in other regions they noted that donors are too preoccupied with creativity and newness, and create unrealistic expectations for local organizations to constantly reinvent the wheel rather than implement what is known to work well.¹⁴ The ultimate solution in each of these cases, then, would be a greater amount of flexibility and more power in the hands of locally led organizations to make decisions based on their knowledge of their communities. In the end, the vast majority of the remarks we heard in this research point to the dire need to place local knowledge at the center of humanitarian work, with the most direct takeaway nicely summarized by one leader:

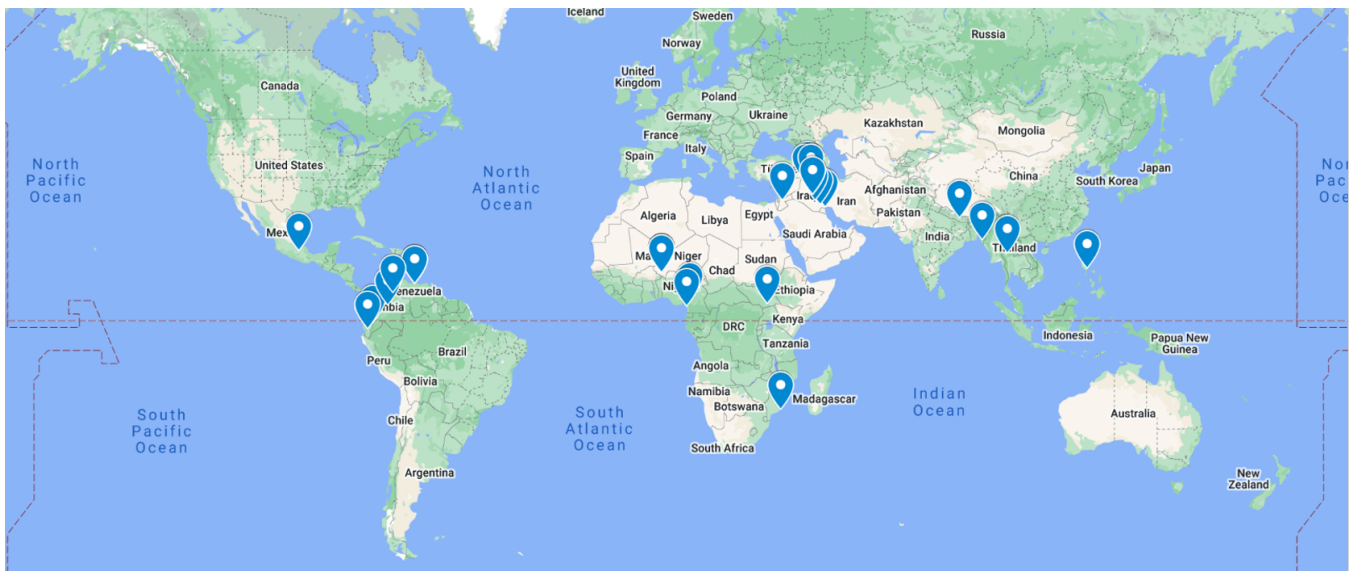
“Outside actors must realize that they are not going into a community to teach, but that knowledge already exists there”¹⁵



Methods

The methodology used for this research was adapted from the one used in USAID’s *Integrating Local Knowledge in Development Programming*. The CARE research team borrowed the research questions used by the USAID team with development organizations and modified it to be more apt for use with grassroots women leaders across the globe. The CARE research team together with one external consultant then reached out to its partners across a variety of regional contexts to gauge interest in interview participation, and in the end conducted 29 interviews with women leaders across Latin America, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Their inputs and recommendations are synthesized throughout this report. Many of their comments have been translated by the research team into English. Because of the nature of work done by this team at CARE, which is focused on gender-based violence in emergencies, many of its partners work in the areas of prevention, mitigation, and response to gender-based violence (GBV), and thus their answers are grounded within that setting. This document does not rely heavily on literature review or outside research, but rather specifically intends to convey the inputs of these 29 women leaders.

The below map shows the locations of each of the organizations represented in this report, though all locations are approximate. Some of the interviewees no longer live in the same place as their organizations – particularly those who have had to flee – but they still represent the organizations based there. We spoke with leaders from 7 organizations in Africa, 4 in Asia, 6 in Latin America, and 11 in MENA. For a full list of countries represented, please see **Annex A**.





Recommendations to Donors and Development Agencies

Identify local leaderships and networks before entering a community. Build relationships and involve local organizations from the very beginning of a project, and always conduct consultation processes with women and women leaders in the project area.

Enter a community together with a member of the community, and do so humbly and without assumptions. Give key leaders in the community co-ownership over any intervention.

Work with truly local organizations. Local does not mean the same as national; there is a lot of local knowledge that sits only within specific communities, and national-level organizations do not have that knowledge for every community in a given country. Funding given to national-level organizations does not necessarily trickle down to the local level.

Maintain partnerships even when there is not a project or proposal at hand and create spaces for critique. Provide spaces for genuine back-and-forth discussion with partners, where they can be honest and provide suggestions and feedback for non-local actors without fear of punishment in the next round of partner selection. Create spaces where both partners can learn from one another.

Stop bringing in outsiders where they aren't needed. Local actors already have expertise. Instead of bringing in technical “experts,” train local organizations on technical knowledge so that they can do the work themselves.

Be flexible. Allow grassroots partners to decide what the need is in their communities and to design their own projects, goals, and M&E plans. Also, allow them to make changes to a project when needs and contexts shift, as they so often do in humanitarian settings.

Understand the specific language and terminology used in a community. Work hard to adapt to using preferred terms, and do not use development agency speak that muddles communication and confuses understanding between partners.

Include grassroots actors at various types of events and discussions. While many local organizations feel that they have been listened to well at international conferences, smaller workshops are sometimes preferred, as they facilitate deeper conversations and better include the voices of local organizations.

Provide funding and visa support for local actors' participation in international conferences and events. Grassroots actors should not simply be invited to international spaces, but brought there and funded by the inviting organization.

Provide feedback whenever possible. Especially when rejecting proposals for funding or other contributions from local organizations, give them feedback on why they have been rejected and help build the skills and administrative capacities of small organizations when they are lacking.

Be aware of local power dynamics within communities. Do not assume that to speak with one sector of a local community is to gain the knowledge held by all various members within it, as some voices are louder than others due to inherent power dynamics.

Avoid extractive practices. When collecting information from local actors, be transparent with how you plan to use it. Build trust with local organizations so they do not feel they are being used by international actors. Instead of only requesting information from them, partner with them.

Stop practicing “donor propaganda.” Do not be the donor that only wants to attend events, have your photos taken, and put your logo on the materials, without actual regard for the issue at hand or the communities affected.

Right-size the bureaucratic requirements, restrictions, and conditions placed upon grantees. The combination of these requirements and the lack of support that comes with them is seen by local actors as an extractive practice.

Use a fair approach to calculating overhead costs for local organizations, including salaries. The current pay discrepancies within the humanitarian system lead to inequalities between frontline workers and expatriates who are paid more to work in a given context from their national headquarters.

Invest in networks of solidarity. Particularly important in emergency situations, as competition for funds often increases in these scenarios, donors should play a role in maintaining cohesion and cooperation among all partners by creating networks among partners in the communities they fund in.



Community Centre for Integrated Development (CCID)



Results and Themes

Conceptualizing Local Knowledge

Defining local knowledge

Our first set of research questions aimed to conceptualize what “local knowledge” actually means to women working in the development and aid industries in their communities. Do these leaders even use the term, or do they prefer something different? Do they spend their time worrying about the concept? Essentially, how do they think about the contextual expertise that someone who lives and works in the context of a development project can provide that an outsider cannot? We found that our interviewees’ answers largely fell within three broad understandings of the term.

Knowing what a community is like

Many interviewees told us that to have local knowledge is to know what a community is like. **To know the ins and outs of the people within it, the structures and systems that govern it, the ways of life, and more.** Some said it meant “knowing the needs and practices of a local community.”¹⁶ Others specifically mentioned that knowledge of the social, economic, political, and cultural contexts of a community is crucial.¹⁷ Others likened it more to understanding the local culture and habits in a place.¹⁸ They thought it more important to understand a society’s traditions and norms, particularly when tackling something like entrenched gender norms in a community.¹⁹ Some mentioned the importance of knowing the laws, traditions, and government services provided to a community, especially from health, economic, social, educational, and legal perspectives.²⁰ And still others conceptualized local knowledge very much within the specificity of their field, thus understanding it to be knowledge specifically of the situation of women and girls in a community; the trends of sexual violence

against them; the specific populations of women most at risk; the cultural and political views regarding sexual diversity and women’s rights; and the various “gender norms, roles, and practices that exist and dominate within a specific community.”²¹

This conceptualization of local knowledge led this subset of interviewees to feel most confident in work that is done by people who have this built-in, intimate understanding of the community affected. For example, an interviewee from Iraq told us how knowledge of her community meant knowing which clans dominate in her community and therefore which “red lines” women in it cannot cross without risk of being killed.²² Other Iraqi interviewees echoed the importance of this knowledge of clan dynamics, and the ability to distinguish between differences across regions within the country where women’s rights vary significantly. Another, from the Yezidi community of Iraq, noted that this manifestation of local knowledge is what leads to an understanding of how her community has changed significantly in the past eight years (since the genocide of her community).²³

Several voices from various regions mentioned that international actors simply do not have this local knowledge, and yet they often try to apply “measures of Western society” on them.²⁴ This is a theme that echoed throughout these conversations.

Knowing what a community needs and where the solutions lie

Another understanding that came through from interviewees is that **local knowledge means not just knowing what a community is like, but what it needs**. This often centers around the ability of doing frequent assessments in a community and talking with the other people within it to understand specific challenges and how best to address them.²⁵ Many described this as specifically knowing the hardships in a community, for instance “what types of violence local people suffer, what their coping mechanisms are, with whom they seek support when they are survivors of GBV, and how they keep living.”²⁶ And beyond just recognizing the hardships, local knowledge is knowing the right ways to meet the needs of the community via solutions that make sense based on the context.²⁷

“Contextual expertise is having experience in a certain context and being able to solve problems based on it”²⁸

One disability rights activist explained how important it is to know what specific accommodations a target population in a project will need, based on assessments of the type, degree, and severity of disabilities in the community. For example, if she knows that sign language is needed in a community, she also knows that she needs to provide interpreters who know the specific type of signing jargon that exists in the community, rather than solely the internationally accepted sign language.²⁹

Many other examples were given as well. Local knowledge means knowing that most instances of GBV in Iraq occur in rural areas (even though INGOs are concentrated in urban ones) and that in certain

communities women’s education levels might be too low to participate in certain types of programming versus others.³⁰ It means being aware that not all women in Cameroon will be in need of dignity kits in crisis situations because some of the women can already afford those materials themselves, or that not all IDPs will be in need of clothing because some had enough time to pack up their belongings before fleeing.³¹ Interviewees told us that international actors simply cannot have this level of local knowledge to the same extent as those in the communities, and that therefore they cannot be the ones to suggest the appropriate solutions.³²

Having a connection with the community

The third conceptualization we heard of local knowledge has to do with the person **having a connection with the community or the grassroots, either by being from there, having lived or worked there for a long time, or being invested in it**. Some described this as “having your heart” in the community.³³ Some specifically said that living in a community for a prolonged period of time is enough to bring local knowledge, as this gives one insight into the family relationships, norms, and traditions.³⁴ It implies knowing the language of a community and being able to communicate with its members, essentially “being closer to the community in every way by being physically present in it.”³⁵ Others explained that local knowledge increases significantly, though, when one goes from simply living to working in a community.³⁶ Many said that working in a community for long enough can lead one to learn the local context within it.³⁷ This is a perspective shared by several groups that have regional networks that work in various communities throughout a country; while they may not be from a specific community, they have local knowledge within it once they have worked there for a sufficiently long time to attain deep understanding of the specific context and to know how to address the needs and challenges within it.³⁸ This knowledge comes not only from doing the work, but from building relationships with the people in a specific society.³⁹

“I have established my NGO for years based on local knowledge; the NGO has knitted its existence with the needs of the society around it”⁴⁰

Key to this conceptualization of local knowledge seems to be the length of time one stays in a community. This is because this knowledge depends on people having gone through different “contexts, histories, processes, and experiences” together, and having learned from them collectively.⁴¹ This also means there must be an element of consistency in one’s presence in the community, particularly true in emergency settings, as having local knowledge to some means being present from the start of crisis situations.⁴² Therefore, it is difficult, if not impossible, for international actors to acquire this same level of investment in communities that is quasi-synonymous with local knowledge unless they have lived, worked, and built relationships within them for a comparably long period of time.

“Understanding and being part of a community means having strong links to one another and relationships built, and on the basis of this community local knowledge gets communicated and shared. It also means being present and doing the work in the area over a long period of time”⁴³

Preferred terms for describing local knowledge

While some interviewees told us they use the term local knowledge in their work, others told us of other preferred terms. Some use “ancestral knowledge,” “comparative knowledge,” or “territorial wisdom.” Others simply do not refer to the concept within their work at all. However, what came across to be important to many of the respondents is that all actors working in a place be fully aligned on the language they are using. As one interviewee noted, “international actors often use terms that are not known or understood by the local community, and therefore it’s more difficult and takes more time for them to understand the needs.”⁴⁴ This is a key theme that arose not only when discussing local knowledge specifically, but all types of terminology used in the humanitarian system.

A full rendering of the other preferred terms mentioned by interviewees is here.

Local Context

Ancestral knowledge

Analysis of a local context

Comparative knowledge

Local evidence-based knowledge

Analysis of a situation

Local experiences

Community work

Context of the community

Territorial wisdom

Territorial approach

Self Knowledge

“I always tell myself that when local knowledge is taken into account, the implementation and ownership of the program becomes very easy. Often there is not much support to provide because the community takes ownership of the program”⁴⁵

Identifying local knowledge stakeholders

After clarifying with women leaders what local knowledge looks like to them, we aimed to discern who they consider to be local knowledge *stakeholders*. In asking these questions, we intended to clarify that, by stakeholders, we meant to explore *anyone who holds local knowledge*, not only local *power holders* whose voices get heard.

The vast majority of the interviewees started by telling us that **women and girls in a community are critical local knowledge stakeholders**.⁴⁶ Some narrowed this to women and youth advocates and leaders, who have specific knowledge of the community.⁴⁷

“We can hire or contract anyone who has technical expertise, but a woman advocate who has intimate knowledge of a community is invaluable”⁴⁸

Then respondents mentioned **other members of the community** as well, including men and women throughout the community. One specified that older community members are stakeholders because they have “a wealth of historical knowledge.”⁴⁹ In contrast, another respondent emphasized the local knowledge of young people, as she sees young people as a tool to bridging the divide between deeply rooted community norms and more emergent gender equality norms.⁵⁰ Another mentioned traditional leaders, health workers, and environmentalists as well, in an effort to clarify the importance of remembering people all across a society.⁵¹ One respondent working in a refugee context in Jordan also explained that host community members are local knowledge holders within these particular contexts.⁵² And finally, a respondent from Latin America emphasized the importance of both informal and formal leadership; she sees *mingas*⁵³ in Ecuador, for example – which involve voluntary community work to improve common spaces in a given area – as key local knowledge stakeholders, given that they generate spaces “for meeting, for dialogue, for conversation, and for the generation of ideas.”⁵⁴

Many interviewees identified **local nongovernmental actors and leaders** as important stakeholders as well. They mentioned grassroots organizations, community leaders, and social workers;⁵⁵ women’s groups, LGBT groups, farmers, and Afro-descendent groups;⁵⁶ institutions, academia, and alternative media;⁵⁷

religious and customary leaders;⁵⁸ traditional healers;⁵⁹ and human rights and humanitarian organizations.⁶⁰

Finally, two respondents mentioned **state and local leaders** as well, but with the caveat that this local knowledge is not as critical as women’s, given that “women’s knowledge is more tangible and real.”⁶¹ Thus, respondents identified various local knowledge stakeholders in their regions, but the cross-cutting ones were women and girls and those with any level of leadership in a community. These are the people that women leaders believe have the most knowledge to offer within the development context, whether or not they are the ones who are most often consulted.

A note on power

While the stakeholders identified above are the ones with important local knowledge to share, often **power dynamics in communities result in a smaller group of these stakeholders dominating conversations**. For instance, while it was largely agreed upon by interviewees that traditional leaders, religious leaders, and local authorities do hold local knowledge, it was also pointed out that they also hold power in many communities, and thus their voices tend to overpower others. A Cameroonian interviewee explained that their word is seen as final and they are “seen as gods,” which makes it harder for lay people to speak out and challenge what they say.⁶² This makes it critical for development actors to hold dialogues between these actors and other local knowledge stakeholders like women and girls, and to create specific space for less powerful stakeholders to share their opinions safely, so that certain voices do not speak for others.

Almost every respondent from Iraq noted power tensions specifically with local government, clergymen, Mukhtars, teachers, and police.⁶³ They each discussed their own approaches to navigating such power dynamics, including working with the power holders closely and educating them to understand women and girls’ rights – particularly in relation to their own line of work, such as training police to maintain databases

regarding women and girls and teachers to provide awareness-raising education for girls.⁶⁴ Another approach mentioned was to work with moderate clan chiefs who are most open to change and try to encourage them to modify their practices in their communities.

“Generally, the relationship between the people holding power was not very close with the stakeholders, especially the women. This is now evolving to advance women’s opinions”⁶⁵

Overall, having this understanding and awareness of internal community power dynamics is critical for development actors working in every region of the world, as ignoring them might lead international actors to work solely with the power holders in a community and neglect the inputs of all other local knowledge stakeholders.

Challenges to sharing and receiving local knowledge

We also asked interviewees about the challenges that arise when an actor – whether a development agency, a donor, a national or regional organization, or any other – tries to attain local knowledge, or when a local organization attempts to share it. They told us of various obstacles to the effective communication of knowledge.

For one, external actors often **do not have access to particular areas**, for a number of reasons.⁶⁶ Some people in local communities might be suspicious of these actors and not welcome them in.⁶⁷ In other situations, physical access to critical areas is difficult, particularly in remote areas or areas that are expensive to reach or can only be reached by air or by sea.⁶⁸ A Colombian interviewee also mentioned the difficulty of reaching areas under control of armed groups.⁶⁹ And multiple respondents mentioned that access to digital information can be restrictive as well, and in Iraq, for example, there is no law that facilitates NGOs’ access to government data, thus inhibiting even local groups from accessing data on GBV.⁷⁰

A second challenge is that there is often not **sufficient time, money, or resources** for local knowledge to

be shared fully.⁷¹ In crisis situations and emergency settings, particularly, it is nearly impossible for local actors to have enough time to communicate their knowledge to external actors.⁷² One interviewee explained that to gain true understanding of local contexts, any actor that enters a community must speak with as many organizations as possible, in order to adapt programming to the specific, localized needs.⁷³ Yet this is a time-consuming process, and thus is not always followed. Additionally, small organizations with local knowledge to share do not often have the appropriate resources to do so far and wide, and particularly women’s organizations tend to lack finances for this.⁷⁴ They also may lack the political power to elevate their knowledge to the appropriate levels, as one respondent told us that her organization lacks the proper relationships with power holders to grant them access to publish the data they have to share.⁷⁵

“The issue is that there are many ways to produce knowledge, but for that knowledge to be known and valued needs a boost of resources and not all organizations have it. And if they are women’s organizations in the periphery, even less so”⁷⁶

Another challenge that was shared by six of the Iraqi interviewees, specifically, is that local knowledge cannot always be communicated because **certain topics are politically sensitive or socially taboo in the country**.⁷⁷ Because they cannot speak freely about everything, certain areas of local knowledge get left out, such as subjects like the power of the clans, religious issues, and violence against women and girls.⁷⁸ They told us that power holders, such as Mukhtars and clergymen, often simply will not listen to what they have to say about such sensitive topics.⁷⁹ Some actors have developed special methods of communication for interacting with these types of actors,⁸⁰ but still they must know exactly whom they can trust and what topics can be broached,⁸¹ and these parameters vary significantly even from region to region.⁸² This is a significant obstacle to communicating local knowledge, and while it was only brought up by interviewees in Iraq, it is possible that other women leaders around the world have faced similar tensions as well.

“We cannot speak with all actors openly in the same way. For example, it’s nearly impossible to talk to government actors in Ninawa about sexual harassment because they know that they themselves are responsible for committing it, and thus they don’t want it brought up. Whereas in some Christian communities outside Mosul it is much easier to discuss this”⁸³

Additionally, we heard that **competition with other local organizations** can present obstacles to sharing knowledge among them, and that too many disparate networks of people and organizations all trying to do the same thing can present challenges to effectively communicating local knowledge outside of them.⁸⁴

Another challenge faced by local actors when they try to share their knowledge is that **Western or other hierarchical points of view tend to dominate over more horizontal, communal approaches**. According to an Ecuadoran interviewee, “those tensions that exist mean there may be an imposition of an external culture, and of different points of view and opinions.”⁸⁵ Another respondent from the Philippines told us that, because of the country’s history of Spanish rule followed by US colonization, local actors often do not recognize that they have this expertise in themselves.⁸⁶ Of course, this challenge is only exacerbated by their continued use of the English language, as “language influences us through Western ideas and outlook, and this adds to the devaluation of people’s local knowledge.”⁸⁷ Western actors also tend to prioritize hearing inputs from the most educated people in a community, thus neglecting to recognize that those without formal education can carry local knowledge as well.⁸⁸ Additionally, they tend to conceptualize knowledge from a very individualistic, academic perspective, which has in some cases even resulted in the Western academic sharing false information, as one Colombian interviewee explained from experience.⁸⁹

“Western organizations once talked about the context of women in the area and that was not the data we had, the numbers were very low and the analysis was not complete enough, there was a lack of information and analysis of what was happening. Later we understood that the information came only from a single local organization that did not work with women. So, knowledge is needed to know how to find or identify those that are working to build knowledge and for information to spread”⁹⁰

Another challenge presented when sharing local knowledge with external actors is that Western organizations tend to be extractive. They often request information from local organizations without being transparent regarding what they will do with it or partnering with the organization in the longer term, and this generates tension between actors.⁹¹ This means that, in order for knowledge sharing to be successful, trust must be generated with local organizations, and relationships must be improved.⁹² Finally, tensions with Western actors were mentioned regarding how they perceive local political situations,⁹³ their lack of long-term vision and permanence of initiatives,⁹⁴ and their tendency to sideline local actors due to their concern with following their rigid formats and structures.⁹⁵

In contrast, another group of interviewees noted a conflicting perspective of Western knowledge when it comes into contact with local knowledge. These respondents seemed to come from the perspective that some local actors are often responsible for **inappropriately sidelining Western knowledge and values**, rather than the other way around. This is particularly true when it comes to doing gender equality work; often, the local, community-based knowledge is more regressive than Western values, so some women leaders we spoke with wanted more Western knowledge incorporated in their societies. In Myanmar, for example, a women leader explained that because local knowledge is inherited from earlier

generations and their traditional beliefs, it is often at odds with notions of gender equality. A Cameroonian respondent also pointed out that scientific knowledge is sometimes at odds with what is traditionally “African” or “Cameroonian.”⁹⁶ A Rohingya interviewee from Bangladesh explained that “you have to keep traditions and restrictions in mind” when working on gender equality issues in her region, even though there is overall more space for women to raise their voices in the camps than in the host community itself.⁹⁷ And one Iraqi interviewee mentioned that local communities are often distrusting of local NGOs because they think they aim to “change values and principles of the society and that we come to motivate women to do wrong things which do not match with the culture of the society.”⁹⁸ Therefore, we noticed some conflicting visions of what local knowledge brings to the table, and how fully it should be highlighted when conducting gender work across these regions.

“So when we talk about gender or women’s rights, they see that that is a Western idea, that doesn’t fit with our community and society. So when we talk about equality between men and women, saying that men should also take care of household work, that is a bit in disagreement with the people in the community. Because the knowledge they got from older generations says that women should be gentle, polite, and stay at home”⁹⁹

Local Knowledge in Practice

Our next set of questions aimed to understand how these women leaders’ organizations use local knowledge in practice, as well as how they wish to see international and national actors use it as well. We explored approaches to designing programs based on local knowledge, how local actors balance certain tensions and power dynamics within their work, good practices for sharing knowledge out, and experiences working with international actors on local knowledge integration.

Approaches to designing programming based on the context

Consultation processes

The greatest common point of discussion among interviewees was the importance of one non-negotiable in program design: **conducting consultation processes when entering any community**. Many respondents told us that their primary approach to designing programming based on local knowledge is to consult with as many members of the community – the local knowledge stakeholders identified above – as possible at the start of any project.¹⁰⁰ This process generally involves communicating the plans for any program, asking questions of community members, understanding their expectations of any program, and then incorporating their feedback into the program design.¹⁰¹ It also includes studying the needs

of women and children, their political, social, and economic situations, and the traditions and norms in the communities based on the local context to be able to design programs specific to those needs and conditions.¹⁰²

“When we implement activities, we always work together with the women in the community. So, whenever change happens, it happens together”¹⁰³

Many organizations have specific teams or committees set up to do these consultation processes.¹⁰⁴ Some use certain tools based on the community context to facilitate these conversations, including focus group discussions, talks, surveys, meetings, and individual interviews.¹⁰⁵ While not everyone discussed timelines,

one interviewee said that “community diagnostics” – as she called the consultation processes – should last three to four months at least.¹⁰⁶ Another also specified that these processes should take time and be ongoing, never considered finished.¹⁰⁷

“We consult people living in the community, we discuss our project proposals and receive community feedback. Without involving the community, you risk bringing projects that won’t resolve communities’ problems, and without community ownership, you risk failing in having their support”¹⁰⁸

Interviewees provided examples of why these consultation processes are so critical. One explained that, without consulting across a wide array of actors to understand the diversity of needs among a target population, organizations may fail to supply the proper support, such as providing blankets to a community that actually needs wheelchairs.¹⁰⁹ Others explained how understanding differences between community contexts is crucial, and that actors who fail to do consultations tend to think that conceptions of women’s rights violations are similar across regions, whereas actually there are significant differences.¹¹⁰ They also explained that the consultation processes are critical for making sure the organization designing a program does not create further tensions within a community. For instance, one leader knows based on consultation processes that to work with widows in certain communities is taboo, as they are regarded as shameful, which leads her to do the work in a more careful way.¹¹¹

Context analyses

While similar to the studies that are conducted as part of the consultation processes, some respondents in Latin America each referred specifically to **conducting context analyses** as part of their approach to programming.¹¹² These are done specifically by collecting information from grassroots organizations in an area. They look at previous research – the state of the art – and what information and data is lacking to determine what the needs are for better analysis

of the context to address needs there.¹¹³ In this way, they bring together local knowledge with the less local or even non-local knowledge generally available in already existing research. One leader explained that these types of processes, done in direct consultation with community members, serve to expose a reality that is not always elucidated in political analyses.¹¹⁴ Therefore, while similar to the consultation processes above, these context analyses dig even deeper into the research aspect of understanding the conditions and needs of a particular community.

Identifying local leaderships and building relationships

Many women leaders also highlighted the importance of approaching program design by **identifying local leaders and building lasting relationships with them**.¹¹⁵ The Ecuadoran leader who earlier highlighted both informal and formal leaders as local knowledge stakeholders explained the importance of building relationships with these leadership structures immediately upon entering a community.¹¹⁶ This includes facilitating spaces for discussion with them, supporting them with resources, generating community ties, and leading training processes.¹¹⁷ Another respondent explained the importance of employing staff in a program that are from the community where it is taking place, as a way of strengthening the relationships between program implementers and community members.¹¹⁸ Others highlighted the importance of involving women leaders in programming. A respondent from Bangladesh explained how she involves women in the development of proposals and continues to communicate with them every day, and encourages INGOs to do the same.¹¹⁹ This is particularly important because, in her context, there are not easy routes for sharing information across community organizations, so this partnership with development actors can enhance the chains of communication.¹²⁰ Finally, an interviewee from the Philippines explained the importance of building these relationships with a diverse array of women leaders in an area to understand all their perspectives.¹²¹ She went even further to explain that her organization conducts training of local leaders to encourage them to recognize their local knowledge and the gendered ways of sharing it, such as how women in the Philippines are socialized to believe they should be on the receiving end of knowledge rather than the sharing end.¹²² Altogether,

these various practices for building relationships with local leaders and strengthening their capacities appear to be critical aspects of approaching program design for many of our interviewees.

Establishing a presence in a community

Respondents also discussed the importance of **having or establishing a presence in a community before doing work within it.**¹²³ Many agreed that they do their work better because they already have an established presence in a community.

“Arriving in a place and asking questions is not enough to create a community. The work we do with the community is work that takes a long time. Many of the people who come here do a project and then think that they are finished; there’s a lack of continuity and sustainability”¹²⁴

“We don’t arrive anywhere to work; we are already there”¹²⁵

Others shared that their approach to establishing a presence where it does not already exist often involves establishing a network of WLOs throughout a country to be able to use them as a reference from program design in any area. For example, one organization’s network of over 100 WLOs across Jordan has provided a reference point for designing and implementing programs, giving them “access to these communities and their local knowledge.”¹²⁶ A Venezuelan organization has developed a “national assistance network” that similarly grants access to local knowledge across many areas.¹²⁷ And another organization in Niger has focal points in each region to allow them to understand who the important players are in each community and how to solicit their feedback and support them.¹²⁸ This strategy of using networks and focal points to generate an established presence across various communities appears to be one used by many national organizations, as a strategy for granting them genuine access to local knowledge in their design of programs.

Balancing tensions that arise

Working strategically with international partners and technical “experts”

Another discussion among local actors was around their practices for **working with international actors and technical teams.** One respondent pointed out that communicating to international actors that local organizations are trustworthy and have good relationships with the community is critical.¹²⁹ Others approached the topic of “technical expertise” and how it should be viewed in project implementation.¹³⁰ A leader from Mozambique explained that she understands “the need to have foreigners due to their technical expertise,” but that she believes these technical experts should “seek advice from community leaders who will benefit locals.”¹³¹ She further explained that, in an ideal scenario, development actors should train local people to develop technical expertise, rather than bringing in outsiders. An Ecuadoran respondent also explored this issue, and said she believes organizations – whether international or domestic – need to train their technical teams in order to communicate local knowledge. Otherwise, they will know how to set goals and metrics, but not how to pay attention to real needs in the community, because the technical teams do not necessarily have the territorial knowledge specific to an area.¹³²

Balancing community needs with funding priorities

We also asked interviewees how they **navigate decision-making processes in program design when it comes to balancing the needs in their community with the priorities of donors or INGOs through which they receive funding.** Many agreed that this is a challenge for them, as often international actors are not very flexible and only want to fund what they already have in mind.¹³³ This is particularly true in emergency or crisis situations, where the lack of flexibility can be detrimental in not allowing WLOs to provide immediate responses to emerging situations.¹³⁴ One respondent from Nepal gave the example of needing to spend money on urgent items during an earthquake like solar energy when electricity is out, but not being allowed to because the donor did not want them spending money on something not strictly relevant to the project.¹³⁵ Others discussed lack of flexibility during program design. A Cameroonian

leader said that a lot of projects fail because they try to work with what the funder wants rather than what the community needs, recognizing that it is difficult to turn down a funding opportunity when WLOs need the resources.¹³⁶ She gave the example of a project that a donor insisted on doing with Pygmies, that failed to take into account their beliefs and thus failed. According to her, “the project failed because it did not address this issue, did not address the needs of that population, and did not take into account these people’s cultural beliefs, societal norms, and religious beliefs.”¹³⁷ Two different respondents from Iraq also discussed the challenge that donors often only want to do what has been done before, which leads to repeated sessions of sewing lessons for women year after year, even when women and the local organizations representing them are expressing that they need to learn new skills.¹³⁸

“When they come with a ready-made project, it doesn’t work well”¹³⁹

Furthermore, another respondent pointed out that a lack of flexibility can be detrimental even before a project begins. She noted that sometimes international actors take so long to write proposals that, by the time the actual project begins, the needs of the community have changed and entirely new targets are needed.¹⁴⁰

Given these challenges and lack of donor flexibility, interviewees told us of various strategies they employ for working with funders and making decisions according to the communities’ needs. Some said they simply prefer to **be direct and honest with the potential funder** from the beginning of the relationship regarding what they are and are not willing to do.¹⁴¹ This strategy depends on having the ability to form long-lasting, close relationships with donors. Others said they might be willing to make concessions, as long as they do so **in consultation with the communities**.¹⁴² Some said they would discuss the situation directly with community leaders,¹⁴³ do a baseline study to determine exactly what their community needs versus what the funder is offering and make decisions accordingly,¹⁴⁴ involve the community directly in budget decisions and prioritization,¹⁴⁵ and hold many internal debates within the organization as well.¹⁴⁶ One example of a difficult decision to make came from an Ecuadoran interviewee whose organization had to decide whether

to forego its focus on abortion access when the Trump administration was in US office and its US-based donor was not allowing work on abortion.¹⁴⁷ In this situation, they held an assembly to consult with the community followed by an internal debate within the organization, where they decided they needed the resources and the time would come later to continue working on abortion.¹⁴⁸ What was critical for them in this decision-making process was the assembly process and being sure to involve the community in the decision.

“The assembly practice has given us the strength that if we make a mistake we have the support of the community and the organization”¹⁴⁹

On the other hand, some interviewees told us that they are often willing to **abandon funding opportunities altogether when the priorities do not align**, particularly if the community consultation process points the organization in that direction. At least six interviewees told us that they have outright refused a funding opportunity that is not in line with community needs.¹⁵⁰ While they recognize that this is a difficult decision, as WLOs are often in great need of resources, they feel it is the correct approach given the value of the community’s inputs. One respondent also pointed out that some activities can still be implemented even without funding, so rejecting funding opportunities does not necessarily mean ending a program entirely.¹⁵¹

“If we design a good project based on needs on the ground and the NGO or funder disagrees with it, then we prefer not to implement it at all”¹⁵²

Despite these challenges, some actors did reflect on positive experiences with donors listening to them and being more willing to negotiate on program design, thus being more flexible to adapt to community needs.¹⁵³ This sentiment will be discussed further in the *Attention Paid by International Partners* section of this report.

Navigating tensions between communities and “elites”

Another important issue we explored with respondents

is how they address and navigate tensions that arise between individuals who are considered “high-status” or “elite” in a community versus those who hold local knowledge. This harkens back to the question of local power holders versus local knowledge stakeholders in a community that was explored in the *Identifying local knowledge stakeholders* section of this report, but goes further to also include the influence of elite outsiders during the process of program design and implementation.

The first tension explored is that **men’s voices often dominate spaces that should be led by women,¹⁵⁴ and women’s local knowledge is not valued by outsiders.¹⁵⁵** One interviewee noted that men often lead NGOs, without any experience working on women’s projects, and thus lead them from their own personal vision and not from women’s perspectives.¹⁵⁶ Another respondent who preferred not to specify her region also noted that local authorities are usually men, and they are considered “high status” so they tend to dominate spaces.¹⁵⁷ Therefore, she said it is very important for outsiders to consult with women in separate spaces to make sure their voices are heard. However, another respondent from Ecuador noted that outsiders do not value women’s local knowledge even when they do listen to them, because they see their own Western perspectives and academic knowledge as superior.¹⁵⁸

“There is an inconsistency between using the population as objects of study, and not as subjects of rights that could benefit from the information. It is a matter of class and status. The research carried out by the academy is more important than that carried out by a local women’s organization like ours”¹⁵⁹

Another tension that came up is when **practices of international actors who are seen as “high-status” clash with those of local leaders.¹⁶⁰** For instance, an interviewee from Mozambique expressed frustration that international actors tend to prioritize the inputs of educated people in her community, while local actors value the perspectives of everyone faced by the same problems.¹⁶¹ Yet because international actors often

maintain positions of power within development settings, it is often up to them to decide who gets listened to. Another respondent pointed out that international actors are often the ones who fill out questionnaires regarding an intervention to communicate out experiences to the rest of the international community, and she says this means that the perspectives of women and girls on the ground get left out.¹⁶² Other respondents pointed to differences in minor practices between international and local organizations, such as preferences for security protocols at events, that can lead to tensions in which the outsiders are dismayed with how things are done and want to impose their own preferences.¹⁶³

“If the person coming in has assumptions, they need to be open to receiving recommendations from the community and to making adjustments based on those suggestions. Otherwise, the program will fail and there will be no sustainability, no tangible impact to measure, no testimonies, no success stories. You’ve wasted your time in the community and nothing will have changed”¹⁶⁴

Another level at which tensions can arise is **between national organizations and local organizations.¹⁶⁵** Similarly to international actors, national NGOs can also be seen as “high-status” in many communities, and therefore their practices also tend to dominate when they clash with local actors’ preferences. Participants spoke of, for example, national organizations’ tendencies to enter community-level spaces and essentially take over from local organizations.¹⁶⁶ A Cameroonian leader noted that when national NGOs enter her community, they pull local leaders such as herself into a variety of conversations, but they are not “coordinated or productive,” and in the end they do not take her recommendations into account.¹⁶⁷ She also mentioned national organizations wanting to view local NGOs as “beneficiaries rather than partners,” taking ownership of community-led interventions, designing programs on their own, and causing the local organizations to lose credibility and their recognition as service providers in their communities.¹⁶⁸

“There are national actors who want us to be beneficiaries rather than partners; they don’t subcontract us, but they want to do everything from their office, not at the grassroots level. They recruit their own field workers to send to the field, rather than working with the people already in the field”¹⁶⁹

A respondent from Bangladesh echoed these frustrations with national organizations tending to dominate spaces that should be local. She also explained that such organizations consult with and learn from hers often, but then fail to partner with or fund local organizations.¹⁷⁰ She said that national NGOs lack the local knowledge to know what is needed in communities, yet also fail to recognize the value of working with community-based organizations who do know the communities.¹⁷¹

One additional tension noted between local organizations and national ones is that, in Iraq, national organizations are often affiliated with political parties, and therefore work in their interest.¹⁷² This leads them to want to bring in even higher status actors from the international sphere, strictly to attract donors and get more funds to benefit the political relationships and their elections campaigns, without listening to women or trying to attain local knowledge for the interventions.¹⁷³

To avoid perpetuating tensions at any of these levels – men/women, international/local, or national/local – and to ensure that the voices of all local knowledge stakeholders are heard in any development context, interviewees say it is critical to, first, **consult with multiple local actors**,¹⁷⁴ and second, to do so in a way that **makes them feel safe and comfortable enough to share**.¹⁷⁵ This requires keeping power dynamics in mind to actively create comfortable spaces for women to speak.¹⁷⁶ For example, a Nepalese leader explained that inviting local women to capital cities to participate in events in fancy hotels in half English/half Nepali is not constructive – it is intimidating and inhibits them from speaking.¹⁷⁷ Therefore, more appropriate environments should be considered for facilitating these conversations that take into consideration the context

and local language.¹⁷⁸ A Cameroonian respondent echoed the importance of acknowledging power, and emphasized also the importance of making sure women feel physically safe in these spaces.¹⁷⁹ Another Cameroonian leader also explained that when outsider elites enter a community, they must do so humbly; they should dress like the community, eat their food with them, and more.¹⁸⁰ Otherwise, she said the communities feel stigmatized, lack trust in the outsiders, and close themselves off to them as a result.¹⁸¹ An Ecuadoran respondent echoed each of these concerns as well, reiterating the importance of genuinely providing a sense of co-ownership with local voices to counteract the dominating influence of elites.¹⁸²

“Bringing the political expert to one’s space can make that person feel less empowered in his or her own space. A place of status, such as a high-level conference, is going to be very different from a space created by the community, that has the food of the community, etc. A true sense of participation and creating the agenda together with the community is needed in spaces like these. The level of participation must be clear from the planning phase, so that the person always feels part of the program, that they feel ‘I am also key.’ We are always the ones who have to adapt to the preferences of the elites. They make patriarchal decisions”¹⁸³

Finally, one last strategy we heard for addressing tensions between elites and those with community knowledge is for local leaders to **build strong relationships with power holders in order to work with them**.¹⁸⁴ One respondent pointed to the effectiveness of local actors asserting their authority by building relationships directly with power holders and then using those relationships to maintain their voice.¹⁸⁵ Over time, she said, this leads even higher-status individuals to recognize the value of local knowledge.

“We have members who are able to work with the governor, are recognized by them, and that is a rare occasion. Especially for the rural communities. It happened because of a long period of establishing relationships”¹⁸⁶

Measures of success in integrating local knowledge

Assessing success informally

We also inquired about how organizations generally assess the level of success in incorporating local knowledge into development work. Some pointed to international organizations first, explaining that a huge measure of success is **when international actors learn and behave differently or connect with the grassroots in some deeper way.**¹⁸⁷ This might look like an INGO partnering with local organizations more than it did previously,¹⁸⁸ learning something important from the local partner,¹⁸⁹ or returning to a community where it worked previously and utilizing the knowledge it had gathered before.¹⁹⁰ It also might be when an INGO is surprised by a program it did not think would work, and thus learns about the local context via that experience.¹⁹¹

Building upon this, several respondents expressed that success is reached when **local knowledge is bridged with non-local knowledge.** This implies that the gap between these two distinct types of knowledge has been lessened to some extent.¹⁹² One interviewee explained that this happens when they are able to “uphold the cultural context of people, respect their traditional norms and beliefs, but at the same time make sure that it doesn’t go against standards.”¹⁹³ Another person said that this sort of bridging of knowledge often occurs around processes such as the advocacy work contributed by grassroots organizations around UPR or CEDAW processes.¹⁹⁴

Others found success in using local knowledge reflected in **women and other community members making gains** and being empowered, as well as **social norms imposed upon them lessening.**¹⁹⁵ One person said it is when women understand their own rights, despite what norms say.¹⁹⁶ Another pointed out specifically the empowerment of young people, as their understanding

of local knowledge means it is being passed on through generations.¹⁹⁷ Another, from Myanmar, said it is when women take a higher leadership role than before her organization trained them, which also increases their own community knowledge.¹⁹⁸ She gave the example of training young people who have hatred for certain groups based on ethnic tensions and past violations, and seeing them come away with a “broader idea of how to see the political situation of the country.”¹⁹⁹ Thus, for these respondents, use of local knowledge in programming is successful when women become empowered and when knowledge spreads among them.

Another group of respondents found success to be **when a good solution to a problem is posed based on local knowledge.** One example given was when an Iraqi organization solved the problem of girls’ lack of access to schools by using their local knowledge around social norms that were opposed to girls riding bikes to raise awareness and change parents’ thoughts around cycling until eventually girls were able to bike to school.²⁰⁰

A few others pointed to the **involvement of a community in solving problems collectively.**²⁰¹ For example, a respondent from Mozambique sees it as success when the problem of GBV is understood to be a community problem, rather than an individual or family one, and thus the community must be united to achieve the solution to it.²⁰² And in Niger, an interviewee told of how a program that was initially designed to be a GBV one was modified to focus on menstruation and HIV/AIDS, entirely based on the community’s input and desires.²⁰³

Someone else described success as when **local knowledge becomes visible** in some way, such as via a mural or digital space that highlights territorial wisdom.²⁰⁴ And someone else sees it as when **networks are formed** among NGOs that all understand the needs of local stakeholders.²⁰⁵

Measuring contributions to results

In addition to these informal assessments of what it looks like to successfully use local knowledge, we also asked respondents whether they have any practices of how to formally measure the contributions made by local knowledge to program results. While many said they did not have these practices, a few shared some methods. Some discussed **baseline and**

closing analyses as powerful tools for documenting contributions from local knowledge.²⁰⁶ Others discussed the importance of **qualitative measurements rather than quantitative ones**, as case studies, observations, and discussions tend to be far more capable of capturing these contributions than log frames.²⁰⁷ Others explained the importance of **conducting follow-ups** with both community leaders²⁰⁸ and the women and girls who participate in the activities to understand success stories from them.²⁰⁹ Someone else mentioned **checkpoints and markers** for knowing when change has happened.²¹⁰

“Good results come from local knowledge. Results are better when there was local knowledge. We see good results when leaders share lessons learned with communities. This amplifies work, particularly on GBV and women’s and girls’ rights”²¹¹

Experiences sharing knowledge with international actors

We next tried to get an idea of what it is like for local actors to share their knowledge with international actors. This section explores experiences local actors have had with international partners, good and bad practices tried and developed for sharing local knowledge, and suggestions for donor practices to be changed.

Attention paid by international actors

Interviewees had a range of experiences to discuss regarding how well they have been included and listened to by international actors. Many expressed that they have noticed **a significant increase in recent years in opportunities for sitting at the table with international counterparts**.²¹² They now sense that they are often more directly included as co-participants in proposal and budget development processes²¹³ and that sometimes funders will refer them to other proposal processes even when they are rejected.²¹⁴ They have also been more fully included and given a voice at international conferences.²¹⁵ However, one caveat is that sometimes they are invited to international

events but their participation in them is not funded, which makes this more of a performative action in those circumstances.²¹⁶ Despite this, many respondents listed several names of international actors that have supported and listened to them in recent years. Many note that INGOs now make a significant effort to connect with the grassroots community and receive the inputs of local leaders.²¹⁷ Or they have demonstrated willingness to modify their plans based on feedback from local voices.²¹⁸ Local actors particularly appreciate when international actors take their local knowledge into consideration, invite them to contribute to their work, consult with them before they publish any of their research, and invite them to the spaces in which they release jointly developed research.²¹⁹ They also appreciate opportunities to contribute to shadow reporting processes, such as for CEDAW and CSW.²²⁰

Some respondents explained that even when international partners are not fully receptive to them right away, **there is often room to negotiate with them and make gradual progress**.²²¹ One respondent shared experiences of having presented proposals based on community needs and receiving pushback from international partners, but then having been able to back up their opinions with results from assessments, or even by conducting further assessments, and finally getting the ear of the partner through this process.²²² Another shared that developing a relationship with an international organization is a long process, and that it often takes a significant amount of time before international partners are willing to recognize the local context and perspectives of local actors.²²³

“Often partners are flexible and seek to include local actors. Sometimes they are not flexible enough, but through the testimonials we manage to show the importance of this to ensure the success of the project”²²⁴

However, others explained that international actors **do not always listen to them, or they listen but nothing comes of it afterward**.²²⁵ One interviewee from Niger said she is still often involved in calls for proposals where the international partners do not take her feedback into consideration and end up

designing a project that ignores the realities on the ground.²²⁶ An Iraqi leader mentioned having supplied information to international actors and then never hearing from them again, so not knowing whether they utilized her inputs or not.²²⁷ Another respondent from Colombia echoed similar sentiments, describing the negative tendency of international organizations to consult WLOs at the beginning of a process but then fail to circle back to them once they have collected the necessary information, reflecting concerns of extractive practices as explained in a prior section of this report.²²⁸ An Ecuadoran respondent also noted that her knowledge has been used extractively when she is invited to an event once, gives her information, and then is never invited back again or engaged for other opportunities.²²⁹ Furthermore, a partner from Iraq mentioned that international partners in her region in the South will listen to some local partners, but not the feminist organizations; thus, they only pay attention in an exclusionary manner that does not benefit the project in the end.²³⁰ An interviewee from Venezuela said that although international actors claim to want to speak with her about community-level concerns, they are actually only ever interested in discussing high-level political issues.²³¹ And others voiced that they are only consulted at convenient moments, but are rarely listened to in emergency situations.²³²

“When they want us to develop something for them, they listen to us very carefully. But in critical moments, we do not get listened to very carefully.”²³³

This subset of interviewees agreed that **international actors have begun to recognize the need to localize more, but it does not always happen in practice.**²³⁴ In conversations with donors, they see that a lot of localization discussions stay on paper and do not make it into practice.²³⁵ And when more localization practices are implemented, sometimes they seem performative, as one partner assessed that “they are doing meetings for the purpose of meetings and not for results.”²³⁶ Furthermore, another interviewee noted that only some international venues and conferences to which she is invited actually seem to listen to what she has to say, whereas others do not seem to absorb her information at all, and no change comes from her participation.²³⁷

Some respondents specifically noted **structural barriers within the system that limit their participation and interaction with international actors.** For instance, most conversations are still in English, which prevents those without English language abilities from participating.²³⁸ Also, some international spaces set age limits that prioritize young leaders, which exclude others from sharing their knowledge.²³⁹ Another respondent shared that, particularly in Latin America, it is difficult to work in the humanitarian space without being directly involved with the Church, as that structure has a lot of voice and power in international forums, and sometimes her work clashes with their values.²⁴⁰ Therefore, humanitarian organizations that are not part of that apparatus are disadvantaged. Finally, another leader from Ecuador shared that to her, being invited to international spaces often “implies breaking into a space that is not designed for you to participate.”²⁴¹ It is so complex to participate that it often feels like a trap.

Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that **interactions between local and international actors should be much more frequent and meaningful.** Several respondents voiced that they appreciate a diverse array of spaces in which to engage with international actors, and that often smaller workshops where information is shared and conversations are deeper and more meaningful are preferred over large international conferences.²⁴² Some leaders would specifically like more opportunities to engage with donors, as they often only get to communicate with funders via reports, which do not allow for spaces of analysis or joint creation of proposals.²⁴³ They want to see real spaces for criticism and feedback with donors, where both partners can learn from each other.²⁴⁴ Another respondent reflected this sentiment, saying her suggestions to INGOs often get met with rejection of funding and opportunities.²⁴⁵ Others reported satisfaction with their donor interaction, but frustration with levels of engagement by UN entities. This frustration was particularly voiced by a respondent from Myanmar, as the political situation is so dire and lack of reception by the UN is particularly detrimental to their cause.²⁴⁶ Overall, local actors would like for various opportunities for interactions and spaces for genuine engagement with international actors to be more common.

Good and bad practices for sharing knowledge

Interviewees told us that the good and bad practices they have identified for sharing knowledge with international actors very much depends on the particular actor and how they tend to behave. **Some are more difficult than others**, as they tend to come to local actors with “structured frameworks to fill, and these tools do not capture the real thing.”²⁴⁷ They also can be quite set in their ways, not only in terms of program design but in their situation analyses as well. A Venezuelan respondent told us, for example, of her experiences working with humanitarian actors in her country who had come from other crisis contexts and thus treated Venezuela as if it was identical to those, despite the fact that in reality the country is wealthy rather than impoverished, highly educated, and not in the midst of an armed conflict.²⁴⁸ She also explained that, in terms of the political situation in the country, she has seen international actors violate the principle of impartiality and go so far as to criticize her organization for working with government actors in some circumstances or even take political stances themselves.²⁴⁹ Another respondent from Iraq explained her negative experiences sharing knowledge that have resulted in exploitation of the local group.²⁵⁰ She has shared her local knowledge with INGOs that have promised to then include her in their project, but ultimately failed to do so. Therefore, interviewees have found it quite difficult to communicate their local knowledge to certain international partners, and particularly hard to do so without being exploited.

However, others of the women leaders we spoke with have **developed strategies for getting their local knowledge in the hands of international actors successfully**. Some emphasized the importance of one-on-one, interpersonal communication, especially having partners visit the local area where the project is taking place.²⁵¹

“We have partners who come to our area to conduct dialogues with local leaders, share experiences, and hold partners meetings where the funding partners are there so that they can hear from the local women leaders their actual experiences and views. That has been helpful for them to have a more real grasp of the situation”²⁵²

Others find that presenting international actors with reports, evidence, data, research, and other publications tends to reach them most effectively.²⁵³ This seems to be the best way to get information out into the international world in bulk form, and it can be combined with personal stories to be particularly convincing.²⁵⁴ And in contrast to an opinion shared above, one leader even said she does not mind if her data gets extracted and exploited, as long as it gets out there and has an effect on the problem.²⁵⁵

Others said that social media is an effective way for them to share knowledge out to international actors. This is a particularly useful way to reach young people, and it can be used to strategically position issues of local interest within the international spotlight.²⁵⁶ Because some actors find that printing their research and sharing it during events can sometimes be less effective, they have turned to social media advocacy and awareness-raising as a way to disseminate their knowledge.²⁵⁷

Final good practices also include building networks with other NGOs to share knowledge collectively and thus reach a larger audience,²⁵⁸ as well as making sure national organizations or other intermediaries are extremely clear when presenting data at an international level that it came directly from the grassroots.²⁵⁹

Donor practices recommended to be changed

While some recommendations for donor relations were shared in prior sections, we also inquired directly about what donor practices local actors wish to see changed. They told us of a variety of changes they wish to see.

As previously mentioned, local actors would like to see **improved relationships between donors and grantees**.²⁶⁰ They want donors to view them as partners always, whether or not there is a project at hand.²⁶¹ They want partnership to be a two-way, mutually beneficial relationship.²⁶² And they wish that donors would be more sensitive to their contexts and how they affect their work.²⁶³

Another request is that donors **stop bringing in outsiders to do project implementation and instead train local people to do it**.²⁶⁴ One respondent assessed that international actors often do not trust local actors to be capable of learning technical skills, and this is why they never learn them.

“We may have less knowledge about things related to funds, proposals, and complicated matters, but we have more knowledge about the local knowledge and environment. We hope as local NGOs that donors shall include us as local partners and provide us with trainings to build our capacity in project implementation”²⁶⁵

Local leaders also want donors to better **distinguish between national and local organizations in their localization efforts**.²⁶⁶ They find that international actors often believe that any organization located within a country is local, when in reality national organizations do not hold specific local knowledge to nearly the same degree as truly community-based organizations. One respondent explicitly expressed frustration with the fact that huge funds are now coming from donors for localization efforts, but they rarely reach the local level because national organizations do not give to local ones.²⁶⁷ Another said that resources get stuck at the intermediary level because international actors are so

distant and cannot reach the local level.²⁶⁸ Local leaders want donors to remember to actually give locally, not just nationally.

“They like to think that any organization in a country knows everything about every community, but it’s not true; there are many differences from municipality to municipality”²⁶⁹

Similarly to this, interviewees request that donors **fund local organizations based in the community where the project is taking place**, rather than any local group from another region.²⁷⁰ An Iraqi interviewee gave the example of donors often giving to local groups from the North of Iraq to carry out project activities in the South, which does not bring the correct local knowledge to the project.²⁷¹

Another recommendation is that donors **lessen the bureaucratic requirements, restrictions, and conditions** placed upon grantees.²⁷² They find the combination of these requirements and the lack of support that comes with them to be an extractive practice.²⁷³ They are often asked to provide, for example, data from project activities disaggregated to such a level that it is prohibitively difficult for the local organization to collect.²⁷⁴ Or donors enforce extremely rigid auditing requirements, even in countries that are politically unstable, such as Myanmar where gathering original receipts for every purchase is not possible because of the armed conflict.²⁷⁵ Another respondent in Bangladesh said that donors sometimes require specific types of audits that her organization cannot afford, and that strict restrictions from auditors mean that activists cannot make in-the-moment adjustments to budget categories, even when there are security risks for women and girls, because they would have to submit a formal request ahead of time to do so.²⁷⁶ Local organizations note that donor restrictions are often limiting to small organizations, particularly, for whom the burden of conducting an audit is heaviest.²⁷⁷ Another common restriction is that many donors cannot fund unregistered organizations, which leaves organizations such as the one we spoke to in Myanmar out of many proposal consideration processes because they cannot register in the country for fear of security risks.²⁷⁸

Relatedly, many interviewees expressed desires for donors to especially **take local context into account when imposing administrative requirements.**²⁷⁹ This means recognizing that there is less reliable internet access and technology in many areas, that some terrain is much more difficult to navigate, and more.²⁸⁰ One respondent from the Philippines specifically noted that during the COVID-19 pandemic, many donors continued to operate as if it were business as usual, requesting reports on a monthly basis and neglecting to realize that the pandemic was felt differently in the Global North than the Global South.²⁸¹ She said she wished donors could live there for one month to understand the reality and the burdens that such demands placed upon her organization.²⁸²

“When donors fund us, they need to analyze the ground level first. They need to research what is good for us, what the rate is here, etc. There are so many gaps between the donor requirements and local requirements”²⁸³

Another recommendation we heard was for donors to **be more flexible in terms of what they fund.**²⁸⁴ Many expressed frustration that donors are limited in the topics that they want to address, and that calls for proposals tend to be quite restrictive. They note that this is an imposition of approach, and limits them to work on issues that are not in line with what local knowledge deems to be most needed in a given community.²⁸⁵ They also expressed having been forced to implement projects only in certain areas, rather than the ones the local organization chooses.²⁸⁶ And they mentioned that donors often will not fund certain budget items within a project, such as technology for project participants, as they see it as unnecessary even when local groups see it as critical to the success of a project.²⁸⁷ Additionally, while leaders in some regions expressed that donors are not willing enough to change what they have funded in the past – such as sewing and hairdressing workshops for women²⁸⁸ – in other regions they noted that donors are too preoccupied with creativity and newness, and create unrealistic expectations for local organizations to constantly reinvent the wheel rather than implement what is known to work well.²⁸⁹ Together, each of these testimonies point to the need to provide a greater

level of flexibility, so that grassroots organizations themselves can determine what is most important to the success of a project.

“Sometimes in disaster response, because of the need to come up with proposals in a very short period of time, you need funders to have some level of flexibility. Because the situation is changing very quickly. There should be more flexibility from funding partners, because at the end of the day who is left behind in the communities? It’s not the funding partners, it’s us. So, if they value local knowledge, they should be more flexible”²⁹⁰

Another request was for donors to **provide longer-term funding and work with partners over longer periods of time.** As it stands, they have been known to return to a community years after a project concluded and work with entirely new people, thus “completely neglecting the original beneficiaries.”²⁹¹

Local leaders also want to **counteract injustices and unfair pay distribution within the humanitarian system.**²⁹² One interviewee reflected that donors often have high expectations for activities, but do not fund salaries well enough to meet those expectations.²⁹³ This leads to inequalities between frontline workers and expatriates who are paid more to work from national headquarters.²⁹⁴ Another respondent noted that donors like to spend money on large venues for events, rather than on projects that would be more useful for local communities.²⁹⁵

Interviewees also want donors to **provide funding for small, nascent organizations.**²⁹⁶ They noted how difficult it is for organizations to have their voices heard when they are young,²⁹⁷ and said that donors are often reluctant to fund them.²⁹⁸ They also said it is very difficult to acquire funding when an organization is new, particularly because the administrative and financial conditions are difficult to comply with and they often require command of the English language.²⁹⁹

Donors should instead support these groups so that they can grow.

Another request was that donors **cease to carry out “donor propaganda.”** A respondent from Venezuela described this as when donors only want to attend events, have their photos taken, and put their logos on the materials, without actual regard for the issue at hand or the communities affected.³⁰⁰

Local actors also want donors to **take more care to use the specific language and terms used by local partners,** to reflect their intention to understand local norms.³⁰¹ As noted previously, interviewees have found that international actors tend to use terms that are not known by the local community, which leads to confusion and complications in working relationships.³⁰²

“International NGOs who are not familiar with our environment always use expressions and abbreviations that local organizations do not understand, which leads to major issues in program design and implementation”³⁰³

Local actors also wish donors would **create networks of solidarity in the communities they fund in.**³⁰⁴ This is particularly important in emergency situations, as competition for funds often increases in these scenarios, so donors should play a role in maintaining cohesion and cooperation among all partners.³⁰⁵

Another request was made only by respondents from Iraq, though that does not necessarily mean the sentiment is not felt by actors elsewhere as well. These actors wish that donors would **work more transparently and not give special treatment to partners with whom they have previously established relationships.**³⁰⁶ They feel frustrated having seen donors repeatedly fund the most well known groups who have developed relationships with donors, without considering all organizations first.³⁰⁷ They also noted political parties’ influences in these donor-grantee relationships, which strips transparency from the interactions.³⁰⁸ And some even mentioned experiences working with donors’ interpreters and finding them not to be honest or trustworthy, because

they “hire people they have personal relationships with.”³⁰⁹

Finally, and perhaps most importantly to this report, women leaders recommended that donors **recognize the value in local knowledge.**³¹⁰ They want donors to understand the importance of the various consultation and community engagement processes they conduct in their societies, and how beneficial those processes are for project design and implementation.³¹¹ They want project funding to be based in evidence that stems from local knowledge, rather than preconceived plans or ideas that come from outside.³¹² Essentially, they need donors to listen to grassroots actors and the local communities they represent before and as they enter communities.

“Outside actors must realize that they are not going into a community to teach, but that knowledge already exists there”³¹³



Annexes

Annex A Countries and Organizations Represented in the Study

Africa	Cameroon	Community Centre for Integrated Development (CCID) nfomi.berka@comuceid.org
	Cameroon	Community Association for Vulnerable Persons (CAVP) cavp2377@gmail.com
	Mozambique	Associacao Liwoningo
	Niger	Comité des Jeunes Filles Leaders (COJEFIL) cojefil2015@gmail.com
	Niger	Association des Jeunes Filles pour la Santé et la Reproduction (AJFSR) kadiaidani@outlook.com
	Niger	Alliance pour la Paix et la Sécurité apaise2018@gmail.com
	Anonymous	Anonymous
Asia	Bangladesh	RW Welfare Society (RWWS) rsmimi15@gmail.com Official - rowwsbd@gmail.com
	Nepal	Women's Rehabilitation Centre Nepal and National Alliance of Women Human Right Defenders chairperson@worecnepal.org
	Burma/Myanmar	Burmese Women's Union (BWU) bwu.secretary@protonmail.com
	Philippines	Pambansang Kongreso ng Kababaihan sa Kanayunan (PKKK) ruralwomenphil@gmail.com

Latin America	Colombia	El Observatorio de Asuntos de Género de Norte de Santander direccion@oagnnds.org
	Ecuador	Fundación Mujer & Mujer mujerymujerec@gmail.com
	Ecuador	Fundación Alas de Colibrí veronica.s@fundacionalasdecolibri.org
	Mexico	Musas de Metal
	Venezuela	Centro de Justicia y Paz (CEPAZ) bborges@cepaz.org
	Venezuela	Daniella Inojosa
Middle East and North Africa	Iraq	Women's Rights and Children Association altaqwa_assoc@yahoo.co
	Iraq	Free Yezidi Foundation
	Iraq	Our Organization for Woman and Child Culture m.mum20@yahoo.com
	Iraq	Kurdistan Women Union viansuleiman@yahoo.com
	Iraq	Awan Organization for Awareness and Capability Development awanorg@hotmail.com
	Iraq	Hope NGO for Development Hope.alrajaa@gmail.com
	Iraq	Iraqi Women's League shamorammat@yahoo.com
	Iraq	Women Empowerment Organization info@weoiraq.org
	Iraq	Alteeba Organization (TORD) teeba.2017@yahoo.com
	Iraq	Women's Human Rights Center Dwrc_sc@yahoo.com Maha.alsakban@yahoo.com
	Iraq	Anonymous
	Jordan	Arab Women Organization of Jordan (AWO) wesal@awo.org.jo

Annex B List of Interviews

Interview #1 on August 14, 2022 with Our Organization for Woman and Child Culture

Interview #2 on August 16, 2022 with Fundación Alas de Colibrí

Interview #3 on August 17, 2022 with Women's Human Rights Center

Interview #4 on August 18, 2022 with Alteeba Organization (TORD)

Interview #5 on August 18, 2022 with Women's Rehabilitation Centre Nepal (WOREC)/ National Alliance of Women Human Right Defenders

Interview #6 on August 19, 2022 with Hope NGO for Development

Interview #7 on August 19, 2022 with Centro de Justicia y Paz (CEPAZ)

Interview #8 on August 20, 2022 with Kurdistan Women Union

Interview #9 on August 22, 2022 with an anonymous WLO

Interview #10 on August 22, 2022 with Women Empowerment Organization

Interview #11 on August 22, 2022 with Burmese Women's Union

Interview #12 on August 22, 2022 with an anonymous woman leader

Interview #13 on August 24, 2022 with Iraqi Women's League

Interview #14 on August 25, 2022 with Women's Rights and Children Association

Interview #15 on August 25, 2022 with Daniella Inojosa

Interview #16 on August 26, 2022 with RW Welfare Society (RWWS)

Interview #17 on August 27, 2022 with Awan Organization for Awareness and Capability Development

Interview #18 on August 29, 2022 with Community Centre for Integrated Development (CCID)

Interview #19 on August 30, 2022 with Community Association for Vulnerable Persons (CAVP)

Interview #20 on September 2, 2022 El Observatorio de Asuntos de Género de Norte de Santander

Interview #21 on September 9, 2022 with Pambansang Kongreso ng Kababaihan sa Kanayunan (PKKK)

Interview #22 on September 15, 2022 with Fundación Mujer & Mujer

Interview #23 on September 19, 2022 with Associacao Liwoningo

Interview #24 on September 23, 2022 with Musas de Metal

Interview #25 on October 5, 2022 with Arab Women Organization of Jordan

Interview #26 on October 17, 2022 with Free Yezidi Foundation

Interview #27 on October 20, 2022 with Comité des Jeunes Filles Leaders (COJEFIL)

Interview #28 on November 1, 2022 with Association des Jeunes Filles pour la Santé et la Reproduction (AJFSR)

Interview #29 on November 18, 2022 with Alliance pour la Paix et la Sécurité



Endnotes

- 1 Integrating Local Knowledge in Development Programming, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). July 2022. https://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/2022-07/integrating_local_knowledge_07112022-400pm.pdf
- 2 Ibid, p. 2
- 3 Interview #13. Please refer to the List of Interviews in **Annex B**
- 4 Interview #7
- 5 Interview #21
- 6 Interview #22
- 7 Interview #15
- 8 Interviews #2, #5, #18, #19, #28
- 9 Interviews #7, #10, #12, #25
- 10 Interviews #13 and #18
- 11 Interviews #1, #5, #8, #12, #29
- 12 Interview #5
- 13 Interviews #4 and #14
- 14 Interview #24
- 15 Interview #5
- 16 Interview #28
- 17 Interview #10
- 18 Interviews #18 and #23
- 19 Interviews #8 and #27
- 20 Interviews #4, #13, #24
- 21 Interviews #4, #24, #26 (quoted)
- 22 Interview #1
- 23 Interview #26
- 24 Interviews #7, #8, #13, #27
- 25 Interviews #12, #19, #28
- 26 Interviews #10 and #23 (quoted)
- 27 Interviews #17 and #28
- 28 Interview #13
- 29 Interview #19
- 30 Interview #1
- 31 Interview #19
- 32 Interview #10
- 33 Interview #7
- 34 Interview #14
- 35 Interview #17
- 36 Interview #6
- 37 Interviews #15 and #20
- 38 Interview #6
- 39 Interview #8
- 40 Interview #3
- 41 Interview #21
- 42 Interview #5
- 43 Interview #2
- 44 Interviews #10 (quoted), #13, #14
- 45 Interview #27
- 46 Interviews #5, #6, #8, #9, #14, #16, #17, #25, #27
- 47 Interviews #15, #22, #27
- 48 Interview #15
- 49 Interview #2
- 50 Interview #11
- 51 Interview #21
- 52 Interview #25
- 53 *Minga* is a Quechua word used often to describe collective work, or solidarity. See here <https://nacla.org/news/minga-resistance-policy-making-below>
- 54 Interview #2
- 55 Interview #20
- 56 Interview #22
- 57 Interview #22
- 58 Interviews #12, #23, #27, #28, #29
- 59 Interview #23
- 60 Interview #7
- 61 Interviews #5 and #25 (quoted)
- 62 Interview #18
- 63 Interviews #4, #9, #13, #14, #17
- 64 Interview #13
- 65 Interview #27
- 66 Interviews #1, #12, #17, #20
- 67 Interview #12
- 68 Interviews #1, #17, #20
- 69 Interview #20
- 70 Interview #17
- 71 Interviews #7, #9, #22, #28
- 72 Interview #7
- 73 Interview #28
- 74 Interview #22
- 75 Interview #9
- 76 Interview #22
- 77 Interviews #1, #3, #4, #6, #13, #17
- 78 Interview #3
- 79 Interview #13
- 80 Interview #10
- 81 Interview #4
- 82 Interview #6
- 83 Interview #6
- 84 Interview #19
- 85 Interview #2
- 86 Interview #21
- 87 Interview #21
- 88 Interview #23
- 89 Interview #20
- 90 Interview #20
- 91 Interviews #10, #20, #22
- 92 Interview #20
- 93 Interview #24
- 94 Interview #7
- 95 Interview #5
- 96 Interview #18
- 97 Interview #16
- 98 Interview #17
- 99 Interview #11
- 100 Interviews #3, #5, #6, #7, #8, #10, #11, #12, #13, #14, #19, #23, #29
- 101 Interviews #9, #11, #12, #23, #27
- 102 Interviews #6, #8, #9, #11, #13
- 103 Interview #11
- 104 Interviews #12 and #13
- 105 Interviews #5 and #14
- 106 Interview #2
- 107 Interview #7
- 108 Interview #23
- 109 Interview #19
- 110 Interview #3
- 111 Interview #6
- 112 Interviews #20 and #22

113	Interview #20	169	Interview #19	224	Interview #27
114	Interview #22	170	Interview #16	225	Interviews #1, #5, #8, #12, #29
115	Interviews #2, #9, #16, #21	171	Interview #16	226	Interview #29
116	Interview #2	172	Interviews #3, #8, #13	227	Interview #17
117	Interview #2	173	Interviews #3 and #8	228	Interview #20
118	Interview #9	174	Interview #28	229	Interview #22
119	Interview #16	175	Interviews #2, #5, #18, #19, #28	230	Interview #1
120	Interview #16	176	Interviews #5 and #18	231	Anonymous comment from an interview
121	Interview #21	177	Interview #5	232	Interviews #5 and #9
122	Interview #21	178	Interview #5	233	Interview #5
123	Interviews #2, #5, #15, #25, #28	179	Interview #18	234	Interviews #5 and #12
124	Interview #2	180	Interview #19	235	Interview #12
125	Interview #15	181	Interview #19	236	Interview #8
126	Interview #25	182	Interview #2	237	Interview #25
127	Interview #15	183	Interview #2	238	Interview #24
128	Interview #28	184	Interview #21	239	Interview #24
129	Interview #16	185	Interview #21	240	Anonymous comment from an interview
130	Interview #2 and Interview #23	186	Interview #21	241	Interview #22
131	Interview #23	187	Interviews #7, #10, #12, #25	242	Interviews #5 and #26
132	Interview #2	188	Interview #12	243	Interviews #2 and #4
133	Interviews #2, #4, #5, #7, #9, #12, #15, #18, #22	189	Interviews #7 and #12	244	Interview #2
134	Interviews #2 and #5	190	Interview #12	245	Interview #1
135	Interview #5	191	Interview #10	246	Interview #11
136	Interview #18	192	Interview #18	247	Interview #5
137	Interview #18	193	Interview #18	248	Anonymous comment from an interview
138	Interviews #4 and #14	194	Interview #25	249	Anonymous comment from an interview
139	Interview #29	195	Interviews #4, #6, #7, #8, #11, #13, #27	250	Interview #10
140	Interview #10	196	Interview #13	251	Interviews #5, #20, #21
141	Interview #15	197	Interview #27	252	Interview #21
142	Interviews #7, #17, #18, #22	198	Interview #11	253	Interviews #8, #9, #17, #18
143	Interview #7	199	Interview #11	254	Interview #18
144	Interview #18	200	Interview #8	255	Interview #8
145	Interview #28	201	Interviews #23 and #28	256	Interview #20
146	Interview #22	202	Interview #23	257	Interview #22
147	Interview #22	203	Interview #28	258	Interview #13
148	Interview #22	204	Interview #2	259	Interview #25
149	Interview #22	205	Interview #13	260	Interviews #2, #9, #21
150	Interview #1, #10, #12, #13, #19, #22	206	Interviews #3, #4, #14, #15	261	Interviews #2 and #9
151	Interview #10	207	Interviews #5 and #7	262	Interview #21
152	Interview #1	208	Interview #28	263	Interview #21
153	Interview #6	209	Interviews #13 and #4	264	Interviews #10 and #23
154	Interviews #6 and #12	210	Interview #11	265	Interview #10
155	Interview #22	211	Interview #27	266	Interviews #16, #21, #25, #29
156	Interview #6	212	Interviews #1, #3, #4, #6, #7, #10, #12, #14, #15, #16, #18, #19, #20, #22, #25, #28	267	Interview #16
157	Interview #12	213	Interviews #2 and #12	268	Interview #7
158	Interview #22	214	Interview #22	269	Interview #21
159	Interview #22	215	Interviews #7 and #19	270	Interview #17
160	Interviews #1, #11, #15, #23	216	Interview #19	271	Interview #17
161	Interview #23	217	Interview #6 and #16	272	Interviews #7, #11, #12, #15, #16, #21, #24, #29
162	Interview #1	218	Interview #3	273	Interview #7
163	Interview #15	219	Interview #20	274	Interview #24
164	Interview #19	220	Interviews #10 and #21	275	Interview #11
165	Interviews #3, #8, #16, #19	221	Interviews #11, #21, #27		
166	Interviews #16 and #19	222	Interview #11		
167	Interview #19	223	Interview #21		
168	Interview #19				

276 Interview #16
277 Interview #29
278 Interview #11
279 Interviews #16 and #21
280 Interview #21
281 Interview #21
282 Interview #21
283 Interview #16
284 Interviews #7, #12, #13, #15, #16, #17,
#21, #23, #24
285 Interview #17
286 Interview #13
287 Interview #16

288 Interviews #4 and #14
289 Interview #24
290 Interview #21
291 Interview #8
292 Interviews #12 and #13
293 Interview #12
294 Interview #12
295 Interview #13
296 Interviews #1, #2, #15, #27
297 Interview #2
298 Interview #27
299 Interview #1
300 Interview #7

301 Interview #15
302 Interviews #10, #13, #14
303 Interview #13
304 Interview #5
305 Interview #5
306 Interviews #3, #4, #6, #13
307 Interviews #4, #6, #13
308 Interview #14
309 Interview #3
310 Interviews #5, #21, #25
311 Interview #21
312 Interview #25
313 Interview #5



Arab Women Organization of Jordan (AWO)