How Danish pooled funds promote locally led development in the Global South

hn Consultants
Enabling efforts

THE DANISH YOUTH COUNCIL

DPOD
DISABLED PEOPLE'S ORGANISATIONS DENMARK

CISU CIVIL SOCIETY IN DEVELOPMENT

CKU
Center for Church-Based Development

28 March 2025

Contents

1. Introduction....3

2. Background – trends in the local leadership agenda....4

3. Methodology....5

4. Civil society cooperation and locally led development....8

5. The added value of membership, peer-to-peer partnerships and volunteers....9

6. Equitability in the partnerships....12

7. The role of language and terminology....16

8. Access to knowledge and information....17

9. The granting mechanisms: The pooled fund managers as donors....18

Annexes

1. Terms of Reference

2. List of selected partnerships

3. Interview guides

4. Survey questionnaire

6. Selected survey results

7. List of references - inspiration for further reading

1. Introduction

The four Danish umbrella organisations Centre for Church-Based Development (CKU), Civil Society in Development (CISU), the Danish Youth Council (DUF) and Disabled People's Organisations Denmark (DPOD) manage pooled funding totally amounting to almost DKK 400 mil/year[1] (2024) for the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). They and their member organisations are important actors in Denmark's efforts to promote a strong civil society in the Global South and – each in their way – play a key role in promoting democracy, developing future leaders, reducing poverty, reaching the marginalised, and organising citizens in the Global South. Furthermore, all four umbrellas are engaged in various global and regional networks supporting promotion of civil society and voices of people and groups from the Global South.

The member[2] organisations of the four umbrellas apply for funding in each umbrella organisation's international pool to fund interventions carried out together with their respective partner organisations in the Global South. As part of the agreement with the MFA, CKU, DUF and DPOD may also use up to 20% of their total grant on their own activities, supporting the aim of the pooled fund[3]. E.g. DPOD has direct partnerships with like-minded disability umbrella organisations in selected countries.[4]

Table 1: Overview of pooled funds' grants to civil society development

	CKU	CISU	DUF	DPOD
Type of member organisations	Faith-based organisations	Civil society organisations working in the Global South – either as their main mandate or as part of it.	Youth organisations	Organisations of persons with disabilities
# of member organisations	33	304	78	36
# of current grants	36[5]	464[6]	65	34[7]
Funds allocated for grants[8] in 2024 (in DKK)	14,228,462	219,512,188	13,523,755 (2024)	28,490,000[9]
Funds allocated for own activities in Global South in 2024 (in DKK)	2,500,000		945,000 (2024)	7,486,000[10]

The four umbrella organisations are strongly committed to the agenda of locally led development and therefore commissioned this analysis of how they and their member organisations can further improve their approaches to partnership, local leadership and locally led development – and how they can inspire future efforts within and beyond the four pooled funds by showcasing best practices related to local leadership.

The analysis was carried out from December 2024 to March 2025 by a Consultancy Team (CT) from HN Consultants Aps consisting of team leader Helene Ellemann-Jensen (MSc in International Development Studies and Communication) and team member Helene Jørgensen (MSc in Sociology). The CT was assisted by the following context specialists: Ms. Era Shresta, Nepal (Independent Consultant and Shift the Power Fellow 2024/25), Dr. Christine Mbonyingingo, Burundi (Senior Consultant), Ms. Saba Yassin, Jordan (Independent Consultant) and Mr. David Kyaddondo, Uganda (Researcher, Makerere University).

The **objectives** of the analysis were twofold:

1. To inform and inspire future efforts by showcasing good practice
2. To provide concrete recommendations to the pooled fund managers on how to improve their approaches to locally led development

This report mainly focuses on objective 2, while objective 1 is dealt with in a separate document.

2. Background – trends in the local leadership agenda

The debate around **local leadership** in development cooperation – or **locally led development** – is not new. In many ways, it reflects the broader history of decolonisation, power dynamics, and the struggle for a more inclusive, fair, and contextually relevant development. In its early years, development assistance was mainly delivered with a rather top-down and entirely donor-driven approach focused on economic growth and industrialisation. In the 1990s, the international development community started to embrace people-centred or participatory development, with an emphasis on involving local communities in decision-making processes and an acknowledgment of the importance of the need for local knowledge in development projects. This approach, however, was still rather instrumental without really challenging the structures perpetuating the power imbalances between donors (mainly Global North) and recipients (mainly Global South).

In the 2010s, activists, scholars, and practitioners from the Global South began to push for **decolonisation of aid** – arguing that aid should not only be reoriented towards local needs but should also dismantle the existing power structures that left Global South countries in a subordinate position.[11] The hashtag **#ShiftThePower** emerged in the lead-up to the Global Summit on Community Philanthropy held in 2016 and became the headline of a transformative agenda and movement that calls for fundamental shifts in how power is distributed in the development and humanitarian sectors and in global governance. The movement gained momentum also in the humanitarian arena at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, where commitments on **localisation** of humanitarian assistance were included in the Grand Bargain. This entailed increasing funding to local actors and altering the power dynamics in aid relations (although many critics noted that the real power still rested with Western donors and that just providing more funds to local organisations did not change the power structures).

In December 2023, the *#ShiftThePower Global Summit*[12] held in Bogotá reinforced the idea that true transformation in the development sector will require systemic changes that empower local actors, enhance accountability, and promote global solidarity, ultimately making development aid more equitable, sustainable, and effective. It emphasised the need for **decolonising** aid practices and **shifting power** from international organisations and donors to the communities that are most affected by crises and development challenges.

Today, parts of the debate continue to centre around the concept **structural racism**, which refers to "the normalisation and legitimatisation of an array of dynamics – historical, cultural, institutional and interpersonal – that routinely advantage White people, while producing chronic adverse outcomes for people of colour worldwide".[13] Some argue that we should start to talk about 'repair' rather than about 'aid' and that "certain modern-day practices and norms reinforce colonial dynamics and beliefs such as the '**White saviour' ideology** visible in fundraising and communications imagery used by INGOs[14], to the organisational structures of INGOs in the Global South and the attitudes of some White international aid workers working in Global South".[15]

The methodological challenge and paradox

Summing up, the call for a more empowered Global South, self-determined development, and justice-oriented aid systems has grown and is now stronger than ever. This means that the aid communities in the Global North need to redefine their roles and look for new ways of working – including new ways of thinking and speaking. However, developing new mindsets and redefining the traditional roles of donors, national governments, and international NGOs also presents a paradox – including in this analysis. For how can a study initiated in the Global North (and carried out primarily by Danish consultants) – with all the potentially in-built biases – conclude or recommend anything about shifting power to the Global South? Who are we (white Westerners) to define what is locally led development in the Global South? Within this context, the mere existence of a pooled funds granting system – developed and based in the North and distributing aid via organisations also in the North – is per se problematic. Can a funding system controlled (ultimately) by the Danish government in any way contribute to challenging any power balances?

Nevertheless, one of the reflections of the #ShiftThePower Global Summit was: How do you use power responsibly once you have it? How can we use our positionality and power to influence the sector to do better?[16] And this is, in our interpretation, what the Danish pools have done – started a journey to explore how they (and their member organisations) can best use power responsibly and address the current power imbalances – and, ultimately, promote more equitable partnerships. Maybe this will not spark major systemic changes, and it obviously has its limitations and biases. But if it can encourage conversations about power dynamics, increase awareness about in-built preconceptions and inappropriate language, and create minor changes that enhance accountability and equity in partnerships, it will be a move towards shifting power.

Hence, the intention of this study has been to shed light on the partnerships between relatively small and diverse Danish organisations and their partners in the Global South and explore their roles in promoting locally led development – within the pooled funding system. All four pools see equitable partnerships as a particularly important dimension of their fund management. The pooled fund mechanisms enable development cooperation and partnerships to unfold among a different set of stakeholders, representing community members or at least civil society representatives in the Global South and the Global North.

Having said that, it should be noted that the scope of the study has not included a full assessment of how well the pooled funds and partnerships enable local leadership among community members. This would require a research design where e.g. fieldwork is at the centre of the scope and the researchers are anchored in the Global South. It is important to note that any input from (South and North) partner organisations regarding the role of community members is subject to the perception of the partner representative(s) and may not reflect the views of community members.

As mentioned above, many of the current trends and discussions around the local leadership/shift-the-power agenda derive from decolonisation, structural racism and white saviour complex. A crosscutting issue relates to power and the inherent power imbalance in the overall development assistance system where some are donors and others are recipients of funds. This power imbalance is further emphasised when funding of partnerships requires i) at least one organisation to originate from the same country as the donor,[17] and ii) one partner to be the official grant-holder and responsible for the budget, administration and reporting. Thus, a key question throughout the analysis has been how to create an enabling environment for more balanced power relations?

3. Methodology

Preparatory activities

The preparation for the study comprised the following activities:

- Coordinating meetings with representatives of the four pools including selection of funding facilities to be included in the analysis
- Review of documents: strategies and guidelines for administration of each pooled fund and inspirational materials related to the local leadership/shift-the-power agenda
- Development of selection criteria and – in agreement with the pool representatives – selection of organisations to be included in focus group discussions and survey
- Exploratory meetings with representatives of the four pools discussing perceptions of local leadership, administrative obstacles and incentives as well as examples of initiatives taken to promote locally led development
- Interviews with representatives from the MFA with particular insight in the role of the pooled funds in Danish civil society development assistance
- Interviews with two South experts[18] on the locally led development agenda to better understand the structural opportunities and challenges in South/North cooperation between smaller civil society organisations
- Development of interview guides and briefing of context experts
- Development of survey questions and preparation of Inception Note

Data collection

The partnerships between the South and North (Danish) organisations are the core of the activities supported by the pooled funds. Therefore, representatives from these partnerships have also been the core of this study of local leadership. The interaction has happened through surveys, interviews and validation workshops. Due to time constraints, the survey and the interviews have been conducted simultaneously.

Partner survey

With the aim of providing an overview of current practice regarding locally led development in the pool-funded partnerships, a survey questionnaire of 51 questions was designed.[19] Several questions were formulated in a way which required qualitative rather than quantitative answers. The formulation of survey questions was based on the issues listed in the Terms of Reference, desk study findings, initial observations and input from Global South context specialists. The aim of the survey was to provide information on trends across partnerships supported by the four pooled funds and serve as a supplement to the qualitative methods applied in the study. The questionnaire was developed in English and tested by selected South and North partners before finalisation. Subsequently it was translated into Spanish.[20]

The survey sample included all Danish organisations and their partners with active project grants, funded by one of the four pooled funds, by the end of 2024. The survey was shared via SurveyMonkey to a total of 681 organisation representatives, of which 270 responded, equalling a response rate of approx. 40%. 66% of the responding organisations were South based, 34% from the North. The number of responses distributed on pooled funds were 152 from CISU, 38 CKU, 50 DPOD and 30 DUF grantees.[21]

Partnership case interviews

The CT has interviewed representatives of North and South based organisations involved in a total of 16 partnerships funded by one of the four pooled funds. The selection of cases has been based on longlists of 7-8 partnerships proposed by each of the four pools.

Based on the principles of a) diversity and b) pragmatism, four partnerships were selected from each of the four pooled funds. One of these was a direct partnership between DPOD and the Ugandan disability umbrella NUDOR, while the rest were partnerships made up by Danish member organisations and their South based partners. Diversity measures included factual parameters such as type and length of partnership, size of organisations and country of partnership in the South, target groups and the key focus area of the partnership. Pragmatic measures included limitation of geographical diversity to three countries and/or regions in order to involve relevant context specialists to conduct the data collection and contribute to the analysis. The final list of selected partnerships, which is attached in Annex 2, was validated by the pools.

Interviews with partners were conducted separately, organisation by organisation. The Danish organisations were interviewed by the CT in Denmark, whereas the organisations in the Global South were interviewed by the respective context specialists. Thus, Era Shresta conducted interviews with organisations in Nepal, Philippines and Bangladesh; Christine Mbonyingino with organisations in Burundi and Rwanda, Saba Yassin with an organisation in Egypt and David Kyaddondo with organisations in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania.

Two sets of semi-structured interview guides were developed, one for the Danish partner organisations and one for the South partner organisations, leaving room for individual adjustments, taking any contextual or factual variation into account. In cases where the organisations in Denmark were interviewed prior to their South partners, the CT shared issues of special interest with the context specialists in order for them to verify to what extent the North perspectives on the partnerships were reflected in the South.

Some of the interviews (in Denmark and in the Global South) were held with individuals, whereas others involved several persons. Most were conducted online – six South partner interviews took place as physical meetings.[22] The informants were organisation representatives with knowledge about the partnership and the activities taking place in relation to the partnership. In the case of the Danish Association of Persons with Physical Disability (DHF), where the partnership involves nine Ugandan disability organisations, only one focus group interview was held with a representative from each of the partner organisations. In the case of the AIDS Foundation, only one of two Ugandan partners in the same partnership was able to participate.

Due to time limitations, budget constraints and broad geographical scope, it was unfortunately not possible during this study to interview project participants, community members or other stakeholders to verify specific findings from the focus group interviews.

Validation workshops
After the data collection, two validation workshops were held online in order to test the preliminary findings, best practice cases and recommendations. Representatives of the Global South partners of the Danish member organisations were invited for the first workshop held on the 27 February (nine South representatives participated), and representatives of the Danish member organisations for the second held on the 28 February 2025 (15 North representatives participated). The context experts conducting the focus group discussions with the Global South partners co-facilitated the first validation workshop. The feedback from the validation workshops has been taken into consideration in the findings and recommendations found in this report.

Language and terminology
The use of terminology and language in this report includes the use of North and South, written with capital first letter to indicate the reference to a named location rather than a definition of a person or group and as a somewhat less biased terminology than 'development country' and 'developed country'.[23] The report has been written in English to reduce the barriers of accessibility for the partner organisations, compared to the use of Danish. That said, the CT is aware of the inherent bias in using English in its communication with representatives from the Global South.

In this study, we also use the international NGO Peace Direct's reference to the word 'local' as "*... development, humanitarian aid and peacebuilding initiatives and programmes owned and led by people working in their own context*".[24] This definition of 'local' does not rule out the potential power imbalance that may (still) occur between a local organisation and its surrounding community, when partnering with a North organisation. Nor does it distinguish between who is 'more' local as this may depend on the observer, the context and other factors.

Throughout the analysis, the terms 'locally led development' and 'local leadership' are used interchangeably to describe the study subject, namely how the pools create an enabling environment for equitable partnerships between civil society organisations (CSOs) in Denmark and in the Global South.

Last, but not least, we are inspired by Peace Direct's "*Nine roles that intermediaries can play in international cooperation*",[25] which identifies relevant roles of intermediaries through the lens of locally led development. Although the roles are more aimed at INGOs than relatively small CSOs or pooled funds, we believe that some of them are relevant for this study and therefore refer to them in some of the sections. The nine roles are (please refer to Peace Direct's publication for elaboration):

1. Interpreter
2. Knowledge broker and producer
3. Trainer, coach and co-learner
4. Convenor
5. Connector and eco-system builder
6. Advocate and amplifier
7. Watchdog
8. Critical friend
9. Sidekick

CARE International[26] has identified a similar list of potential roles they can play as an INGO in different contexts as a partner with other CSOs. Several are very similar to the nine roles above, but it is worth mentioning the following roles as particularly relevant for the pools and their member organisations: **Advocate for civil society, Public support mobiliser** and **Civil society grant manager**. There are several other examples of role definitions and how to enable equity in partnerships, developed by INGOs, CSO consortia, consultancies etc. For a list of further reading for inspiration, please see Annex 7.

4. Civil society cooperation and locally led development

The partnerships supported by the four Danish pools are based on a number of features, distinguishing them from development partnerships involving larger and more 'professional' INGOs. First of all, they represent a very diverse civil society in the Global North as well as in the Global South. They also focus on a number of different thematic issues and have different constituencies,[27] history, size[28] - and operate in very different contexts all over the world.

As mentioned in the introduction, all four pools promote civil society development, and most of the partnerships supported by the pools focus on developing the capacity of South partner organisations and/or community representatives to lead local development. Promoting a strong **civil society** in the South and promoting **locally led development** both involve strengthening the ability of local actors to address their own needs and challenges. The two concepts are closely related but focus on slightly different aspects. While civil society is the broader organisational and advocacy framework that supports citizens' voices and participation, locally led development is more focused on ensuring that development initiatives and solutions are driven by local needs, priorities, and leadership. Thus, promoting a strong civil society can help build the capacity for locally led development by fostering the networks, skills, advocacy and local representation necessary for local actors to take leadership in development efforts.

While supporting a diverse and vibrant civil society in the Global South for the four pools is a goal in itself, it is also a means to an end, and the pools play an important role as **advocates for civil society**.[29] Civil society organisations in different countries working together in long-lasting partnerships bridge people across cultures and contexts and enhance our understanding of a world larger than ourselves. CISU calls it 'civic diplomacy' – the civil democracy, which connects us as human beings and creates solidarity between peoples. The Danish pool member organisations have a large outreach in Denmark which contributes to enlightenment, commitment and popular engagement – a **public support** mobiliser in CARE's terminology. As one informant said: "*If you have 300 small active civil society organisations, you reach further into local communities in Denmark than you do with 20 large organisations.*" Although the larger organisations also successfully engage the Danish population, the claim is that smaller CSOs often reach wider and deeper into communities and involve groups not commonly engaged in the global development agenda.

A related question is to what extent locally led development and public engagement in Denmark are mutually reinforcing or contradicting. Several informants mention that fewer Danes in the Global South (e.g. no longer deploying Danish missionaries/advisers in partner countries) and fewer mutual partner visits mean less access to personal stories and experiences told and shared in constituencies, schools etc., which may reduce the support and broader engagement of the Danish public in global issues. The personal meeting between people from different cultures is, as further discussed in section 6, a key value for building equitable partnerships and promoting locally led development. It is therefore essential to continue to develop engagement modalities that can facilitate the personal exchange and enable cooperation on more equal terms such as the GLOBUS pool[30] or DUF's Youth Leadership Programme.[31] Communicating with the Danish public requires an understanding of their context and interests. Therefore, the need for mediation of information and stories continues to be valid. However, the decisions on collection and curation of information from a Global South context should as a minimum involve the relevant South stakeholders. The thematic evaluation on public engagement in Denmark commissioned by the MFA in 2022[32] does not address whether public engagement efforts reinforce or contradict locally led development, but examples show that a peer-to-peer approach is particularly useful in engaging groups that are not commonly engaged in development cooperation. Section 5 will look further into the role of peer-to-peer in partnerships.

LEARNING POINTS

Based on the findings described above, we see the following practices as conducive to locally led development:

- Providing access to pooled funds for small and diverse civil society organisations to enable partnerships with ditto diverse organisations in the Global South.
- Reassessing approaches to storytelling in public engagement activities in Denmark by promoting a 'power-shifted' approach to collecting personal stories in the Global South.
- Ensuring that guidelines for public engagement pools promote locally led development.

5. The added value of membership, peer-to-peer partnerships and volunteers

Many of the North and South organisations supported by pooled funding have a **membership-based** organisational structure, emphasising the connection to and representation of the local communities in which they operate. This is particularly important for anchoring locally led development, seen from a logical point of view of large numbers reflecting representation.[33] Among all surveyed organisations, 10% state that they do not have members. All others state that they have individual, group and/or organisational members. Although being membership-based does not automatically mean that the organisation is driven by its members or that the members have influence on decisions made in the organisation. That said, having a foundation of members indicates that the organisation has a reach of supporters.[34] Therefore, the constituencies or member bases of partner organisations will strengthen their democratic mandate and legitimacy as local actors – both in the North and in the South. This does not leave out that other forms of organisation may have equal or sometimes better opportunities for enabling locally led development. An assessment of this is however beyond the scope of this study.

There are two reasons for the high proportion of membership-based organisations: First, the Danish CSOs are required to have a support- or member-base and democratic structure to become members of the umbrellas that manage the pooled funds.[35] As they prioritise to partner with likeminded organisations, they will often find South partners who are also based on membership. Secondly, strengthening democratic structures (general assemblies, development of local branches, increasing membership base etc.) is often a part of the organisational development support in the projects funded by the pools.

Another common feature characterising the four umbrella organisations' member organisations is the **peer-to-peer** approach, commonly depicted through organisations directly represented and led by the target groups, the often-called 'of'-organisations. Peer-to-peer often refers to relationships between people with similar backgrounds or experiences relevant for the relationship, activities and/or identities of the peers and may occur in two dimensions, namely within and between organisations.

Both dimensions are particularly evident for DPOD's member organisations and their partners who all represent persons with disabilities, DUF's members and partners representing young people, and CKU's members often sharing the same faith. Some of CISU's members, e.g. diaspora organisations, also apply a peer-to-peer approach. The peer-to-peer approach is by all pools described as an inherent part of "the way we work".

The data collected confirms that the peer-to-peer approach is widespread, as 85% of all survey respondents consider their partnership a peer-to-peer relationship. Comments from South and North organisations emphasise that peer-to-peer enhances equitable partnerships, e.g. through sharing values and goals, mutual respect and having 'a common denominator'.

"*We share the same perspectives regarding peace and embrace different political environments. Both organisations are youth led hence experiences are shared, there is increased sense of belonging and it's easy to solve problems*" (South partner, survey).

"*Both build on the foundation of shared identity and purpose as both are deaf based organisations. They embrace mutual understanding, shared learning and collaborative growth to empower their communities*" (South partner, survey).

A South based organisation mentioned that they had facilitated interaction between project participants and peers in like-minded organisations in other (South) countries, which was found to be very useful. The peer-to-peer approach was praised for enabling the sharing of experiences and shifting young people's perspectives on themselves and each other. They realised that their problems were shared by other people. Some also gained confidence upon realising that they faced fewer challenges than some of their peers.

When peer-to-peer is understood as similar lived experiences (e.g. being young, having a disability), the mechanism of mutuality not only strengthens the sense of coherence and trust, it also engages people who may not usually participate in international development cooperation, cultural exchange and decision-making in civil society.

It should be noted that peer-to-peer is understood differently by the partners and not all organisations see their partnership as peer-to-peer. Not all similarities between people or organisations are equivalent to peer-to-peer, particularly not when the shared experiences refer to similar educational or professional backgrounds where access to quality education and jobs are unequally distributed between North and South. As the example below illustrates, it is important to recognise the significant differences in background and context that provide very different opportunities.

"*Disagree with peer-to-peer definition. We consider [our partner] an equal partner, but it would be ridiculous to pretend our experiences can be compared - exactly for that reason we have something to offer to each other. While sharing aspects of background and education (natural resource management), we still differ in many significant ways and pretending to understand 100% is arrogant*" (North partner, survey).

A challenge mentioned by disability organisations in particular is that they experience internal competition for funding among peer organisations. "*We all go to the same funder and compete for the same resources, which are limited*". Many donors do not understand the diversity of disabilities, and there is a need to support several organisations of persons with disabilities to ensure a strong disability movement in a given country. This is another reason why the specialised pooled funds play a significant role in enabling small, peer-led CSOs to access funding and other support to develop.

Volunteering is a cornerstone of many organisations supported by the pooled funds, and there is generally a high degree of voluntarism in the partnerships. The survey shows that 63% of South respondents and 86% of North respondents have one or more volunteers engaged in their international work.[36] North partners have an average of 27 volunteers engaged in international work. For South partners, the average number of volunteers is 20.

Although volunteering is often related to the peer-to-peer approach, it has its distinct differences, namely that anyone can be a volunteer, whereas peers are expected to have some shared experiences. However, the study suggests that motivation to act as peers or volunteers builds on a more personal incentive to contribute than what is expected from employees.
The engagement of volunteers allows a focus on person-to-person relationship rather than a merely professional engagement. A mutual layperson perspective prevents some of the imbalance often seen when a North professional is perceived to have special knowledge, unmatched by a South professional due to lack of access to information.

The engagement of volunteers may also add to the mutual respect of the partners, as highlighted by a North partner representative: "*Perhaps it earns some respect from [South partner] that [our] people are volunteers – and how much work they do voluntarily.*" (North partner, interview). The South partner seems to agree: "*I have never seen a country with more volunteers than Denmark. We've had volunteers over the years from Denmark. They have 2-3 technical people, the rest are volunteers [...] They help a lot because they provide a mirror for you. They provide reflective advice and you can see how to improve*" (South partner, interview).

In another project, volunteers enable the city-based partner to easily reach the hyper local context, "With only a phone call, you will get your target". As the volunteers live in the neighbourhoods where the project is implemented, they manage to build good relationships with their fellow community members.

This person-first focus also enables trust-building and expands the diversity among decision-makers in the partnership. Voluntary efforts, however, require solid support from the pool if the volunteers are not fully equipped to undertake the roles required in the partnerships, e.g. because they are young and have limited experience.

"*They [volunteers] may cause harm by not being aware of certain things due to a lack of expertise. But the good thing is that volunteers are passionate about something – this makes the conversation a bit more equal, even though an imbalance remains*" (North partner, interview).

Some informants see sustainability as one of the benefits of engaging volunteers: "*Volunteers (...) are key for the sustainability of the project because they will hopefully continue the work after the project closes*" (interview with South partner). Others find that involving volunteers in the partnerships can sometimes lead to commitment issues. One South partner explains in an interview that "the main barrier is the absence of full commitment and the high rotation of volunteers, this causes delay and extra effort."

The cultural role of volunteering is not universal and therefore the engagement of volunteers has its own bias, too. The following statement exemplifies the differences in access to paid jobs and social benefits: "*In Uganda, volunteering is real volunteering without anything, because the country is 'dry', unlike in Denmark where, even if you are not working, you can get some welfare support from the state*" (South partner, survey).

The examples above suggest that there is a degree of discrepancy in the role and perception of volunteers in North and South – but also that there might be a solution to this, namely that the partners clarify their definitions and expectations to volunteer engagement. The pooled funds may also play a role by revisiting some of the ways they enable support of volunteer engagement, for example by offering more flexible meeting times and training courses outside Copenhagen or assisting grant applicants in defining reasonable budgets for volunteer related expenses. Given the cultural and social differences, the support may not be the same in all contexts.

LEARNING POINTS

Based on the findings described above, we see the following practices as conducive to locally led development:

- Supporting member-based, peer-to-peer relationships and voluntary engagement to enable equitability in partnerships.
- Offering advisory services and activities at times and locations that work for volunteers.
- Assisting grant applicants in defining context-sensitive and reasonable budgets for volunteer related expenses to recognise the role of volunteers in the partnerships.

6. Equitability in the partnerships

A key factor for enabling locally led development is equitable partnerships, where mutual trust and respect are valued. For all four pools, equitable partnerships are an important dimension of their fund management – not least DUF, for whom equitable partnerships are top of mind throughout all their partnership activities.

The Peace Direct report '*Transforming Partnerships in International Cooperation*' finds that four values highlight the essentials of equitable and 'decolonised partnerships': Trust, humility, respect and mutuality. The data collected clearly confirms the importance of these values as well as their presence in the pool funded partnerships. Notably **trust** and **mutual respect** were repeatedly mentioned by informants as crucial factors for an equitable partnership – and closely associated with **time**. When you spend time together, you get to know each other – and build trust. Close personal relations not only strengthen personal commitment but also facilitate informal communication (e.g. via WhatsApp), which again is important for a more equitable partnership. Time and trust were emphasised particularly by the youth organisations, of which many (in addition to the grants in DUF's International Pool) had benefited from DUF's Youth Leadership Programme.[37] As one informant phrased it: "*I got some really good friends; that means a lot when you use your spare time – and it is easier when you are in the same stage of life*" (North partner, interview).

The survey confirms a high degree of **mutual respect** in the partnerships. When the South partners are asked whether they have ever experienced any **power imbalance** in the partnership, most answer 'never' (52%) or 'rarely' (39%), whereas 8% say 'often' or 'always' (2%). (Please see Annex 6 for graphs showing the survey data referred to.) It should be mentioned that the survey also conveys the point of view that there will always be a power imbalance when one of the partners provides the funds. When asked whether they have ever experienced a **'know-it-all' attitude** from their Danish partner in the dialogue, 69% of the South partners respond 'no', 25% 'rarely' and only 4% 'often' and 3% 'always'. Although there is still room for improvement, these figures suggest a relatively high degree of mutual respect in the partnerships.
One way of enhancing an equitable partnership is to be clear about what that each partner brings to the table, have an explicit division of roles and responsibilities and respect each other's contributions. That can facilitate that the party in charge takes the lead as agreed in advance. However, the fact that the Danish organisation is ultimately accountable for the grant vis-à-vis the pool is obviously not conducive for equality in the partnerships.

In most of the partnerships included in this study, the division of roles and responsibilities is rather traditional. The South partner knows the local context, has the contact to the community/target group in question, provides input to the application (including the budget) and implements the project when approved. The Danish partner knows the pool requirements well, takes the lead in writing the application, 'translates' the partner input to a results framework and budget according to the guidelines, and submits the proposal. This suggests that the Danish partner will often take on the role of **interpreter**[38] between the donor and the local actors. Once approved, the Danish partner monitors the project during implementation and submits the required reports to the pool, typically based on input from quarterly reports from the partner.

Some of the informants have, however, taken another path and pursue a more long-term approach, where the two partners formulate a joint vision about the overall changes that they aim at. In one case, the Danish partner has the main responsibility for the fundraising, which does not necessarily involve the South partner. Instead, they have committed themselves to support the South partner's organisational development over a period of 5-10 years. A close and dialogue-based relationship gives opportunity for co-creation, which is key to a more horizontal and equal partnership where focus is shifted from a merely project-based approach to a more long-term and strategic approach, illustrated by the catchphrase, "*We don't do projects, we do processes*".

Successful locally led development is highly dependent on the South partners' involvement in **decision-making**. Small and large decisions are made daily in the partnerships and in the development, implementation, reporting and evaluation of projects funded by the pools. The survey respondents were asked to report on the level of involvement in decision-making for both South and North partners. The responses show that the majority of both South and North partners find that the *South partners* decide or co-decide on all aspects.[39]

Looking closer, we see a significant variation between South and North organisations' perception of this influence. 65% of the South based respondents report that the South partner (themselves) decides or co-decides "**about the content of a funding proposal to [the pooled fund]**". 89% of North based organisations report the same for the South partner (their partner). A difference of 24 percentage points strongly indicates that the perception of South partner's level of decision-making power is biased.

When asked about South partner's level of influence on "**decisions about adjustments to project plans**", we see the same pattern. 64% of South-organisations report that they decide or co-decide and 91% of North-organisations report that South organisations decide or co-decide. When it comes to decisions "**about the budget in a funding proposal to [pooled fund]**", 62% of South partners and 86% of North partners report that South partners decide or co-decide.

The different perceptions about the decision-making role of the south partner represent two challenges; i) The perception of a relatively low level of decision-making among South-partners indicates a lack of influence; ii) the difference between South and North perceptions suggests that the organisations see their partnerships in different lights. This, again, calls for a clarification of roles in the partnership.[40]

Another important element that promotes equitability in a partnership is **North-South exchange** visits, which inspire, create commitment, and enhance the personal relationships mentioned above. However, the fact that mostly people from the Global North can visit the Global South is a big challenge. Obtaining visa to Denmark for Global South partner representatives is a huge administrative task with a very low success rate, and this has discouraged some Danish organisations from even trying.

"*We from Denmark can always visit [our partner country], and we bring the money*" (North partner, interview).

One of the contributions highly appreciated by multiple South partners has been the opportunity to exchange knowledge with peer partners in the region, as the Danish funding has facilitated **South-South exchange**. 42% of South based respondents report that they have participated in South-South-events facilitated by the pools. Quite a few survey respondents mention more South-South exchange as a way to further promote local leadership in partnerships funded by the pools. This suggests that the Danish CSOs have an important role to play as **convenors**[41] - i.e. someone that provides space for local groups to reflect, plan and learn together, either in-country or outside.

In addition, the **size** of the organisations seems to be an important factor for equitability in the partnership. While a few South partner organisations are huge with thousands of staff, half of the responding organisations have 7.5 staff or less. This means – for both partners – that the way from the individual staff/volunteer to the leadership is short, which enhances the informal relations and communication that again strengthen equitability. Relatively small set-ups are also more likely to enable engagement of volunteers, which allows for involving a broader range of profiles (see also section 5).

The two South experts interviewed confirm the importance of small CSOs in promoting equitable partnerships, although the money they bring is more limited than INGOs. They both state that although money is very important, there is too much focus on the money in development cooperation. **Moses Isooba** distinguishes between 'cold money', which are transactional and depersonalised – and 'warm money', which are about trust and channelled through small CSOs who share their time, expertise and solidarity. In his view, locally led development is "*not about the quantity of money, but the quality. With more warm money comes the dividend of locally led development (...) It is a bold statement of willingness to take more risk towards locally led development*". **Nana Afadzinu** states that the added value of CSO support is the connection to the local level. She believes that "*smaller organisations can build even better relationships – local to local relationships – and the cultural exchange might be even better there at local level than at international level*".

They both encourage back donors and pools to increase their 'risk appetite' - i.e. to loosen up the financial control requirements and short-term grants, which put a heavy burden and insecurity on small organisations and counteract locally led development. The relatively smaller budgets of interventions funded by the pools could provide an opportunity to explore these opportunities, since the financial risk is smaller. Nana Afadzinu emphasises that both partners in the partnership bear a risk (as they invest time, resources, money, etc.), and that it is important to be open and transparent about that. She suggests that partners

develop a risk register clarifying who runs what risks and listing risk mitigation measures to balance the risks between the partners.

Donors also play an important role in balancing risks. The upward accountability and elaborate control mechanisms drown out the focus on the risks run by the South partner. As the grant recipient, the North partner is responsible for controlling the financial and programmatic activities usually implemented by the South partner. Apart from creating an imbalance in the partnership, this distribution of roles conceals the risks involved in being the implementing partner, staff[42] and community members. A North representative suggested to let the financial responsibility rotate between South and North partner once a year, which might be a way to reduce the power imbalance within the existing system.

Some of the partnerships included in the study comprise several South partners to one Danish. The data suggests that this composition has the potential for a more equal partnership, since the South partners constitute the majority and thus to some extent can leverage the fact that the Danish partner brings the funds. Others have established Project Steering Committees where the South partner(s) have the majority of seats, which is also a way to move more decision-making power to the South.

Community involvement in different processes

Analysing the power balance in partnerships between South and North organisations is of course only one aspect of locally led development. To be really 'locally led', change processes must follow what Moses Isooba calls the **subsidiary principle** – i.e. *those who are closest to a problem should be the ones to solve it*. In some cases, the South partner organisation *is* the one closest to a problem – in others, the organisation is addressing other people's problems related to e.g. livelihoods, health, education, living conditions etc. In this study, we refer to them as community members. The key question is **to what extent they are leading their own development processes**.

Exploring this properly would (as previously mentioned) require a much deeper analysis, which has been beyond the scope of this study. However, the survey gives us an indication – at least about how the South organisations (who sometimes represent the community members) see it.

The survey confirms the division of labour mentioned previously where community members are primarily involved in problem analysis and definition of project activities (and to some extent project objectives). According to 60% of the South respondents and 38% of North respondents[43], community members **lead the process** or **co-decide**. When it comes to reporting and evaluating a project, community members are to a larger extent merely **consulted** or **informed**. 57% of all respondents report that community members are consulted or informed in evaluations. While it is positive for locally led development that many community members are in the drivers' seat when it comes to analysing their own problems and defining how these should be addressed on activity level, it seems that there is still some way to go before power is fully localised throughout the programme cycle.

In order to localise decision-making to community level, some of the interviewed organisations have established small-grant facilities. E.g. DHF has set up a Trust Fund in Uganda where small disability organisations can apply for grants of app. DKK 5,500-9,000. Their applications are assessed by a Steering Committee (consisting of peer organisations elected at the partner caucus) who decide on the fund allocation. According to a learning review conducted in 2023, "*the participatory approach to grant-making …. is considered constituting a best practice model for stimulating local ownership, local leadership and accountability within a project*".[44]

LEARNING POINTS

Based on the findings described above, we see the following practices as conducive to locally led development:

- Nurturing long-term partnerships and personal relations in order to build up trust and mutual respect, which are key preconditions for equitability in a partnership. This can happen in many ways and be backed by different stakeholders. Visits to Denmark by South representatives contribute to mutual learning and balance in the partnership but require that issues regarding visas are addressed by the Danish authorities.

- Being clear about division of roles and responsibilities in the partnership and about who should be involved in decision-making about which issues. This is something that the partner organisations can do without any further ado. One way of ensuring a higher degree of decision-making at local level – or locally led development – could be to establish project steering committees where relevant South representatives have the majority of seats – notably those (community members) who often are at the centre of the intervention. Another way could be to regularly conduct a partnership assessment where the different roles and responsibilities as well as the overall partnership are reviewed.

- Facilitating more South-South exchange in order to provide space for local groups to reflect, plan and learn together. Regional meetings (online as well as offline) can also contribute to capacity sharing, co-learning and building networks among South partners.

- Increasing the risk appetite - i.e. loosening up the financial control requirements and allowing organisations to a larger extent to share (financial) risks. This will require changes in requirements from the back donor (the MFA) as well as the pools, informed by more specific requests from South and North partner organisations. In the meantime, partners can embark on conversations about the risks that each of them runs and possibly create a risk register to describe, monitor and mitigate risks.

- Creating consortia where more South organisations partner with one Danish in order to obtain a better power balance in the partnership. This is already possible within the pool framework, but requires even more clarity about the division of roles and responsibilities and potentially further support from the pools.

- Establishing small-grant facilities that can devolve decision-making to community level.

7. The role of language and terminology

Although the locally led development/Shift the Power agenda is a hot topic in the development sector and among scholars and activists in the Global South and Global North, it continues to be a rather academic debate with a terminology that is not commonly used among small CSOs in the Global South – or their Danish partners for that matter. During interviews with South partner organisations, the term local leadership often refers to local leaders, representing their community. It did not necessarily define the degree of decision-making power or indicate a change in power or agency from one actor to another or from the Global North to the Global South.

> *"For many of the local organisations, [the shift-the-power debate] within international development is not their main focus. They are concerned about their local problems and not about the international development system. Yet the international development system affects them so much in the way they engage and the partnerships that they have. All of that is a structure, a system."* (Nana Afadzinu)

Still, it is important to be conscious about the language bias inherent in the terminology used in the development community, as it can alienate and reinforce (post-colonial) asymmetries. Examples include the terms beneficiaries or target group, highlighting that there are giving and receiving ends of a partnership. The same applies to capacity building, which indicates that one part builds the capacity of the other (empty) part, or the field which denotes the existence of a centre and a periphery. Moses Isooba[45] suggests replacing beneficiaries with co-investors to appreciate that community members also have assets (time, money, knowledge, skills) that they can choose to invest in a project.[46] He believes that "*once INGOs start to pay attention to these community assets, the system will start deploying community voice and community power*".[47] For the same reason, he also proposes to r*eplace capacity building/capacity development with capacity sharing*.[48]

The very use of English (or Spanish/French) as the common language is obviously also a colonial heritage, and the ability to master a certain language represents a potential risk of power imbalance. Yet, to communicate in a language that both parties understand is also a precondition for the partnerships funded by the pools. The survey shows that 231 of 256 respondents (eq. 90%) use English in their communication with their partners, 34 of which use English in combination with one or more other languages. 25 respondents listed that they use other languages than English in their communication with their partner.
Most respondents report not to have language issues in their partnership – only 14% say that choice of language presents a challenge in understanding each other. This figure, however, comprises a significant difference between South and North partners, as 8% of South partners and 26% of North partners consider language an issue.

The language used by the pools in templates and guidelines sets the standards for their members, and only few of the informants interviewed appeared to have moved away from the traditional development jargon. The pools could therefore revisit their terminology and discuss how to find alternatives which do not reinforce the power asymmetries.[49] Informants mentioned, however, that changes in the granting systems, which lead to updates in formats, guidelines etc. often strain on the grant applicants. Therefore, it is important that buy-in is in place prior to making major changes.

LEARNING POINTS
Based on the findings described above, we see the following practices as conducive to locally led development:

- Being conscious about language biases and changing language practices that reinforce power asymmetries such as beneficiaries and capacity building. This applies to all stakeholders in the system and will require conversations also among CSO partners about the impact of language and what terminology should be changed.

8. Access to knowledge and information

Another language aspect related to equality in partnerships and locally led development is to have access to the same information, e.g. through the pools' websites. All four pools have English versions of their websites, but they do not all fully mirror the Danish versions, meaning that South partners' access to strategies, guidelines, events etc. is limited.[50] This picture is confirmed by some of the interview informants. E.g. one South partner mentioned that not everything is in English and that "*we are oriented, but still we don't understand everything*". This bias can potentially enhance the Danish organisations' role as gatekeepers or on a more positive note, as **interpreters**, if handled respectfully.

The survey reflects significant differences in the respondents' experienced access to guidelines in a language they understand. 75% of the CISU funded South partners report that they have access to pool guidelines in a language that they understand; the same goes for 41% of DPOD funded South partners. 87% of DUF-funded and 96% CKU-funded South partners report that they have access to the guidelines in a language that they understand.[51]

As the pools are to some extent conducting training courses online – and in English – the member organisations' South partners are beginning to join. More than half (58%) of the South survey respondents are aware of the **possibility** of attending online training, and 37% state that they **have attended** online training offered by the pool (as opposed to 78% of the North organisations). This is a step in the right direction, but still with a potential for a bigger outreach. As one of the informants said: "*We should have more access to such information… it is not enough for [our Danish partner] to get training on the CISU framework, we should also know*" (South partner, interview). Quite a few survey respondents call for more training – notably leadership training – to further reinforce South leadership. These findings suggest a potentially bigger role as **trainer, coach and co-learner**[52] for the pools.

Owning and influencing the knowledge and learning generated through evaluations, reviews and other studies is key for local leadership. Although external evaluations are no longer a requirement, some pool grantees still conduct them – more as a compliance exercise than a learning process for partners and other stakeholders. The informants mostly preferred to contract local consultants rather than internationals, although this often seemed to be due to limited budgets rather than a conscious choice of context experts. Evaluation processes follow designated Terms of Reference, which are mostly drafted by the Danish partner, sometimes based on a template from the pooled funds. The timing of end evaluations is often inconvenient as the application for a new project has already been submitted by the time the end evaluation is finalised. Therefore, the results are not fully processed collectively in order to strengthen the partnership, operations and future projects.

LEARNING POINTS

Based on the findings described above, we see the following practices as conducive to locally led development:

- Ensuring that pool websites, guidelines, policies, templates etc. are (fully) accessible in English.
- Offering training courses – particularly leadership training – also to South partners, i.e. online, in English and during different working hours
- Ensuring that evaluations serve as integrated learning processes involving all relevant stakeholders throughout the process so that the joint learning informs the strategic direction of the partnership

9. The granting mechanisms: The pooled fund managers as donors

In the role of **civil society grant managers**,[53] the pools channel resources to small (and medium-sized) CSOs who would find it difficult to otherwise access donor funds. As pooled funds managers, the pools have comprehensive sets of strategies, guidelines and templates as well as a well-defined and transparent systems of grant committees and procedures that guide the process of funding applications from their respective member organisations.[54] The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the back donor, and the set-up is therefore negotiated and agreed with the MFA, which is committed to the locally led development agenda but also subject to the Public Administration Act and accountable to the Danish taxpayers. There is a good dialogue between the pools and the MFA, which has a preference for incentives rather than requirements, but also some red lines e.g. in regard to anti-corruption and PSEAH requirements.

The pools are slightly different in their approaches to locally led development. DPOD has traditionally focused primarily on organisational development (of disability organisations) and thus has a strong focus also on the partnership. DUF's member organisations comprise young and less experienced members who require a lot of support during the process. DUF's grants are therefore smaller and very varied, and equality in the partnership is top of mind. One of DUF's funding modalities, the Youth Leadership Programme, plays a key role in the development of strong personal relations as described in section 6. CKU is special in the way that it manages the grants of some of its member organisations enabling less experienced North organisations to participate in international partnerships, whereas others are 'self-managing' (*selvforvaltende*). CISU is 'the big sister' with a more streamlined granting system and a huge number of grantees who all manage their own grants.

Generally, the pools have over time adapted their granting systems to accommodate the large diversity in size, experience and capacity of their member organisations. All four pools have funding streams for different purposes such as partner identification, pre-studies, different sizes of development projects, capacity assessments, learning processes etc., and the requirements are adjusted to the different types of grants. Some of the tools offered by the pools have a strong focus on partnerships and are designed for mutual assessment and regular reviews of the partnership.[55] All four pools have recently revised their granting mechanisms and e.g. CISU and CKU have made adjustments that promote locally led development by adding a requirement to explain how the target group has been involved in the project development. DPOD has created phase-based modalities enabling further involvement of community stakeholders through multi-step decision-making and better funding security, and their guidelines offer step-by-step guidance to different phases and aspects of partnerships.[56]

The survey shows that the majority of both South and North respondents are familiar with the pooled fund guidelines[57] and manuals.[58] During the interviews, the Danish member organisations report that they were consulted during the revision processes, whereas the South partners report that they were not involved. The survey, however, shows that 26% of South respondents report that they were consulted in the development of guidelines for their respective pooled fund manager, and 16% even claim to have co-decided on the content of the document. Although there are examples of involvement of South partners not all four pools (systematically) involved South partners in development and revision of guidelines and policies. This may explain the variation in the survey data.[59]

Yet, the granting systems are still relatively traditional focusing on the classical development project with set outcomes, results framework, monitoring plan and reporting requirements – mainly designed (by North based donors) to ensure upwards accountability, although steps towards more downwards accountability have been taken. They represent a conventional, linear approach to project cycle management, which makes the involved organisations hesitant to involve community members/target groups in the planning in order to avoid raising hopes and expectations. The language used is the project development terminology including concepts like context analysis, added value, advocacy, target group, risk assessment and sustainability – a language mastered better by development professionals than by community members – and not by all CSOs in the Global South.

> *"...the system seems to think that it is open-minded and flexible, but the reality is that they have a very specific culture and thinking, where the application needs to hit a certain level of bullshit bingo"* (South partner, survey).

A long-term perspective (in funding as well as in planning by partners) with a more transformational approach would to a higher extent enable locally led development, also by ensuring that all involved stakeholders are on board during the planning of activities. If the detailed project development could take place after the approval of the grant, it would facilitate more South-driven and community-led processes. One way to do so could be by designing a community co-creation process as the first phase in a series of activities, where short- and long-term goals are defined collectively after the grant is secured. The current pooled fund setup does not entirely support such approaches as the granting systems require that objectives, outcomes and outputs are defined from the onset. However, DPOD has recently launched two grant modalities where a stepwise or phase-based design is made available, honouring that the project design is a process. At the time of this study, no applications have been submitted yet. Time will tell to what extent these modalities can enable further co-creation in practice.

CISU and DPOD have introduced a programme modality aimed at providing more predictability to the member organisations and their partners and reducing the requirements for documentation. This is a positive step in the perspective of locally led development, since it can facilitate a more strategic, long-term transformational approach with less focus on short-term project deliverables. However, the limited amount of funds in the pools (described below) means that the chances of obtaining a programme have become more limited, at least with CISU.

The current requirements of the granting systems are assessed with mixed feelings both among North and South organisations. The survey shows that 45% of the North organisations find the pools' guidelines and templates 'easily understandable' and 41% 'somewhat understandable', while 9% find them 'complicated' (5% don't know). Interestingly, the picture is more positive for the South partners, of which 57% find guidelines and templates 'easily understandable' and 29% 'somewhat understandable', while only 5% find them complicated (9 % don't know). This can perhaps be explained by the **interpreter** role that many North organisations seem to play. A South informant phrases it this way: "*They [North partner] have empowered us to get around the hard format. Every 3-4 years, DPOD changes its application format. It is a hard application format, but they help us understand it, because we work together on the application, in the process you learn*" (South partner, interview).

One of the informants suggested to conduct training in locally led development for all grantees and their partners to learn from previous experience and ensure a joint understanding, which may be a useful idea.

CKU and DUF have introduced a joint online platform (GrantOne), where applicants upload their applications and where all formal grant documents are accessible for both the Danish member organisation and the South partner. DPOD will use the same system from mid-2025. Experience with GrantOne is limited so far, but the informants generally see the system as an improvement. However, some mention that all functionalities should be in English so that the grantees could share e.g. reporting reminders with their partners.[60] CISU also has a grant management platform, *Vores CISU*. It is in Danish and designed for the Danish organisations only.

None of the online platforms are designed to facilitate that member organisations and their partners can work together in the same documents simultaneously during the project design phase. If this were possible, it would perhaps to a larger extent encourage a co-creation process.

The budget formats used for project applications include an administration fee of up to 7%, which for most partnerships is ring-fenced to the Danish organisation. This means that administration costs borne by the South partner need to be specified as 'office rent', 'salaries' etc. and linked to project activities. The limited and tied budget for core costs is a challenge for many South partners, who struggle to maintain staff etc. Also, the documentation requirements for the 7% admin fee are less strict than any other budget lines. DUF's new guidelines establish that the administration fee of 7% can be shared between the Danish and the South partner. This is definitely a move towards more independent funds management in the South and thus has a potential to strengthen locally led development.

All four pools have – to varying degrees – opened advisory, status and evaluation meetings for South partners. This has been well received by the South partners, who to a large extent have attended the meetings. When asked about participation in status meetings with the pooled fund and their partners, more than half of the South partners answered 'yes'. Among CISU and DPOD supported South partners, 54% have attended joint meetings, whereas this is the case for 79% of DUF supported South organisations and 62% of CKU supported South partners.

The advisory service offered by the pools is generally highly appreciated, and the possibility of having joint meetings contributes to shared ownership and equality in the partnership. Some informants, however, call for advisory meetings in other languages than English (e.g. Spanish) and for more flexibility in meeting hours due to differences in time zones. CISU has introduced joint status meetings (with both Danish and South partners) instead of status reports, which is seen as a relief by the grantees and a good way to ensure full inclusion of the South partner.

Deadlines for submitting applications differ from pool to pool and depend on the type and size of the grant applied for. CKU, DPOD and DUF have ongoing deadlines for small project grants. Some informants call for more continuous deadlines in CISU to accommodate applications from partnerships with limited capacity. Both CISU and CKU receive (many) more applications than they can approve within their budgets. In 2024, CISU had to reject applications considered worthy of funding for DKK 91,344,265 and CKU for DKK 8,418,769 (amounting to approx. one quarter of the total budget for the four pooled funds). The large number of strong applications reflects that many applicants have acquired strong skills within the discipline of proposal writing, but the increased competition for funding has also increased the application demands and created a disproportionate academisation.

> "*The CISU granting system is efficiently organised and smoothly operated. Over the years, much work has been invested in making the guidelines and the requirements as simple as possible. However, acknowledging the underlying accountability regime, there are limits to how simple requirements can be established. The main challenge to the granting system is in fact shortage of funds. CISU members are increasingly competent in writing applications and in some funding rounds up to 50% of approved applications receive no funding*" (North partner, survey).

It is obviously de-motivating for the applicants when applications are rejected despite being considered worthy of funding. But worse is that it is counterproductive to locally led development, as it drains resources from the involved organisations and because it often results in North organisations finalising the applications due to the need for mastering context-specific development/pooled fund terminology. Many CSOs in the South are already struggling to cover their core costs, and the investment they make in each application takes a toll on the organisation, especially if it is not rewarded. Moreover, having strong applications rejected means that it is difficult to maintain a long-term, strategic perspective on the partnership and its long-term outcomes, which again counteracts locally led development.

Only few of the organisations interviewed have experience with grants from different pools – i.e. both CISU and CKU. The limited data suggests that CKU's approach is more hands-on than CISU's - even for those who manage their own grants. The CKU pool is obviously much smaller than CISU's, and CKU is generally closer to its members and their partnerships – to an extent that some even ask whether the South partners are CKU's or the member organisations' partners. Some see the close relation as an added value that contributes experience, while others prefer the more hands-off approach of CISU. Also CISU's application and reporting procedures are perceived as simpler than CKU's.

LEARNING POINTS

Based on the findings described above, we see the following practices as conducive to locally led development:

- Applying a strategic, long-term, **transformational perspective** in the partnerships with less focus on details, possibly with **post-grant design** and fewer restrictions on finances. Within the current framework, there is already room for aligning to a larger extent to the South partners' long-term strategies, but less focus on short-term project deliverables would require adjustments in the pool frameworks and application formats.
- Ensuring consequent use of English in grant management platforms to provide equal access for both partners in the partnership.
- Allowing for sharing of **administrative fee** in budgets to provide less restrictive core funding to South partners. This change could be made by the pools within the current framework.
- (Further) opening pool advisory meetings, status meetings and evaluation meetings for South partners and offering advisory service in English (and possibly Spanish (Arabic, French?)).
- To a larger degree ensuring **predictability in funding** to promote continuity, avoid draining organisational resources and invest in local capabilities. The funding gap in the pools is obviously a political issue, but some of the changes in application regimes mentioned above could possibly help to mitigate the consequences for the South partners.

1 Including all funding modalities channeled through the pooled funds
2 The requirement for membership varies across the four umbrellas and the pools. For CKU and DUF, membership of the umbrella is a precondition for obtaining a grant. This is not the case for CISU and DPOD. This is further elaborated in the Finance Act 2025: https://fm.dk/udgivelser/2025/februar/finanslov-for-finansaaret-2025/
3 https://um.dk/-/media/websites/umdk/danish-site/danida/samarbejdspartnere/retningslinjer-for-forvaltning-af-tilskudsmidler-fra-udenrigsministeriet-til-puljeordninger-og-netvr.ashx
4 CKU is part of the global Partnership for Religion and Sustainable Development (PaRD) and DUF runs a network aiming at engaging new organisations in international development cooperation.
5 Including the CKU Pooled Fund, but excluding the Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) open window funds
6 Including the Civil Society Fund, the Climate Change Adaptation Modality (CCAM) and the Neighbourhood Fund – but excluding the Danish Emergency Relief Fund (DERF), the Information and Civic Engagement Fund (OpEn), and the Information Fund
7 Including the Neighbourhood Fund
8 Only the grants relevant for this study are included here
9 Including the Neighbourhood Fund
10 Both figures from DPOD include costs in Denmark
11 E.g. the Zambian author Dambisa Moyo with the book 'Dead aid – Why aid is not working and how there is a better way for Africa'
12 Attended by 700 CSO representatives from 80 countries
13 'Poverty Outcomes', Intergroup Resources, 2004 – quoted in 2021 by Peace Direct in PD-Decolonising-Aid_Second-Edition.pdf
14 For an example of how to counter the 'white saviour' ideology in communication products, please see this video produced by Doctors without Borders in Denmark: Hvem er Læger uden Grænser?
15 PD-Decolonising-Aid_Second-Edition.pdf
16 Decolonising mindsets and language: Reflections from the #ShiftthePower Summit – The International Civil Society Centre
17 And at least one partner to originate from a country on the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list of recipients of Official Development Assistance (ODA).
18 Dr. Nana Afadzinu, Executive Director, WACSI and lead of the Re-Imagining INGOs initiative (RINGO - a group of practitioners reimagining INGOs through disruption, innovation and systematic thinking); Dr. Moses Isooba, Executive Director, Uganda National NGO Forum and language lead of RINGO.
19 Please see Annex 4 for the full list of survey questions.
20 Due to budgetary constraints, it was not possible to offer the survey in other languages that may have eased the access for partner organisations to participate.
21 Due to variations in partnership setups, overlapping grant periods and database duplicates, some organisations have responded to the survey more than once. The CT decided to keep the responses, as the survey results are not used to assess each partnership 1:1 but rather to assess the perceptions, experiences and understandings from the point-of-view of all respondents, representing organisations, supported by one of the four pooled funds. additionally, although some background information is collected about the respondents, it cannot be guaranteed what response best represent the partner organisations.
22 Union of Baptist Churches in Burundi, Mental Health Uganda, Show Abilities Uganda, Lady Mermaid Empowerment Centre, Just Nepal Foundation and Physicians for Social Responsibility Nepal were interviewed in person.
23 The terminology is largely based on the perspectives and definitions highlighted by Peace Direct in their reports 'Decolonising Aid' and 'Transforming Partnerships in International Cooperation'. The terms Global Majority/Global Minority are also used in the shift-the-power debate. The CT uses the terms North and South to distinguish between organisations based in Denmark and organisations based in partner countries, being aware, that some partner countries are not geographically placed in the Global South.
24 Peace Direct 2021: Decolonising Aid
25 The nine roles that intermediaries can play in international cooperation
26 https://www.careemergencytoolkit.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/1_CI-Civil-Society-Resource.pdf
27 The South partners could also be social movements, networks etc. In this study, we refer to all these actors as organisations.
28 Half of the surveyed North organisations have 4 staff or less. Among South organisations, half has a staff count of 9 or less.
29 Referring to CARE International's roles for civil society: 1_CI-Civil-Society-Resource.pdf

30 GLOBUS - Puljen for Globalt engagement, Uddannelse og Samarbejde
31 Uddannelse: DUFs ungdomslederprogram - Dansk Ungdoms Fællesråd
32 Evaluation of the Danish support to civil society. Thematic evaluation 1: Public engagement in Denmark (2022)
33 It should also be noted that the argument that member-based CSOs enable anchoring of locally led development may be based on a North perception of civil society's role in society.
34 This is based on the assumption that obtaining a membership happens voluntarily and without external force.
35 DPOD Statutes; CKU Statutes; DUF Statutes; CISU Statutes; Bliv medlem af CISU
36 76% of all respondents in the survey have one or more volunteers engaged in their international work
37 A youth exchange programme, where young volunteers from DUF's member organisations work together with peers from partner organisations in the Global South. The participants are trained in Denmark and work together in a partner country for between three and 12 months.
38 The nine roles that intermediaries can play in international cooperation, role no. 1
39 The following analysis focuses on the South and North perceptions of decision-making for South partners only. To see the results of South and North perceptions of decision-making for North partners, please refer to Annex 6.
40 It should be noted that survey data does not 1:1 reflect South-North partnership representatives as some partnerships may only be represented by the South or North organisation, as not all recipients have responded to the survey. Additionally, 2/3 of all surveyed are South representatives and 1/3 are North representatives.
41 The nine roles that intermediaries can play in international cooperation, role no. 4
42 Insecurity of funding impose an added risk regarding recruitment and termination of qualified staff.
43 The large difference in South and North responses indicates that there might be some discrepancy in either the knowledge about the level of community involvement or the understanding of the survey question.
44 Project-based Grant Facilities [1. Draft]
45 Under RINGO, Dr. Isooba is the idea carrier of the Language and Lexicon prototype.
46 In this report, we use the term 'community members', which refers to people involved in a specific project – sometimes identical with the members of the South partner organisation.
47 How use of language can breathe life into localization | Devex
48 Oxfam has developed an Inclusive Language Guide - Oxfam, which also presents some alternatives to the most commonly used normative phrases.
49 Informants mentioned, however, that changes in the granting systems lead to updates in formats, guidelines etc., which often strains on the grant applicants. Therefore, it is important that buy-in is in place prior to making major changes.
50 CISU's and DUF's English websites are the most elaborated and DUF's the only one where guidelines are also available in Spanish.
51 Part of this variation can be due to a high proportion of language diversity among South partners supported by DPOD, related to a) lower English literacy level for persons with disabilities and b) a large proportion of Spanish-speaking partners, compared to other pools.
52 The nine roles that intermediaries can play in international cooperation, role no. 3
53 Referring to CARE International's roles 1_CI-Civil-Society-Resource.pdf
54 This analysis will not dig further into the overall distribution of funds between Denmark and the Global South – i.e. the costs for running the secretariats of the pool.
55 See for example CKU modalities or DUF guidelines
56 DPOD partnership engagement guidelines.
57 71% of South respondents and 93% of North respondents answering "yes" to the question: "Do you have access to the following guidelines and manuals from [the pooled fund] in a language that you understand? - Pooled fund guidelines"
58 75% of South respondents and 93% of North respondents answering "yes" to the question: "Do you have access to the following guidelines and manuals from [the pooled fund] in a language that you understand? - Administrative and financial management manuals".
59 There are some instances, where results from the survey and interviews show contradicting or ambiguous results. It is not fully certain what data to rely on but given the nature and complexity of the study and the additional risk of misinterpretation of survey questions (including the lack of opportunity to clarify), the CT suggests that the qualitative data is generally more likely to be accurate.
60 This has been implemented by CKU and DUF during the time of the study.

Terms of Reference

How to promote local leadership in civil society support

Best practices and lessons learnt from Danish pooled funds

1. Introduction

Center for Church-Based Development CKU, Disabled People's Organisations Denmark (DPOD), the Danish Youth Council (DUF) and Civil Society in Development (CISU) (hereafter referred to as the pooled funds or fund managers) have supported equitable partnerships, local leadership and locally-led development for many years. With the recent Strategy for strengthened Danish engagement with African countries (2024) and the coming development of the next Danish development policy strategy, it is relevant to enhance the understanding, document best practices and identify where improvements can be made in supporting local leadership and locally led development through the pooled funds.

While the pooled funds are similar in many ways, there are also important differences in constituencies, approaches and experience. The fund managers therefore believe a lot can be learnt from each other, both at partnership and community level as well as in the ways the four fund managers work provide capacity building and manage grants.

2. Background

Local leadership[1] in Denmark's Development Cooperation

With the decolonization and shift-the-power movement, there is a change towards *"new behaviours, mindsets and work approaches that shift power and resources, and promote more equitable and people-led development[2]".* This change impacts the methods and approaches of Danish support to civil society and calls for more data and joint reflections.

Support to civil society organisations in the Global South/majority world makes up 20-25% of the Danish bilateral development assistance given through the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)[3]. Civil society is a key actor in promoting democracy, developing future leaders, reducing poverty and reaching the marginalised, and it is an end in itself to ensure a strong civil society that organizes citizens. The structures and approaches of Danish support to civil society in the Global South/majority world is increasingly attentive to the agenda of locally-led development.

In Denmark, the MFA focused on localization as a key topic in the latest evaluation of Danish support to civil society (2020-22). Furthermore, localization and local leadership are key priorities in the Danish

[1] In these TOR we use the same terminology and definition as the one used by Globalt Fokus, where 'local leadership' is more than just equal partnerships and also reflect a situation where national and local actors have decision making power to take ownership and lead interventions, projects and programs in their own context.
[2] https://www.civicus.org/index.php/media-resources/news/interviews/4196-shiftthepower-exciting-possibilities-and-challenges-for-resourcing
[3] Danish resumé, evaluation of Danish support to civil society, DANIDA (2020-22)

support to civil society as reflected in the How-to note for implementation of "The World We Share" on Danish support for civil society. Likewise, the recent "Strategy for strengthened Danish engagement with African" countries emphasizes the importance of partnerships through civil society (among others) in support of human rights, democratic values, and local ownership.

At an overarching level, localization is often equal to a %-age spent at partner level/implementing country level, but localization as a term needs to be more fully unfolded in all the aspects of partnership collaboration that is practiced among the eco-system being supported by the Danish pooled funds. Hence, there is a need to understand more in detail what can be promoted to **support local leadership**, expressed through equitable partnerships and locally-led development based on the local needs where the interventions take place.

Partnerships should be reciprocal and in keeping with the localisation agenda. Accordingly, they need to underpin local leadership. This calls for paying attention to the various dimensions of local leadership, including the South partners' ownership, as well as coordination, capacity development and financial transfers to local partners." ***(How to note on Danish support for civil society, 2022, pp 8).***

What characterizes the pooled funds and the partnerships they support

Approximately 398 million DKK[4] of the official Danish development assistance is annually channeled through the four pooled funds. The pooled funds support partnerships between Danish civil society organisations and likeminded partners in the Global South/majority world, namely faith based- (CKU), youth driven- (DUF) and disability (DPOD) organisations as well as abroad range of civil society actors (CISU).

CKU, DUF, DPOD and CISU are umbrella organisations and at the same time manages various pools of funds that support civil society and humanitarian initiatives[5], with the goal of fostering sustainable change. These funds are distributed through an impartial grant allocation process.

Capacity building is key as the four pooled funds provide platforms for member organisations to network and share experiences; facilitate courses and events; offer advisory services and provide guidance on a wide range of topics, including financial management of projects, organisational development, and sustainable, rights-based approaches.

Additionally, all four fund managers are involved in engaging and creating awareness among people in Denmark about global issues.

The interventions, supported by the four pooled funds, contribute with a people-to-people element to Danish development cooperation. The work and funding guidelines for the pooled funds are based on a human rights-based approach. This means that people must be involved in decisions that affect their lives and that interventions should empower people to demand their rights and hold duty-bearers to account.

The Danish organisations with partnerships supported by the pooled funds are characterized by being small to medium sized with small secretariats or driven by voluntary efforts. The partners are also most often small to medium sized and are often located in remote areas. The partnerships are often between likeminded organisations and can constitute a platform for democratic conversations across

[4] Danish Finance Act 2024

[5] CISU has the Danish Emergency Relief Fund (DERF). CKU, DUF and DPOD do not support humanitarian interventions.

cultures and borders. CKU, DPOD and DUF also have direct partnerships whereas CISU only funds partnerships.

Capacity building is an integrated part of the partnerships. At organizational level, this includes strengthening democracy, legitimacy and organizational capacity as well as the recognition of organisations and their local branches. At community level, it includes strengthening empowerment, participation and decision making as well as enhancing the self-esteem, confidence and knowledge of community members.

Interventions and partnerships are very diverse as there are no thematic or country specific restrictions, and the interventions make use of a variety of citizen-driven approaches to address local needs and priorities.

3. Objectives

There are two closely related objectives for this assignment.

The first objective is that **the four fund managers and member organisations learn how to improve** approaches to partnerships, local leadership, locally-led development, learning from each other and from the perspective of member organisations and national partners from the Global South/majority world – and, if possible, community stakeholders. The findings will be captured in a learning document, including recommendations on how the fund managers can further promote local leadership and locally-led development. The learning document will also form basis for the best practice publication described below.

The second objective of this assignment is to **inform and inspire future efforts by providing concrete recommendations and showcasing best practices** from the pooled funds when it comes to promoting local leadership and locally-led development.

4. Scope

The assignment has two trails. Firstly, to produce an internal learning document with recommendations for the pooled funds which forms part of a joint learning process for the four pooled funds through one or two workshops facilitated by the consultants.

The second document is a best practice publication with main messages and showcasing how to facilitate local leadership and locally-led development. The intention is for the publication to serve as a knowledge piece and key input to ongoing debates and processes towards more localized civil society support in Denmark. It should ideally feed into the implementation of the Africa Strategy and the upcoming strategy for Denmark's Development Cooperation.

It is crucial that the voices of South partners – and if possible community stakheholders - are clearly reflected in both publications.

The two documents are elaborated below:

Learning document

Format: The learning document should summarise key learning points from the desk review and data collection from member organizations, their partners and if possible community stakeholders, along

with recommendations on what the fund managers can do to promote local leadership and locally-led development further. Max. 20 pages. The publication should be clearly structured to facilitate an easy overview.

Target group: The primary target groups is the four Danish fund managers. The secondary target groups are member organisations of CISU, DPOD, DUF and CKU.

Content: Issues to be covered shall include but is not limited to the following:

- Fund management: How does fund managers support local leadership and locally-led development through granting systems; flexibility; capacity building and advisory services; what are the approach(es), and examples of concrete mechanisms that work.
- Partnerships: What is the value of citizen-driven initiatives; partnership between likeminded organisations; organizational capacity building; loyalty and trust; strategic alignment between partners; ownership and power balances; long-term partnerships.
- Locally-led development: How are communities and community stakeholders involved in interventions; level of ownership and responsiveness to local needs.
- The role and value of Danish organisations: Popular engagement – how does the involvement of volunteers and likeminded organisations contribute to global solidarity; the importance of networks and knowledge sharing.
- A positioning of the setup and approach of the pooled funds in supporting development interventions in relation to the ongoing sector debates on de-colonisation, shift the power, tied aid/untying aid, localization and local leadership.

Best practice publication

Format: The content of the best practice publication is to be presented in a relatively short reader-friendly publication showcasing and recommending best practises for local leadership, equitable partnerships and locally led development. It should include joint messages as well as reflect the differences in approaches, setup and contribution to the local leadership agenda.

The publication should include a maximum of 10 main messages, each supported by a short informative narrative, facts such as graphs and key figures, as well as examples. The publication should be supported by a range of good quality photographs illustrating the partnerships and key messages.

Target group: Mainly the Danish MFA, civil servants working with development cooperation, the political parties' spokespersons on development cooperation, as well as larger Danish NGOs with a Strategic Partner Agreement (SPA organisations) or other organisations with an agreement with the MFA.

Content: The main messages should be based on the most important findings from the data collection. The main messages in the publication are to be selected in collaboration with the four pool managers.

5. Methodology

The methodology should be a combination of data collection in Denmark among the pooled funds and their member organisations and data collection among South partners, experts – and preferably community stakeholders - in a selected number of countries.

The assignment is expected to be based on – but not necessarily limited to – the following methods.

- **Desk review** of relevant studies, strategies/policies, guidelines, grant administration guidelines, grant management procedures, projects/programmes and cases from the four fund managers, supplemented by other Danish and international studies and other relevant material which can contribute to the reflections and learning on local leadership.
- **Workshop or interviews with the pooled fund managers** to identify and map how the fund managers work with the local leadership agenda, partnerships and locally led development. Identify similarities and differences in approaches, setup and constituencies. Some grant consultants should also be interviewed.
- **Data collection among selected Danish member organisations** from the different pooled funds, possibly done as joint focus group discussions. Danish member organisations will be selected by each fund manager in dialogue with the consultants. The organisations should represent different but strong partnership approaches (aiming to learn from what works).
- **Online questionnaire** to a larger number of Danish member organisations and South partners.
- **Data collection among selected South partners** from the different pooled funds through online interviews (individual or group) to get an insight into the different perspectives. Selected partners should represent a broad range of partnerships, i.e. partners who have been in short versus long-term partnerships, in different country contexts and working on different issues. Preferably, community stakeholders should also be included in the data collection.
- Conduct **key informant interviews** with Danish and international key stakeholders in the local leadership agenda. List to be elaborated between the four fund managers and the consultant.
- **Learning and validation workshop with the fund managers** to present the draft learning document and the most important recommendations. At the workshop, the messages that go into the best practice publication will also be presented and finally decided on.

6. Outputs

The outputs for the assignment are:

- **Inception** report
- **Draft reports – learning document and best practice publication** (in English)
- Present findings from the draft reports in a **learning and validation workshop with fund managers**
- **Final reports** – learning document and best practice publication.
- **Presentation** of findings at public event(s)

7. Timeframe and workplan

The assignment is expected to commence in November 2024 and be finalized by the end of March 2025.

Tentative workplan

Time (2024/25)	Task	Participants involved
Primo November	Recruitment of consultants	DPOD, DUF, CKU and CISU

Primo November	Inception briefing	CISU
November	Desk review and interviews/workshop with fund managers	Consultants
Ultimo November	Inception report	Consultants
Primo December	Feedback on inception report	DPOD, DUF, CKU and CISU
December – medio February	Data collection (questionnaire and interviews)	Consultants
Medio February	Draft publications shared with fund managers	Consultants
Ultimo February	Learning and validation workshop Written comments on draft publications	DPOD, DUF, CKU and CISU
March 15th 2025	Deadline for final publications (learning document and best practice publication)	Consultants
Ultimo March	Present findings at public event	DPOD, DUF, CKU and CISU, Consultants

8. Consultants

The assignment is expected to be completed by a small team of consultants, who between them have proven experience with:

1. Danish civil society, including small to medium sized voluntarily based organisations, and civil society in the Global South/majority world.
2. The local leadership/#ShiftThePower agenda and locally led development
3. Managing different data collection methods including participatory methods, strong analytical and report writing skills, as well as facilitation of learning workshops.
4. Formulating complex messages in an easy-to-read and interesting manner.

It is an advantage if the consultants have a research network in several countries in the Global South/majority world and can combine data collection in Denmark and in the global south. It is also preferred that the consultant team possess combined competence in the field of data collection and communication of messages.

9. Review Team / Management of the assignment

DPOD, DUF, CKU and CISU are commissioning the present assignment. The assignment is anchored with CISU and the CISU management is responsible for contracting issues, and for signing the ToR. DPOD, DUF, CKU and CISU are jointly responsible for the final approval of the publications. CISU is responsible for collating feedback from the review team and sharing with the consultants.

The appointed CISU Advisor Rikke Sig Hansen is responsible for briefing the consultant about the task and the day-to-day administration and arrangements. This will be done in consultation and with participation from International Chief Consultant Katrine Christiansen from DUF, Senior Advisor Gitte Liebst Robinson from DPOD and MEAL Coordinator Annika Bach from CKU.

There is an absolute maximum ceiling of DKK 250,000 (including tax and IVA) all-inclusive for this assignment. The assignment will have to be planned and invoiced within this absolute ceiling.

10. Application process

To be considered for the above assignment send an Expression of Interest (including approach to the assignment/methodology) of max. 3 pages, a financial proposal and updated CVs for all team members to CISU Advisor, Rikke Sig Hansen at rsh@cisu.dk. An example of previous work on communicating simple key messages should also be attached.

Deadline is 31st October 2024.

11. Key documents

Below is a list of relevant documents: internal documents relevant to both publications for this assignment, and external documents particularly relevant to the learning process.

Internal documentation from each of the four fund managers

- Guidelines, strategies/policies, grant administration guidelines, grant administration procedures, annual reports
- Cases
- International and external studies and reports

Relevant external documentation on local leadership (among others)

- EVALUATION OF THE DANISH SUPPORT TO CIVIL SOCIETY - Thematic Evaluation 2: Strengthening Civil Society in the Global South, DANIDA, (2022)
- A comparative case study on the role of Danish, Dutch, Belgian and French 'Citizen Initiatives for Global Solidarity' in Nepal and Senegal, Radboud, (2024)

Pictures

- Each fund manager will make good quality pictures available for the publications.

Contact CISU advisor Rikke Sig Hansen at rsh@cisu.dk for access to a full list of documents.

Annex 2, Final list of selected partnership cases – local leadership study

	CISU	CKU	DH	DUF	Context expert
Uganda	AIDS Fondet and Centre for Development of People, Human Right Awareness and Promotion Forum and Lady Mermaid Empowerment Centre		DHF and 9 OPDs SUMH and SAU SIND and Mental Health Uganda		**David Kyaddondo (M)**
Kenya	Dreamtown and Public Space Network			DSU and Siasa Place	
Tanzania		PULS[1] and FAYOWODO Lutheran Mission and ELCT			
Rwanda			DPOD and NUDOR	Danish Baptist Scouts & BBU and AEBR Youth	**Christine Mbonyingino (F)**
Burundi		Baptist Church and Union of Baptist churches in Burundi			
Egypt				Silba and the Dialogue Company	**Saba Yassin (F)**
Nepal	CICED and Just Nepal Foundation			IMCC and Physicians for Social Responsibility/Student chapter	**Era Shrestha (F)**
Philippines	DIB and Alternative Planning Initiatives				
Bangladesh		The Leprosy Mission in Denmark and The Leprosy Mission in Bangladesh			

[1] Also have CISU grant

Annex 3

Interview guide focus group discussions, South organisations:

1. **Decision-making and division of roles in the partnership**
    a. How did you and your Danish partner(s) become partners? Who took the initiative?
    b. In what way is your partnership based on the strengths of each partner? How do you - in your own view - add value to your partner(s) in Denmark? How does the Danish partner(s) add value? How could you or your Danish partner add better/more value to the partnership?
    c. Please tell me how and by whom decisions are made in the partnership. Say for example:
        - When and how often to meet?
        - Decisions on what activities should be undertaken in your partnership with the Danish partner(s)?
        - Whether to continue or end the partnership?
        - Examples of decision-making that turned out really well in your partnership?
    d. In what ways are community members involved in decision-making?
    e. What are the roles that you and your Danish partner organisations respectively play in developing project applications? Who takes the lead/defines the objectives and activities? Who elaborates the budgets and who decides on budget changes?
    f. What is the main role of community members in project development? To what extent are needs and project outcomes defined by community members?
    g. How (by whom) is it decided what type of capacity development should be included in the project (if any)?
    h. To what extent are project outcomes defined by the Danish partner?
    i. What challenges have you experienced any regarding decision-making and division of roles? Please explain how these challenges were overcome.
    j. What do you see as the biggest challenge to get a more balanced partnership? Ideas for improvements?
2. **Good practice [Now let us discuss about practices in local leadership in your partnership]**
    a. How do you understand local leadership, locally led development or shift the power? Tell me how these terms are relevant for you to use in relation to how you approach your global/international partnerships?
    b. Can you mention a good example of local ownership and locally led development?
    c. Can you mention examples of power shifts in your partnership? Power shifts to community level? Any lessons learned from this?
    d. Do you have experience with other partners/donors? Have you picked any lessons learned from this experience?
3. **Like-mindedness**
    a. What role does the peer-to-peer cooperation play in your partnership?
    b. To what extent and how is peer-to-peer cooperation an advantage for promoting local leadership?
    c. What are the benefits of a network with like-minded organisations? What are the disadvantages?
4. **Volunteers [Let us now talk about Volunteers]**
    a. What is the role of volunteers (from Denmark or your own country) in your partnership?
    b. What do you see as the benefits of volunteer involvement in your partnership (if any)?
    c. What are the barriers/disadvantages of volunteer involvement in your partnership (if any)?
5. **The granting system [I would like that we now talk about your experience with the granting system in your partnership]**
    a. Were you in any way involved in the development of the pooled fund managers' (PFM) partnership policy, strategies or guidelines?
    b. Which of the features of the application system promote local leadership? Does the system encourage involvement of community members? How? What can be done to enable this (further)?

c. What are the limitations to locally led development in the granting system?
d. What is your opinion of the distribution of funds between North and South? In what way does that influence how well local leadership is performed?
e. Have you ever had an application assessed as worthy of funding, but rejected due to lack of funds? If yes, how did that impact on local leadership?
f. CKU grantees: What is your experience with accessing all documentation via GrantOne? What is your experience with developing proposals jointly via GrantOne?
g. Have you attended joint status meetings, counselling/advisory or evaluation meetings together with your Danish partner? What was your experience?
h. Organisations with grants from different pools or from other donors: Have you experienced any differences (related to local leadership) in the way the pools work? Or differences from other donors (e.g. Danida)?

6. Knowledge and information

a. How do you find the guidelines, templates etc. needed for elaborating a project proposal? What does it mean to you that not all information is available in English? (or Spanish, Arabic or other languages)
b. What is the common practice in the partnership regarding flow of information regarding the administration of the funding? To what extent do you translate, share or in other ways make information available to your partner? Is there information that you do not share with your partner? If so, why not?
c. Do you talk to your Danish partner(s) about trainings and other opportunities from the pooled fund?
d. Who defines the scope of reviews and evaluations (if applicable)?
e. Have you done anything to promote the involvement of South-based consultants in project evaluations? Are there any barriers for involving South-based consultants in project evaluations or other consultancies?

7. Overall recommendations

a. What recommendations do you have to the PFM on how to promote local leadership in a manageable way for you and your Danish partner?
b. What would you need from the ideal partner?
c. If there was one thing in your partnership that you would recommend anyone doing, what would that be?

Interview guide focus group discussions, North organisations:

1. **Decision-making and division of roles in the partnership**
    a. How did you and your South partner(s) become partners? Who took the initiative?
    b. In what way is your partnership based on the strengths of each partner? How do you - in your own view - add value to your partner(s) in the South? How does the South partner(s) add value? How could you or your South partner add better/more value to the partnership?
    c. How and by whom are decisions made in the partnership? (E.g. about whether to continue or end the partnership, how often to meet, etc.) (Examples of decision-making that turned out really well in your partnership?)
    d. How do you decide what activities should be undertaken in your partnership with the South partner(s)?
    e. In what way are community members involved in decision-making?
    f. What are the roles that you and your South partner organisations respectively play in developing project applications? Who takes the lead/defines the objectives and activities? Who elaborates the budgets and who decides on budget changes?
    g. What is the role of community members in project development? (To what extent are needs and project outcomes defined by community members?)
    h. How (by whom) is it decided what type of capacity development should be included in the project (if any)?
    i. What challenges have you experienced regarding decision-making and division of roles? How were they overcome?
    j. What do you see as the biggest challenge to get a more balanced partnership? Ideas for improvements?
2. **Good practice**
    a. How do you understand local leadership, locally led development or shift the power? Are they relevant terms for you to use in relation to how you approach your global/international partnerships?
    b. What are good examples of local ownership and locally led development in your partnerships in the South?
    c. Can you mention examples of power shifts in your partnership? Power shifts to community level? Any lessons learned from this?
    d. Do you have experience with other partners/donors? Any lessons learned from this?
3. **Like-mindedness**
    a. What role does the peer-to-peer cooperation play in your partnership?
    b. To what extent and how is peer-to-peer cooperation an advantage for promoting local leadership?
4. **Volunteers and public engagement**
    a. What is the role of volunteers in your partnership?
    b. What are the benefits of volunteer involvement in your partnership (if any)?
    c. What are the barriers/disadvantages of volunteer involvement in your partnership (if any)?
    d. To what extent is public engagement a strength or weakness in promoting local leadership?
5. **The granting system**
    a. Were you involved in the development of the PFMs' partnership policy, strategies or guidelines? Are you (or other Danish organisations) sufficiently involved in the granting process? How about South partners?
    b. Which features of the application system promote local leadership? Does the system encourage involvement of community members? How? What can be done to enable this (further)?
    c. What limitations to locally led development do you see in the granting system?
    d. What is your opinion of the distribution of funds between North and South? In what way does that influence how well local leadership is performed?
    e. Have you ever had an application assessed as worthy of funding, but rejected due to lack of funds? If yes, did that have any impact on local leadership?

f. CKU grantees: What is your experience with accessing all documentation via GrantOne? What is your experience with developing proposals jointly via GrantOne? To what extent can GrantOne enable local leadership?
g. Have you attended any joint status meetings or counselling/advisory or evaluation meetings together with your South partner? What was your experience?
h. Organisations with grants from different pools or from other donors: Have you experienced any differences (related to local leadership) in the way the pools work? Or differences from other donors (e.g. Danida)?

6. Knowledge and information

a. What is the common practice in the partnership regarding flow of information about the administration of the funding? To what extent do you translate, share or in other ways make information available to your partner? Is there information that you do not share with your partners? If so, why not?
b. Do you talk to your South partner(s) about trainings and other opportunities from the pooled fund?
c. Who defines the scope of reviews and evaluations (if applicable)?
d. Have you done anything to promote the involvement of South-based consultants in project evaluations? Are there any barriers for involving South-based consultants in project evaluations or other consultancy?

7. Overall recommendations

a. What recommendations do you have to the PFM on how to promote local leadership in a manageable way for you and your South partner?
b. What would you need from the ideal partner?
c. If there was one thing in your partnership that you would recommend anyone doing, what would that be?

Annex 4 – Survey Questionnaire

General

The questions in this survey refer to a current partnership, related to a grant received from the pooled fund mentioned in your invitation email.

When responding to the following questions, it is important that you think of only ONE partner organisation related to a grant (as mentioned above). If you have more than one partner, please choose one of them.

This survey intends to understand the similarities and variations in experiences of different partners supported by grants from a Danish pooled fund. We therefore use the terms North and South to distinguish between organisations based in Denmark and organisations based in partner countries. We are however aware, that some partner countries are not geographically placed in the Global South.

If your organisation is based in the Global South, the partner you think of should be based in the Global North – and vice versa.

As mentioned in the invitation email, this study aims to identify best practices and understand how to strengthen approaches to local leadership.

In short, we define local leadership (or locally led development) as change processes that put the affected people in the "driver's seat". I.e. processes where people control and manage the changes they want to achieve.

* 1. Based on the above description, would you consider **your organisation** to be **North- based** or **South-based**?

- ◯ North-based organisation
- ◯ South-based organisation

* 2. What is the **name** of your organisation? ('organisation' also includes social movements, networks etc.)

* 3. In what **country** is your organisation based? (If it has several locations, please name the country where the organisation has its headquarters or main activities)

* 4. Is your organisation **member-based**?

- ☐ Yes, our members are individuals
- ☐ Yes, our members are other organisations or groups
- ☐ No, we do not have members
- ☐ Other (please specify)

5. How many **staff** are employed in your organisation? (please count all employees as one (1) person including part-time staff but NOT volunteers. If none, please write 0)

Female

Male

Other (e.g. non-binary)

6. Approximately how many **volunteers** in your organisation are engaged in your international work? (if none, please write 0)

7. Is your organisation associated with a larger, **global** organisation, network or movement?

- Yes
- No

* 8. What is the name of **your partner organisation**? (Please only name **ONE partner** related to a recent **grant from the Danish pooled fund** mentioned in your invitation email. If unsure, please refer to the person who shared this survey with you)

* 9. Who took the **initiative** to establish this partnership?

- We did
- The partner did
- Someone from outside connected us
- It was a joint initiative
- Other (please specify)
- Don't know

* 10. Which of the following **pooled funds organisations** has financially supported the current grant in your partnership?

- Civil Society in Development (CISU)
- Disabled People's Organisations Denmark (DPOD)
- Danish Youth Council (DUF)
- Center for Church-based Development (CKU)

Partnership policy

11. Are you familiar with the **partnership policy** from {{ Q10 }}?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

Partnership policy

12. Are you familiar with the **Partnership Policy** and **Guide to Partnership Engagement** from {{ Q10 }}?

- ◯ Yes, I am familiar with **both documents**
- ◯ Yes, I am familiar with **one of the documents**
- ◯ No

Pooled funding in Denmark

* 13. Has your organisation received funding from **other Danish pooled funds** organisations than {{ Q10 }}?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Don't know

Pooled funding in Denmark

* 14. If yes, please tick the names of the Danish pooled funds organisations you have received funding from, **other than {{ Q10 }}**

- ☐ Civil Society in Development (CISU)
- ☐ Disabled People's Organisations Denmark (DPOD)
- ☐ Danish Youth Council (DUF)
- ☐ Center for Church-based Development (CKU)

Pooled funding in Denmark

15. If you have received funding from **more than one Danish pooled fund** organisation, please describe any **differences** you have experienced between the pools related to the promotion of local leadership.

Equity in partnerships

16. In what **year** did your partnership with {{ Q8 }} begin?

17. How are partners involved in the following **decisions** made in the partnership?

Drop-down menu for each white section:
4. Decides
3. Co-decides
2. Consulted before a decision is made
1. Informed about decisions made
0. Not involved in decision-making
N/A - Not Applicable / Don't know

North Partner	South Partner
Decisions about the **content of a funding proposal** to {{ Q10 }}	
Decisions about the **budget in a funding proposal** to {{ Q10 }}	
Decisions about **adjustments to project plans**	
Decisions about **adjustments to the project budget**	
Decisions about what is on the **agenda for lobbying and advocacy**	

Equity in partnerships

18. How are partners involved in the following **decisions** made in the partnership?

Drop-down menu for each white section:
4. Decides
3. Co-decides
2. Consulted before a decision is made
1. Informed about decisions made
0. Not involved in decision-making
N/A - Not Applicable / Don't know

North Partner	South Partner
Decisions about how to **monitor and evaluate** the project and partnership	
Decisions about **what indicators will be used** to measure progress	
Decisions about **what to report** to {{ Q10 }}	
Decisions about the **terms of reference** for conducting reviews or evaluations	

Equity in partnerships

19. How are partners involved in the following **decisions** made in the partnership?
    Drop-down menu for each white section:
    4. Decides
    3. Co-decides
    2. Consulted before a decision is made
    1. Informed about decisions made
    0. Not involved in decision-making
    N/A - Not Applicable / Don't know

	North Partner	South Partner
Decisions about **whether to continue** the partnership		
Decisions about **whether to apply for continued funding**		

20. Have you experienced any challenges in the partnership regarding **roles and decision- making**? Please describe.

Community involvement

The following questions refer to **community members in the Global South**. The term 'community members' may also be understood as 'target group'. Sometimes 'community members' are identical with the membership of the South partner organisation.

21. To what extent are **community members** from the Global South involved in...

	Community members lead the process	Community members co-decide	Community members are consulted	Community members are informed	Community members are not involved	N/A

Problem analysis/needs assessment	○	○	○	○	○	○
Definition of project **objectives**	○	○	○	○	○	○
Definition of project **activities**	○	○	○	○	○	○
Assessing project **progress**	○	○	○	○	○	○
Reporting	○	○	○	○	○	○
Evaluations	○	○	○	○	○	○

22. To what extent do the following {{ Q10 }} templates promote involvement of **community members**?

	Not at all	To a small extent	To some extent	To a large extent	Don't know / N/A
Application templates	○	○	○	○	○
Reporting templates	○	○	○	○	○

Equity in partnerships

The following questions refer to **peer-to-peer relationships**. Peer-to-peer refers to relationships between people with **similar backgrounds or experiences** relevant for the relationship, activities and/or identities of the peers. Examples could be having a disability, being young, having the same political ideology or the same religious affiliation.

23. Based on the description above, do you consider your partnership with {{ Q8 }} a **peer- to-peer relationship**?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Don't know

24. What **value do you see in peer-to-peer** relationships (if any)? (Also if you don't consider your own partnership peer-to-peer)

25. Have you ever experienced any **power imbalance** in the partnership with {{ Q8 }}?

- ○ Always
- ○ Often
- ○ Rarely
- ○ Never

Equity in partnerships

26. Please provide examples of how you have experienced **power imbalance** in the partnership with {{ Q8 }}, if possible.

Equity in partnerships

27. Have you ever experienced a **'know-it-all' attitude** from {{ Q8 }} in the dialogue?

- ◯ Always
- ◯ Often
- ◯ Rarely
- ◯ Never

* 28. What has **your organisation contributed** to the partnership?

- ☐ Knowledge/expertise
- ☐ Companionship
- ☐ Spotlight on an important cause
- ☐ Access to funding
- ☐ Access to decision-making forums
- ☐ Access to community members
- ☐ Access to networks
- ☐ Other (please specify)

* 29. What has **{{ Q8 }} contributed** to the partnership?

- ☐ Knowledge/expertise
- ☐ Companionship
- ☐ Spotlight on an important cause
- ☐ Access to funding
- ☐ Access to decision-making forums
- ☐ Access to community members
- ☐ Access to networks
- ☐ Other (please specify)

The Granting System

30. Do you know the proportional **financial distribution of your current grant** between the North and South partners within your partnership with {{ Q8 }}?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

31. Do you have any comments regarding the **financial distribution of grants** between North and South partners?

The Granting System

* 32. Have you attended any of the following online **meetings with {{ Q8 }} and {{ Q10 }}**?

	Yes	No	Don't know
Status meetings	○	○	○
Advisory meetings	○	○	○
Evaluation meetings	○	○	○

Language

* 33. What is/are the most common **language(s) spoken in your organisation**?

* 34. What **language(s)** do you use in your **communication with {{ Q8 }}**?

35. Does choice of **language** present any **challenges** in understanding each other?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Don't know

The Granting System

36. Do you have **access to the following guidelines and manuals** from {{ Q10 }} in a language that you understand?

	Yes	No	Don't know
Pooled fund guidelines	○	○	○
Administrative and financial mangement manuals	○	○	○

37. To what extent was **your organisation involved** in the development of the **Pooled fund guidelines** from {{ Q10 }}?

- ○ We co-decided on the content of the document
- ○ We were consulted before the document was finalised
- ○ We were not involved in the development of the document I don't
- ○ know if we were involved

The Granting System

* 38. What is your overall **opinion** on the **granting system** from {{ Q10 }}?

- ◯ Guidelines and templates are easily understandable
- ◯ Guidelines and templates are somewhat understandable
- ◯ Guidelines and templates are complicated
- ◯ Don't know

* 39. How easy is it to **comply** with the **requirements** attached to the pooled funds grants from {{ Q10 }}?

- ◯ Easy
- ◯ Doable
- ◯ Difficult
- ◯ Don't know

40. Do you have any **comments** on the requirements and the granting system?

* 41. Do you have **access to all information** needed for the purpose of the partnership and related activities **without having to consult with your partner** first?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ To some extent
- ◯ No

42. To what extent does {{ Q10 }} provide **favourable conditions** for activities of your **priority**?

- ◯ To a large extent
- ◯ To some extent
- ◯ To a small extent
- ◯ Don't know

Access to Knowledge and Information

43. Do you know of the **possibility of attending** any of the following **activities**, offered by {{ Q10 }}:

	Yes	No
Online training	◯	◯
Online events	◯	◯
Physical events in Denmark	◯	◯
Physical events in other countries than Denmark	◯	◯

* 44. Did anyone from your organisation **attend online training**, offered by {{ Q10 }}?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Don't know

Access to Knowledge and Information

45. Do you have any **comments** on the **training**?

Access to Knowledge and Information

46. Have **consultants from the Global South** been commissioned for evaluations or other studies in the partnership with {{ Q8 }}?

- ◯ Always
- ◯ Sometimes
- ◯ Never
- ◯ Don't know / Not Applicable

* 47. Did your **organisation participate in any events** or meetings facilitated by {{ Q10 }} where **South partners interacted** across countries?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Don't know

Access to Knowledge and Information

48. What was the **benefit of participating** in these events?

49. What could have been done to **increase the benefit** of these events?

Pooled fund added value

* 50. What has **{{ Q10 }} contributed** to your partnership with {{ Q8 }}?

- [ ] Knowledge/expertise
- [ ] Companionship
- [ ] Spotlight on an important cause
- [ ] Access to funding
- [ ] Access to decision-making forums
- [ ] Access to community members
- [ ] Access to networks
- [ ] Matching with potential partner organisations
- [ ] Other (please specify)
- [ ] Don't know

General

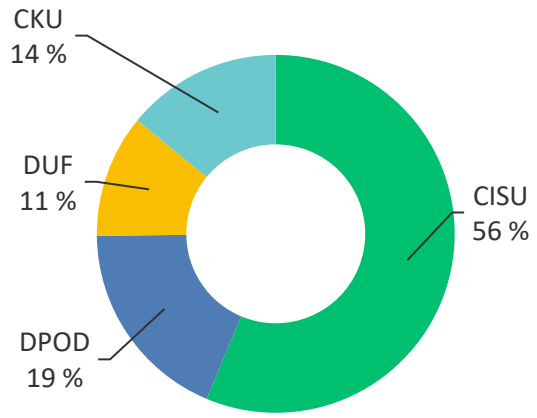
51. Do you have any **recommendations** on how to further promote local leadership in partnerships funded through the pools?

Thank you for filling this survey and contributing to the study on how Danish pooled funds for civil society development can further strengthen their approaches to partnership, local leadership and locally led development.

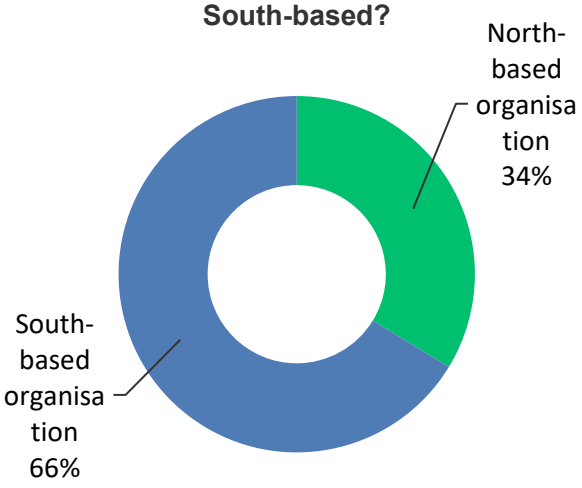
Annex 6 – Selected survey results

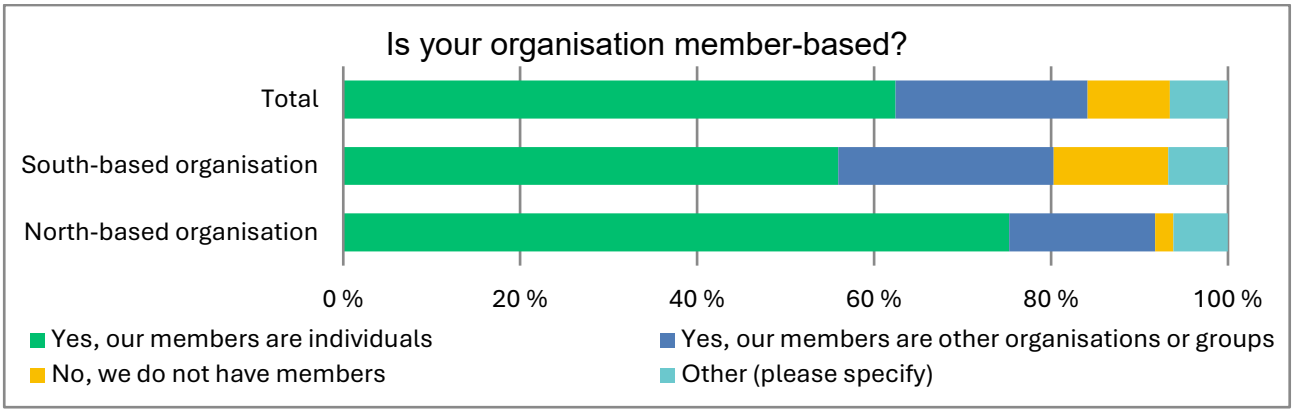
Online questionnaire sent to 681 respondents. 270 organisations responded (66,3 % from the South, 33,7% from the North). 152 CISU, 38 CKU, 50 DH, 30 DUF.

Which of the following pooled funds organisations has financially supported the current grant in your partnership?

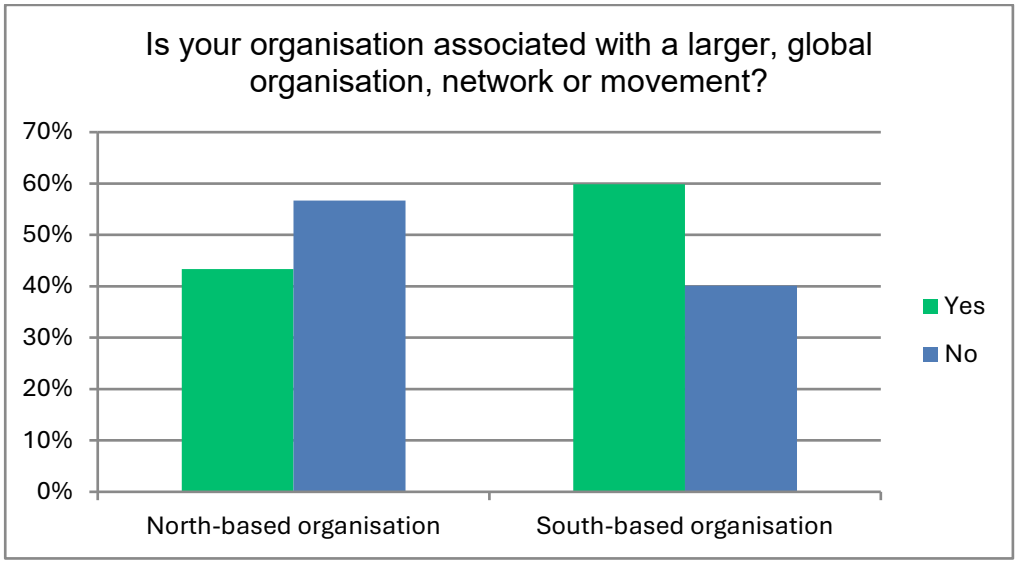


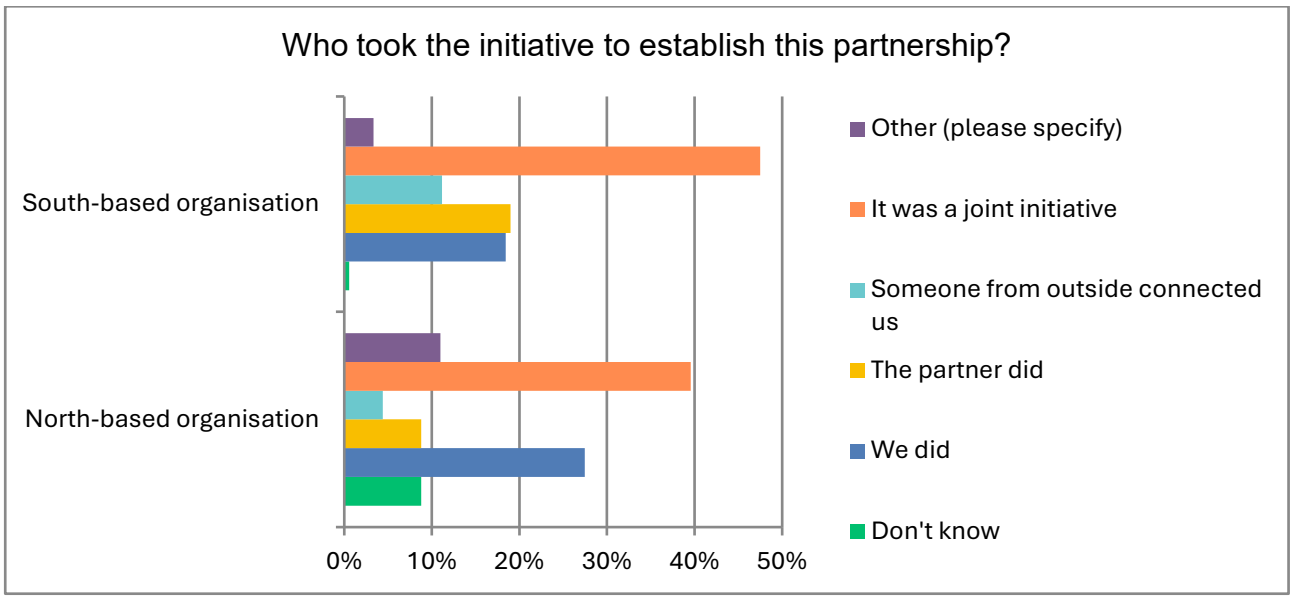
Based on the above description, would you consider your organisation to be North-based or South-based?

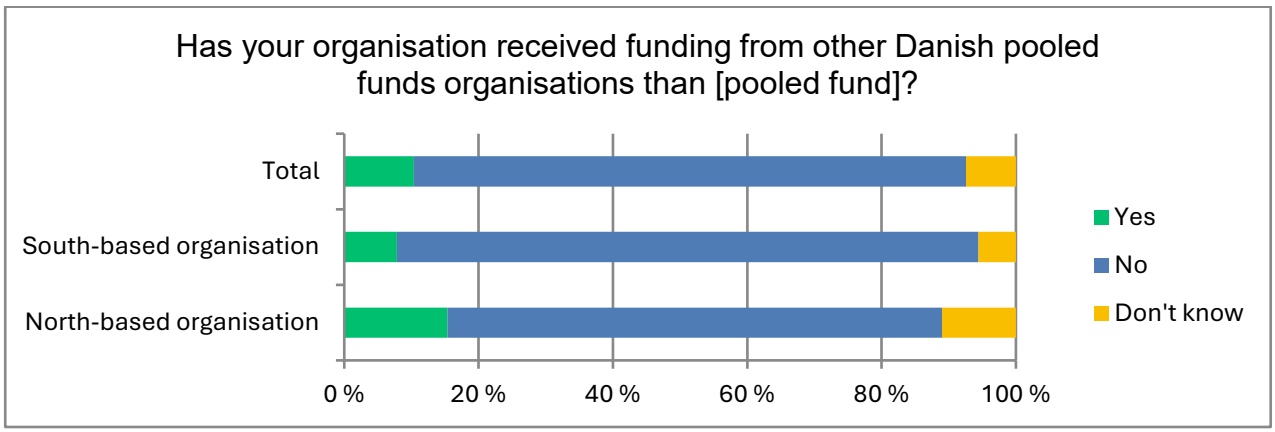


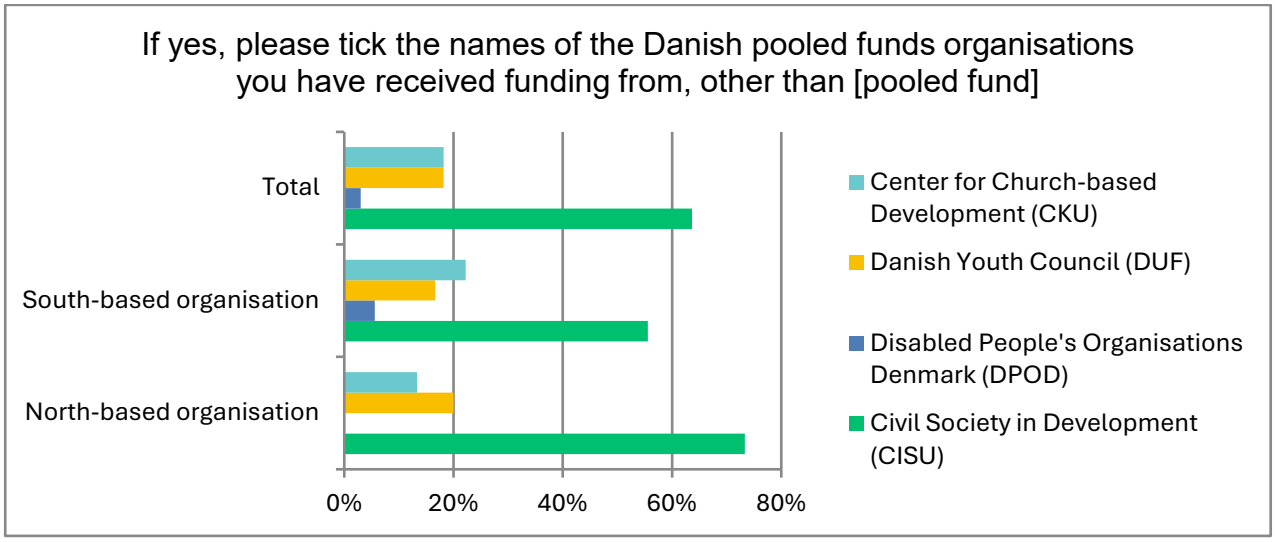


	Proportion of organisations with one or more volunteers
North-based organisation	63%
South-based organisation	86%

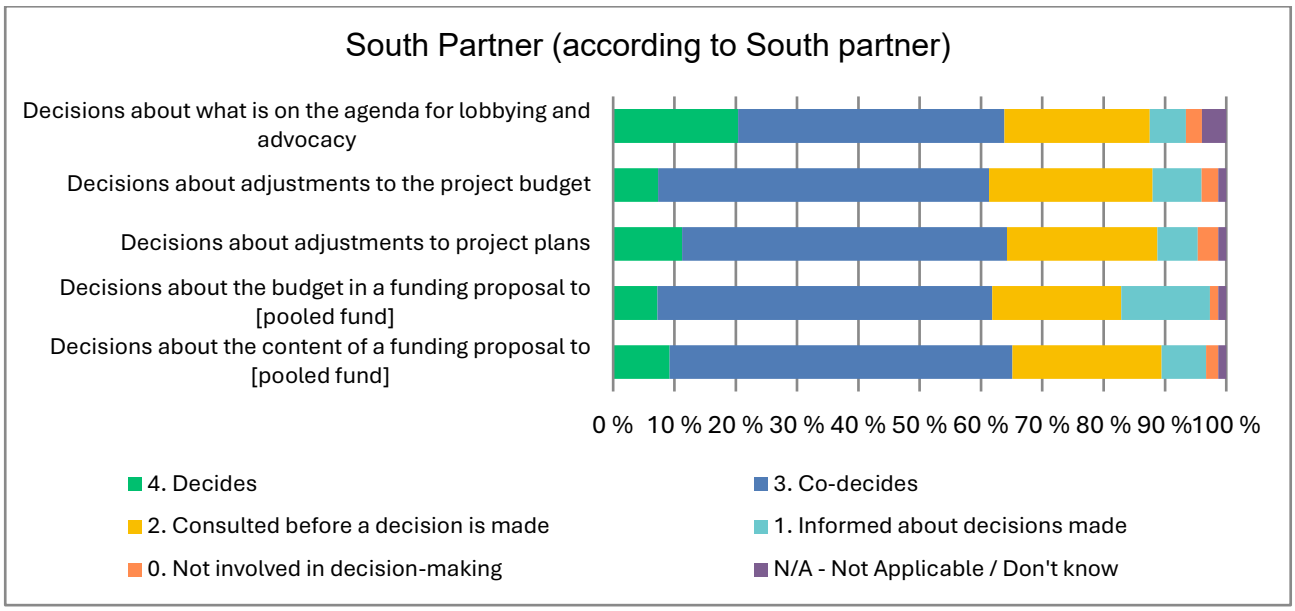

Is your organisation associated with a larger, global organisation, network or movement?
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
North-based organisation
South-based organisation
Yes
No

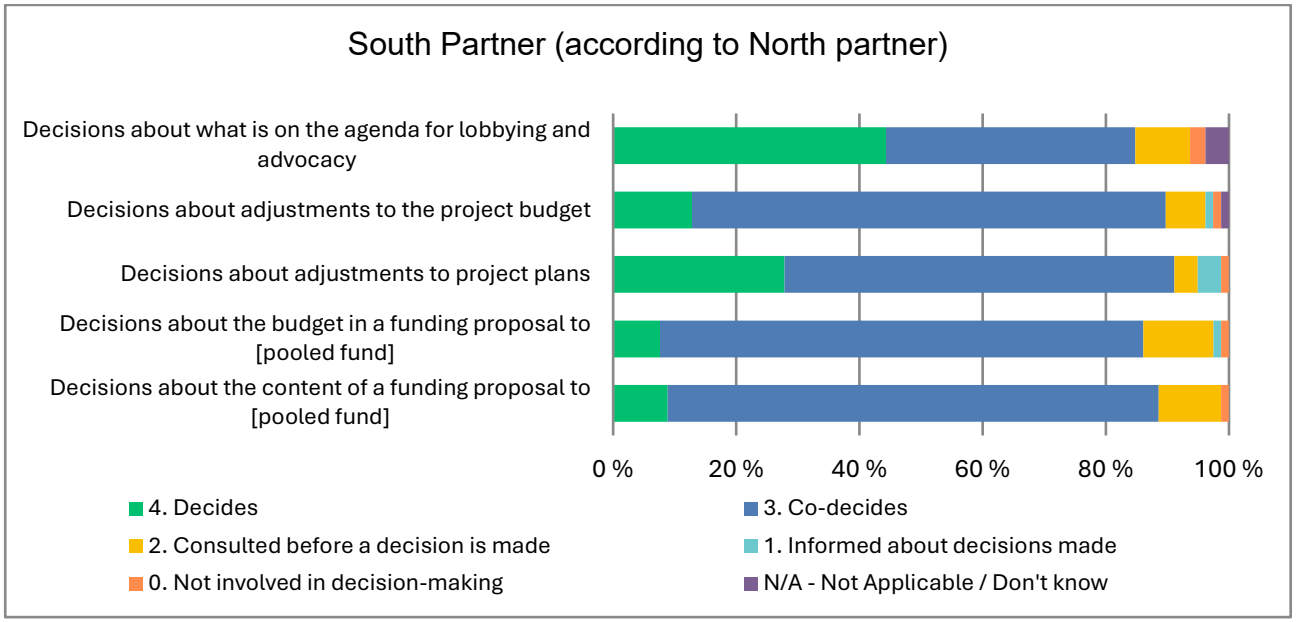

Who took the initiative to establish this partnership?
South-based organisation
North-based organisation
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
Other (please specify)
It was a joint initiative
Someone from outside connected us
The partner did
We did
Don't know

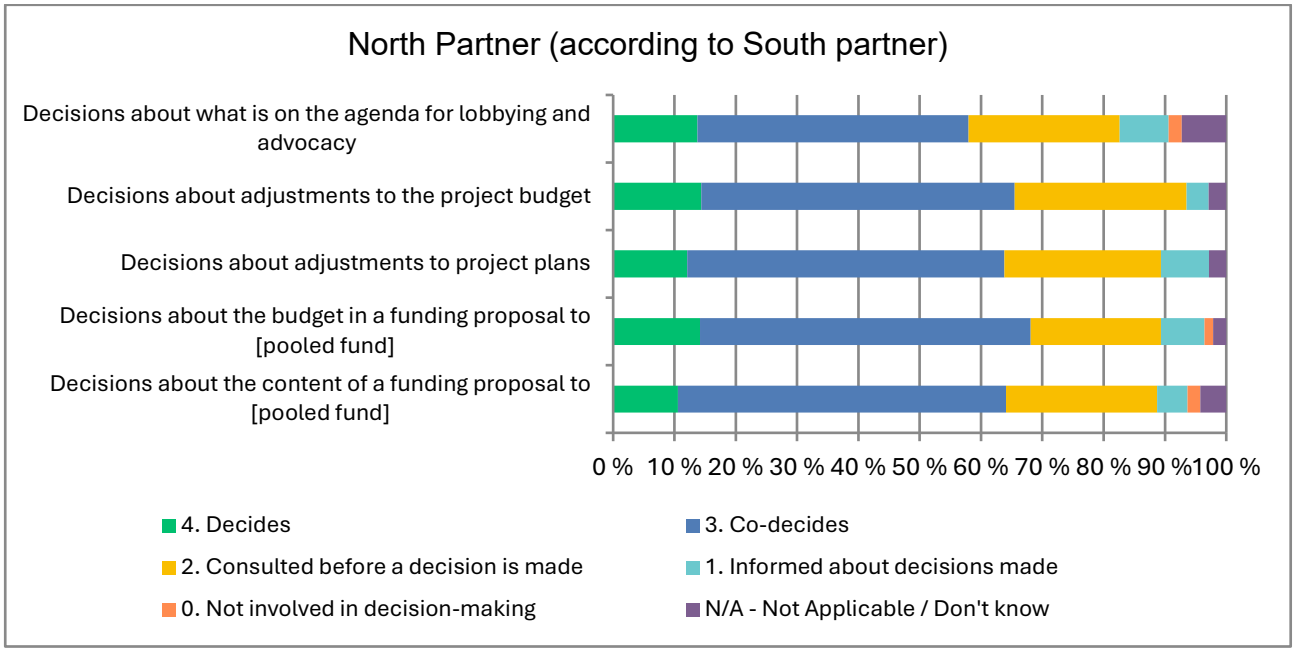

Has your organisation received funding from other Danish pooled funds organisations than [pooled fund]?
Total
South-based organisation
North-based organisation
0 %
20 %
40 %
60 %
80 %
100 %
Yes
No
Don't know

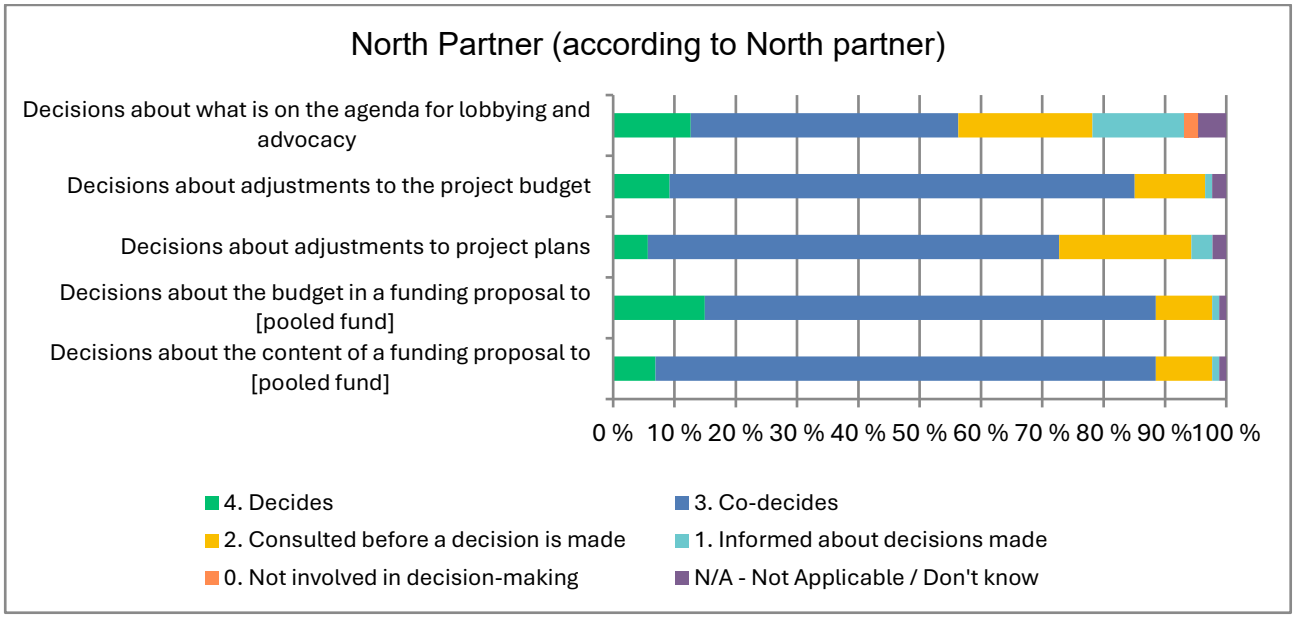


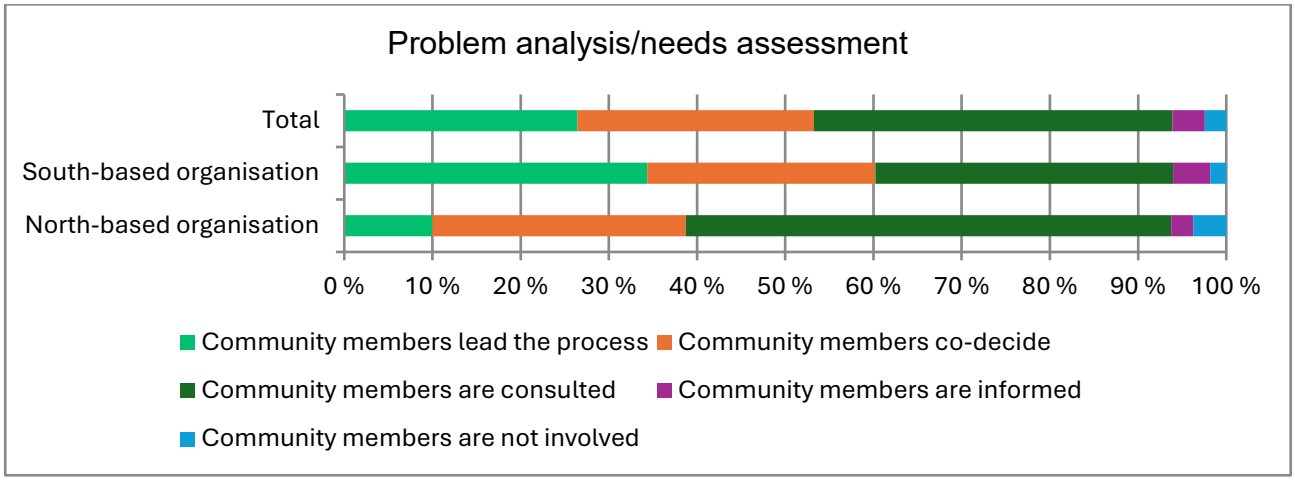
How are partners involved in the following decisions made in the partnership? (Split by South and North partners responding about South and North partner involvement)

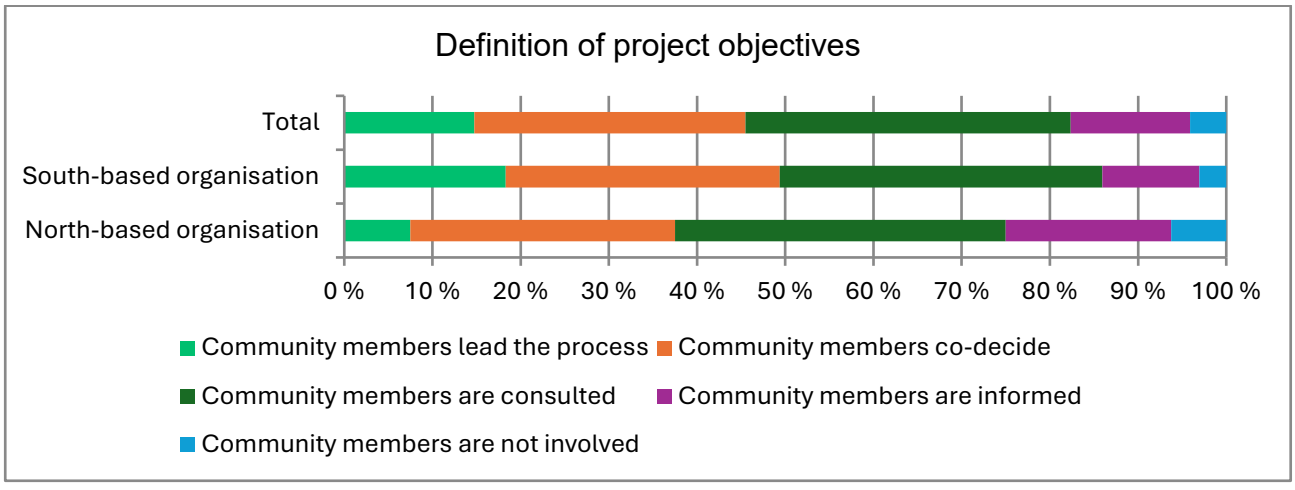


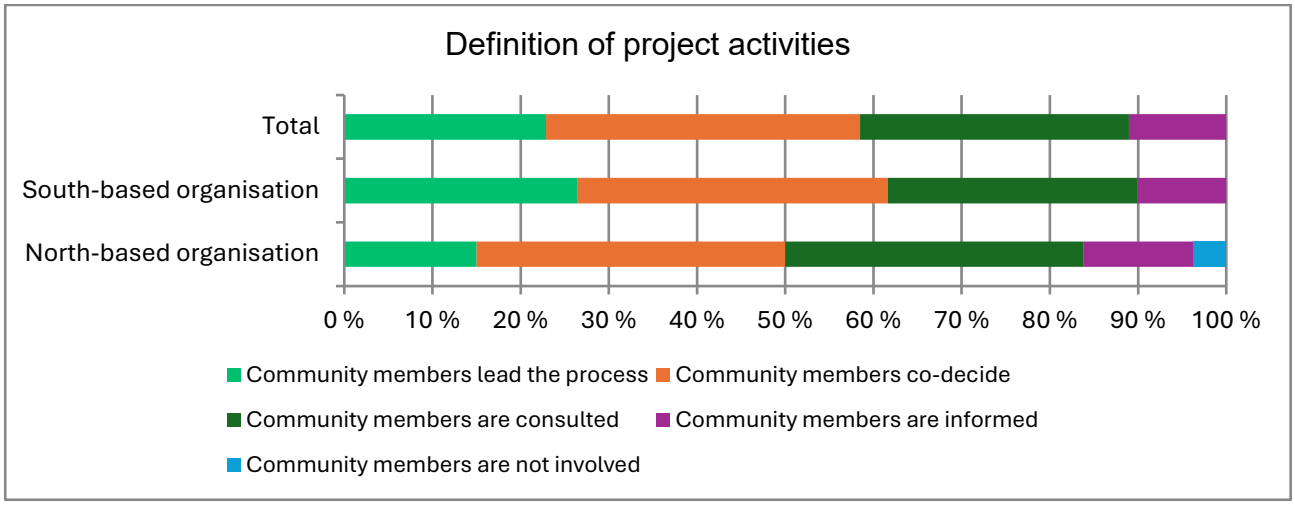

South Partner (according to North partner)
Decisions about what is on the agenda for lobbying and advocacy
Decisions about adjustments to the project budget
Decisions about adjustments to project plans
Decisions about the budget in a funding proposal to [pooled fund]
Decisions about the content of a funding proposal to [pooled fund]
0 %
20 %
40 %
60 %
80 %
100 %
4. Decides
3. Co-decides
2. Consulted before a decision is made
1. Informed about decisions made
0. Not involved in decision-making
N/A - Not Applicable / Don't know

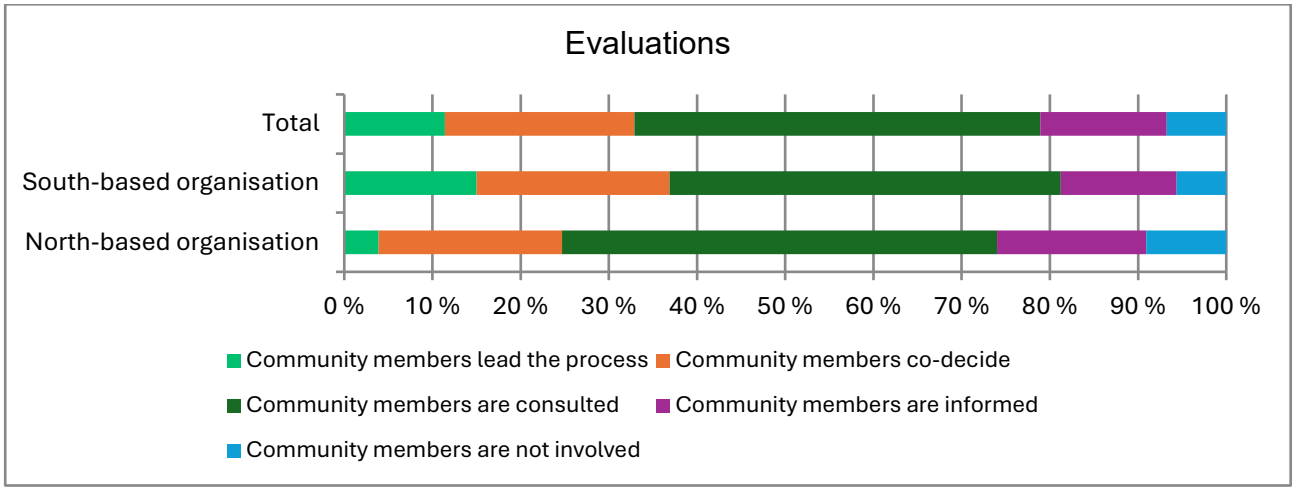

North Partner (according to South partner)
Decisions about what is on the agenda for lobbying and advocacy
Decisions about adjustments to the project budget
Decisions about adjustments to project plans
Decisions about the budget in a funding proposal to [pooled fund]
Decisions about the content of a funding proposal to [pooled fund]
0 %
10 %
20 %
30 %
40 %
50 %
60 %
70 %
80 %
90 %
100 %
4. Decides
3. Co-decides
2. Consulted before a decision is made
1. Informed about decisions made
0. Not involved in decision-making
N/A - Not Applicable / Don't know

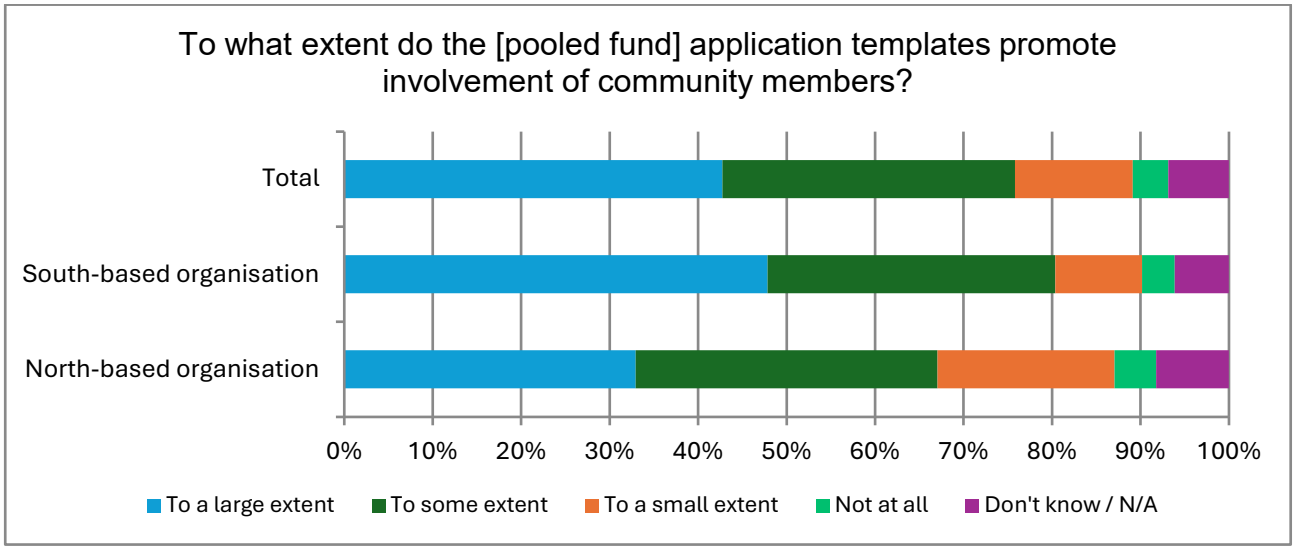

North Partner (according to North partner)
Decisions about what is on the agenda for lobbying and advocacy
Decisions about adjustments to the project budget
Decisions about adjustments to project plans
Decisions about the budget in a funding proposal to [pooled fund]
Decisions about the content of a funding proposal to [pooled fund]
0 % 10 % 20 % 30 % 40 % 50 % 60 % 70 % 80 % 90 % 100 %
4. Decides
3. Co-decides
2. Consulted before a decision is made
1. Informed about decisions made
0. Not involved in decision-making
N/A - Not Applicable / Don't know

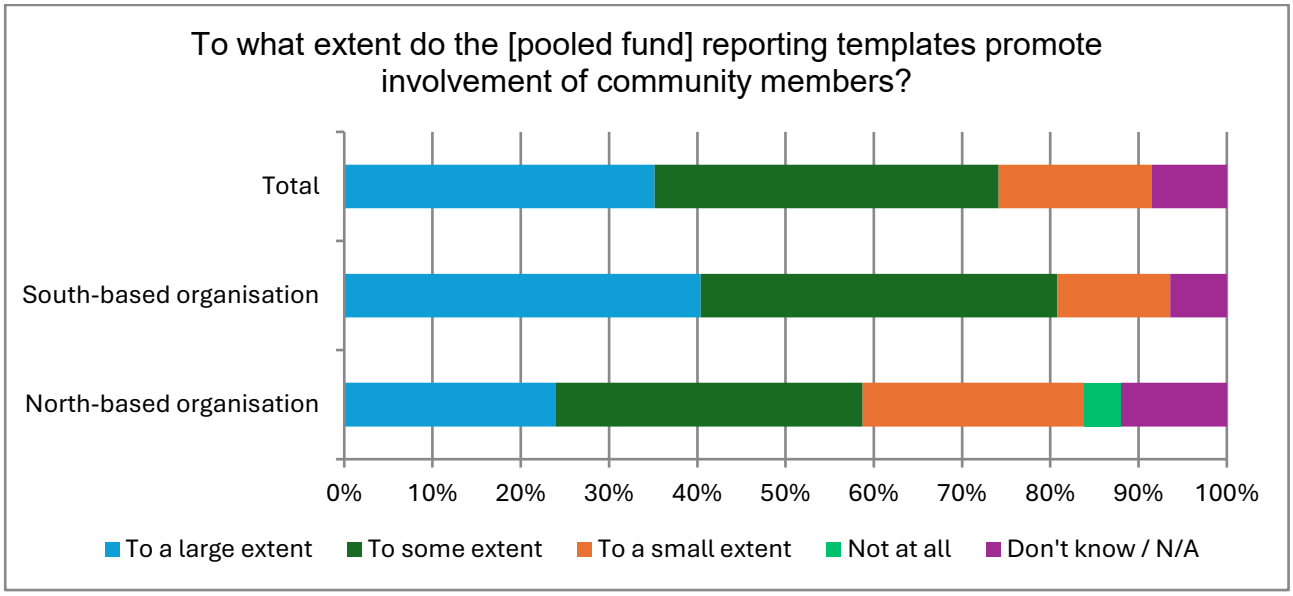

Problem analysis/needs assessment
Total
South-based organisation
North-based organisation
0 % 10 % 20 % 30 % 40 % 50 % 60 % 70 % 80 % 90 % 100 %
Community members lead the process
Community members co-decide
Community members are consulted
Community members are informed
Community members are not involved

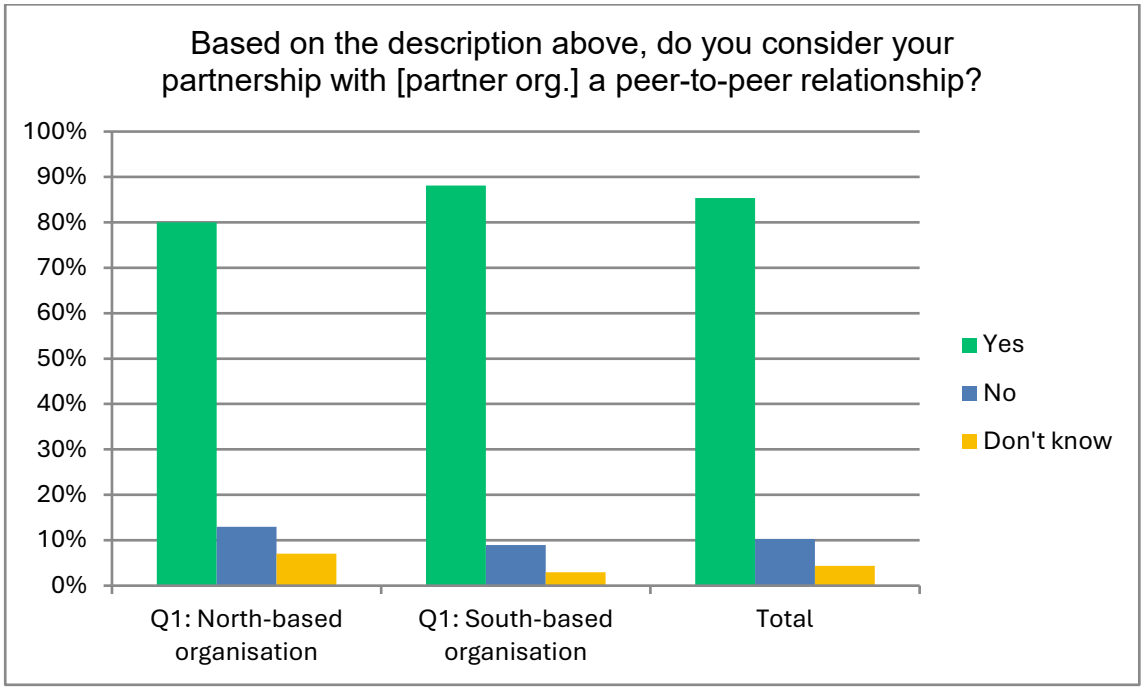

Definition of project objectives
Total
South-based organisation
North-based organisation
0 % 10 % 20 % 30 % 40 % 50 % 60 % 70 % 80 % 90 % 100 %
Community members lead the process
Community members co-decide
Community members are consulted
Community members are informed
Community members are not involved

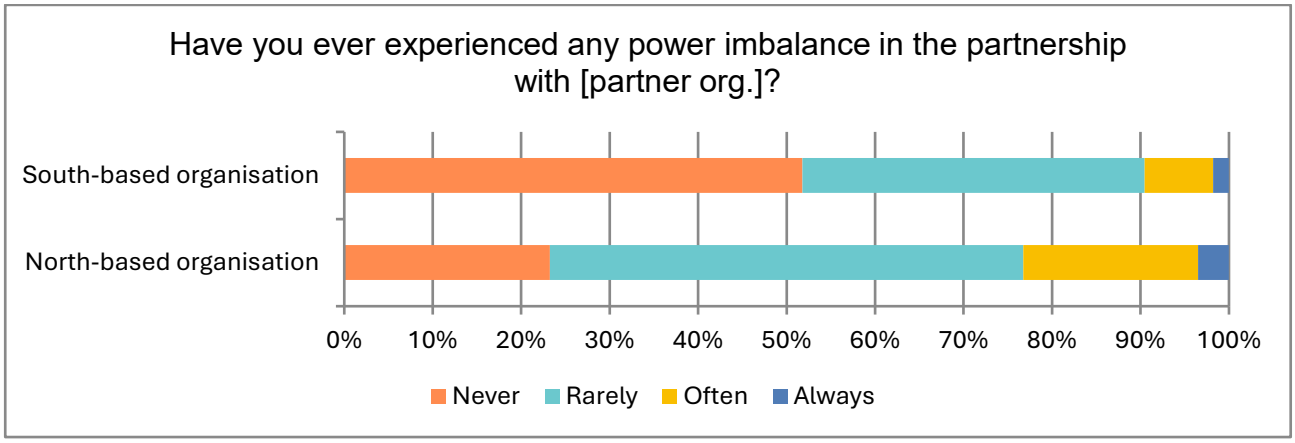

Definition of project activities
Total
South-based organisation
North-based organisation
0 %
10 %
20 %
30 %
40 %
50 %
60 %
70 %
80 %
90 %
100 %
Community members lead the process
Community members co-decide
Community members are consulted
Community members are informed
Community members are not involved

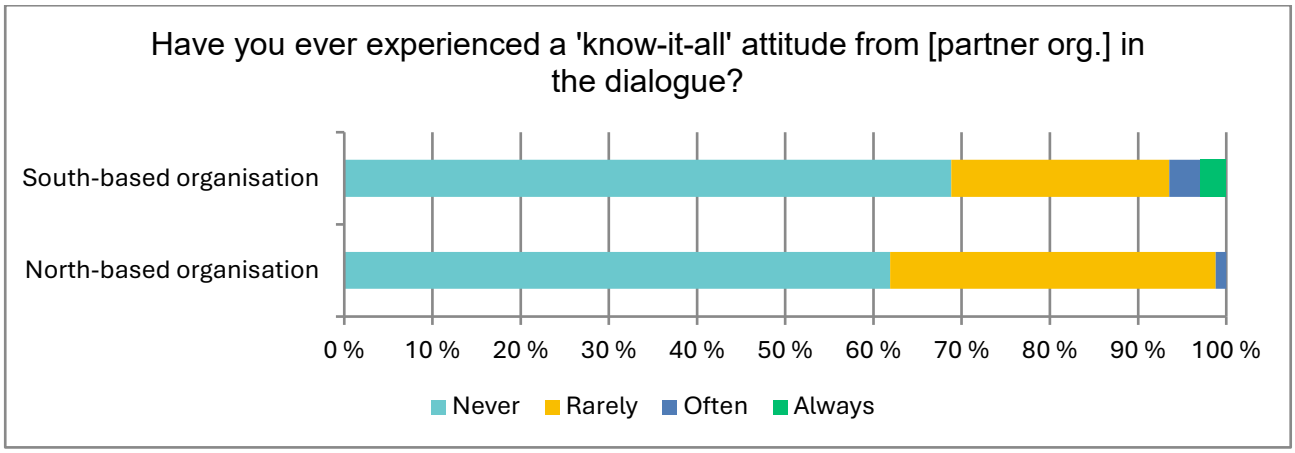

Evaluations
Total
South-based organisation
North-based organisation
0 %
10 %
20 %
30 %
40 %
50 %
60 %
70 %
80 %
90 %
100 %
Community members lead the process
Community members co-decide
Community members are consulted
Community members are informed
Community members are not involved

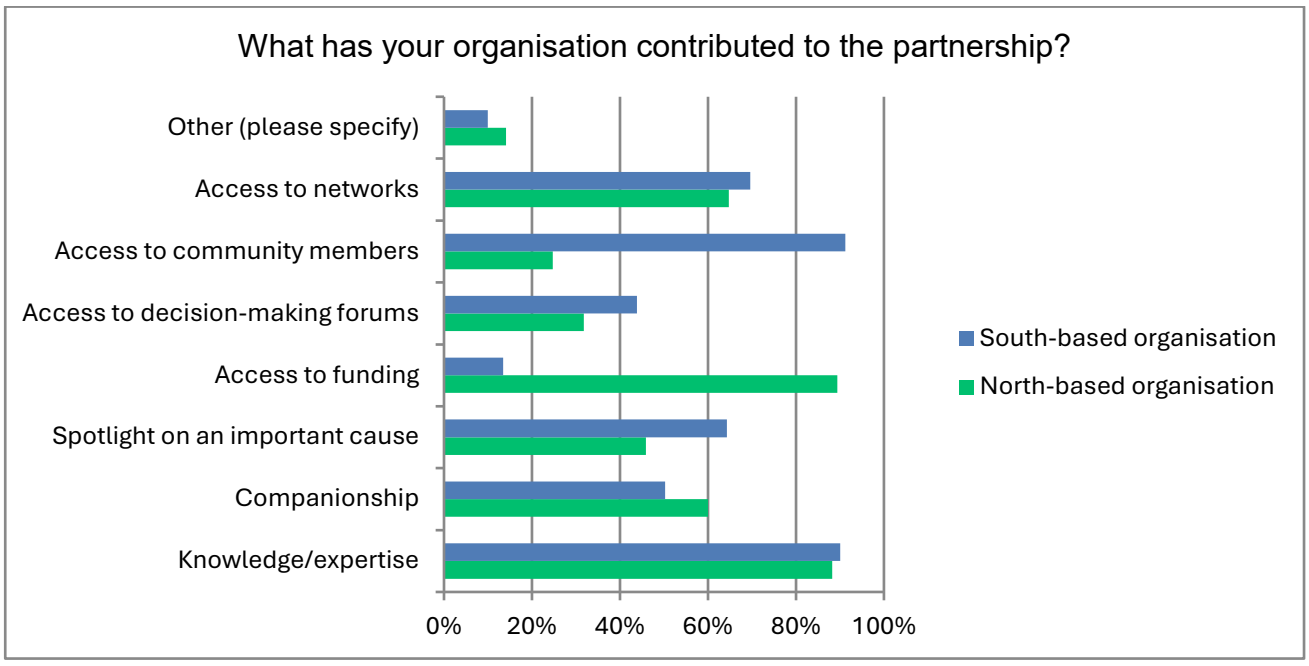

To what extent do the [pooled fund] application templates promote involvement of community members?
Total
South-based organisation
North-based organisation
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
To a large extent
To some extent
To a small extent
Not at all
Don't know / N/A

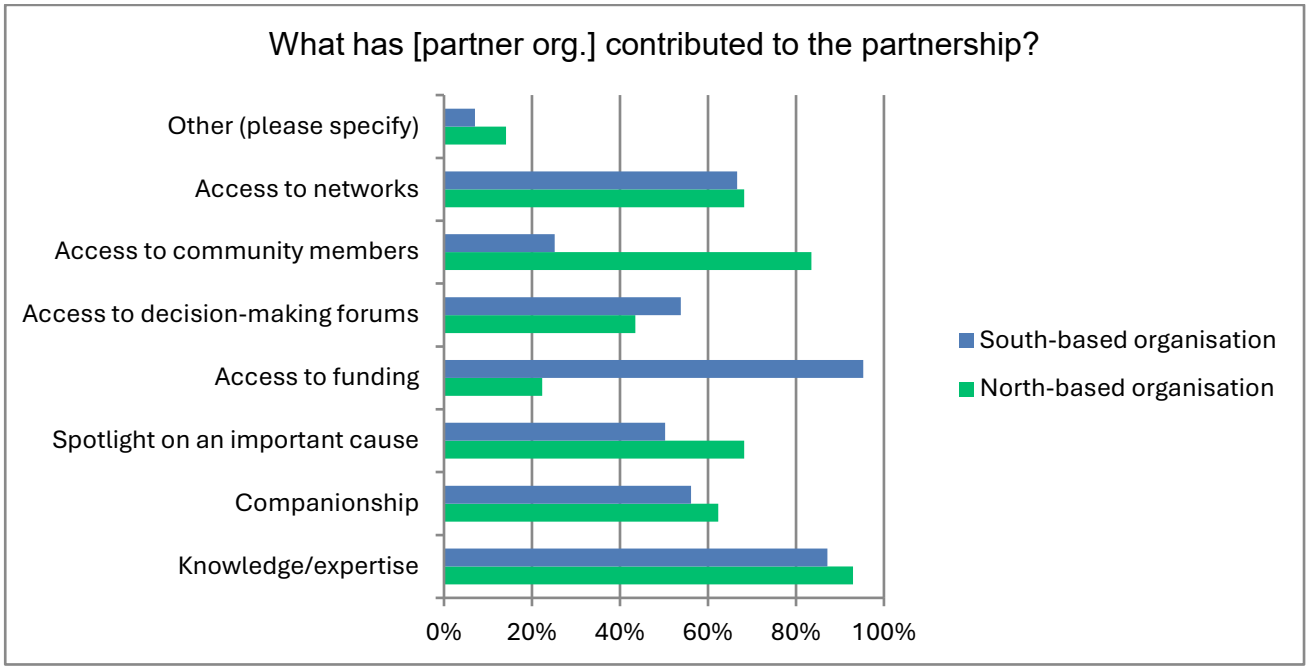

To what extent do the [pooled fund] reporting templates promote involvement of community members?
Total
South-based organisation
North-based organisation
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
To a large extent
To some extent
To a small extent
Not at all
Don't know / N/A

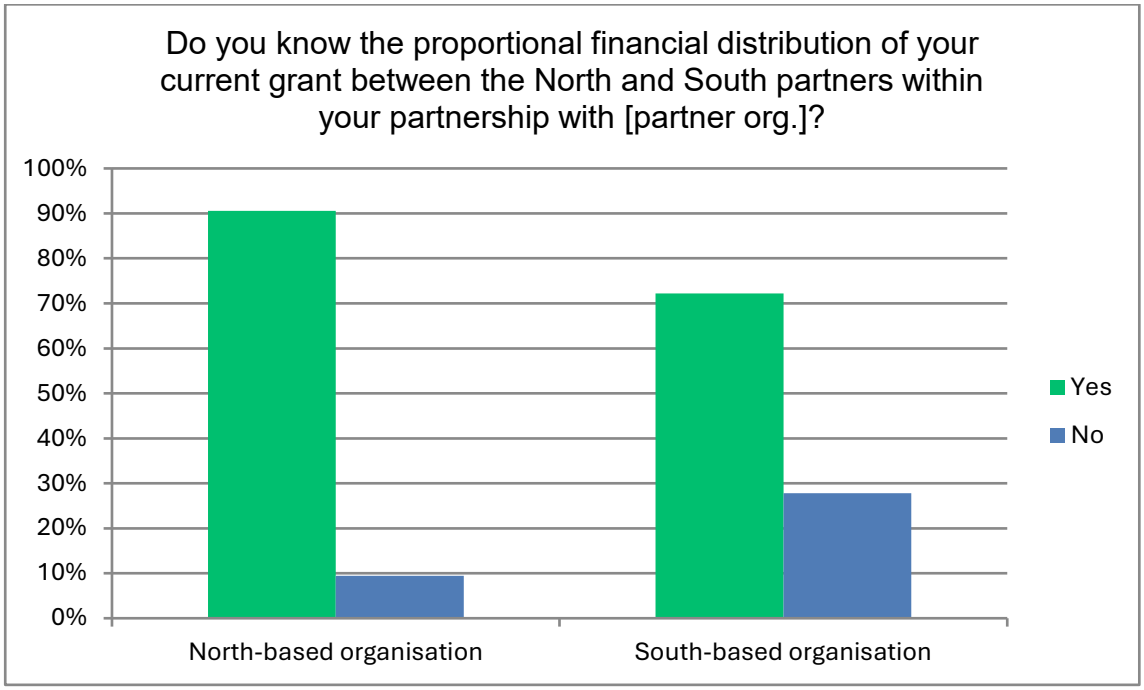

Based on the description above, do you consider your partnership with [partner org.] a peer-to-peer relationship?
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Q1: North-based organisation
Q1: South-based organisation
Total
Yes
No
Don't know

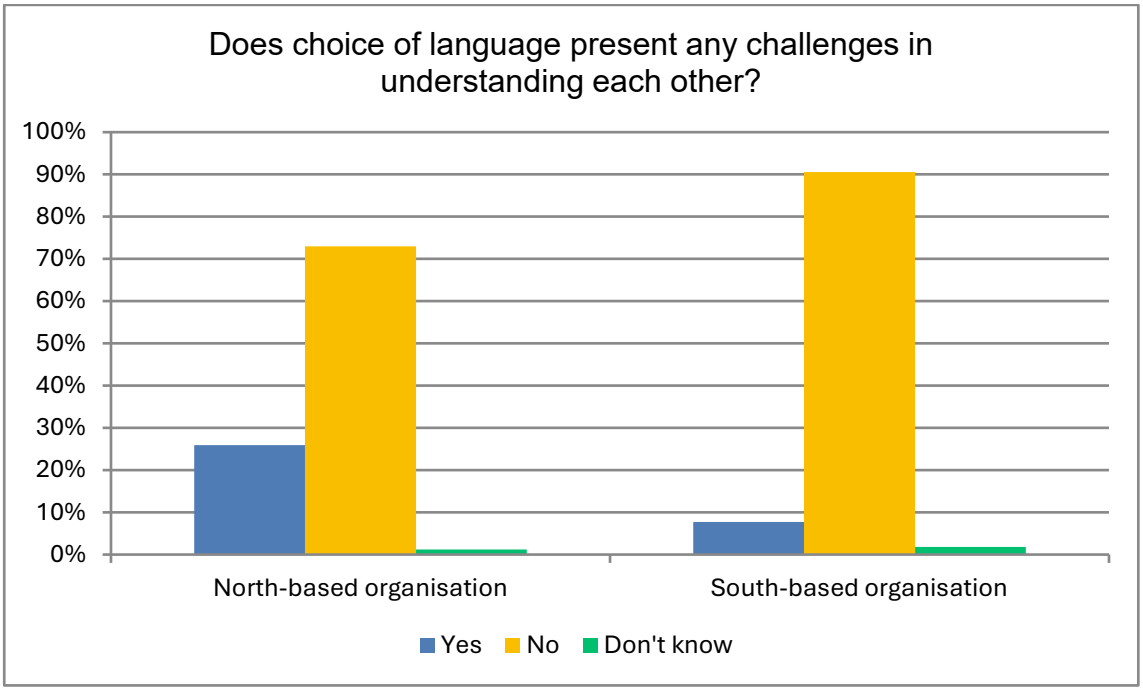

Have you ever experienced any power imbalance in the partnership with [partner org.]?
South-based organisation
North-based organisation
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
Never
Rarely
Often
Always


Have you ever experienced a 'know-it-all' attitude from [partner org.] in the dialogue?
South-based organisation
North-based organisation
0 %
10 %
20 %
30 %
40 %
50 %
60 %
70 %
80 %
90 %
100 %
Never
Rarely
Often
Always

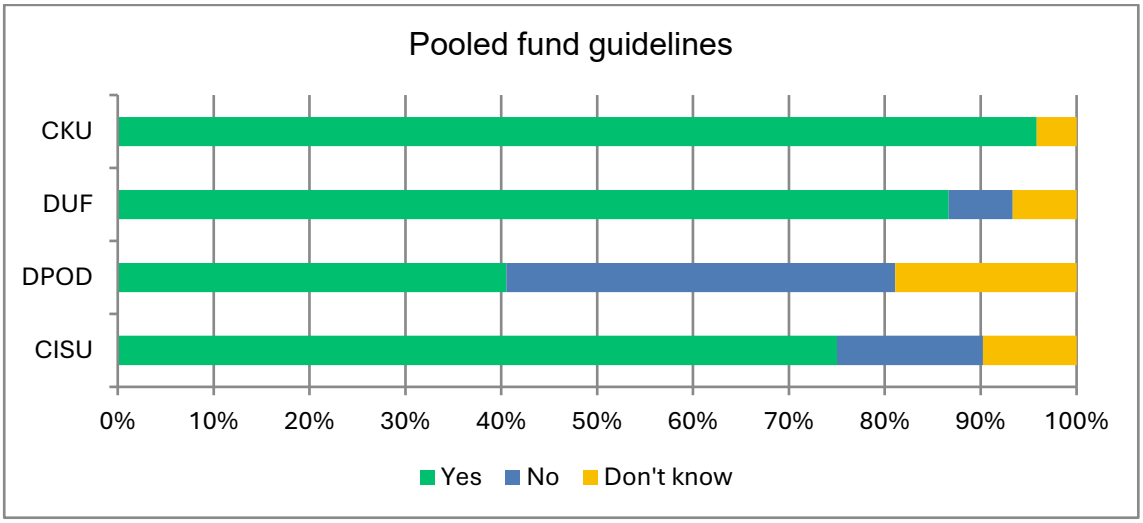

What has your organisation contributed to the partnership?
Other (please specify)
Access to networks
Access to community members
Access to decision-making forums
Access to funding
Spotlight on an important cause
Companionship
Knowledge/expertise
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%
100%
South-based organisation
North-based organisation

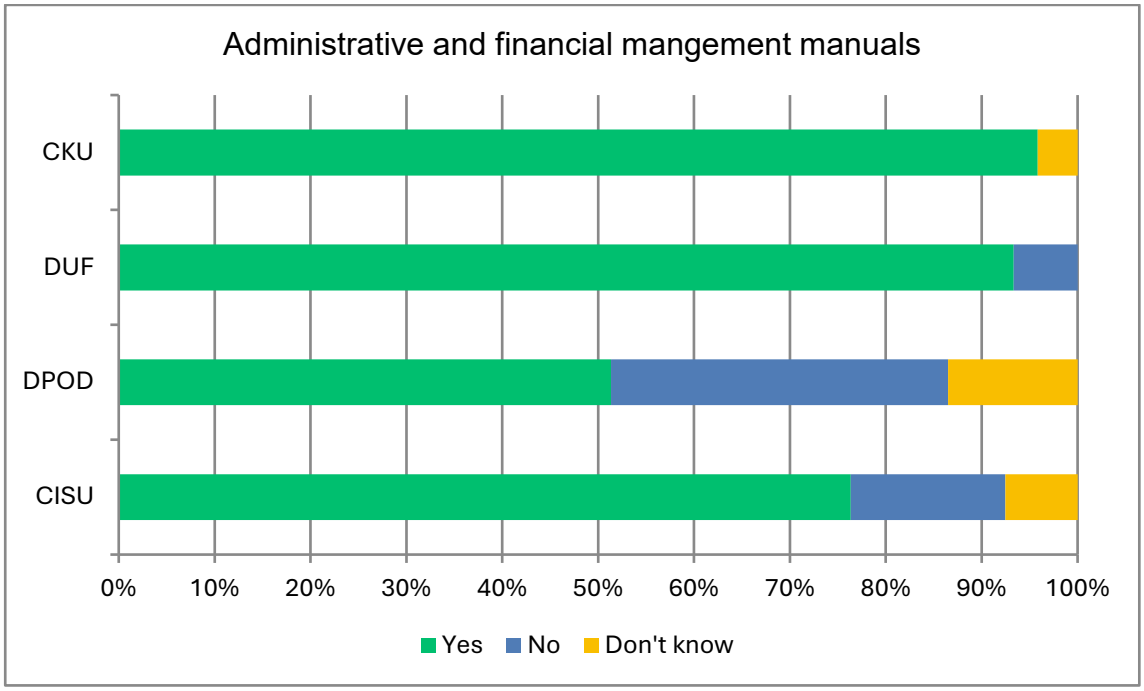

What has [partner org.] contributed to the partnership?
Other (please specify)
Access to networks
Access to community members
Access to decision-making forums
Access to funding
Spotlight on an important cause
Companionship
Knowledge/expertise
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%
100%
South-based organisation
North-based organisation


Do you know the proportional financial distribution of your current grant between the North and South partners within your partnership with [partner org.]?
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
North-based organisation
South-based organisation
Yes
No

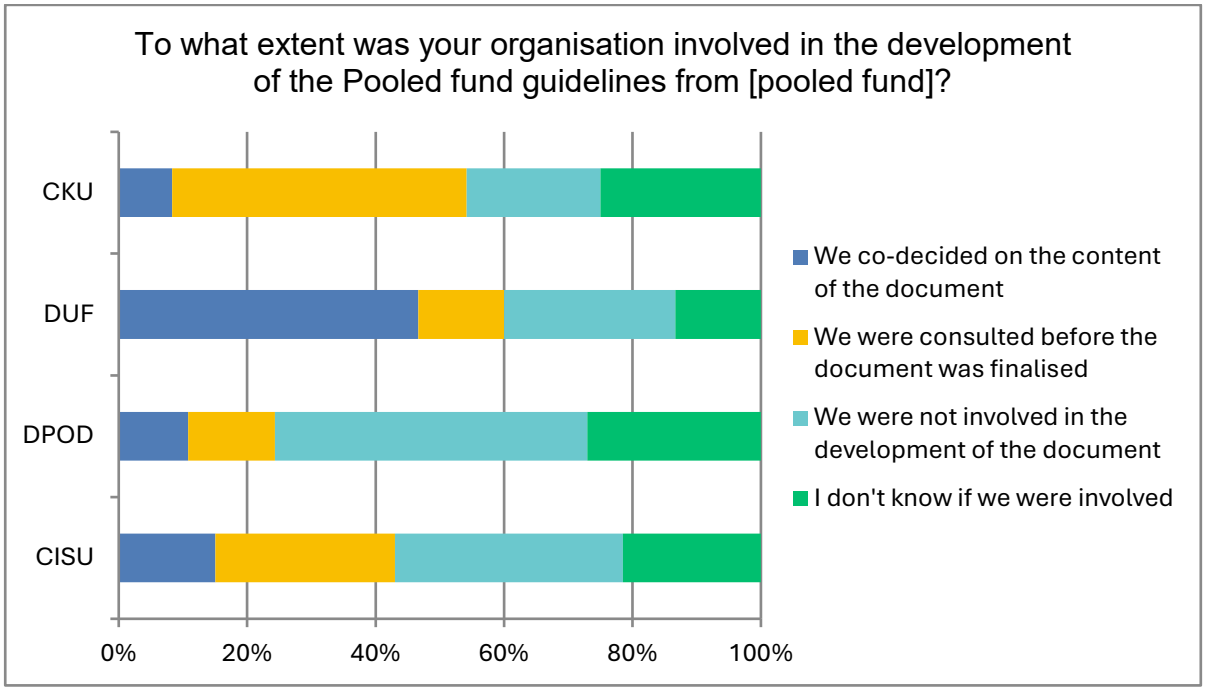


Do you have access to the following guidelines and manuals from [pooled fund] in a language that you understand? (South partners only)

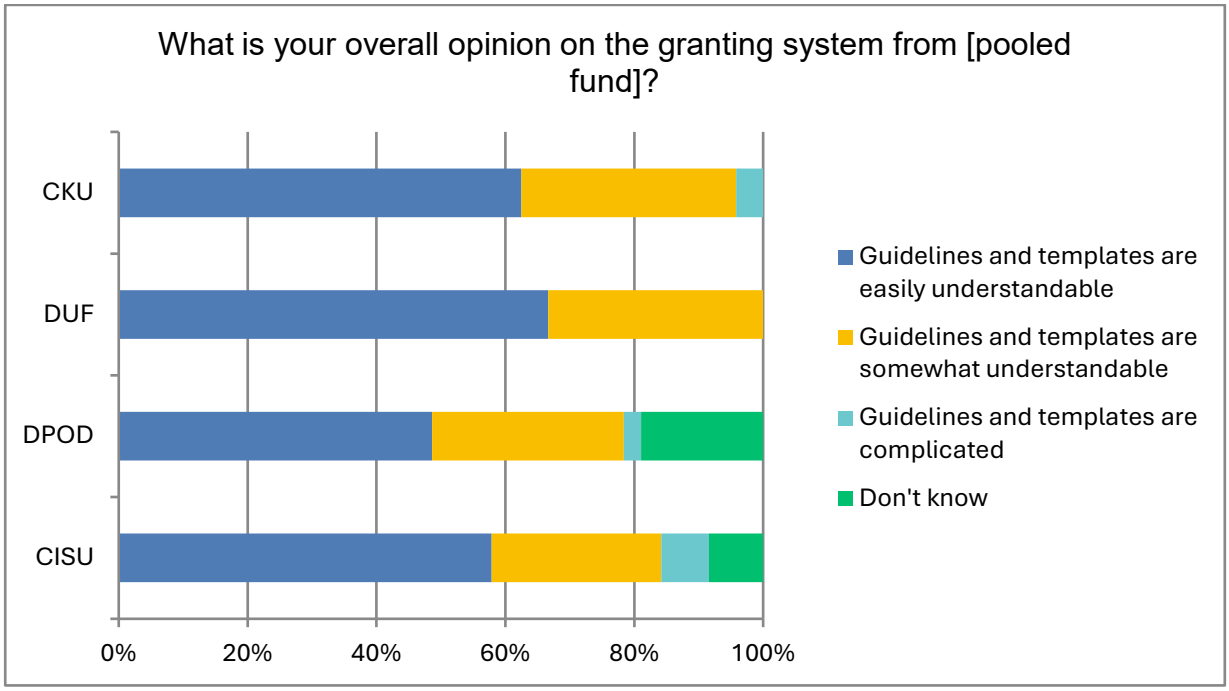




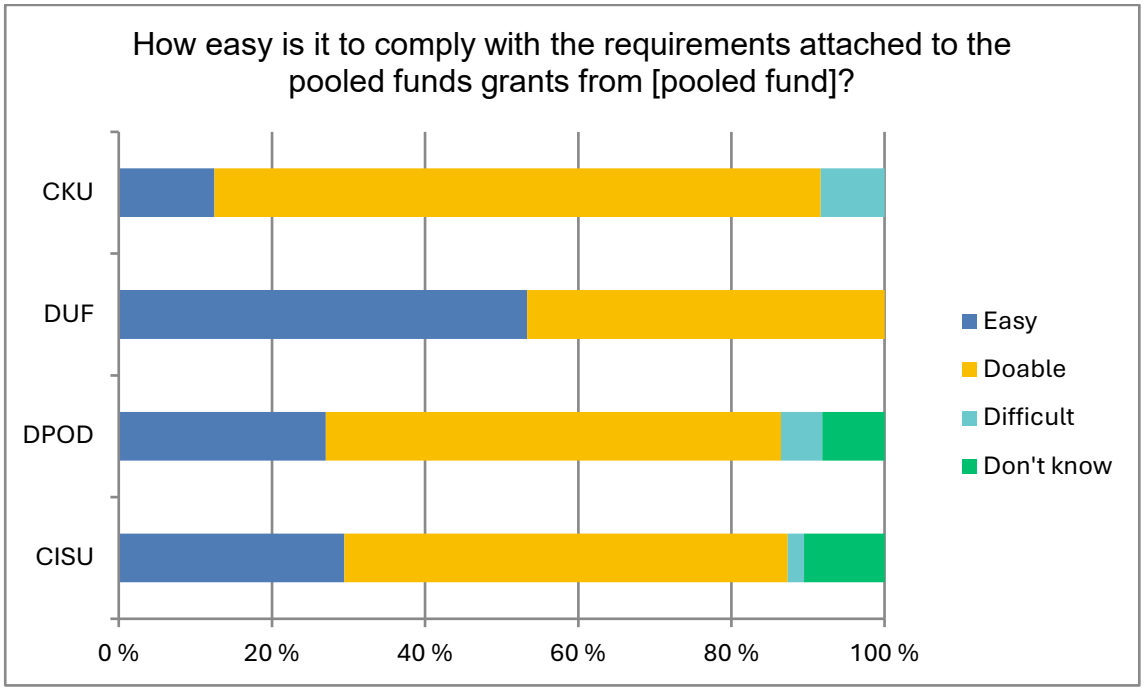
South partners only



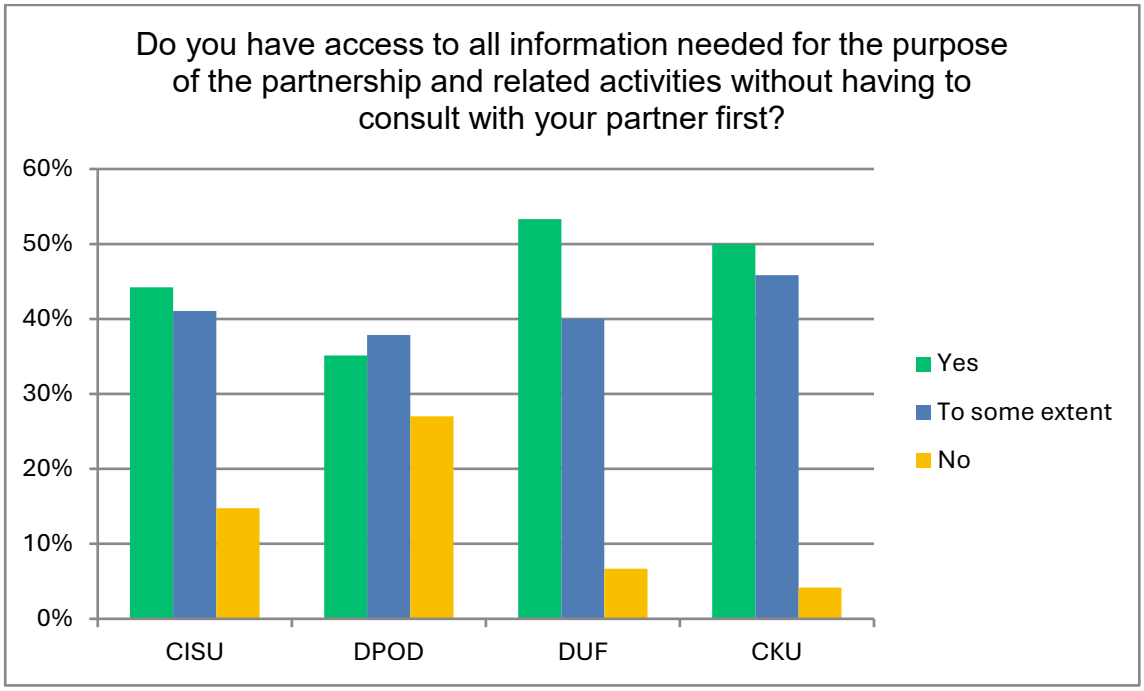
South partners only



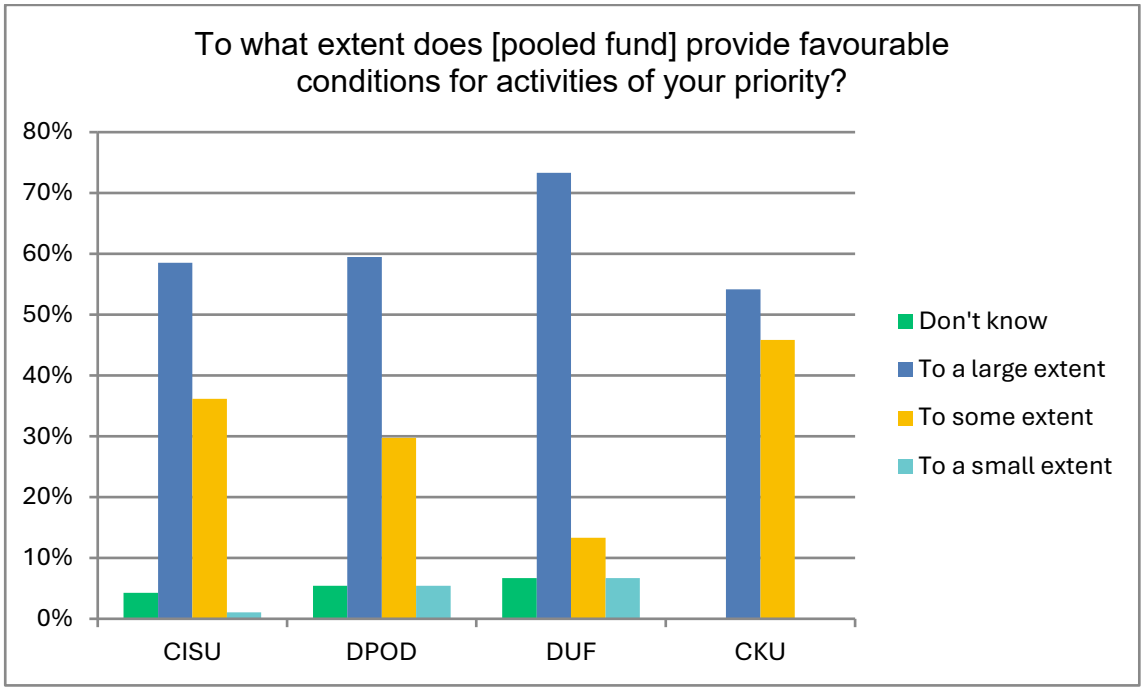
South partners only



South partners only

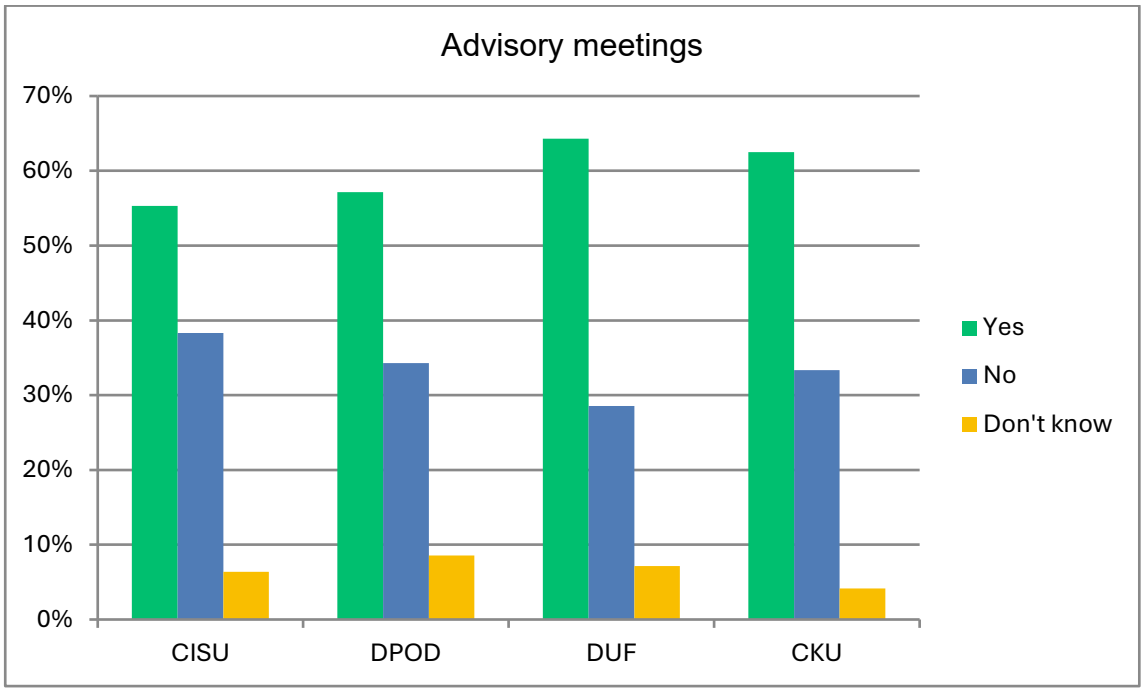


South partners only

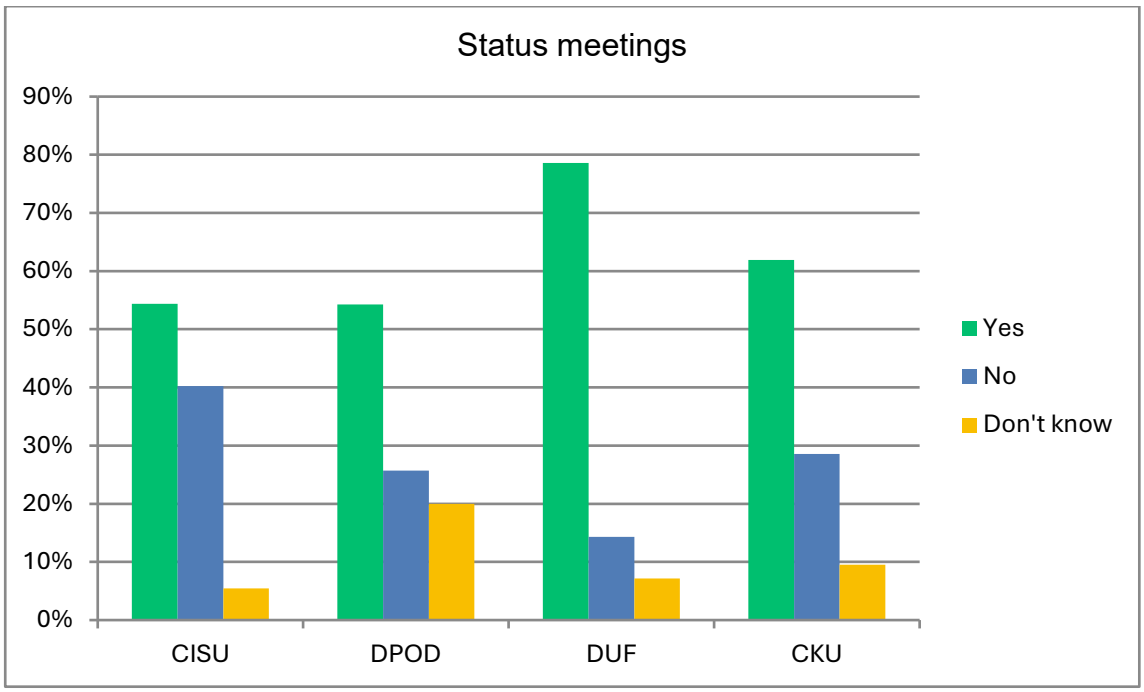


South partners only

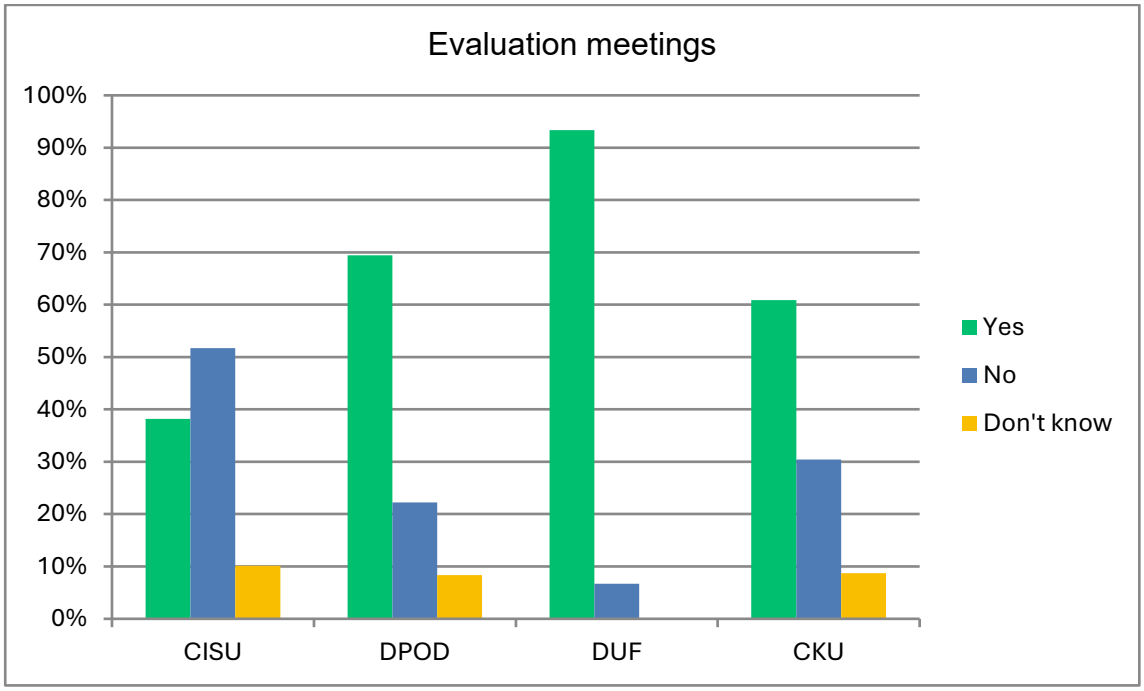
Have you attended any of the following online meetings with [North partner] and [Pooled fund]?



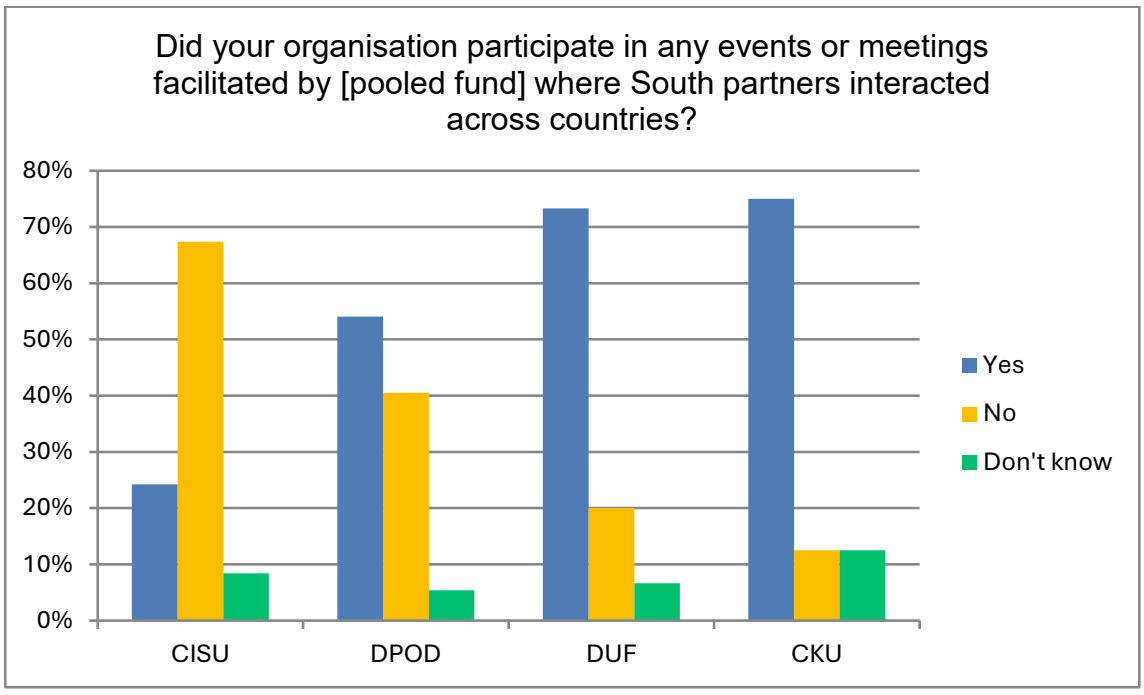
South partners only



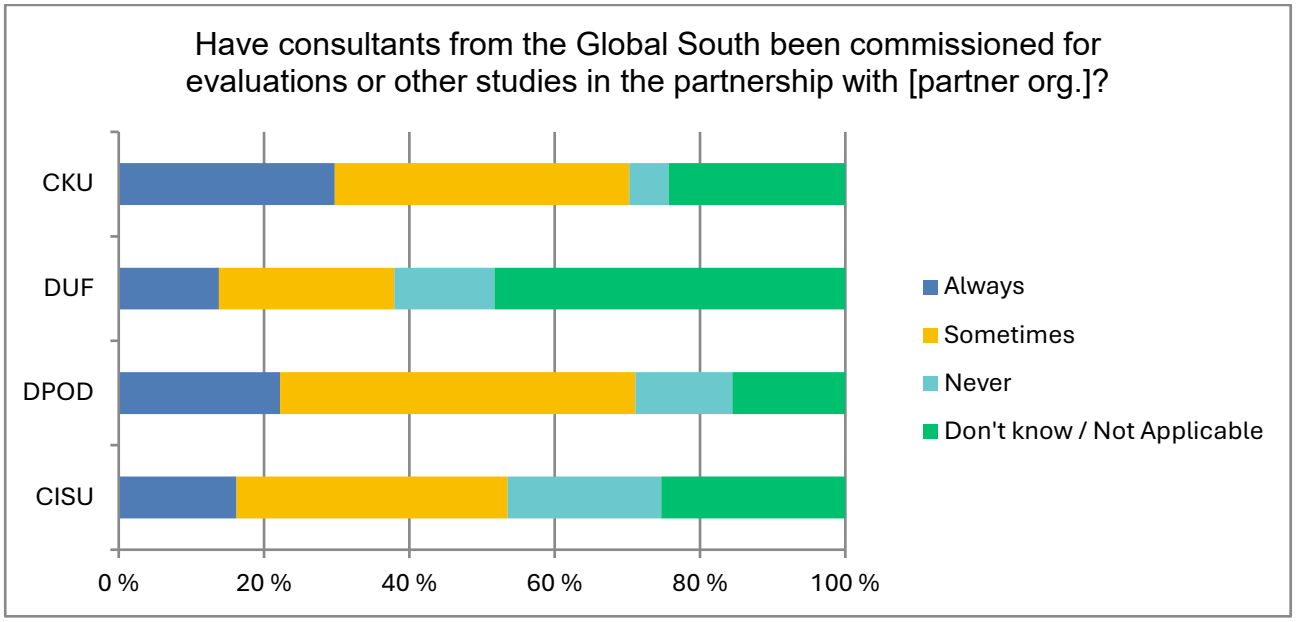
South partners only



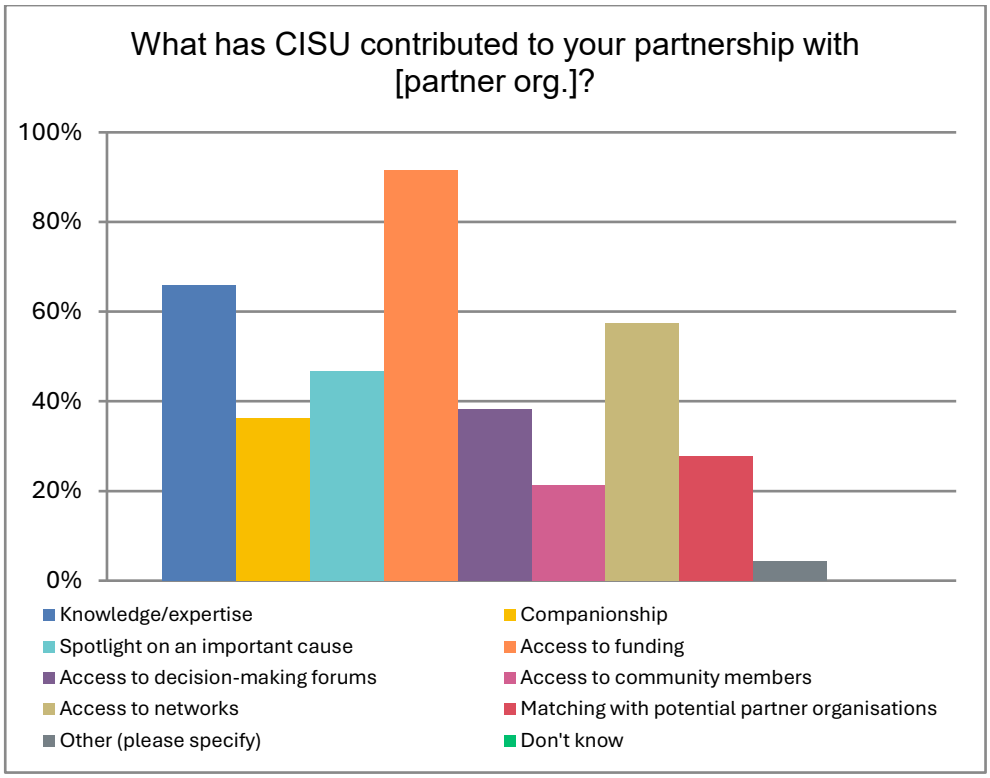
South partners only



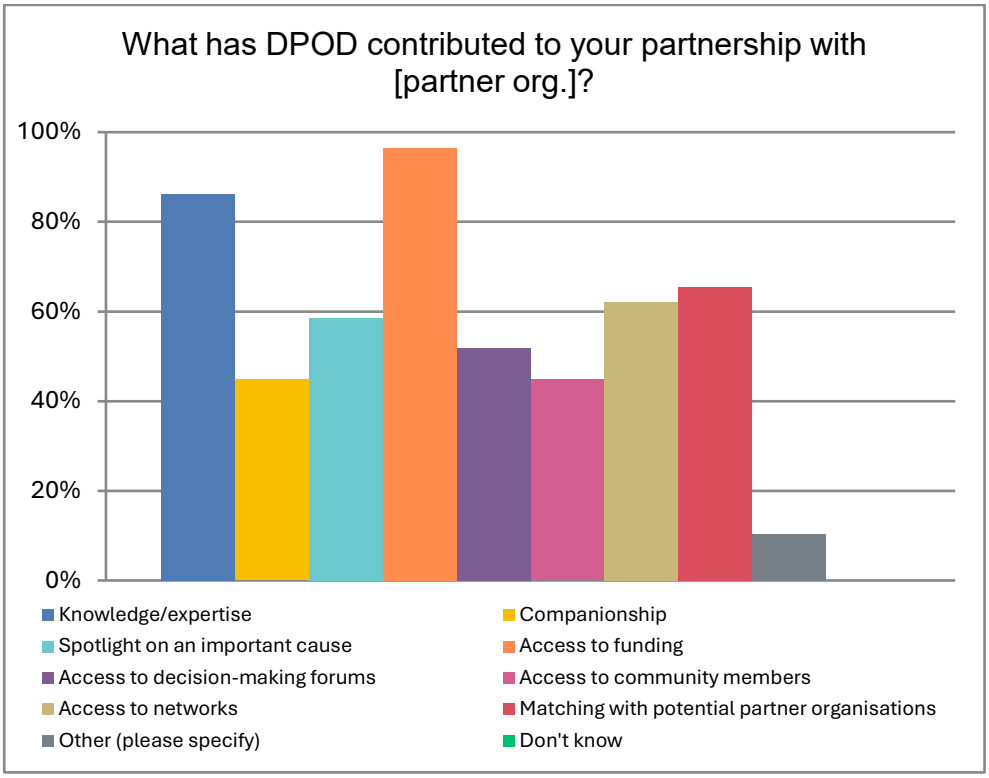
South partners only



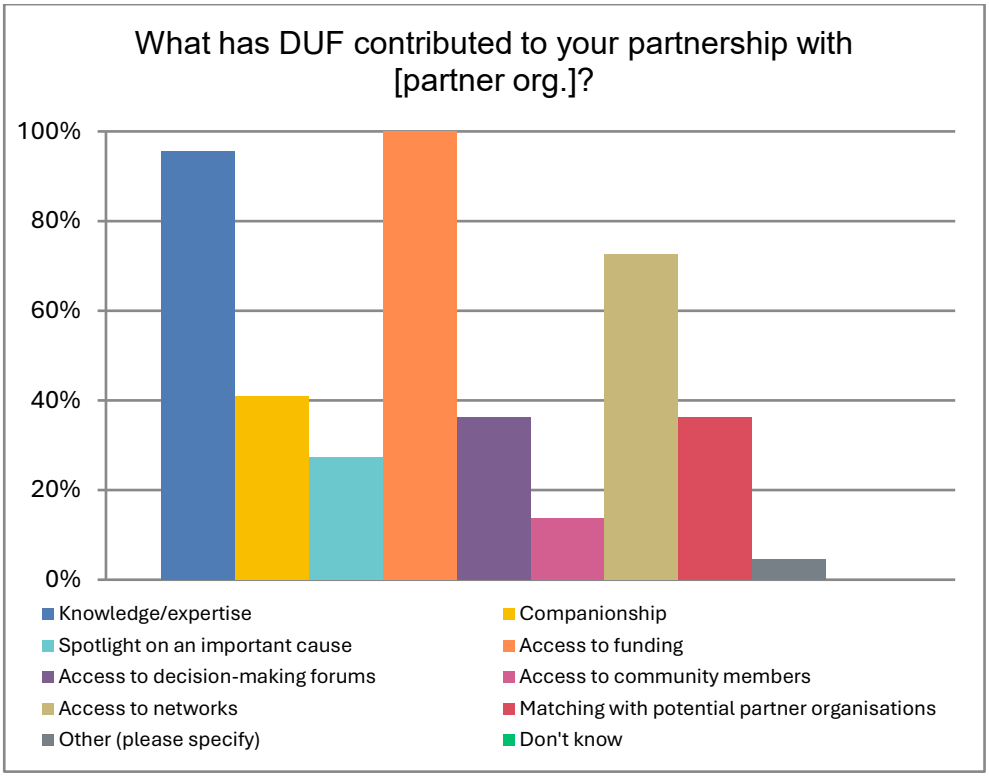
South and North partners



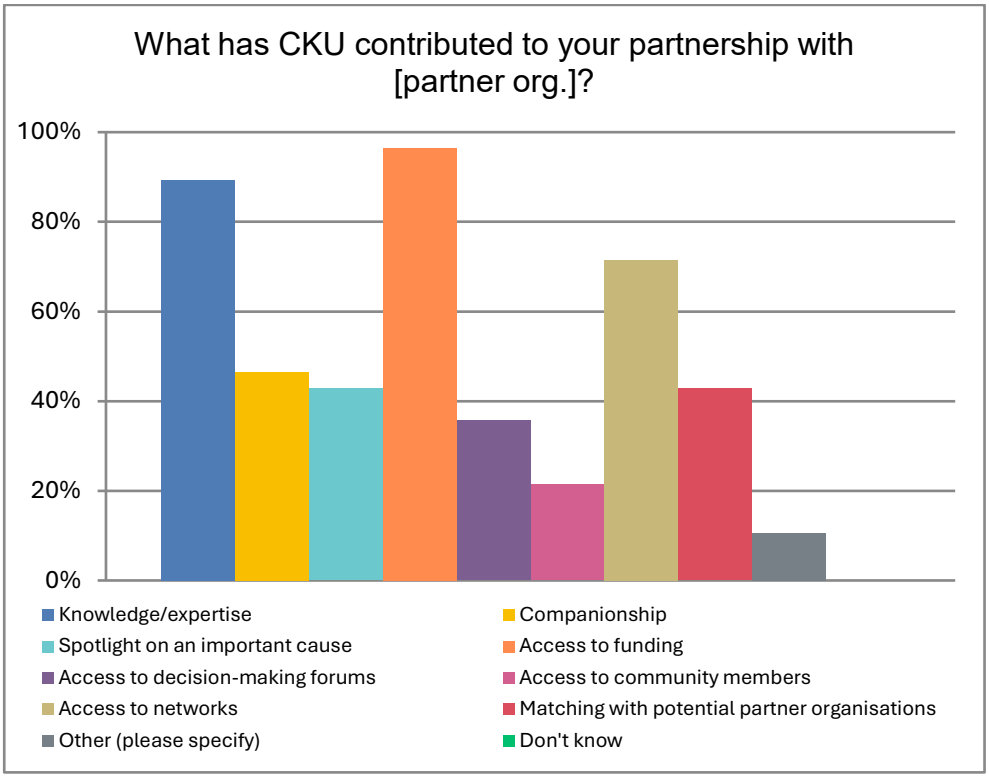
South and North partners



South and North partners



South and North partners



South and North partners

Annex 7: Inspiration for further reading on locally led development

Author	Title	Link
Books and reports:		
Deborah Doane	The INGO Problem: Power, Privilege and Renewal	The INGO Problem
Rights CoLab/WACSI	Fostering equitable North-South Civil Society Partnerships	Voices-from-the-Global-South-RINGO-Report-OV.pdf
Peace Direct	Decolonising aid	PD-Decolonising-Aid_Second-Edition.pdf
Peace Direct	Transforming partnerships	Peace-Direct-Transforming-Partnerships-Report-English.pdf
Peace Direct	The nine roles that intermediaries can play in international cooperation	The nine roles that intermediaries can play in international cooperation
Peace Direct	Time to decolonise aid	Time to Decolonise Aid - Peace Direct
Peace Direct	Race, Power and Peacebuilding	Race, Power and Peacebuilding - Peace Direct
Partos	Dream paper: Shift the Power	Partos-Dreampaper-Shift-the-Power-v7.pdf
Partos	The Digital Power Awareness Tool 2.0	The digital Power Awareness Tool 2.0 - Partos English
CARE International	CI Civil Society Resource	1_CI-Civil-Society-Resource.pdf
EngenderHealth	Transforming INGO Models for Equity – A Change Initiative	Transforming INGO Models for Equity—A Change Initiative | EngenderHealth
OECD	Shifting Power with Partners	Shifting Power with Partners | OECD
OECD	Framing DAC member approaches to enabling locally led development	Framing DAC member approaches to enabling locally led development
Conducive Space for Peace	Learning Note: Innovative Practices – Changing the International System to Better Enable Local Leadership	Learning Note: Innovative Practices – Changing the International System to Better Enable Local Leadership - Conducive Space for Peace
Conducive Space for Peace	Challenges and Opportunities in International Support to Local Civil Society	Challenges and Opportunities in International Support to Local Civil Society - Conducive Space for Peace
Bond	Taking British politics and colonialism out of our language: Bond's language guide	Bond_Decoloinising-and-depoliticising_updated-2022.pdf
International Civil Society Centre	Accelerating Inclusive Power Shift	ICSCentre_Aggregated-Benchmarking-Study_December.pdf

Tearfund, Christian Aid, CARE, ActionAid, CAFOD, Oxfam	Accelerating Localisation through Partnerships: Nepal	Accelerating Localisation Through Partnerships: Nepal report | Save the Children's Resource Centre
Norsaac in Ghana and Transform Trade in Kenya	South Meets North in Power Shift: A Participatory Grant-Making Model (PGM)	South Meets North in Power Shift: A Participatory Grant-Making Model (PGM)
DFAT (Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade)	DFAT Guidance Note: Locally Led Development	https://www.dfat.gov.au/about-us/business-opportunities/business-notifications/dfat-guidance-note-locally-led-development
UK, Switzerland and Denmark	Guidance note for donors: Promoting inclusive and locally-led action through humanitarian pooled funds	Guidance note for donors: Promoting inclusive and locally-led action through humanitarian pooled funds
Articles and websites:		
Manifesto for Change – Another Way Is Possible		
Reimagining Development Language – The SDG Communicator		
How use of language can breathe life into localization | Devex		
Why is "locally led development" missing the mark? | Bond		
The RINGO Project: Re-Imagining the INGO and the Role of Global Civil Society		Rights CoLab
The New Humanitarian | International aid agencies pay the price for boom and bust		
Abt: Grappling with localisation		
Abt: What does locally led development mean in practice?		
Shift the Power: Monitoring and evaluation, whatever you call it should not be perceived as "something for donors"		
Videos:		
The INGO problem and why it's time for radical reimagining – Another Way Is Possible		
Where do we go from here? Navigating inequalities between development NGOs in the aid system		