CREATING OPPORTUNITIES TO WORK WITH DIASPORAS IN HUMANITARIAN SETTINGS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABOUT DEMAC

The Diaspora Emergency Action and Coordination (DEMAC) project is implemented by Danish Refugee Council (DRC), AFFORD UK, and the Berghof Foundation to improve diaspora emergency response capacity and coordination with the institutional humanitarian system. Since 2015, DEMAC has been collaborating closely with institutional aid providers and diaspora organisations that are actively engaged in emergency and humanitarian responses in Syria, Somalia, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone.

Acting as a platform for promoting dialogue, networking, knowledge development and exchange, DEMAC documents the strength and complementarity of diaspora humanitarianism, and highlights opportunities for greater collaboration at local and international level. DEMAC is strengthening the role of diaspora organisations and their local partners in coordinated aid delivery and is contributing to promote and support evidence-based shifts in strategic planning, programme design, and partnership models within the institutional aid architecture. Through its work, DEMAC seeks to enhance the complementarity of different actors and actions, towards a more effective and efficient humanitarian response to the benefit of affected populations.

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ACRONYMS

BoYPAI	Borno Youths for Positive Action Initiative
CANUK	Central Association of Nigerians in the United Kingdom
CISLAC	Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DEMAC	Diaspora Emergency Action and Coordination
DO	Diaspora Organisation
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
F.R.E.E.	Foundation for Refugee Economic Empowerment
HLA	Homs League Abroad
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
NEMA	Nigerian National Emergency Management Agency
NESCOB	Network of Civil Society Organisations in Borno State
NFI	Non-Food Items
NIDO	Nigerians in the Diaspora Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NNGO	National Non-Governmental Organisation
OCAT	Organisational Capacity Assessment Tool
OSN	Orodata Science Nigeria
SACSUIT	Samaritan Care and Support Initiative
UN	United Nations
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WHS	World Humanitarian Summit

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Diaspora organisations (DOs) are newly recognised actors in the humanitarian space. DOs respond to crises such as those in Syria, Somalia, and Nigeria, which have shown the limitations of the traditional humanitarian sector. Their contributions to emergency response are under-studied and, as our research shows, often misunderstood due to a gap in knowledge about their work. This report contributes to filling this gap. It sets out to understand how DOs contribute to strengthening humanitarian response in crisis settings. We explore opportunities to work with DOs in humanitarian action through six case studies of DOs operating in Somalia and Syria. Fieldwork was conducted in seven remote sites of humanitarian intervention, including in Nigeria, where DO actions are still limited. A context analysis for Nigeria provides an entry point into understanding the potential for DOs to contribute in the northeastern region.

In order to answer the central research question—how diaspora organisations can, and cannot yet, contribute to strengthening the humanitarian response in times of crisis—48 structured interviews, 13 focus group discussions, and six organisational capacity assessment tools (OCATs) were conducted with DOs, IOs, beneficiaries, and local actors. The variety of actors consulted and research tools used allowed collection of more critical, independent, and impartial input on the DOs concerned. This approach helped to control for positive self-reporting bias by DOs and constructed a more comprehensive image of what and how DOs contribute to humanitarian response. Further, by evaluating all DOs against eight common criteria (cost-effectiveness, access, rapidity, local ownership and anchoring of activities post-project completion, results, sustainability, innovation, and voice amplification), the study provides comparative insights among DOs to highlight features that broaden and exemplify our definition of DOs as humanitarian actors.

Barriers to coordination and communication

A main message that emerged from the study is that for a variety of reasons there are barriers to coordinating and communicating with DOs. The primary barrier is the operational divide between new and traditional humanitarian actors. UN representatives express a sense of mistrust in DOs with the suspicion that DOs are partial to particular tribes and clans, that they operate out of self-interest and without consideration for longer-term development outcomes, and that DOs are uninterested in or incapable of collaborating with formal actors. These sentiments were echoed by other respondents that interact with DOs.

Another barrier underlying this divide is the limited awareness of the work of small and medium-sized DOs. Most DOs interviewed are not visible actors of the aid community because of their relatively small size and because they are often based remotely—primarily in Europe—rather than on the ground; consequently they do not participate in inter-organisation coordination fora in Syria and Somalia and so do not share information on how and when they operate. As highlighted in the findings below, there are also a number of barriers that DOs confront in their interactions with typical humanitarian actors, namely DOs' concern about the bureaucratic burden created by formalising their work vis-à-vis registration and reporting. DO's in this study also expressed reservations about being constrained by the operational rigidity that results from complying with established humanitarian standards. These organisational differences create distance between the sets of actors.

Value in engaging DOs in humanitarian response

In spite of the divisions, the imperative for engaging with DOs in these contexts is clear. In Syria, successful large-scale DOs are incorporated into coordination meetings and are able to share information on the beneficiaries they reach and the approaches they employ to deliver aid. Conversely, the small- and medium-sized Syrian DOs observed in this study were unable to contribute their insights to the broader consortium of actors, forgoing learning opportunities. In Somalia, actors' responses to drought did not adequately incorporate the DOs that were involved in this study, resulting in duplication of efforts and uneven attention received by affected populations. In Nigeria, DOs have limited presence and operational experience in the northern region where conflict is most acute. Their capacity gaps could be identified and developed in order to draw on their unique potential to intervene, in turn contributing to operationalization of a larger-scale response to underserved conflict-affected populations.

DOs have demonstrated willingness to intervene and have varying capabilities to do so; their efforts can be strengthened and better facilitated. While it appears obvious that coordination can help engender a more informed and comprehensive response to emergency situations, DOs nevertheless emphasised their commitment to maintaining flexibility and autonomy, and so efforts to more fully incorporate DOs into the humanitarian system need to account for this. The following findings can help inform future actions.

Key findings on strengths and weaknesses of DOs

DOs interviewed in this study exhibited a number of overlapping strengths that can be drawn on to develop more effective, system-wide emergency responses. Of particular note, DOs work from the bottom-up, relying on built trust and direct relationships with community representatives, volunteers, and beneficiaries for a more rapid and timely response. Because DOs are not proposal- or donor- driven, they are not beholden to excessive bureaucratic hurdles that other actors confront, which lends to organisational flexibility. Their ability to solicit and to respond to expressed local needs enables DOs to launch effective 'emotional' social media advocacy and fundraising campaigns among the general public, which helps them to maintain their independence.

The financial efficacy of DOs can also be seen in their transnational organisational structures, which tend to be lightweight and with reduced operational overhead: they rely predominantly on local volunteer staff and have few physical structures to manage. Finally, DOs observed were able to cross the humanitarian-development divide, transferring skills to build self-reliance as part of broader social investment efforts. These myriad attributes are distinct from many of those possessed by traditional humanitarian actors.

This study seeks a balanced and productive assessment of the six DOs observed, which requires that aforementioned strengths are nuanced to avoid generalisation of complex organisations, and also that observed shortcomings are highlighted and accounted for moving forward. The challenges of DO response in humanitarian spaces, as observed in Somalia and Syria, are often rooted in their reluctance or inability to incorporate humanitarian standards into their operations. Information channels are not transparent at all times in the lifecycle of individual DOs; they often do not have legal status, sometimes for security reasons, but also because they lack resources to formalise organisational documentation. Few organisations abide by Sphere or INEE standards; instead, many of their responses are informed by needs expressed by communities themselves, which can at times compromise elements of neutrality and impartiality. Furthermore, DOs rely on perpetual public fundraising campaigns and typically do not employ many staff, which creates challenges for organisational growth and sustainability. Consequently, the strength of relations with CSOs, UN, IOs, and government actors are weak among most DOs interviewed, which compromises harmonisation of interventions and foregoes opportunities for developing more impactful responses.

Recommendations

These synthesised findings inform 16 recommendations targeted at DOs, DEMAC, IOs and INGOs, donors, and governments. Recommendations aim to help consolidate the position of DOs, premised on the understanding that for DOs to become more universally accepted as humanitarian responders who make valuable contributions to the traditional system, they will need broad-based support from all existing actors.

Recommendations target two broad considerations:

First, the small- and medium-scale DOs interviewed expressed consciousness of their strengths and limitations and noted that self-reflection and learning are important at this juncture. Of paramount concern, DOs are evaluating how best to balance their independence and ability to think and act differently from traditional humanitarian actors with the recognition that they may need to formalise certain practices to improve outcomes of their work. This is where they need (and request) support: from Somalia to Syria, network- and volunteer-based DOs are prepared to register, and to adapt more structural policies to improve legal and financial processes. Doing so can help access more secure sources of funding, however, it is recommended that donors attempt to preserve DOs' strategic advantages by limiting conditionalities, mandating only that DO's abide by specific humanitarian standards such as demonstration of non-discrimination and area-based approaches that include members of different ethnic groups, tribes, and other affiliations. Similarly, when DOs are brought into coordination and resilience fora, IOs and INGOs should take advantage of their ease of access and lower security restrictions, similar to the way INGOs partner with contractors, rather than mandating that DOs mainstream their methods.

Second, in order for DOs to further strengthen their value in humanitarian settings, the tendency toward misinformation needs to give way to information sharing. It would be valuable to more widely broadcast the many successes DOs have had with bridging current gaps in humanitarian practice. Doing so could help them establish a larger and trusted voice in the aid community. For instance, Syrian DO, Doz e V., exemplifies an organisation that effectively works across the humanitarian-development nexus, building capacities of civil society organisations and advancing social development projects through their food security and agricultural trainings. Nevertheless, their work is not known among the IOs interviewed.

DOs also introduce innovative and inclusive approaches in crisis settings that other humanitarian responders could learn from, as seen through Somali Faces' social justice work, which advocates for women's rights in culturally sensitive situations that INGOs are less able to intervene on. Amplifying the unique strengths that DOs have to offer requires that they overcome elements of their operations that are particularly lacking, namely, the collection of data, sharing of data, and overall monitoring and evaluation of their work. These are capacities that traditional humanitarian actors could help DOs develop.

All stakeholders consulted in this study – including government, UN, IOs, local actors, and DOs themselves – agree that DOs have an important role to play within the humanitarian ecosystem. Across Syria, Somalia, and Nigeria, DOs have an intention to continue operations and the capacity to adapt and deliver, as demonstrated in this study. At this stage, we need to facilitate their engagement through considered implementation of the recommendations discussed within, including governments' removal of taxes, IOs and UN engaging in twinning programmes, and carving out spaces for DOs in various stakeholder consortia.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DOS

1. **Consolidate an umbrella network of diaspora organisations for humanitarian action**
Serve as a referral network or resource in crisis settings when other actors cannot mobilise as quickly.
2. **Engage with diaspora organisations involved in the development sector**
Map social investments and track improvements to infrastructure that can support humanitarian DOs.
3. **Identify twinning opportunities between large and medium-scale DOs, between DOs and traditional humanitarian actors, and across settings**
Improve diaspora organisations' technical and managerial capacities, monitoring and reporting skills.
4. **Commit to systematic reporting, based on monitoring and longitudinal data**
Develop a learning agenda with events, workshops and opportunities to debate and share lessons.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IOS & NGOS

8. **Consider DOs as partners who can do what IO/INGOs cannot do**
Encourage DOs to use and document different methods to achieve a common objective.
9. **Engage in a twinning program**
Participate in shared programs with other organisations to develop capacity in specific fields and contexts.
10. **Include DOs in resilience consortia**
Capitalise on DOs' role in strengthening community capacities to absorb, adapt and transform in the aftermath of shocks and stressors, in collaboration with resilience actors.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENTS

15. **Apply tax exemptions for members of diaspora organisations**
Fiscal benefits to be accompanied by conditionalities, such as regular reporting and coordination.
16. **Include the role of DOs in humanitarian action in government's existing or future diaspora engagement policies**

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEMAC

5. **Build a learning agenda on diaspora engagement by highlighting and disseminating successful initiatives as entry points for engagement with DOs**
Share information and present entry points for engagement between DOs and a range of stakeholders.
6. **Provide capacity-building support**
Focus on: (1) building partnerships, (2) knowledge management and reporting, (3) referrals and skill-transfers, (4) financial and legal procedures, (5) humanitarian principles and working in displacement-affected communities.
7. **Engage the diaspora's voice and capacity to act in displacement contexts**
Establish and ensure comprehension of guidelines for protection and durable solutions programming.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DONORS

11. **Initiate co-creation requests for proposals that will require diasporic and traditional actors to generate joint project ideas**
Identify common geographical and thematic areas of work to advance resource-sharing practices.
12. **Generate opportunities for non-conditional funding to explore new approaches**
Develop pilot funding for DOs, available over 2-5 years to fund humanitarian action.
13. **Define cross-border possibilities**
Learn from DOs' cross-border programming to negotiate access and adapt to local contexts.
14. **Scale successful DO initiatives**
Identify community-based DO initiatives that can be scaled and assess the financial costs for scale-up.

1. INTRODUCTION

While the contribution of diasporas to development has been widely researched, their input into the humanitarian sphere remains underexplored[1]. This study reviews the work of six Diaspora organisations (DOs) in contemporary crisis settings, when emergency and early recovery responses are needed as a result of droughts, terror attacks or active conflict. It provides a critical analysis and a case study approach to advance the understanding of DOs' contributions in humanitarian settings.

Analysts and media commentators have increased the coverage of Diaspora's humanitarian actions in recent years, most notably during the Syrian conflict[2]. The work of DOs has not been as widely explored across other crisis settings or outside of a group of large DOs. This research started by asking how small- and medium-scale DOs add value in remote and restricted settings where mainstream humanitarian actors face challenges of access, local ownership and sustainability. It concludes on areas of complementarity between DOs and the traditional humanitarian sector, outlining their strengths and weaknesses, achievements and areas where they should be supported.

The complexities of operating in emergency humanitarian settings in countries such as Nigeria, Somalia and Syria apply to all organisations – whether international or diaspora. DOs have to negotiate their access to funding and their implementation capacity just like traditional actors. They operate in a common humanitarian aid ecosystem, are confronted with similar challenges, and use alternative modes of intervention that can also act as sources for best practices. Yet this study reveals that traditional humanitarian actors[3] and diasporic actors rarely interact to improve the results of humanitarian aid across emergency settings. The lack of knowledge of each other's work, capacity and potential contributions weaken the aid ecosystem and the response. This study is a step towards bridging this gap.

The first detailed literature review on diaspora humanitarianism published in 2016 recommends the development of "a set of good practices, as has been done in the development field, for humanitarian actors to follow in their engagement with diasporas or diaspora groups"[4]. Based on this, this report started with a question: What comparative advantage and added value do different types of diaspora organisations (DOs) offer in humanitarian responses?

This research question reviews DOs in relative terms to traditional humanitarian actors, and stems from previous work by the Diaspora Emergency Action and Coordination (DEMAC) project. A 2016 conference held in Copenhagen recognised "the distinctiveness and mutual strengths between DOs and institutional actors" and called for identifying areas of complementarity for a more effective humanitarian response[5].

It became clear from the inception of this project, however, that the question would need to be reviewed as it was methodologically impossible to compare organisations that differ in mandates, organisational structures and modus operandi; and second, that gaps in knowledge of DOs' work in the aid sector prevented such an analysis. The research question had to be revised to ask instead how diaspora organisations can – and cannot yet – contribute to strengthening the humanitarian response in times of crisis. This is done through a case study approach of six DOs in three contexts.

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1   CDA "Humanitarian Effectiveness and the Role of the Diaspora" May 2016 found "no information in the humanitarian literature specifically to the comparative effectiveness of Diasporas in different types of humanitarian crises"
2   See the work of ODI's Humanitarian Policy Group on the Syrian diaspora and Aid https://www.odi.org/syria-diaspora including the work of Svoboda and Pantuliano (2015); Wall, I. for the Guardian and Phillips, M. for the Conversation.
3   This report refers to traditional humanitarian actors as inclusive of United Nations agencies, International Organisations (IOs) and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

4   CDA (2016), p.23
5   DEMAC (2016) 'A missing link? Diaspora's place in an enhanced international humanitarian system', a conference organized on 3 October 2016 at the United Nations City, Copenhagen, Denmark.

2. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

New and traditional humanitarian actors. Since 2011, parallel humanitarian crises have added strain on the traditional humanitarian system, leading to greater attention paid to 'non-traditional' or 'newly recognised' humanitarian actors and their potential in mitigating the impacts of such crises[6]. The contemporary debate around the new vs. traditional humanitarian actors culminated in the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit's call to map out new, more inclusive and effective humanitarian approaches. A series of consultations were organised in the lead-up to this Summit, including a migration series on the role of diaspora in humanitarian response[7].

'Traditional humanitarian actors' refer to the established Western humanitarian system[8] of UN agencies, international organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). In opposition to the traditional actors are the 'new' actors. Diaspora organisations are part of this category as they are "providing aid in new ways"[9]. The work of King and Grullon (2003) established diasporas as "increasingly influential actors on the international humanitarian stage", using technology, e-banking and social media to facilitate access to populations affected by disasters in their home countries, as well as skilled volunteers with local knowledge and first-hand information from affected populations. In their work, some of the key tenants and assumptions on the added value of DOs had been given. Their contribution concludes on the potential that the international community stands to benefit from the presence, and knowledge, of these groups to gain stronger insights into crisis situations – and adapted responses – on the ground.

This research will critically assess whether similar recommendations should be drawn, and if so, detailing some of the potential modes of engagement that can strengthen overall humanitarian response.

The report is structured around three main chapters:

1. Methodological framework and overview of six selected DOs
2. An assessment of DOs' contributions and potential to respond in crisis settings
3. Conclusions and recommendations on the role of DOs in humanitarian responses.

Defining Diaspora. Diaspora are defined as dispersed collectives residing outside their country of origin who "maintain regular or occasional contacts with what they regard as their homeland and with individuals and groups of the same background residing in other host countries"[10]. Most importantly, they are characterised by "multifarious links involving flows and exchanges of people and resources: between the homeland and destination countries, and among destination countries."

In the context of humanitarian action, Diaspora groupings can assume multiple forms: Diaspora communities, Diaspora initiatives, Diaspora networks, and Diaspora organisations. The diversity in nomenclatures illustrates well the diversity in the shape and forms of Diaspora mobilisation, on the one hand, and engagement with Diaspora on the other. For the purpose of this research, the term 'Diaspora organisation (DO)' is used with a caveat: what is called an organisation may sometimes not be a registered entity but rather an initiative, network, umbrella, or group of volunteers. The typology is varied and wide, as this report will illustrate by reviewing six organisations. What matters is how these different actors contribute to humanitarian settings and how they could be supported.

Diaspora organisations (DOs) in humanitarian action. DOs act through various motives and modes of intervention as they seek to provide humanitarian assistance[11]. They can be a volunteer-led movement, a network or campaign centred on a systematic or continuous form of giving, or a more formal NGO structure. Their action can be systematic and continuous in its approach, or ad-hoc and short-term. In our case studies, DOs provide assistance to populations in emergency humanitarian settings which have been confronted by severe external shocks, be it a drought, an attack, or an ongoing conflict. For some, the scope of their humanitarian action expands to early recovery initiatives.

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6   Shaw-Hamilton (2012) "Newly Recognised Humanitarian Actors", Forced Migration Review FMR 39, June 2012.

7   For more information, refer to the IOM Migration Series and 'The Role Of Diaspora in Humanitarian Response : Summary Report' instead of

8   Sezgin, Z. (Ed.), Dijkzeul, D. (Ed.). (2016). "The New Humanitarians in International Practice". London: Routledge. See also Donini, A. (2010) 'The Far Side : The Meta Functions of Humanitarianism in a Globalised World', Disasters, 34(2): 220-237 for a discussion of the roots of traditional humanitarianism in the Northern/ Western humanitarian movement.

9   King, D. and Grullon, H. (2003) 'Diaspora communities as aid providers', Migration Policy Practice, Vol III N°4, August – September 2003

10   Sheffer (2003) "Diaspora Politics: At Home Abroad", p. 9-10.

11   Newland (2010) "Diaspora Philanthropy: Private Giving and Public Policy", Migration Policy Institute

The methodology for this research aims to go beyond a descriptive review of DOs' work in humanitarian settings – already established through some of the references provided above – to provide an insight into their contributions.

METHODS

Preliminary review

The dearth of data on DOs in humanitarian action is in large part due to the lack of reporting, written information, and data provided by these organisations. Whether due to reasons of security—as was the case for Syrian DOs—or limited reporting capacity, data was largely lacking. Therefore, this report relied on a review of the proximate literatures and field visits in order to conduct interviews and direct observation. Findings derive from perceptions of actors in the field, and self-perceptions shared by DOs in Somalia and Syria. Nigerian DOs were not incorporated in the study due to their lack of visibility – it was judged difficult with the current state of knowledge on diaspora humanitarianism in Northeast Nigeria specifically to gather feedback on DOs' contribution. Instead, this report provides a context analysis that lays the ground for future case studies.

Selection of DOs and fieldwork locations

A total of six DOs—three from Somalia and three from Syria, described below—were involved in the study. These organisations were selected by DEMAC based on their unique characteristics, focusing on medium-sized organisations with variations in modalities, highlighting the diversity of DOs' profiles and contributions. The fieldwork locations were identified in collaboration with the selected DOs and DEMAC. The seven sites cover remote areas of intervention as well as one neighbouring country setting given the relevance of Gaziantep, Turkey as a humanitarian hub on the Syria response. Data gathering took place in the following sites:

Table 1. Geographic coverage of the field research

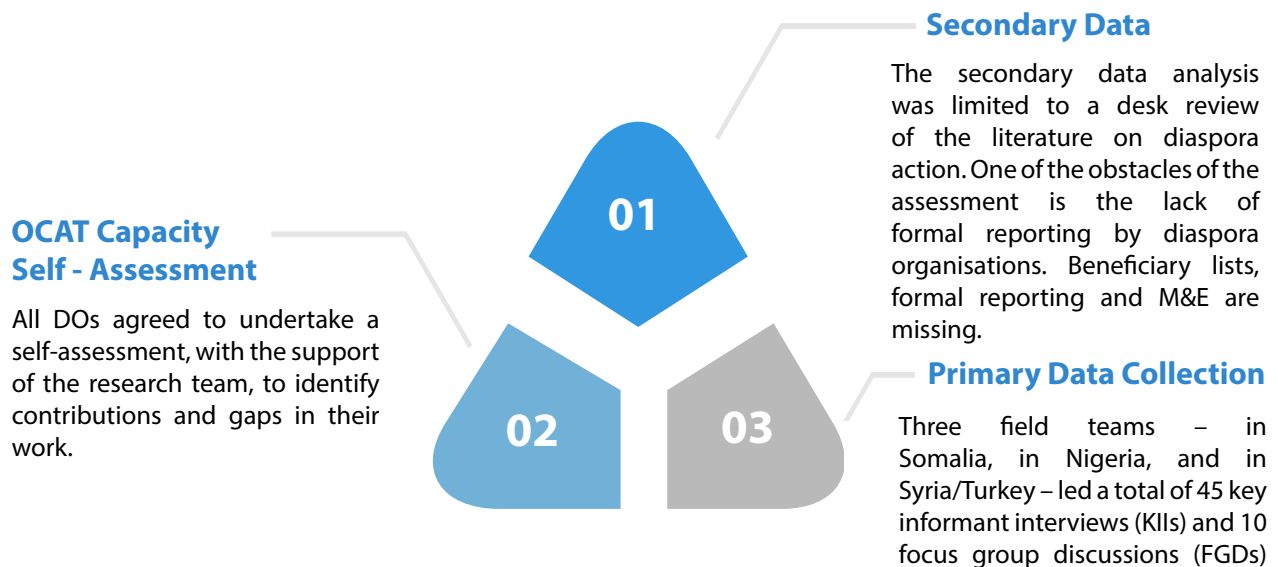| Country	Location	Tools
Somalia	Galgaduud (South Central)	KIIs, FGDs, OCAT
	Faraweyne (Somaliland)	KIIs, FGDs, OCAT
Syria	Idlib (Idlib - Northwest)	KIIs, FGDs, OCAT
	Kobani (Aleppo - North)	KIIs, FGDs, OCAT
	Gaziantep (Turkey)	KIIs, FGDs, OCAT
Nigeria	Maiduguri (Northeast)	KIIs, Context analysis
	Lagos (Capital city)	KIIs

Research design

Research methods included direct observation in the field sites and participatory methods, targeting a wide selection of actors. Research tools included structured interviews with DOs, local actors, national actors, traditional humanitarian actors, and beneficiaries; focus group discussions with beneficiaries; and an Organisational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT) that allowed each DO to self-assess its capacity in three areas: organisational capacity, operational capacity, and the ability to engage with other actors.

Research teams in each country were composed of one researcher and one enumerator who spoke the local language. Teams used snowball sampling to identify informants: for each of the six DOs involved in the study, focal points were identified from within the leadership structure of the DO. Focal points provided a preliminary interview and helped researchers identify informants within their organisations and among the communities in which they provide assistance. In Syria, DOs had databases of their beneficiaries that we referenced; in Somalia, it was necessary to conduct a more involved search: through Rajo, researchers were directed to community leaders who helped arrange meetings with known beneficiaries; Somali Faces were not able to help the research team find beneficiaries in Galgaduud because IDPs were mobile and thus cannot be tracked by other intermediaries.

FGD participants were selected based firstly on the team's ability to find beneficiaries, and on their relevance to the DO being discussed.

Figure 1. Triangulation of research tools

Secondary Data

The secondary data analysis was limited to a desk review of the literature on diaspora action. One of the obstacles of the assessment is the lack of formal reporting by diaspora organisations. Beneficiary lists, formal reporting and M&E are missing.

OCAT Capacity Self - Assessment

All DOs agreed to undertake a self-assessment, with the support of the research team, to identify contributions and gaps in their work.

Primary Data Collection

Three field teams – in Somalia, in Nigeria, and in Syria/Turkey – led a total of 45 key informant interviews (KIIs) and 10 focus group discussions (FGDs)

Criteria for assessing DOs

Based on the existing literature and desk review, research tools were selected to answer the revised research question. In order to elicit comparable information across a range of different DOs and settings, DEMAC and Samuel Hall identified eight criteria to articulate ways in which DOs contribute to humanitarian response in crisis settings. The eight criteria listed in Table 2 are thematically focused to capture responses against which all DOs could be measured. The 'dimensions' identified in the second column clarify the sub-topics of interest. The criteria were kept general enough to capture a diversity of interpretations and responses that reflect the unique attributes of individual DOs.

Table 2. Criteria and Dimensions for an analysis of DO contributions

Criteria	Dimensions
Cost-effectiveness	Use of resources
	Modes of intervention
Access	Access to vulnerable populations in need of assistance
	Networks involving local actors
Rapidity	Mobilisation of resources
	Timeliness of interventions

Table 2. Criteria and Dimensions for an analysis of DO contributions [cont'd]

Criteria	Dimensions
Local ownership & anchoring of activities post-project completion	Relevance to the local and national agenda
	Area-based approach and community-based accountability.
	Procedures
Results	Needs-based approaches and results of action
	Early recovery impact
Sustainability	Social capital: Transfers of skills and knowhow to local organisations and communities
	Quality of partners and coordination.
Innovation	Innovative modes of delivery
	Innovations are taken up by local CSOs, affected communities and/or International Organisations (IOs)
Voice Amplification	Effective political lobbying
	Effective social and traditional media campaigns

Lessons learned from the methodology

The research aimed to triangulate both subjective and objective data on DO contributions through several research steps:

• Desk review of available documentation
• Feedback of diaspora-led interventions' beneficiaries (FGDs)
• Feedback of INGO-led interventions' beneficiaries (FGDs)
• Self-Assessment of Diaspora Organisations (OCAT tool)
• Perceptions of traditional humanitarian actors and authorities (Key Informant Interviews)

This methodological framework rested on the assumption that actors evolving in the same humanitarian sphere would know of each other's work and be able to talk of each other's work. In other words that the traditional humanitarian actors would, as key informants, share their knowledge of the selected DOs; likewise, that DOs operating in specific communities would now of traditional actors in their vicinity. This proved quickly to not be the case. While key informants could speak broadly about DO contributions no extensive insights were shared. Instead, the main actors to speak of specific DOs' contributions were beneficiaries, CSOs and local authorities. This is a reflection of the divisions in the humanitarian ecosystem and of the gaps in communication between actors. As a result, one of the key findings of the research on the lack of knowledge and levels of mistrust between actors came out of the methodology framework and was further evidenced in the interviews.

Limitations

The authors recognize that there are several limitations to the findings of this report. First among these is that the research focuses narrowly on six Diaspora organisations. The scope of work and methodology do not allow broader generalizations. The findings presented in this report are intended to provide indicative insights into the role of DOs in crisis settings. The sample of DOs is too small to draw generalized conclusions.

While the authors recognize the diversity of diaspora organisations in each country, their history, background, geographic and thematic specialisations, we encourage the reader to reflect on some of the barriers to entry for newly established humanitarian actors who are not part of the traditional humanitarian sphere. The tendency to leave actors out, rather than engage with newcomers, has been documented in previous research[12], and has caused many of the limitations in the methods, data collection and analysis for this report. To the extent possible, there were attempts

to minimise any adverse impacts these limitations have on the quality and integrity of the data. The report is not about DOs generally in Syria, Somalia, and Nigeria, but about specific DOs in specific contexts. This is due to the inherent difficult nature of engaging in a dialogue on DOs when knowledge and evidence are lacking, or when the issue is seen as too sensitive (in the context of Syria) to talk about.

The DOs profiled were selected by DEMAC, which introduces a sampling bias, and yields six medium-sized, established organisations that are not representative of all DOs operating in the country of humanitarian response. These factors were difficult to work around: while research on large and well-established DOs could provide a wealth of historical organisational information and track record of actions, to provide deep insights, this research did not benefit from this institutional backing. In order to compensate for this lack of primary and secondary documentation, greater attention is paid to the views, perceptions and feedback of actors in the field. In order to augment the limited data available, the research methods were grounded in empirical analysis, drawing heavily on direct observation to corroborate qualitative inputs from informants. This was particularly important when seeking feedback from some groups of beneficiaries. For example, those that received emergency food distributions from DOs often did not know the source of the aid and so researchers' observations helped to contextualize responses to make them analytically meaningful. This approach was less necessary for interviews with women at the safehouse that was established by DOs, as they received sustained support so they could comment on the value added by DOs.

To offset the lack of information among external stakeholders, the research team relied on DOs' own perceptions and self-assessment of their work. This skewed results towards subjective rather than objective assessments, but also provided an insider's look into areas of particular interest. Self-identified weaknesses provide the basis to recommend support, coaching and capacity building. As is the case with all self-reporting, there was a concern about potential positive biases in the responses from DOs. In order to control for this, focus groups were convened with beneficiaries and a broad range of actors were interviewed in an attempt to get as independent an assessment as possible on the DOs that provide them services.

Lastly, the timeline for the field research did not provide for more opportunities to speak to beneficiaries. This is where monitoring and evaluation by DOs are needed. As much as they want to keep their independence, the voices of their beneficiaries need to be heard. This is done in small part in this report.

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12   Svoboda and Pantuliano (2015) "International and local/diaspora actors in the Syria response. A diverging set of systems?" ODI HPG.

SELECTED DIASPORA ORGANISATIONS
SOMALIA & SYRIA

SYRIA

HUMAN CARE SYRIA

**HOMS LEAGUE
ABROAD (HLA)**

DOZ E. V.

SOMALI FACES

**RAJO
ORGANISATION**

CAAWI WALAAL

SOMALIA

Selected Diaspora organisations (DOs)

The six organisations under review represent a range of structures and modalities of intervention. These are often defined by their context. As this report will show, those operating in Somalia have more in common among themselves than with those operating in Syria. In Nigeria, our third case study, DOs are so new to the **humanitarian** system they cannot yet be integrated into this study.

SOMALIA

Photo : © Caawi Walaal

Organisation 1. Caawi Walaal emerged from a Somali-language hashtag meaning "Help a brother or sister". After the hashtag began circulating, volunteers turned it into a brand to sponsor 500 families living in drought-affected areas of Somalia. It was then adopted by a youth volunteer movement aiming to help Somali families suffering from drought and famine. Caawi Walaal collected USD101.000 to deliver clean water, essential drugs for cholera responses, basic medications and food, to an estimated 55,834 people in 12 regions.

The organisation also coordinated the Mogadishu Victim Fund ($32,063) following an attack in the Somali capital in October 2017, in support of victims and the ambulance service. Most of their funding arrived through mobile money transfers and a GoFundMe campaign, alongside fundraising ceremonies in Mogadishu.

Caawi Walaal is defined by its informality and a technology-based platform that emphasizes a flexible and rapid response. Caawi Walaal has been using the crisis-mapping platform: abaaraha.org (meaning 'famine' in Somalia). The Abaaraha platform was originally set up to provide real-time reporting from famine-affected areas where people are most in need of help. #CaawiWalaal volunteers used this resource to respond immediately to urgent needs and deliver vitally-needed water, food, and medicine. Caawi Walaal raises money through social media

– private donors send the money via their Dahabshiil account.

Photo : Receiving treatment in mobile health clinic in Balibusle, Sanaag region, Somalia © Somali Faces

Organisation 2. Somali Faces is a UK-based charity organisation with offices in Somalia and Australia, which uses storytelling to share stories of Somalis and transform a wider community's concern into action through social media and fundraising. The organisation aims to change commonly-held stereotypes about Somali people, works towards peacebuilding, and raises funds in direct support of the Somali people. A storytelling platform co-founded by photographers, storytellers, and human rights advocates in 2016, it evolved into a charity after succesfully managing a drought relief campaign in 2017 that raised USD124.011,91 and provided emergency food and water to 54,300 Somalis with an emphasis on inaccessible settlements in 12 regions. Following the October 2017 Mogadishu attack, Somali Faces raised £30,610 in support of hospitals, ambulance services and in direct support of victims. It places special emphasis on awareness-raising about social justice and has provided resettlement support for rape victims as well as empowering women in IDP camps by improving their livelihoods through creating income- generating sources for their families.

Photo : Food ration delivered and distributed by Rajo Organisation to population in need in Waado-Bariis, Somalia © Rajo Organisation

Organisation 3. Rajo Organisation meaning 'Hope' in Somali, is a non-profit grassroots organisation based in Denmark. Established in 2000 to assist women in Denmark and Somaliland, it has focused especially on development projects and humanitarian assistance in Somaliland in the past five years. In recent years, they attracted resources from DANIDA-funded grant mechanisms to expand their funding base, respond to the drought in 2016 and initiate social development projects. Rajo implemented a lifesaving USD87,153 food delivery project in July 2017 funded by a Danish Emergency Response Fund. Helped by their local partner organisation, Al-Rahma, they delivered food to 4,000 families in Somaliland. Beyond saving lives, their objective is to build capacity and improve skills through sharing knowledge and resources.

SYRIA

Photo : © DOZ e. V.

Organisation 4. Doz e. V. was initially established in 2012 as a youth network working in the Kurdish areas of Syria and currently operates out of Germany, a regional office in Irbil, Iraq, and field offices in Northern Syria. It aims to build transnational, cross-border 'sustainable solidarity', and places emphasis on supporting civil society centres in northern Syria where it provides local students and children with education.

DOZ also monitors the living standard of children in villages and refugee camps, investigates violence committed against children, and has implemented awareness campaigns relating to child protection, tolerance and health. Going beyond direct implementation and emergency humanitarian work, it has supported the capacity-building of civil society organisations, and worked on food security and sustainable solidarity networks inside Syria.

Photo : Kids in the education center in Gaziantep, Turkey © Homs League Abroad

Organisation 5. Homs League Abroad (HLA) is a nonprofit Syrian DO started in 2011 in solidarity with the victims of the Syrian city of Homs. Registered in Germany, it commands a membership of former Homs residents spread across 24 countries. The organisation relies mostly on private donations and supports some 700 widows and orphans displaced to Syria's neighboring countries where they receive psychosocial support and shelter in centres.

Widows can also receive vocational training. HLA's programme also supports Syrian children through education and Turkish language courses.

Photo : © Human Care Syria

Organisation 6. Human Care Syria is a registered UK-based charity founded in 2011, part of the Human Care Foundation Worldwide, and currently employing ten employees in its Syria office. It focuses on providing relief in Raqqa, Aleppo, Idlib, and Homs with an emphasis on emergency and medical aid, food security and livelihood, support to the education sector and providing platforms for Syrians to start their own business. Human Care Syria works with local staff and organizations inside Syria.

3. ANALYSIS OF DO CONTRIBUTIONS IN SOMALIA AND SYRIA

SOMALIA: DOS' BOTTOM-UP APPROACH TO PLUGGING THE AID GAP

In Somalia we review the work of three selected diaspora organisations: Caawi Walaal, Somali Faces and Rajo. The nature of each of these organisations differs (see page 10) as they are respectively a network of volunteers, a storytelling platform and finally a Denmark-based and registered organisation. The common findings across these different types of DOs are synthesised in this section.

Many key informants were unable to comment specifically on the work of these three organisations due to a lack of knowledge of their existence or actions. Respondents shared general impressions that DOs are locally grounded, with a privileged outsider-insider position, and that they have grassroots approaches based on strong feedback loops from the communities they serve.

Compared to international NGOs, the Somali DOs interviewed are perceived to have an advantage when it comes to access, rapidity and local ownership. Compared to national NGOs, they are thought to better amplify the voices of ordinary peoples. These assumptions are tested in this section.

DO partners, local civil society organisations, and beneficiaries were better able to speak of these three DOs' work specifically. Even then, caveats are needed. In Mogadishu, beneficiaries of Somali Faces showed a good understanding of the organisation's work. But outside of the capital city, some beneficiaries only knew of the local implementing partner, not of the DO. This was the case for Rajo's work, which was carried out by Al-Rahma. This low profile presence is intended, in part, by the organisation. It is also a general reality for traditional actors: very few beneficiaries can name specific organisations, they can instead speak broadly of the type of actor (UN or INGO) assisting them. It also points to a gap in transparency, communication and exchange and an opportunity to strengthen these three DOs' actions in Somalia.

Addressing the knowledge gap and a sense of mistrust to plug the aid gap

"We have never been approached by DOs, however, I personally believe that there is a lack of information about what diasporas can do and what they do. This might be due to their inability to organise or evolve into systematic institutions."

-Member of a civil society organisation, Hargeisa, Somaliland

Ignorance of and a resulting sense of mistrust around DOs' work in Somalia persists and centres around three key aspects. The first is that selected **DOs are not visible actors** of the aid community – as most of them are neither in Somalia nor in Kenya where coordination happens. Not being part of coordination fora, they also do not share information on how and when they operate, leaving the impression that actions are ad-hoc, not planned nor strategically building beyond time-bound contributions relating to specific events or shocks. In the case of the civil society informant quoted above, the view was that DOs are "lobbying for international recognition, commemoration of independence days and ceremonies during the summer season". In other words, their work is described as being politicised and seasonal. The lack of clarity on their actions, and the lack of information and knowledge can lead to mistrust and soft accusations that can negatively impact DOs' reputations.

The second aspect is related: **DOs are often presumed to promote the welfare of their clans or tribes**, furthering tensions in Somalia and a lack of neutrality in their humanitarian action. The politicisation of DO actions in Somalia was not noted in the fieldwork for this research showing the extent to which better information on DOs can address accusations made against DOs.

Third and last, while larger DOs might be known, **the smaller and medium-level DOs selected in this study operate under the radar** of most government, traditional or community actors. In other words, speaking of DOs in general is within reach for most stakeholders, but speaking of specific DOs is more difficult. Hearsay rather than reflection on direct experiences with DOs comprise the majority of feedback received.

Representatives of UN agencies and INGOs interviewed often disparage DOs or express ignorance of how they operate. *"I've heard their names but I have not heard about how they operate,"* said a UN representative. *"They do this like a business. They're only looking out for their own benefit. I have experience with these Diaspora people from 2009. Their donations caused clan-based fighting with the Islamic courts. The trust has been lost."*

When asked about their capacity to move beyond the humanitarian sphere and have an impact on social investments more broadly, critics question the Diaspora's contribution to the transfer of skills and their openness to collaboratively achieve more sustainable goals. On the former, the research conducted for this study disproves the lack of transfer of skills. On the latter, while some believe that DOs can work with the government and the traditional humanitarian sector to support communities in need, others deny this, claiming that DOs do not trust other government and INGO actors, and can only work bilaterally with local communities and local CSOs.

The reasons for mistrust can also open opportunities for dialogue. The lack of engagement is not with communities but with other actors and with the government. Diasporas have a different modus operandi but can also be encouraged to get on board with the government, or in coordination fora in Somalia. Civil society actors interviewed in Somalia view DOs positively – and would like to be counted on as a bridge between them and other stakeholders. *"The government should give tax-exemption and create coordination in terms of information and logistics, and the Diaspora need to work with the government instead of just mistrusting them,"* according to another key informant from the local civil society.

This section examines eight criteria extracted from qualitative fieldwork between Somaliland and South-Central Somalia to hypothesise the contributions DOs bring to humanitarian response.

Criterion 1: Access through outreach

Photo : Somali Faces team and volunteers in Caynaba, Somalia, after conducting emergency food and water distribution © Somali Faces

DOs interviewed **negotiate access in regions of Somalia primarily through community outreach and civil society organisations but also through on-the-ground visits by DO representatives.** This has the added advantage, in their view, of personalising the relationship with leaders and communities, and having a direct line of communication with key counterparts.

However, it contributes to furthering an **image of individually driven assistance** rather than organised, institutional assistance. In the case of Rajo, beneficiaries were unfamiliar with the DO but recognised the importance of an individual, Amina Jibril, of Rajo but mistakenly assumed to be part of Al Rahma during her visits to the community. Respondents knew about Al Rahma, the IP, and about Action Aid, the INGO also working in the area, but not of the DO. In the case of Somali Faces, interventions are perceived as being spearheaded by a group of young diaspora members with local university students.

A sense of proximity was established with DOs that beneficiaries had not experienced with traditional humanitarian actors.

The local government in Faraweyne, South Central Somalia, commented on the work of DOs, ranking highest their **ability to rely on local informants and structures and to avoid duplicating efforts in their support of local leaders.** They link the strong access of DOs directly to their information base and capacity to visit locations and stakeholders, whether donors, government, organisations or affected people. According to a government representative in Faraweyne, DOs "can feel and understand the challenges we face locally". As a result, the 'emotional humanitarianism' that international organisations have an issue with is what local stakeholders value and trust the most.

Interviews with Al Rahma and Action Aid, who operate in nearby locations, shared the view that most **DOs benefit from better access to local communities because they are from these communities and have strong ties with locals.** Frequent community visits, interactions with local traditional elders and Islamic leaders, and participation in social events all contribute to a stronger rapport with the locals than any outsiders can achieve.

An example of access through local outreach is Rajo, one of the three DOs reviewed. Despite lacking a physical presence in Somaliland, it remotely established and built a strong network and track-record in partnering with local organisations. Rajo typically teams up with national NGOs (currently Al-Rahma and formerly the Horn of Africa Voluntary Youth Community Organization), avoids high-profile activities such as aid-delivery, and shuns publicity. As a result, it is not a well known organisation – none of the key informants were able to reflect on the work of Rajo – but it has secured access to communities through the local faith-based partner.

The Action Aid interview, as well as one CSO interview in Hargeisa, **raised doubts over whether humanitarian principles guide DO implementation.**

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Respondents from Al-Rahma opined that humanitarian sentiments guide DOs but indicated that most of those they engage are impartial and neutral due to viewing their efforts as a religious obligation. However, they also acknowledged that some DOs could be motivated by tribal sentiments and might focus on specific tribal areas or groups over others.

Village elders interviewed confirm that clan dynamics drive some of the DO-led activities but that, while they guide where the funding goes, the needs exists and actions have a ripple effect on communities: a dual needs and community-based approach take over purely clan-based considerations.

They further add that with the limited aid available from DOs, and the widespread humanitarian needs in such contexts, a selection has to be made and targeting one's own group is not a source of justified criticism.

"The items were brought to us by men from Mogadishu University representing Somali Faces and they were honest guys," said a 41 year-old IDP businesswoman who participated in a focus group in Mogadishu. *"I have never seen them before. Usually we see corrupt guys from NGOs, whether local or international. But these guys were straightforward and we thank them for their dedication and time."*

This touches on a common conclusion across all three reviews. Whether in South-Central Somalia or Somaliland, **not being part of the traditional humanitarian world was seen as an asset in gaining local trust and access.** According to one female focus group participant in Mogadishu, relying on individuals rather than professional humanitarian officers was preferred. Somali Faces relied on local university students to facilitate gap-bridging with vulnerable groups.

"The way they work is very good because they use local partners and don't waste money on travel or offices," said the member of a district administration in Guricel. *"Their local partners have access, so they have access too. They were the first ones who came to save lives when the drought happened, sending money, medicines and food. Their intervention is in answer to a call from the community, so in line with local priorities."*
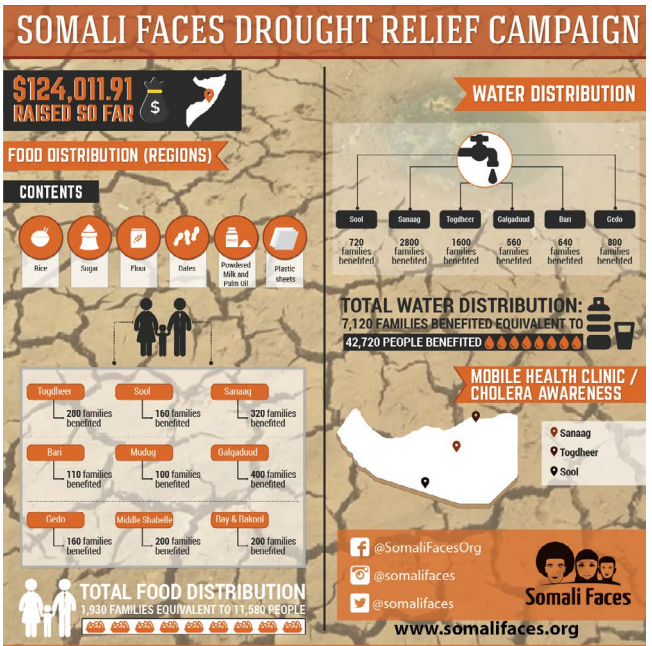
Criteria 2 and 3: Linking rapidity and cost-effectiveness

In this – as in other research[13] – a review of DO financing was not intended nor conducted. As such cost-effectiveness could not be assessed in the context of Somalia. **DOs are perceived as cost-effective** as they can reduce administrative costs by relying on individuals in the field or local partners without the need for offices or a formal structure. But this has to be questioned and

caveats are needed: while Caawi Walaal and Rajo are volunteer-based, Somali Faces maintains offices in Somalia and Australia. While they may have little in terms of salary and overhead costs, this review did not have access to the finances or budget allocations by DOs. The question of cost effectiveness could not be determined. Other research points to the lack of economies of scale in DOs' actions; but cost-effectiveness cannot be reduced to economies of scale alone. The methodology for this study reviews cost-effectiveness as both an outcome of use of existing resources and modalities of intervention. On the former, the perception is that DOs' are better at using existing resources as their aim is not to become a full-fledged NGO, nor to start humanitarian activities from scratch but fill in gaps in programming or support existing activities.

A proxy for cost effectiveness is the rapidity of DOs' ability to collect and transfer funds. While international organisations are often limited in their timeliness due to transfer of funds, interviews confirm that the three **DOs under review are able to quickly send private funds through online platforms, phone-based cash transfers and remittance transfers.**

Money is collected from abroad and transferred through one of these channels. In the case of Caawi Walaal, the funds are disbursed directly from a Go Fund Me account online to a fund management account in Salaam Bank in Somalia. The money is deposited with no time lag and is immediately available for volunteer fund managers to disburse to implementers on the ground. Al-Rahma, working with Rajo in Hargeisa, confirms that Rajo's ability to collect funds online meant a quicker transfer time to them than when they work with international organisations through grants.

Infograph : © Somali Faces

13   NCG (2018) "Evaluation of DRC's Diaspora Project Support (DiPS) Program", commissioned by DRC.

"DOs are faster when it comes to resource mobilisation" (UN representative)

Key informants see DOs as able to act faster than the traditional organisations to mobilise resources and respond to humanitarian crises, as **most are not constrained by formal procedures and administrative systems.** One example given by all respondents is the ability of DOs to engage the community to channel assistance. A village community leader in Faraweyene explains that traditional elders are one of the resources that DOs use effectively.

While they did not necessarily receive enough aid – indeed, community leaders were critical of the amount of aid received through DOs – the funding does come faster than with traditional actors.

Local NGOs who work with DOs feel that they are taken more seriously and trusted for what they bring in terms of access and results. Complaints were voiced in Faraweyne about traditional humanitarian interventions arriving only after people had already survived the harshest stage and the crisis was normalised. *"Needs assessments, beneficiary selection, bidding and procurement processes are all hurdles that could drag an intervention on [and prevent a timely response to a crisis,]"* according to one DO representative.

"We know they provided support to the victims in the Mogadishu blast of the 14th of October that has cost over 700 civilian lives," said a 27 year old female IDP and beneficiary of Somali Faces, who was a participant in the focus group in Mogadishu. *"The Diaspora distributed money to the victims."*

These perceptions reinforce **a positive perception of and receptivity to DOs among government and community leaders who feel assured that money donated by the Diaspora is not diverted.** This positive – and subjective – reputation on the use of resources by the Somali DOs, is built upon previous successes in delivering quick and impactful interventions. The intervention by Somali Faces' following the October 2017 Mogadishu attack—the largest in Somali history— was specifically cited; the flexibility of remittance-based funding and lack of administrative hurdles was also cited by partners on the ground (in the case of Rajo specifically) as maximising the use of resources in a timely manner.

Responding to the drought: Emergency response and lifesaving interventions

Somali Faces and Rajo

"It was during an emergency period and I was in dire need of help," said a 46-year-old female IDP participating in a focus group in Mogadishu who had been supported by Somali Faces. *"We were all starving. The food really helped us. I received rice, cooking oil, powder milk, wheatflour, dates and plastic cover to protect me from the rain." "Yes they are very timely. They come very quickly,"* said a local NGO chairman in Giraceel. *"They are much better at mobilizing resources. They have family here who will tell them immediately when something happens and start pressuring them to respond. I remember the UN's humanitarian coordination for the most recent drought [in October 2016] started in November 2016 but still took almost eight months to happen, proving that they have very long processes. But DOs are much faster. They get money from families and they don't have really long processes to follow. They are much faster in response to an emergency, whereas INGOs are proposal-driven."*

"When we work with traditional organisations, we have to do a lot of paperwork, request funds, wait for approval and follow procurement and policy guidelines," said KII – HAVAYOCO previously funded by RAJO – Hargeisa. *"But when we have to make decisions on small-scale funds provided by the Diaspora, we do not need to go through all of these steps, although we will still have to purchase in an open way, in consultation with the respective people in our organisation and share the invoice vouchers, too. They are trusted to quickly fundraise and send money through remittances."*

Photo : Food ration delivered and distributed by Rajo Organisation to population in need in Waado-Bariis, Somalia © Rajo Organisation

Criteria 4 and 5: Local ownership can drive interventions and bring results

"Diasporas are the biggest resource Somalis have had in the past 26 years, offering support, asylum and resettlement as well as remittances in response to natural disasters. But most of them are disorganised, so how do you expect them to transfer skills to people?"

-Member of a civil society organisation, Hargeisa, Somaliland

In all three DO interventions, community-driven actions were reported. DOs respond to such crises with **interventions that are felt to be more relevant to local needs**. Their responses to emergency contribute to the perception that, they serve local interests, whereas international organisations are believed to have top-down approaches to proposal developments and enacting plans. A UN representative reflected, *"Yes, they [DOs] address local priorities. You can say they are in line with the local agenda and priorities, certainly in comparison to international NGOs whose funds are based on projects and cannot be diverted based on the needs on the ground."*

In Faraweyne, strong Diaspora access was tainted by persistent questions relating to clan affiliations and preferential treatment. *"Even assuming they want to support the entire community, they mainly focus on the needs of their own tribes and clans (…) mostly their 'children' and from their own tribes,"* charged one interviewee. At the same time, minority clan beneficiaries of Caawi Walaal in Xaarxaar claimed that this was the first time they were being assisted and listened to. *"They assisted the Tumal community when others discriminated against us, whether in terms of aid, marriage, education or employment,"* one interviewee said. *"They taught me that the Tumal community needs to be treated well and as equals to other communities",* explains a research team leader who conducted a focus group with women beneficiaries of Caawi Walaal.

Somali DOs ranked weaker than international NGOs in their capacity to integrate into the local and national humanitarian agendas or coordination system. This ranked among the top criticisms made of DOs. They are considered effective in responding to local needs but weak in planning and aligning their work with national priorities. Organisations that had previously partnered with DOs advised them to improve their capacity to study local development agendas and international plans, emulate how INGOs conduct their operational strategies and align themselves more with the district development plans recently drafted for each district in Somaliland.

Also common, **DOs were criticised for their alleged lack of transparency in selecting beneficiaries and partners.**

A common comment among key informants was that DOs rely on local "businessmen" and "religious leaders" excessively. **Nevertheless, there was consensus that their approach remains consultative and reactive to local needs.** *"Their projects are based on consultation,"* one participant said. *"They work with their local contacts to understand what is needed and are usually invited by the local community and asked to provide something specific, making for relevant interventions."*

But for partners of DOs like Rajo, the level of engagement needs to be better understood. While DOs may not coordinate "upwards" with the traditional humanitarian sector, they do provide capacity building and training support to CSOs, and they do listen to locals' requests for funding to decide what type of assistance is required. In the case of Somali Faces, independent fund managers have been trained to support implementers, direct and record funds being disbursed. Al Rahma adds that *"there are a number of meetings organised for DO partners – notably trainings. They are short and one-off trainings, skills transfers are limited but they happen".* In addition, training for locals is also part of the agenda of Rajo, notably on waste management.

Criterion 6: Sustainable project outcomes

A village community leader in Faraweyene asks rhetorically *"What can we do when the source of the help is one person – like Hassan? We know what one person can do."* In his opinion, DOs can intervene quickly but not at a scale that can make a significant or sustainable change.

"The support from the Diaspora members was felt so much," said a 27-year-old female IDP who participated in a focus group in Mogadishu. *"But the assistance given here was temporary in kind, we ate all the foods and it is now over and nothing is left (…) Their approach is temporary, while the local NGOs' approach is permanent in that they are here in this area and accountable to the community".*

DOs do not directly aim for sustainability, especially when intervening in the aftermath of specific shocks and emergencies. All interviewees recognised their limitations in what they can achieve within a limited timespan and with private funds, but also saw potential for attaining sustainability through local NGOs.

The DOs observed are capable but limited in their ability to transfer skills to local NGOs in Somalia. A UN representative commented that *"They mostly operate over the telephone, so I have not observed any transfer of skills."* Reliance on mobile funding dispersed through locally based trustees often places importance on developing DO fundraising skills rather than field capacity.

According to the same UN representative, *"they send the money through the hawala¹⁴ and put a couple of trusted elders or people as trustees. (…) In my experience DOs are good at fundraising when their relatives or people inside the country call them during the seasonal drought or when building schools, hospitals, and other important things that the community may need."*

There are exceptions however. Rajo, who was successful in securing funds via a number of different sources for both humanitarian and development-related activities,

has been a pioneer in coordinating research on how waste-management and recycling in Hargeisa could provide livelihoods. Specifically, Rajo led a research project in early 2017 funded by the DRC Diaspora Programme that was carried out with a UK-based NGO whose contribution was in technical expertise, and a local partner with a broad network. Rajo is now working on securing funding for the second phase of the project whose aim is to provide local job opportunities in waste-management and recycling in Hargeisa while also reducing the negative environmental impact of increasing amounts of waste in the area.

Photo : © Rajo Organisation

Although there is still an impression that DOs only intervene in emergency settings, the support offered by DOs is actually more nuanced. Somali Faces specifically sought to amplify women's voices in culturally sensitive situations that local NGOs would not have been able to intervene on. DOs can affect fundamental social changes by leveraging their identities in spaces where others are not welcome or capable.

DOs have been **criticised for a tendency to leave an area shortly after delivering an intervention** instead of maintaining a longer-term presence. It is possible, however, that through this approach, DOs contribute to sustainable responses, **complementing longer-term actors rather than attempting to replicate existing structures and already-functional projects.** *"During the drought, they came here to implement but only for that specific crisis,"* said a national NGO area manager in Guricel. *"They came, did their work and left, changing the situation and saving a lot of lives… Because local NGOs are permanently here, they can do their interventions over 4-6 months depending on funds, but with DOs, they come and mostly do one-off distributions mostly."*

Acting on an emergency response basis is not necessarily antithetical to sustainability. To the contrary, if DOs respond in partnership and coordination with other, more permanent and well-resourced actors, they can engender sustainable action. DOs can provide small-scale, flexible, and punctual help where traditional donors and actors cannot, contributing to plugging the aid gap.

Criterion 7: Innovation

Among humanitarian actors, **DOs are perceived as being particularly innovative** in the way that they adapt and put to use resources and concepts encountered abroad and in new contexts. Their reliance on unorthodox funding streams and their use of social media are also widely commended.

Examples of DO-linked innovation seen in this research:

1. New methods of funding (e.g. crowd funding) in response to local demands
2. New methods of aid delivery following shocks (e.g. networks of local volunteers and youth)
3. Innovative use of technologies: the Abaahara crisis-mapping platform is one such example, as is the crowd-sourced gathering, curating, categorisation, and geotagging of data culled from a variety of social media and fed in real-time during a humanitarian emergency into the platform. Caawi Walaal and Somali Faces were prominent in their support of Abaahara.
4. New products like the recycling and waste management model put forth by Rajo in Somaliland.

The three DOs in Somalia showed that innovation happens through three channels – using technology and social media; relying on dedicated individuals who can act as focal points and volunteers in crisis settings; utilizing technical solutions often retrieved from the private sector to bring sustainable solutions to enhance the environment of target communities.

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14   A traditional system of transferring money whereby money is paid to an agent who then instructs an associate in the relevant country or area to pay the final recipient (Wikipedia).

These innovations were not used by the traditional humanitarian sector in these settings.

"Basically, the Somali Diaspora thought and came up with ideas and solutions for their fellow Somali brothers and sisters," said a 27 year old female IDP who participated in a focus group in Mogadishu. *"For instance if a Somali man or woman is seriously injured or wounded, the Diaspora contributes money and helps so that the victim can be flown to a different country where they can access a medical facility. The Diaspora pay for the return flight ticket and the hospital bills too."*

Criterion 8: Voice amplification can lead to coordination

DOs are seen to make effective use of social media and emotional pledges to expedite the process fundraising and disseminate information around humanitarian needs. When locals are in need, they first reach out to members of the Diaspora with whom they are connected. *"Locals put huge trust in the Diaspora,"* said an Al Rahma staff member. DOs build their communication strategies around these interactions. Traditional organisations call these "felt-need rather than real-need approaches;" local NGOs conceive of them as practical ways to mobilise attention and compassion from abroad. According to a paediatric doctor in Guraceel, *"I have seen them on social media campaigns mostly mobilising resources for sick people or people facing drought. They usually post pictures of a sick person or about the emergency and give information on how people can support. People respond almost immediately with money, especially if it is health or education-related."*

Somali Faces started as a storytelling social media platform, offering participants the opportunity to make audible the voices of drought victims in international media. In the process, they demonstrated the benefit of amplifying local voices to support fundraising. Somali Faces now has a new programme to train storytellers and volunteers in ways of collecting and relaying these stories.

"I know the Somali diaspora advocates for marginalised Somali communities wherever they are and they are all united which enables them to contribute and send money back to Somalia in the name of helping the poor. This has a positive impact to the assistance rendered by other NGOs that operate within Somalia."

IDP farmer woman, 51, participant in Mogadishu focus group

DO outreach efforts of the kind set up by Somali Faces can have an **impact beyond emergency situations**. Interviews with a representative of Swisso Kalmö, an INGO, show that **DOs have the potential to lobby their government:** *"In Somalia, anything that happens, any development or activity, is usually led by the Diaspora. They are heavily involved in lobbying at the local and national levels, using social and other media, but also holding meetings with leaders. They were instrumental in spreading awareness about the drought, attaining worldwide attention. I think this is why it was not as bad as it could have been."*

Somali DOs have **effectively amplified voices and awareness of local situations by grounding their campaigns in reality and using social media to report on crises and to promote their responses.** The three DOs' can take this voice amplification to the next level and use it as a basis for strengthened coordination. Traditional humanitarian actors can benefit from the experiences and local knowledge of DOs if DOs also cater to this audience. Lobbying traditional aid actors can be an outcome of the proven ability to amplify voices but is not capitalised on at the time of this study. Diaspora organisations are often criticised for not attending any of the cluster meetings in Somalia – whether cash group meetings to discuss the use of remittances to deliver aid, or the food and shelter clusters that are essential to those working in humanitarian emergencies throughout Somalia.

Given their **reliance on community feedback and consultation**, they may at times also be privy to information that they alone cannot act upon. One such case came out of the fieldwork, in locations where Somali Faces operates. The issues noted by the research team related to child protection and gender-based violence, while in Hargeisa's Daryeel Camp, IDPs complained about security:

1.   A camp community leader allegedly blackmailed every household into giving half of their aid: *"I received 5kgs of oil and the camp leader came to me to ask me to give half the jerry-can to him and all the other items I received from NGOs,"* he said. *"I urge you to take us back to our original homelands where we came from instead of living such a horrible life"*

2.   Teenage girls were nowhere to be found in the camps. According to information from the IDPs, young girls are often the target for soldiers or youth who find that the girls' families are desperate – they seize them by force at night and rape them. After this happened a number of times, most families that had the resources sent their daughters off to the town centre.

What should be the role of DOs when such events occur in their areas of community-based interventions? Caawi Walaal recognised that having an umbrella organisation of private schools present in Somalia has helped them manage funds better through a subsidiary account. Somali Faces might consider the need for an umbrella organisation or participating in coordination meetings to ensure that referrals can be made.

Better coordination is key to a stronger DO actions in Somalia.

Where do Somali DOs need most support?

OCAT (organisational capacity assessment tool) results for each Somali DO interviewed reveal different types of support that are needed. Figure 2 shows the self-reported strengths and weaknesses of DOs across the key dimensions of a humanitarian organisation's work. Rajo self-reports a stronger legal and financial structure and capacity for local partnerships.

Somali Faces and Rajo rank themselves high on gender and inclusivity, innovation, and outreach. These self-reported strengths can inform how they could work together, where they can complement each other, and where they might require external support.

Caawi Walaal: while the organisation chose not to be registered in order to retain its flexibility, it abides by certain standards of transparency such as publishing all of their receipts online. They can benefit from external support with:

1. Improvements in humanitarian principles
2. Improvements in knowledge and learning
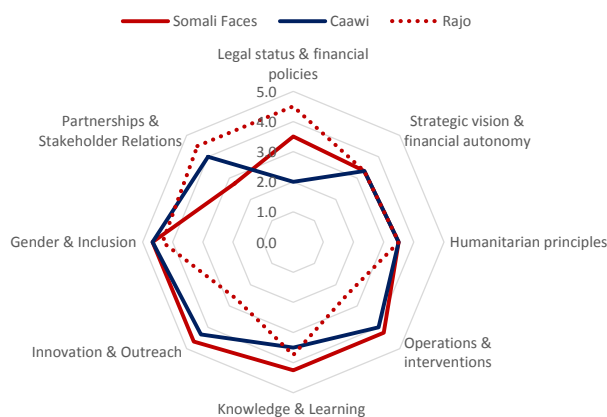3. Legal status and financial policies

Somali Faces are developing in 2018 a three-year strategic plan to improve their work and mission. The first step will be a review of their organisational policies with a focus on policies around governance, finance and human resources. The second will focus on a fundraising strategy to sustain their efforts. They can benefit from external support in:

1. Developing a strategic plan
2. Developing a fundraising strategy
3. Identifying human resources policies adapted to their identity as a volunteer-based platform

Rajo have trained local communities and organisations on waste management. This type of technical support and follow-up activities can be scaled. Rajo identified the lack of information as an inhibition to coordination in Somaliland but are not attempting to improve this status quo. They can benefit from external support in strengthening:

1. Coordination mechanisms
2. Reporting structures
3. Outreach and dissemination efforts

Figure 2. Capacity self-assessment of three Somali DOs

Overall, this diagram illustrates the self-reported strengths and weaknesses of the Somali DOs.

While their strengths lie:

• Primarily, in their innovation and outreach, gender engagement, and inclusiveness
• Secondly, in their operations and interventions, and strong humanitarian principles
• Thirdly, in their knowledge and learning

Their weaknesses rest in:

• A lack of legal and financial policies
• Strategic vision and financial autonomy
• Partnerships and stakeholder relations

This categorisation can help foster more strategic engagement with DOs in support of their actions to amplify their results. The recommendations chapter will set out advisable next steps on the basis of this data.

MAIN FINDINGS FOR THE 3 DOS' UNDER REVIEW IN SOMALIA - DOS' BOTTOM-UP APPROACH TO PLUGGING THE AID GAP

Acting on an emergency response basis is not necessarily antithetical to sustainability. To the contrary, if DOs respond in partnership and coordination with other, more permanent and well-resourced actors, they can engender sustainable action. DOs can provide small-scale, flexible, and punctual help where traditional donors and actors cannot, contributing to plugging the aid gap.

SUSTAINABILITY

- The three DOs under review do not aim for sustainability when responding to shocks and emergencies.
- They are capable but limited in their ability to transfer skills to local NGOs in Somalia, with notable exceptions.
- Although there is still an impression that DOs only intervene in emergency settings, the support offered by DOs in this study often complements, rather than duplicates, efforts of other actors.

ACCESS

- DOs in this study are present on the ground through community outreach and in-person visits by DO representatives.
- They benefit from better access to local communities because they are from these communities and have strong ties with locals.
- Their 'emotional humanitarianism' is an asset in winning local trust and access, and is well perceived by local stakeholders.

RAPIDITY AND COST EFFECTIVENESS

- The three DOs are not constrained by formal procedures and administrative systems.
- They are able to quickly send private funds through web platforms, phone-based cash transfers, and remittance transfers.

INNOVATION

- The three DOs are perceived as being particularly innovative in the way that they adapt and put to use resources and concepts encountered abroad.
- They use new methods of funding, are resourceful in delivering aid in the aftermath of shocks, make wide use of technologies (e.g., a crisis-mapping platform, crowd-source gathering), and introduce new models for protection (e.g., recycling and waste management interventions to encourage environmental sustainability).

LOCAL OWNERSHIP/RESULTS

- Interventions by the DOs in the study are felt to be more relevant to local needs and to serve local interests.
- They were criticised for their alleged lack of transparency in selecting beneficiaries and partners. There were perceptions that clan affiliations informed their decisions.
- The DOs were not felt to be transparent or well integrated into the local and national humanitarian coordination systems.

VOICE AMPLIFICATION

- The three DOs are seen to make effective use of social media and emotional pledges to expedite fundraising processes and to disseminate information around humanitarian needs.
- They rely on community feedback and consultation to raise awareness of local situations. In turn, they have a unique potential to lobby the government.

SYRIA: GRASSROOTS ORGANISATIONS AND THE CONTOURS OF HUMANITARIAN AID

In Syria, the profile of Diaspora organisations varies. Some of the larger DOs, such as Hand-in-Hand, have been at the forefront of the Syria response, participate in international coordination mechanisms, and benefit from international funding streams. They are integrated in the traditional humanitarian system. Keeping with the theme of this report on new actors of the humanitarian system, this section focuses instead on smaller DOs who still evolve on the outskirts of the humanitarian ecosystem. They are not known by the traditional humanitarian sector and are sometimes criticised by the sector. These DOs, as a result, evolve on the margins of this sector.

There is a strong distinction to be made between large and small DOs operating in Syria. The early, and better-known DOs in Syria have carved out positions in the humanitarian ecosystem and have been influential in defining it. They were among the first to mobilise aid, deliver cross-border responses and be involved in coordination structures. In the words of a UN representative, *"they fall somewhere between the local NGOs and the INGOs"*.

Yet, they were not always accepted. A focus on "differences rather than recognising similarities"' have been documented – notably in a series of papers by the Overseas Development Institute in 2014[15]. This research finds that these findings still hold true. While ODI's Humanitarian Policy Group has documented the existence of hundreds of DOs "successfully negotiating access and delivering aid to civilians in areas that international agencies are struggling to reach", DOs are still being scrutinised, with further engagement not being considered or explored, while needs in Syria still outweigh the capacity of the traditional humanitarian sector.

This section will review the extent to which some of these generalisations of DOs apply to more recent, medium-scale and less well known DOs, and how they may be overcome.

We review the work of three selected diaspora organisations: **Homs League Abroad (HLA), Doz e.v., and Human Care Syria.** They mainly rely on private donations, are better known of CSOs and local authorities than of the traditional humanitarian actors.

None of the international actors interviewed spoke specifically about these DOs, either due to their lack of knowledge or to the sensitive nature of their views. They all preferred to speak, positively and in broad terms, about engaging with DOs. They preferred not to share their views when these were not positive.

Caution was also exercised on the side of DOs. All three organisations were reluctant to be defined or labelled as diaspora organisations as will be discussed in the opening section of this chapter.

"We are more than a diaspora organisation"[16]

"Grassroot organisations have more understanding than international organisations on what is related to the needs of the community, access, distribution and community acceptance inside Syria," **said a DO representative**

The term **'grassroot organisation'** was commonly used by stakeholders to describe DOs. They are perceived as intervening from the ground-up. This vision is shared by a representative of Doz: *"we are a youth and student organisation. We are a local organisation with a Diaspora component"*.

There are three stated reasons why DOs interviewed view themselves as local first and Diaspora second. Firstly, they belong to the broader DO-led response mechanisms. DOs were among the first to organise and deliver aid in Syria; their long-term presence on the ground strengthens their local identity. Secondly, DOs – whether large or small – have secured direct access to communities inside Syria in collaboration with and often with more depth than national or local NGOs. Thirdly, their ability to enact cross-border responses, and obtain funding from abroad to fund their own activities, sets them apart from Syria-based organisations.

In the words of a UN representative in Gaziantep, they "add a new layer" in the humanitarian system. The view of partnerships between NGOs and Diasporas as "a flawed marriage"[17] is now outdated and the formal humanitarian system has reached out to create partnerships with many DOs operating in Syria, specifically out of Turkey.

INGOs interviewed for this research report already engaging in partnerships with DOs (for e.g. between iMMAP, Hand-in-Hand, and Syria Relief), alongside partnerships agreed upon with the UN's humanitarian fund. These partnerships do not extend to the three DOs reviewed in this report, but they set a precedent to envisage how partnerships can be extended. Analysts have pointed to the need for greater collaboration: "An alliance between grassroots NGOs—who have access on the ground—and international organizations—with their expertise and money—has to emerge if lives are to be saved."[18]

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15   Svoboa, E. and Pantuliano, S. (2015) "International and local/diaspora actors in the Syria response", Overseas Development Institute.

16   Statement made by Syrian Dos during an inception call with the research team
17   Wall, I. (2016) "The diaspora groups bringing aid to Syria", The Guardian (5 June 2016)
18   Ahsan, S. (2013) "Syrian diaspora leads aid effort", article published in the New Internationalist (4 February 2013)

In Syria, this can be facilitated both by DOs that are embraced by the formal humanitarian system and those who have not yet reached the same level of exposure and credibility. In order to have this discussion, their strengths and weaknesses are assessed alongside the 8 criteria of our research.

Criterion 1: Access

The three Syrian DOs under review have proven access to communities in need of assistance as they operate:

1. Across a range of locations inside Syria, including hard-to-reach areas
2. In the host countries or areas of displacement, providing a link to those who may be considering returning to the homeland
3. Through cross-border response from both Turkey and Iraq.

"Inside Syria, 75% of aid is now arriving through local networks supported by diaspora groups (…) It is the birth of a global network of new humanitarians… Most did not exist five years ago: an incredible 600-700 NGOs have been founded inside and outside Syria since the war started in 2011" – Imogen Wall in The Guardian (2016)

This access within Syria is especially critical given the difficulties of the traditional humanitarian sector in securing and negotiating its access inside Syria. In July 2014, UN Security Council Resolution 2165 (renewed on 17 December 2014 through UNSCR 2191) allowed the UN to cross borders in order to deliver humanitarian goods. This opened a window of opportunity to the traditional humanitarian sector to assist populations inside Syria. At the same time, the expansion of the Islamic State inside Syria continued to restrict humanitarian access in key areas. Since the beginning of the humanitarian crisis in Syria, it has been exceptionally difficult for the international community to intervene due to the security situation. UNSCR resolutions 2165 and 2191 opened the landscape to cross-border programming. DOs – including the three under review – were able to avoid being tied down by restrictions imposed on the traditional humanitarian sector, and therefore are ahead in terms of access and interventions. As a result, DOs that are by definition transnational actors, are well suited to the remote management required of humanitarian actors in the Syria response. While the UN and INGOs rely on remote management as a last resort, DOs have always worked under such set-ups.

Over the last two years INGOs have started to implement new security and access strategies. Among these, the international NGO Concern Worldwide has improved its access, providing services in Mashlab inside al Raqqa city, a locale that DOs cannot reach. Given the experience of DOs in working inside Syria and securing access, there is a mutually beneficial relationship or dialogue, at the minimum, to be established between diaspora and INGOs on strategies for securing access. These interventions should also be mapped as part of the Turkey-based information management efforts.

However, access inside Syria is not the only requirement for effective contributions to the humanitarian response. Access to coordination meetings is needed, as well. Given the large number of diaspora organisations working on and in Syria, and the limited number of seats at the coordination table, opportunities are today restricted to larger DOs who fit in the traditional humanitarian sector. DOs' fluency in key languages has made them essential participants in coordination bodies according to a UN official interviewed in Gaziantep, Turkey in charge of coordination. As a result of their skills, some DOs now lead coordination structures, while others are invited to coordinate and participate in similar ways as other humanitarian members. *"We believe they are active actors who can address the need for the cross-border response; they have the capacity to carry out this intervention,"* said a representative at UNHCR in Gaziantep.

While this is true of the large DOs, it does not apply to the DOs interviewed for this report. Their access to coordination mechanisms is limited or non-existent.

"Before 2013, we were not able to cross into Syria, so we relied on the diaspora organisations and local CSOs for assistance deliveries. Most of the health cluster members were diaspora organisations, good doctors with good communication and advocacy skills. They are professional in their health sector, and we can't forget their easy access to the field" (UNOCHA, Gaziantep)

CRITERIA 2 AND 3. Rapidity and Cost Effectiveness

The modes of intervention in place in Syria are widely recognised as being the result of the work done by DOs. These interventions are perceived to be cost-effective as they rely on four parameters: knowledge of the context, a high level of skills, expertise in required fields, and flexible self-organised action.

DOs' access, rapidity, and cost effectiveness are assets that can support the traditional aid and coordination system. *"They are involved in the cluster mechanism equally with other actors but there is a need for more focus to ensure that diaspora organisations are part of this response. At the end of the day, we believe that grassroot organisations (both Syrian diaspora and local CSOs) have more understanding than IOs*

in what is related to the needs of the community, and better access also in distribution and community acceptance" as reported by a representative of UNHCR in Gaziantep.

Yet these conclusions do not apply to the DOs under review. No evidence was given on their rapidity or cost effectiveness. This is the result of two critical gaps: first, registration; second, human resources.

Registration is a key component to better understanding the dividing line between DOs who partner with IOs and those who act on their own or with local counterparts. Those that are registered in Turkey are part of a services advisor platform, managed by the UN (Turkey.servicesadvisor.org and activityinfo.org). One of the main criteria is to be fully registered in Turkey. Yet this same registration can restrict organisations' ability to support people in need in the Kurdish areas. Registration can therefore limit a comprehensive mapping, and the ability of organisations to work freely.

Photo : During a class at education center in Gaziantep, Turkey © Homs League Abroad

Organisations like Homs League Abroad are considered to be too small and not well known in coordination circles. They rely on private funds, the origins of which are at times questioned by stakeholders. UN representatives interviewed specifically cited the potential for conflicts of interest, seen through overlaps in the governance system (such as having the same individuals in the board of trustees and board of directors).

To this, a Homs League Abroad representative responds that the flexibility that they contributed in the early years of the crisis is now frowned upon: *"We didn't want to be a traditional organisation, and are scrutinised for thinking differently."* They are part of a new generation of DOs for whom the management of projects is new, yet the standards that are being held over them are those of the more experienced and larger DOs.

This sentiment was echoed by the other DOs interviewed, who feel that they should not be scrutinized against the standards applied to other humanitarian actors. Their added value comes from thinking and acting differently from the formal humanitarian sector, a uniqueness they are keen to preserve.

This is closely related to a gap in human resources. The DOs interviewed did not have proper staffing or salary systems, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems in place to report back on their action, nor management systems. As the quotes (see box on the right) show, a certain level of frustration is felt by these smaller DOs who are trying to contribute to the best of their capacity to the needs of Syrians at home. They however feel under-capacitated and overly-scrutinised for the good work that they try to achieve.

The precedents set by larger DOs is making their work and lives harder, and not easier. Palpable tensions are making the work of smaller DOs more challenging.

"INGOs that subcontract us, they send M&E teams, they behave as secret services, they think they can treat us however they want. A donor sent someone, who told the employees 'how can you accept to be paid like this'. (…)We have principles." (Doz International)

"I'm an engineer, you have to understand that managing aid projects is new to us." (Homs League Abroad)

CRITERIA 4 AND 5. Local Ownership and Results

While they may be unknown entities to traditional humanitarian actors, the DOs interviewed have concrete links to communities inside Syria and are actively exploring ways to improve their local ownership and bring new, added results to their portfolio of interventions. Instead of trying to address the gaps that the humanitarian sector has identified, instead of adapting themselves to integrate the traditional humanitarian sector, the DOs interviewed are opting for a different strategy. **They are establishing a local footprint, outside of the traditional humanitarian system. The DOs interviewed have expanded their interventions into early recovery and development work.**

DOZ is scaling up its early recovery work, effectively branching outside of emergency work. This is being done in the agricultural sector. In Kobani, DOZ support covers agricultural projects, covering an area of 2.000 square meters to achieve food security for families. The crops were distributed to displaced populations and families in need, to encourage farmers to return to the countryside and revive their work in agriculture.

While justified as spontaneous returns to locations inside Syria are on the increase, there are risks to be considered. In a recent Samuel Hall report, we highlighted how returns are not necessarily based on a strong knowledge of the return context[19]. The report cautions against incentivising returns when households are not fully informed or prepared on the situations in their communities. For returns to be successful, it is necessary to facilitate extensive pre-return planning. In other words, results will only be maximised if interventions like DOz's are matched by information and counselling sessions prior to their return. This can provide one possible area for collaboration with CSOs.

DOZ is also intervening in the distribution of school bags to students, and expanding its food security program. Community reception to DOZ is positive.

DOZ are using their existing networks and are actively involved in the mechanisms to enhance their knowledge and in-depth understanding of the affected communities' needs. They have a better capacity to conduct more frequent needs analyses because of their access to and relations with the communities. As there is no formal M&E system, key informants echo the need for both M&E and auditing systems to be strengthened.

Reflecting on the local ownership criteria, one particular community assisted by Human Care Syria in Atareb City, Idlib governorate, commented on the mishandling of aid delivery. Beneficiaries in this particular community were living in difficult conditions and were dissatisfied with the support received. They report that the aid was delivered in a situation of "congestion, brawl and bad words," causing "disrespect and humiliation" for them. The distribution was conducted in "a disrupted, random way." In one particular case, a focus group participant claimed that *"someone received my share of relief without my knowledge."* They all agreed on the root causes: "No effective coordination", "the support was random and generally inadequate", and there was discrimination throughout the process. Individuals claimed that "kinship guides relief" and that "there is discrimination when providing support to people who have a financed return…depriving others who have no return". This information needs to be taken up by the organisation itself to better understand the root of the frustrations voiced by the focus group participants. **The capacity of the organisation to respond to the claims and put in place mitigation mechanisms will be critical to ensuring that concerns are addressed.** This also points to the above mentioned need to improve and increase focus on M&E, and on beneficiary feedback and complaint mechanisms.

CRITERION 6. Sustainability of Project Outcomes

The DOs under review are diversifying their actions and their funding to improve the sustainability of their actions. For many of them **financial sustainability is the first priorit**y. Being able to branch out of private diaspora funding into international funding sources is a priority. They have mixed experiences in achieving this and require further support. Homs League Abroad relied on private donations but in recent months has expanded to receiving support through Turkish organisations (including through in kind donations) and a German organisation that has now funded HLA for six months. This is a recent development. HLA shared its difficulties in managing non cash donations from Turkish organisations. More time is needed to assess whether the new funding sources will support the organisation's work towards greater sustainability. At the very least, these openings outside of private funding streams pave the way for more international funding to support Homs League Abroad and other smaller DOs.

A safe shelter set up by HLA is addressing a key need among female refugees and mothers, but the lack of registration in Turkey and the high cost of maintaining a shelter may put the project at risk. HLA has solved the difficulty by reallocating the women and children to a shelter in Antakya, which receives direct support from a Turkish organization. While UNICEF is supporting the educational component of this initiative, further funding will be required. Safe houses have the potential to be at the crossroads of protection and empowerment, providing long-term services to vulnerable populations towards both safe and sustainable recovery. To do so, they must provide beneficiaries with holistic services, including legal aid, medical support, entertainment and a range of other needs raised during focus groups and which shall require additional funding to be addressed. All the female beneficiaries of HLA spoke of the unique aid provided by HLA, as other safe shelters, for instance, do not allow mothers to stay with their children even when they are adolescents. This shelter maintains the family together while training women. The approach is unique in the context of Syria where orphans or children usually stay with the next of kin. Yet, safe houses are known to be costly, and difficult to scale.

The second focus on sustainability is through the selected DOs' understanding that they need to **transfer skills and engage in social investments**. A representative of DOZ explains that their focus is on communicating directly with farmers through communications, provision of new materials, and training on modern methods. By establishing community leadership projects in Kobani, such as the development of workshops and social centres, and of the Rock Shop project on peace and countering extremism, DOZ involves

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19   Samuel Hall (2018) "Syria's Spontaneous Returns", produced with the support of the EUTF RDPP in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq.

community actors and emphasizes the importance of self-management. DOZ also implemented activities to support children's education, in partnership with the UN. *"I have benefited from education, language classes, and household goods in 2015-2016. They provide theatre and drawing for children, awareness-raising and clean-up campaigns for others, and peace events were held annually. The also created agricultural projects to prevent extremism"* – explains a focus group participant and beneficiary of DOZ.

"Diaspora organisations alone cannot mobilise the resources needed in a city like Kobani and its countryside, where about 300,000 people are in need of support. DOs alone are not enough. IOs are more capable as they have better funding and support than DOs." (Dan Church Aid)

Photo : © DOZ e. V.

Overall, it is understood that DOs have access to and benefit from the United Nation's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' (OCHA) humanitarian pool funding. A certain number of the Humanitarian Fund members are diasporic, such as Big Heart, Sham Foundation, Watan Khayr, SAMS, SEMA, USSOM and others. The majority are in the health sector with the exception of IRD, which focuses on education and Big Heart, which specialised on shelter and non-food items (NFIs). OCHA reported working closely with DOs, with "at least three of them being steering committee members for the NGO forum, and an unknown number which are members in the NGO forum…Some are taking on roles of co-leading clusters and working groups, and playing very strong leading roles in advocacy and cross border operations". To qualify for humanitarian funding, an organisation must be legally registered as an organisation and implement cross-border humanitarian operations. This is not yet the case of the three DOs under review.

Continuing with or without funds. *"The difference between diaspora organisations and INGOs is that DOs, for example, work within the ideas of civil society and we have a focus on voluntary work. Financial support is not as much a necessity to our work as it is with IOs. Sometimes we carry out an awareness project in the countryside by ourselves and voluntarily. But the other INGOs may not be able to do so, as they are waiting for support and approvals in order to do something."*

The DOs interviewed originally formed in Syria and most of the founders were already engaged in unpaid voluntary work in the field of education and medicine. They are fully prepared to continue working on a voluntary basis. During the time they spent in the country, they established a network of contacts with associations that became the basis for their work. When they moved abroad, their ability to provide support and services increased. *"They are the sons of these conflict-prone areas, and can reach the most remote or dangerous areas, which may have been bombed with chemicals or other substances,"* says a representative of Syria Relief in Gaziantep.

Some avoid legally registering their entities in order to avoid the risk of having a higher authority withdraw their authorisation to work. *"In Syria, there are new laws for organising CSOs; new actors are imposing laws that block our work,"* explains a representative of Doz International referring to revised regulations introduced by authorities. While the literature and interviews confirm that many DOs in Syria are accustomed to developing partnerships and have operational savvy to participate in coordination mechanisms, this is not the case for the DOs reviewed in this study. Whether unregistered or lacking minimum humanitarian community qualifications, they remain active, if unequal, partners in the Syria response. Partnerships can be improved in two areas:

1.   **With relation to local authorities:** Relationships with local authorities and local leaders ought to be formalised and made more transparent. In Idlib, Human Care Syria prioritised relationship-building with local authorities from the outset but faced challenges due to the lack of coordination at the implementation level. Local authorities were informed of the plans to intervene but remained suspicious of the mechanisms used to achieve these aims. The lack of clarity created tensions.

2.   **In relation to local organisations:** Contribution to enhanced capacity of local organisations is needed to improve upon the current learning-by-doing approach to training. Local NGOs would benefit from a similar initiative to Doz's provision of skills-transfer to communities.

CRITERION 7. Innovation

Innovation is central to DOs' operational history in Syria, as demonstrated in their alternative modes of delivering aid to beneficiaries (see box on page 30). In effect, **DOs have established the basis of today's coordination system in Syria.** *"Before the UN arrived, the Syrian NGOs, especially diaspora, started to work inside Syria. There was no cluster system, they tried to make their own coordination bodies with the help of some INGOs,"* explains a representative of UNOCHA in Gaziantep. DOs brought to the Syria response new methods of mobilizing resources, coordinating actors, and advocating for assistance. They are now moving beyond work in the emergency sector to focus specifically on displacement issues, and sectorally on health, education, and agriculture. DOs interviewed asked to be given the space and opportunity to continue innovating, specifically in situations of displacement.

Photo : © DOZ e. V.

One example is a **DO's current initiative to support farmers in building a greener future.** DOZ is focusing on agriculture, the main livelihood sector for most Syrians, whether displaced or not. They support farmers by building greenhouses, providing consultations and moral support, and teaching modern agricultural techniques. Their work weaves in psychosocial interventions alongside social and economic support, aiming for a holistic approach to rebuild livelihoods in a crisis setting. Their initiative can be learned from, built upon and scaled. But support is needed. The multi-dimensional requirements of this intervention require partnerships, input from various CSOs and authorities, and the intervention of specialised care providers. Identifying these opportunities and pilot initiatives can help international organisations and donors support seed initiatives led by DOs. Others have initiated similar work: the Kobani Relief and Development Organisation with Char, a Norwegian organisation, established a project for agricultural spending

in the region, but the work remains limited: only about 50 farmers benefited from it with the successful results being restricted to only a small group. Actors need to consider how can such initiatives be scaled up and supported given the high investments needed – from skills, to equipments and infrastructures – to achieve agriculture-based livelihoods systems and ecological solutions in crisis settings. **Setting standards of innovation in crisis settings: The creation of underground hospitals by DOs in Syria**

One of the most impactful innovations developed by DOs are underground hospitals located across Syria. This initiative originated with the diaspora and has now scaled up to become mainstream. The Avicenna Women & Children's Hospital in Idlib is the largest underground medical facility in that province. Established by the Sustainable International Relief Organization (SIMRO), it has benefited from foreign and crowd funding as well as the support of celebrities worldwide. As a result, between 2014 and 2017 the organisation has been able to increase its donor base and attract traditional humanitarian donors, new donors, and the traditional humanitarian sector of UN agencies.

CRITERION 8. Voice Amplification

In July 2014, the UN Security Council authorized cross-border operations under Resolution 2165. According to UN organisations in the field, among the primary reasons that the resolution passed were that DOs have a strong record of delivering cross-border operations and were a persuasive lobbying voice.

While more work could be done on humanitarian messaging, according to an OCHA representative, DOs in Syria are shouldering the responsibility of maintaining international standards. Already active in specific working groups within the cluster system, they are engaged in applying these standards. In the communications working group, one of the DOs conducted a media training, applying all of the relevant principles and UN guidelines related to media work.

Concerns remain about the gaps in coordination and communication between local organisations, DOs, and IOs, and their limited participation in the cluster system. Nevertheless, international actors express reservations about a fully integrated system out of concern that certain DOs are not politically neutral and could jeopardise humanitarian response.

"We shouldn't forget that most of the diaspora organisations are implementing partners of opposition political parties (…) Most diaspora staff members used to have the opposition bracelet on their hands." – IMMAP, Gaziantep

In general, the lack of reporting on and evaluation of interventions means that knowledge and learning opportunities in DO response remain weak. Some of the DOs interviewed view evaluation as a burdensome tool imposed on them to scrutinise their work; they do not yet appreciate the potential insights such mechanisms can provide.

Others have taken steps to move beyond the initial resistance to M&E to integrate practices in their systems. The internal M&E units that DOZ developed can be examined more closely and learned from to inform other DOs. Given the reticence to view M&E positively, if the experience is shared between DOs – and not a requirement imposed by donors or external actors – learning might be more organic and face less resistance.

Where do Syrian DOs need most support?

A review of the OCAT results reveals that the DOs under review all suffer from a lack of partnership and effective stakeholder relations, and a concomitant lack of grounding in humanitarian principles. The self-assessment also reveals their satisfaction with their current legal status and financial structure.
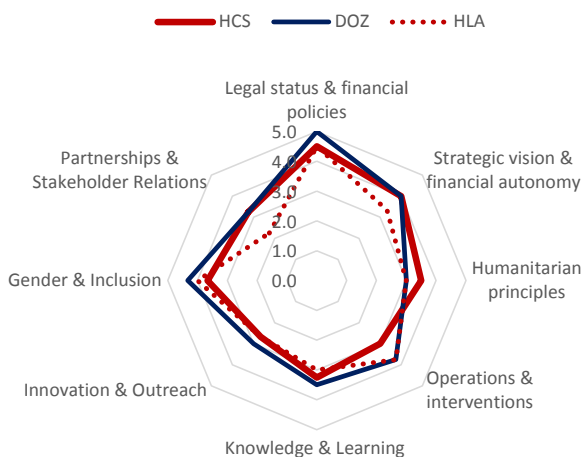
The three DOs can offer one another further support by developing:

1. Operations and interventions, to learn from each other's subnational access strategy
2. Gender and inclusion of vulnerable groups
3. Partnerships and stakeholder relations.

They can benefit from external support by:

4. Learning, and humanitarian principles
5. Legal status and financial policies
6. Financial autonomy

Figure 3. Capacity self-assessment of 3 Syrian Diaspora Organisations

This diagram illustrates the self-reported strengths and weaknesses of the Syrian DOs.

While their strengths lie:

*   Primarily, in their inclusion of underserved communities, and specifically of women,
*   Secondly, in their legal status and financial policies
*   Thirdly, in their operations and direct interventions inside Syria

Their weaknesses rest in:

*   Further innovation and outreach
*   Knowledge and learning, with a key gap in monitoring and evaluation
*   Partnerships and stakeholder relations.

This categorisation can help better understand what medium-scaled DOs can do in Syria and where they need more support. The self-assessment can pave the way for a more strategic engagement with DOs, to support their actions, and amplify their results where possible. The recommendations chapter will further detail possible next steps on the basis of this data.

MAIN FINDINGS FOR THE DOS' UNDER REVIEW IN SYRIA - GRASSROOTS ORGANISATIONS AND THE CONTOURS OF HUMANITARIAN AID

"Inside Syria, 75% of aid is now arriving through local networks supported by diaspora groups (…) It is the birth of a global network of new humanitarians… Most did not exist five years ago: an incredible 600-700 NGOs have been founded inside and outside Syria since the war started in 2011" – **Imogen Wall in The Guardian (2016)**

SUSTAINABILITY

- The three Syrian DOs in this study place emphasis on the need to establish financial sustainability. They want to transition from private funding to international funding sources.
- They attempt to make sustained change through transferring skills and engaging in social investments.

ACCESS

- DOs in the study have proven access to communities across a range of locations. They have intervened across Syria, including in hard-to-reach areas; in the host communities, whether they act as links for those who consider staying or returning; and in cross-border responses (e.g., in Turkey and Iraq).

RAPIDITY AND COST EFFECTIVENESS

- The three Syrian DOs are knowledgeable of the local context because they are well connected with beneficiary populations.
- The DOs have levels of skills, expertise, and flexible self-organisation.
- Their primary limitations are that they are not registered and have constrained human resources.

INNOVATION

- Current initiatives by the three DOs include development activities such as an agriculture programmes that incorporate psychosocial and economic support.
- These are small-scale interventions that can be scaled and supported with higher investments.
- UN agencies recognise the innovative contributions that Syrian DOs have made to developing coordinated humanitarian responses.

LOCAL OWNERSHIP/RESULTS

- The three DOs have established a local footprint outside of the traditional humanitarian system and expanded their interventions into early recovery and development work.
- There are concerns that DO responses are informed by kinship networks.
- The DOs have the capacity to put in place mitigation mechanisms that address concerns of beneficiaries.

VOICE AMPLIFICATION

- DOs in this study have limited participation in the humanitarian coordination system; international organisations express suspicion of the DOs' intentionals, which limits their influence.
- There are concerns about whether DOs are impartial in their selection and representation of beneficiary populations.

NIGERIA: NEWCOMERS TO THE HUMANITARIAN SYSTEM

This third section informs potential Diaspora-engagement efforts in response to the crisis in Northeast Nigeria. The methodology focuses on feedback from the field research on DOs and their general involvement in the humanitarian sphere in Nigeria. DEMAC had not yet selected its in-country partners at the time of this research, in part due to the fact that most interventions stemming from DOs based in Europe are focused on the southern parts of Nigeria, and fewer on the northern region. Key informants confirm that there is a more limited knowledge by diaspora of the local environment and of cultural nuances in the Northeast. At the same time, DOs in Nigeria also present a hybrid structure: they consider themselves as local organisations as they are locally registered. As a result, what is defined as a DO in Nigeria differs from other country contexts.

According to the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the Nigerian National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), the situation in Nigeria's Northeast has rapidly deteriorated into a humanitarian crisis. One proxy is the increase in internal displacement from about 389,281 IDPs in 2013 to over 2.2 million people in 2016[20]. The grave nature of the situation prompted the Nigerian government into finally recognizing the displacement crisis in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe, although it initially underestimated its severity. The government ultimately responded by mobilising national stakeholders, including the Diaspora, alongside international partners. Coordination and communication between these groups, and the existence of parallel coordination systems (national, civil society and UN-led) remain key challenges.

Access not yet secured

Nigeria has not had a humanitarian crisis of the magnitude currently experienced by the Northeast since the experience of the civil war (1967-1970)[21]. Not only did the geography change, so did the nature of the work required, leading to a change among most Nigerian DOs which had previously focused on developmental or cultural activities[22]. Consequently, DOs can be regarded as newcomers to the humanitarian terrain.

DOs need guidance and support from local NGOs and community-based organisations (CSOs) to access vulnerable populations and areas. The lack of local knowledge and access raise important questions about what value DOs present in Nigeria. Most diaspora organisations may not be owned or championed by Borno State indigenes but, rather, by Nigerian Diaspora from other parts of the country, particularly the South.

Hence, they may lack knowledge of the local cultures, traditions and practices. For organisations coming from outside to support the Northeast, being unable to speak Hausa, Kanuri and other local dialects renders language an additional barrier. Religion may also be a factor in accessing some areas and earning local acceptance. DOs do have a value-add in that they might target secondary crisis areas and not necessarily the most urgent zones – making them the only on-the-ground partners.

A shift to the Northeast

Donors, and INGOs, who previously concentrated their funding for NGO activities in the southern part of the country had moved to the Northeast following a government directive. This directive explicitly required a shift in support towards rebuilding the Northeast[23]. To respond to this directive,

DOs have started operating using charity-based intervention, distributing relief materials or making donations and leaving shortly thereafter[24]. The government focal point for humanitarian coordination in Maiduguri points out that *"the Diaspora individuals and organisations usually come in with charity – the kind of support that is transient. Most times they do not even monitor the impact of the support they provide"[25]* . This charity-based approach has three main consequences:

- DOs are not engaged in coordination mecanisms and hence invisible to other stake holders
- Community feedback mechanisms and sustainability are lacking
- Partnerships with local organisations do not lead to skills being transferred

As noted in the quote above, the direct consequence rests on the sustainability of interventions in Northeast Nigeria. All actors argued that DOs only intervene in the short-term: one actor called their appearance "a smoke effect" [26].

20   IOM, "Humanitarian Needs Escalate in Nigeria with Over Two Million Internally Displaced", August, 2016
21   Johnson, D.F. (2016) "The Unspoken Humanitarian Crisis: Nigeria". Ottawa: Canadian Research Institute on Humanitarian Crisis and Aid (OCCAH);
22   Marchand, Langley, and Siegel (2015). "Diaspora engagement in Development: An Analysis of the Engagement of the Nigerian Diaspora in Germany and the Potentials for Cooperation". Germany: Maastricht Graduate school of governance (MGSOG). p.21

23   Interview with Centre for Global Solutions and Sustainable Development (CENGSSUD), 28 November, 2017
24   Interview with National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), December 2017.
25   Interview with National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), December 20107.
26   Interview with the Head of Sub-Office Maiduguri, Borno State, UNHCR, December 2017.

The national context is opening up to Diaspora contributions. The Nigerian government signed the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission Establishment Bill 2017[27] . Once fully established, the Diaspora Commission will be responsible for coordinating and organizing Nigerians in and of the Diaspora to contribute human capital and material resources, including expertise, for the country's national development.

In addition, the Federal Republic of Nigeria consulted Diaspora Nigerians for its 2016 Draft National Policy on Diaspora Matters.

At present, informants do not have sufficient knowledge about the Diaspora Commission Establishment Bill 2017[28].

Umbrella bodies such as the Nigerians in the Diaspora Organization (NIDO), and various branches in America, Europe, Russia and Asia, in addition to the Central Association of Nigerians in the United Kingdom (CANUK), the Nigerian Peoples' Forum USA and the Organisation for the Advancement of Nigerians, could organise sensitisation programmes for their members to familiarize them with existing laws and policies relevant to the Nigerian Diaspora and possible entry points towards contributing to humanitarian action.

DOs' search for an entry point into humanitarian action

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and the Presidential Committee on the North-East Initiative (PCNI) have organised National Humanitarian Coordination meetings and workshops for donor agencies and in-country international partners. A review of the literature and KIIs reveals no evidence that DOs were involved in this mechanism. Unlike traditional humanitarian actors, and local NGOs, most DOs are not field-based. KIIs revealed that most local organizations are uninformed about DO interventions, and lack familiarity with their activities and modes of intervention in the Northeast. This lack of visibility leads to two main challenges:

• A lack of access to data potentially useful for implementation
• A lack of inclusion in coordination mechanisms

Several aspects can be explored to give more depth and anchor DO activities in the Northeast. Interview responses showed that DOs can and do lobby local, national and international actors to act on issues concerning the humanitarian crisis. One example cited during the interview was the case of the #bringbackourgirls campaign

which had strong input and support from the Diaspora and resulted in the government acting more decisively towards rescuing the 279 schoolgirls kidnapped from their school in the Northeast's Chibok by Boko Haram. Another example given was the Diaspora's lobbying at the international level for international community support in addressing the 2014 Ebola pandemic in Nigeria.

The respondents also believed that the Diaspora systematically engages the media and social media in campaigning and lobbying as part of its work.

DOs' added value might rest in their ability to innovate and amplify voices. Local authorities perceive the Diaspora as comfortably enlisting modern information and communications technology (ICT) in lobbying at the local, national and international levels. Key informants revealed that DOs have more knowhow in the use of social media for humanitarian campaigns and in sourcing donations via online sources. However, in terms of aid delivery, most DOs are said to replicate the traditional humanitarian approach familiar to beneficiaries (whether in the distribution/provision of food, clothes, shelter, nutrition, or health services).

Stakeholders and coordination in Northeast Nigeria

The humanitarian context in Northeast Nigeria has been described as complex, and involving multiple stakeholders[29]. One challenge is that IDPs mainly live in host communities (only an estimated eight percent reside in camps; the in-excess of two million people remaining are located in often inaccessible and remote host communities in the Northeast). The rolling Boko Haram crisis has resulted in cyclical displacements in the Northeast as IDPs experience multiple episodes of displacement[30]. Meanwhile, the disruption of agricultural production and malfunctioning markets resulting in high food prices have made even IDPs living in accessible areas dependent on humanitarian assistance [31].

Traditional and local actors pointed out that direct cooperation was currently difficult due to the lack of DO visibility. Yet they all expressed willingness to work with DOs. INGOs tend to work on temporary permits in Nigeria which limits their ability to amplify the voice of beneficiaries, meaning that there is a window of opportunity for DOs to play a key role in advocacy for IDPs in Northeast Nigeria by registering themselves as local NGOs.

27   Federal Republic of Nigeria (2016) "Draft National Policy on Diaspora Matters".

28   IOM (2012) "Mapping Exercise For Nigerian Health and Education Professionals in the United States of America". Abuja: International Organization For Migration

29   Interview with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Maiduguri, December 2017

30   Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (2014) "Nigeria: multiple displacement crises overshadowed by Boko Haram". Retrieved from: http://www.internal-displacement.org/sub-saharan-africa/nigeria/2014/nigeria-multiple-displacement-crises-overshadowed-by-boko-haram

31   Lundberg, P. (2017) "Statement by the UN Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator for Nigeria, Peter Lundberg" - Press Conference, 12 August 2017. Retrieved from: https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/statement-un-deputy-humanitarian-coordinator-nigeria-peter-lundberg-press-conference

CSO networks are active in the humanitarian response in the Northeast. The Network of Civil Society Organisations in Borno State (NESCOB) relied on local and community-based organisations to inform humanitarian actors of needs in different localities. The actors that responded to the humanitarian crisis in Nigeria's Northeast are the Nigerian National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), the State Emergency Management Agencies (SEMA), Nigerian civil society organisations, INGOs, UN agencies, and a few Diaspora-led organisations.

The many actors jockeying for involvement in humanitarian activities in the Northeast, prompted the adoption of overlapping levels of coordination. The Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) was established to coordinate responses to humanitarian needs in the Northeast. Before the ECC was set up, In September 2016, the Federal Government of Nigeria had created an Interministerial Task Force (IMTF), a multi-stakeholder platform in support of its humanitarian response in the country's Northeast. The Task Force placed Cabinet Ministers directly in charge of the humanitarian response's sectoral coordination and is chaired by the Minister of State for Budget and National Planning.

Members include the ministers of health, interior, women's affairs, agriculture and water resources, the National Security Adviser to the President, the Chief of Army Staff, NEMA and PCNI[32].

To enhance synergy, a Humanitarian Coordination Working Group (HCWG) was set up as the operational arm of the IMTF, to directly coordinate the humanitarian response and implement the agenda of the Task Force. Situated at the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) in Abuja and headed by a Chief Humanitarian Coordinator, the HCWG brings together the key stakeholders at federal and state levels along with donors, aid agencies and civil society organisations (CSOs). The HCWG in the ECC was set-up as the operational arm of the IMTF response- coordination efforts. In 2016, the HCWG led the development, in collaboration with the UN, of a Humanitarian Response Plan for 2017, with Nigeria's component requiring US$1.054 billion for implementation.

There is no evidence in the literature of the Nigerian Diaspora's integration into coordination mechanisms in Nigeria, which are currently focused around the government, donors, INGOs, and local organisations.

One of the reasons why DOs are not included in the coordination mechanisms in the Northeast is because they are not fully on the ground yet but participate in CSO networks.

Limited funding for diaspora organisations
According to key informants, DOs do not have the same capacity as INGOs and UN organisations to access funds from donors. In cases such as the Nigeria Humanitarian Fund, where funds are available for all organisations, DOs fail to qualify as they lack the standards of the competing INGOs and local NGOs.

Many depend on member donations. A review of some of the websites of Nigerian DOs such as empower54, the Good Samaritan Foundation, Arise Women and FREE[33] reveal that they mostly rely for funding their humanitarian activities on donations from individuals, groups and organizations. In recent times, some Nigerian DOs began considering innovative, technology-driven alternatives to mobilise resources through fundraising activities, crowd-sourcing[34], and social media[35]. What is still not clear are what amounts such sources generate, as well as issues of transparency, accountability and the impacts such interventions have.

The following organisations were identified on a field visit to Maiduguri: the Foundation for Refugee Economic Empowerment (F.R.E.E) and ARISE! Nigerian Women. Both organisations display the large range, scope and modalities of DOs and can build the basis for future case studies of DOs' actions in Northeast Nigeria.

32   Nigeria Co-organises International Donor Conference To Tackle Humanitarian Situation In Northeast, Raises US$672m.

33   https://free-ng.org/, 23 November, 2017
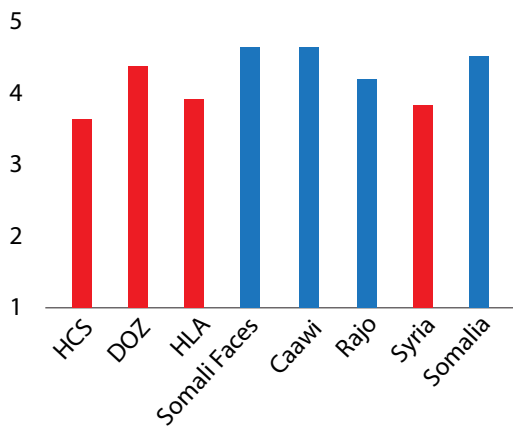34   "Crowdsourcing for the reconstruction of Northeastern Nigeria", http://www.nmfuk.org/blog-single.php?pstid=9, 3 December, 2017
35   "Sanitary aid for Nigerian girls", https://www.sanitaryaidng.com/, https://twitter.com/freesanitarypad, 3 December, 2017

Table 3. Maiduguri-based DOs

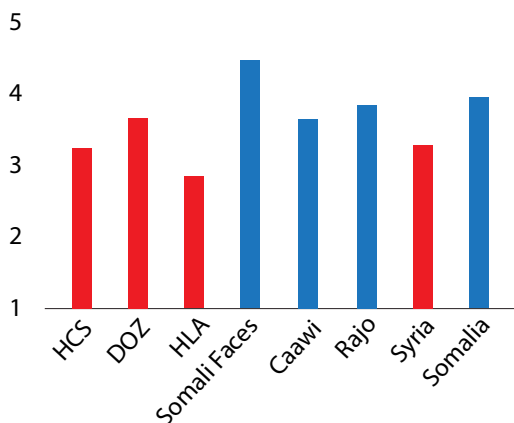|	Foundation for Refugee Economic Empowerment F.R.E.E	ARISE! Nigerian Women
Funded	2014	2010
Objective	Addressing the immediate and long-term needs of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and communities affected by the Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast	Creating a platform for all Nigerian women
Current focus	Water-access (boreholes) in Borno State	Worked in partnership with the Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) based in Abuja, to provide preparatory training to organizations working/helping in IDP camps in the Northeast
Examples of past projects	Regular collection and distribution of relief materials in partnership with other NGOs. Partnered with the UK's International Health Partners (IHP) to provide medication and medical supplies for health clinics in camps within Yola. In February 2016. FREE organised a two-day training programme for traditional birth attendants in Yola, Adamawa state and also established a tailoring school in Jambutu, Yola North LGA, Adamawa state.	With funding provided by EU through IOM, in 2015, it worked with CISLAC, to build the technical capacity of local actors to implement content on issues of migration and humanitarianism.
Registration	In the UK and Nigeria	In Nigeria
Social media presence	Limited	Limited
Sustainability	Short-term intervention	Policy interventions
Partnerships	Despite having field offices in Adamawa and Maiduguri, FREE was unaware of any other DOs engaged in humanitarian intervention in the Northeast.	ARISE, the Diaspora partner of Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC), also conducts capacity-building sessions for NGOs.
Funding	Funders in the UK	Relies on donations from a single family
Key challenge	Bureaucratic bottlenecks in dealing with government offices in the country. Examples given include requirements for registering foreign-based DOs which are treated as INGOs, requiring registration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Planning Commission.	Diaspora led humanitarian interventions are not long-term in nature due to limited resources. Interventions are seen as a part-time engagement on the side of already-employed individuals.
Opportunities	Capacity-building in fundraising, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and lessons learned. Working to integrate displaced populations in existing programmes: "We hire IDPs themselves to forage the boreholes, it builds trust".	The organization hopes to bring other DOs in the UK and register them under an umbrella body. This could serve as an entry-point for building the capacity of local CSOs or between INGOs and customary actors. In addition, it could serve as a connection between DOs, AFFORD and NGOs such as CISLAC.

4. DOS' POTENTIAL TO CONTRIBUTE FURTHER
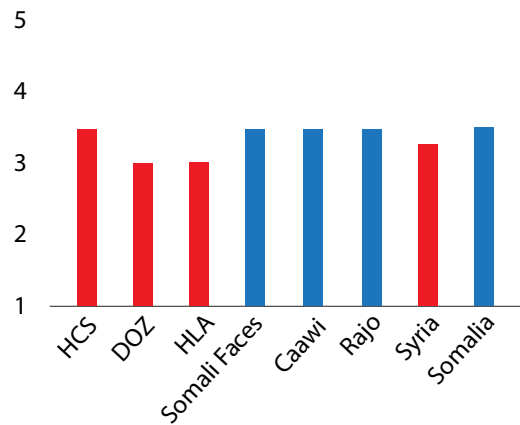
**Advantage:
Gender & Inclusion**

The self-reported strengths of the six DOs rest in their decision-making flexibility, beneficiary selection, feedback mechanisms, gender inclusion, community participation and representation of beneficiaries. In all these areas they have a comparative advantage and present added value to the work being carried out by other humanitarian actors. Lessons learned and sharing of practices in this realm could benefit the spectrum of organisations in both settings. Focus group discussions revealed a level of ease, trust and comfort with DOs and local CSOs collaborating with them that were unmatched by the more formal humanitarian actors. Focus group participants relayed a different sense of belonging that impacted positively on the aid they received. This was the case across all focus group discussions, with the notable exception of one.

**Disadvantage:
Knowledge & Learning**

The areas of self-reported improvement for DOs remain financial sustainability and human resources, safety-management and modalities of intervention, knowledge-management and reporting, national alignment, relations with CSO, UN and IOs, and partnerships. The legal and staffing structures varied by context and organisation, but knowledge management remained uninstitutionalised across the board. In some cases, reports were available but beneficiary listings rarely given; contacts of community leaders were kept for information-management purposes, but little actual knowledge was being generated in terms of lessons learned, analysis or reflections.

**Disadvantage:
Humanitarian Principles**

This then translates into a gap in terms of humanitarian engagement and humanitarian principles. Only a few organisations abide by Sphere or INEE standards. As reviewed in this report, many of the DO responses are framed by the communities themselves. Their intervention is a direct response to the call for support by the communities.

Elements of neutrality and impartiality are lost to some extent, but the value of a bottom-up approach ensures that the communities are well-placed to decide. The question of equality is then raised: how to give all communities the same access? This is a question that is often asked of the traditional humanitarian sector as well.

This is where the presently inconsistent support in innovation, networks and the media can provide further potential for scalability across contexts.
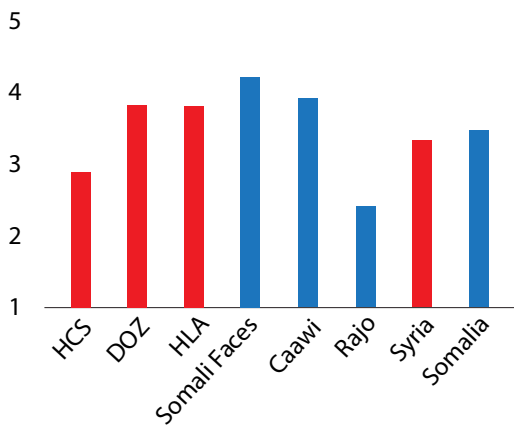
What support do DOs need and want?

In Syria, the three DOs under review have more formal structures, ranking highly on their legal status and financial policies, articulating their strategies, and their selection process. They want support in improving their:

1. Monitoring and evaluation know-how
2. Procurement and logistics
3. Technical capacity

    o   Management
    o   Humanitarian and early recovery:
        through twinning programs with IOs
    o   Communications and media (similar
        to larger DOs operating in the Syria response)

They are at a critical juncture where procurement and logistics processes require more investment on their part. This can be addressed, in part, by increasing partnerships with local CSOs.

This relates to the lack of capacity at the field level. DOZ notes the need for project managers that can grow with the organisation's activities: how to implement projects that branch out of food distribution into early recovery work? Here the mentorship of international organisations is needed to conduct workshops in the field and coaching sessions for key personnel in the office.
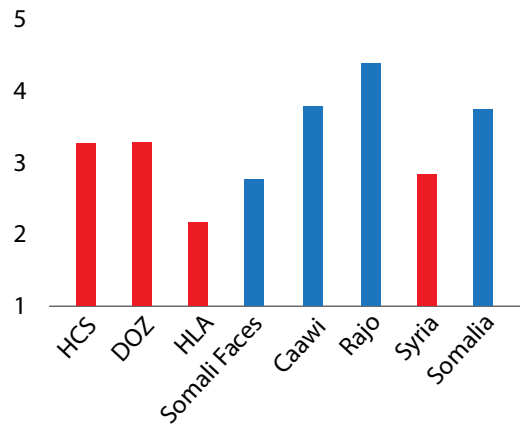
Operations & Interventions

DOs in Syria want to share their experience and enter into twin collaboration modalities with other experienced NGOs, to benefit in turn from their experience.

More than an opportunity to network, the twinning program should lead to the possibility for DOs to enter the common humanitarian funding streams, understand how to better write proposals and identify opportunities for funding. In addition, skills related to monitoring and evaluation were raised as critical needs. These are common to all NGOs and could easily be integrated in a twinning modality.
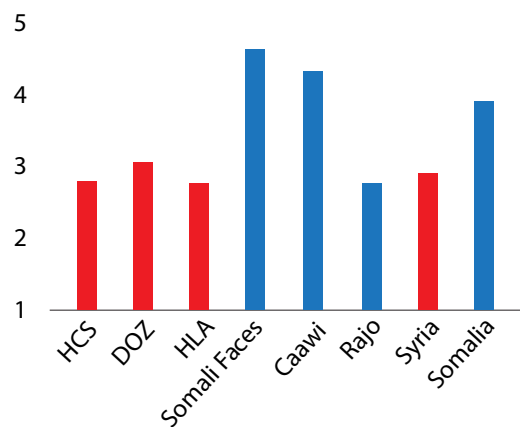
Partnerships & Stakeholders Relations

While many DOs in Syria are strong on outreach and voice-amplification, the three DOs under review are still young and inexperienced in this regard.

They requested media training to better project their organisational voice, and in turn of those they represent. DOs interviewed acknowledged that their current staff are either volunteers or unspecialised paid staff without sufficient capacity to implement campaigns that correctly represent the work of the organisation. Their current lack of outreach results in under-reporting their activities and mandates.
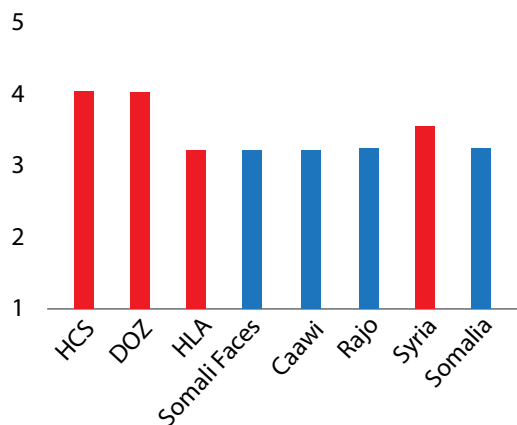
Innovation & Outreach

In Somalia, all three diaspora organisations interviewed ranked highly on their ability to address gender issues, involve their communities and represent their voices. They were known for being innovative and network- and media-oriented. In turn, they expressed limitations and gaps on

1. Strategic planning
2. Funding strategies and managing funding
3. Communications support
4. Technical skills (for instance on programming to safeguard the environment)
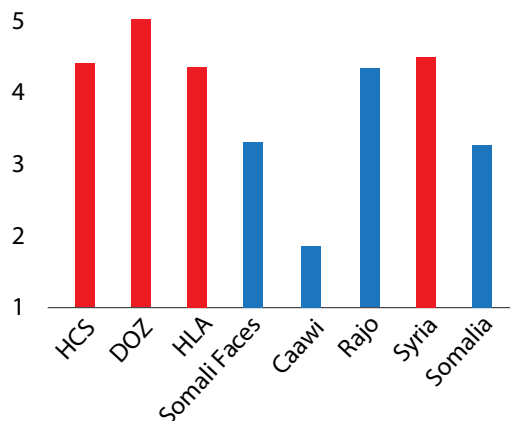5. Information gaps (through mapping activities and needs, similar to the Syria response platforms)

Donors are willing to support the DOs under review, but the need to be financially sustainable while simultaneously autonomous sometimes clash. DOs are wary of forging a formal association with a donor, or accepting donor funding (for instance from a foreign government) for fear that it will limit their ability to develop their own humanitarian response model. They are worried about losing their independence and reputation, but concerned for their financial autonomy. Donors and DOs need to discuss this and carve out a solution.

Strategic Vision & Financial Autonomy

DOs in Somalia voiced the willingness to move beyond emergency response to more durable support activities. This will inevitably modify the amount and structure of their spending. They are conscious that they have entered a humanitarian ecosystem where they are judged against the likes of UNICEF, which can "deliver 40 tankers of water, while we can only deliver 2. People nevertheless expect the same from us". This level of expectation is one that is now also felt on the legal status and financial policies front.

Legal Status & Financial Policies

The DOs under review in Somalia would like to formalise certain processes that they have been able to perform but would like to improve. Notably DOs must hold trainings for their volunteers and develop more ambitious campaigns. So far unregistered organisations like Caawi Walaal, are now considering setting up formal offices. Created as a result of specific conflicts or shocks, Somali DOs are learning about the need for financial sustainability, autonomy and the benefits of more structured processes that facilitate their branching out into life-saving assistance.

5. THE ROAD AHEAD: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

"Within the Somali context, local communities, diaspora groups, and local organizations (including clan structures, religious organizations, businesses, community-based organizations or CBOs, and local authorities) are typically the first responders in crisis" – Tufts 2014[36]

Diaspora organisations are newly recognised actors in humanitarian systems. The limitations of the traditional humanitarian sector are continually tested and increasingly visible. DOs are also continuously tested – this report does not aim to scrutinise DOs' work but identify how they contribute to humanitarian work in crisis settings. To do so, the report reviews the work of six medium-scale DOs selected by DEMAC as part of their efforts to better understand, inform and support humanitarian interventions in Syria, Somalia and Nigeria.

These settings were chosen because DEMAC is working across all three countries to identify diaspora organisations that can be supported to add value to humanitarian interventions; and address the needs and amplify the voices of local populations. In Somalia, it took the international community eight months to respond to a famine that existing warning systems had already flagged. In Syria, it was diaspora organisations rather than established international actors that responded first to mobilise resources and set up informal coordination systems ahead of the UN's arrival. In both these cases, DOs did not (have to) wait for the international community to mobilise resources but instead fundraised and took advantage of local knowledge to intervene directly and with relatively limited bureaucratic impediment. It is acknowledged that such interventions did not consistently follow accepted humanitarian values and standards, particularly regarding impartiality and neutrality. Regardless of adherence to established rules of engagement, both beneficiaries and other stakeholders recognise that very often, aid delivered by DOs fulfilled humanitarian needs, was quickly distributed, and filled operational gaps among traditional humanitarian actors.

This section shares observed strengths and achievements of DO operations[37], but also insists

that caution is exercised when interpreting findings.

There were many limitations to this study, as noted in the methodology section. This field of study is limited at present—only one academic article has been published on the topic[38] —and the small number of DOs interviewed (three in Somalia and three in Syria) mean that findings should not be simplified nor generalized. Conclusions and recommendations provided in this final section benefit from insights of individuals experts and key informants.

The original research question could not be faithfully addressed. By modifying the original premise to account for limitations that became apparent throughout the study, a more realistic and constructive conversation emerges that is in line with the current academic understanding of how DOs contribute to humanitarian response.

Therefore, we advance discussion based on the following questions, from which future research can build:

1. What are the observed strengths that diaspora organisations (DOs) in this study bring to humanitarian response, and how do and can they complement the work of traditional humanitarian actors?

2. What challenges or shortcomings in DO response have been revealed by this preliminary analysis, and what does that tell us about how humanitarian actors can or should move forward (i.e. whether actions can be synchronised and complementary, or developed in parallel, etc.)?

These questions rest on the premise that diaspora organisations can assume a more prominent and strengthened position in the humanitarian landscape: while the DOs observed generally had better access to beneficiaries than international organisations, they are financially less well endowed with sporadic interventions. They implement in crisis settings, alongside national NGOs and other CSOs, while fundraising through individual contributors and negotiating their access, in parallel to the work of the traditional humanitarian actors. Their position can be consolidated with a more authoritative role within the international system through partnerships, exchanges of best practices and stronger communications. In other words, they can be integrated in a community of practice to shed some of the mistrust and misinformation on their actions.

As detailed in the recommendations, if DOs are to become more universally accepted as new humanitarian actors who can support the traditional system, they will need broad-based support from donors and governments,

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36   Maxwell, D. et al. (2014) "Lessons learned from the Somali famine and the Greater Horn of Africa Crisis 2011-2012", Feinstein International Center, Tufts.
37   For instance: In Somalia, these included both lobbying for the development of waste management systems and against ongoing environmental degradation, in addition to their emergency response initiatives. In Syria, underground hospitals were built and agricultural projects set up for IDPs and returnees, while safe houses built in Turkey allowed refugee women to seek protection for themselves and their children.
38   Horst, C., Lubkemann, S., and Neajai Pailey, R. (2017) "Diaspora Humanitarianism: The Invisibility of a Third Humanitarian Domain".

from other diaspora organisations, and from INGOs.

1. Observed strengths among DOs

In response to the first revised research question above, this section presents a collection of general mechanisms that were identified over the course of research, highlighting features that make diaspora-led projects distinct in their humanitarian operations. While not all DOs of this study exhibit these traits, and there is variability in the degree to which they are observed in practice, these perceived strengths give an indication of the relative differences between DOs and IOs. Commentary on specific DOs follow each of the general findings to add nuance, where potentially useful.

a. Work from the bottom-up for a more rapid and timely response: they respond to local needs, receiving their cues and requests from populations rather than donors. They are not proposal-driven or donor-driven, but have direct links with communities, village elders and volunteers that can alert them when emergency response or technical response are needed. This was highlighted by village elders and beneficiaries in Somalia who cited examples from Mogadishu and Faradweyne to show that the ease of communication with DOs meant that they can be alerted in real-time. In turn, their capacity to disburse funds rapidly ensures that they unlock the first responses in crisis settings such as the 2017 attack in Mogadishu.

b. Benefit from an 'outsider-insider' position to build trust and direct relationships with community representatives, volunteers and beneficiaries that can amplify their voices more effectively:

o   Among vulnerable populations: While criticised by traditional actors for relying on a 'emotional humanitarianism' or using a 'felt need vs. real need' approach to delivering aid, this is not how the populations on the receiving end view it. In focus group discussions, beneficiaries were able to put a face behind the aid received, saw that a member of the diaspora visited them regularly to understand their needs. The decision makers were invested in informal ways that allow for the creation of strong ties with communities. This outsider-insider position adds to their credibility, trust, knowledge and capacity to amplify voices. The label of emotional humanitarianism implies a distance which DOs do not have with their target groups.

o   Among individual donors: Crowdfunding and private funding enable them to be flexible and show a capacity to respond in the wake of crises. In the case of Somali faces, online funding is directed immediately to a local bank account with independent fund managers who disburse sums to implementers.

c. Minimise costs associated with permanent structures and staff, thereby maximising value of aid delivered: Although untrained staff is one of their major constraints, volunteerism remains integral to their core model. While this was seen by traditional actors as 'relying on non-professionals', it was seen in focus group discussions as relying on people from communities to help communities, adding to the credibility of DOs' work. In Somalia, DOs' capacity to rely on university youth was particularly appreciated by female beneficiaries. At more senior levels, they function through like-minded networks of individuals who maintain full-time jobs but are prepared to volunteer for a cause. From Somalia to Syria, volunteers are the lifeblood of DOs and their biggest claim to sustainability - introducing technical know-how, such as underground hospitals in Syria.

d. Transnational positioning enables response to the growing demands for remote management and cross-border response: DOs do not adapt their model to a crisis; they are from the local settings and bring in their international experience and position to support local needs. They have, from their inception, operated in a remote fashion. As such, their transnational identity is well suited for remote interventions and cross-border response, a balance which is much harder for traditional humanitarians to strike. Their distance does not slow them down, instead they have developed tools – such as the use of technology and social media – to access communities.

e. Build on humanitarian actions to access funds that contribute to greater social investments: in other words, DOs interviewed were able to more easily cross the humanitarian-development divide than the traditional aid sector. Starting with food, health and education interventions, they span forward to tackling waste management and environmental degradation. They contribute to raising the profile of marginalised groups by identifying for them often-over-looked resources that can contribute to greater self-reliance. In the words of a 61-year-old woman "I did not think our waste had any value". Diaspora organisations can help trigger mentality shifts that contribute to strengthening rights and greater autonomy. Their transfer of skills is the start of greater social investments than traditional humanitarian sectors have been able to achieve in similar settings.

f. Share information through media and social media, online platforms and mapping applications: while they may be less active in coordination fora, they are open to sharing information that can support planning processes and actively do so through various platforms. One obstacle remains the lack of capacity in knowledge management and a lack of organised data, especially as compared to traditional humanitarian actors.

g.   Open to collaboration and learning to improve their capacity: DOs are open about sharing the specifics of their approach in order to put an end to the era of mistrust and scrutiny. They ask to be trusted to think differently and creatively, and not to be asked to fit in the traditional humanitarian sector. In the self-assessment exercise, DOs in Syria suggested a twinning program that could help them learn from larger DOs or from international actors.

2.   Observed challenges, weaknesses, and possible limitations of DOs
DOs often have the same challenges and weaknesses that traditional humanitarian actors have. The same difficulties in maintaining impartiality in locations like Somalia, where clan affiliations often direct aid, even among international counterparts, also affect DOs. But DOs are more transparent about it. Analysis of the DOs involved in this study, and a critical perspective on their operations, raise the following considerations around potential areas for structural improvement and opportunities to benefit from the comparative strengths of established international and national NGOs. This analysis, therefore, begins to respond to the second revised question above.

A.   Streamlined cost-effectiveness: DOs do not necessarily have access to economies of scale, which may undermine the suggestion that they are more cost-effective across the board. To unlock some of their difficulties in securing funding, this key question will need to be addressed. Further research is needed on the economic model of DOs.

B.   Information lifecycles are not yet standardised: While DOs are frequently embedded in beneficiary communities and are considered to have more immediate and accurate insights to local information, this is not standardized through sets of practices or systems. As a result, information channels are not consistent at all times in the lifecycle of an individual DO but reactive to specific needs and shocks.

C.   Distribution of aid is not necessarily impartial
In Faraweyne, Diaspora access was tainted by persistent questions relating to clan affiliations and preferential treatment. While village elders in Somalia recognised that clan dynamics drive some of the DO-led activities they also see the ripple effects on communities: a dual needs and community-based approach take over purely clan-based considerations. They further add that with the limited aid available from DOs, and the widespread humanitarian needs in such contexts, a selection has to be made and targeting one's own group is not a source of justified criticism. While this is also true of the actions of international organisations, stronger records of the rationale behind community and beneficiary selection – and the impact on communities – can help dispel some

of these concerns. In the context of Nigeria, the fact that most DOs are embedded in the South and not the North has impeded their ability to respond to the Northeastern crisis. As a result, they are new humanitarian actors in that setting, behind the work of international organisations. Lessons could be learned from Syrian DO counterparts to avoid such gaps in the response, and to better understand how they can adapt beyond local, clan or tribe dynamics, to the needs of their fellow citizens throughout the country.

D.   Long-term planning and strategic development: Organisations who had previously partnered with DOs advised them to improve their capacity to study local development agendas and international plans, emulate how INGOs conduct their operational strategies and align themselves more with the district development plans recently drafted for each district in Somaliland; or adapt to changes in regulations around interventions and registration procedures in Syria.

For all the six DOs interviewed, this is a time of change and self-reflection. While the Syrian DOs reviewed were clear that they will maintain their independence to think and act differently from the traditional aid sector, all also recognised the need to formalise certain practices. From Somalia to Syria, network- and volunteer-based medium-scale DOs are prepared to register, adapt more structural policies to improve legal and financial processes. What lacked in their approach is the collection of data, sharing of data and overall monitoring and evaluation of their work. Transparency needs to be worked on as it affects their ability to have a larger voice and become more central actors of the aid system. The DOs interviewed are part of the system and will continue to evolve on the margins if certain changes are not made. The recommendations section will suggest how to reach out to them to support them in this process.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DIASPORA ORGANISATIONS

1.   Consolidate an umbrella network of diaspora organisations for humanitarian action: The key to unlocking some of the key weaknesses of DOs – partnerships, referrals and transparency – can be through the creation of an umbrella organisation. Such a network can, with time, become a referral network or a resource in the crisis aftermath for partners. The network can be called upon to act when others cannot mobilise as quickly, whether they be the UN, international organisations, donors or governments.

This network can learn from initiatives set up in the context of Syria by the international community: setting up an advisory platform that will map out actions taken. This builds on existing initiatives in Somalia such as the the Abaahara crisis-mapping platform.

2.   Engage with diaspora organisations involved in the development sector: For social investments to turn into longer-term outcomes, "strategic and systematic" actions need to be taken to bridge the humanitarian-development divide. A mapping of investments made by development-oriented DOs in improving infrastructure and addressing poverty can be linked to protection-oriented activities, civic engagement processes, and livelihood initiatives generated by humanitarian DOs.

3.   Identify twinning opportunities between large and medium-scale DOs, between DOs and traditional humanitarian actors, and across settings: Diaspora organisations were vocal about the willingness to participate in mentorship or twinning programs. In Syria, large diaspora organisations and international organisations alike can take smaller organisations under their wing. Boosting the technical and managerial capacity of office and field staff, alongside their monitoring and reporting skills are perceived as some of the top needs for DOs. Across the contexts, learning can shape stronger action: initiatives around environmental degradation and greener futures in Somalia and Syria are related to common challenges that are global, but require local solutions. Sharing these practices across settings in a twinning programme can ensure that beyond networking, actions can be replicated.

4.   Commit to systematic reporting, based on monitoring and longitudinal data: Monitoring should be seen as a requisite for learning and improving the work currently undertaken. Rather than as external scrutiny or an inspection, which is how DOs perceive monitoring & evaluation at the moment, an educational agenda is needed with learning events, workshops and opportunities to debate and share successes and challenges. The focus should be on learning from the work of diaspora organisations, and on beneficiary feedback. DOs possess the kind of access that allows them, to track over time specific communities, individuals and households who have benefited from aid and convey their voices and needs to the agenda-setting humanitarian actors. If a direct line of communication already links populations and DOs, then how can others in the humanitarian system benefit from this relationship?

From a safe house ran for displaced women and their children in Turkey, to the situation of IDPs in agricultural projects in Syria, or the experience of communities involved in waste management in Somaliland, participants can be recruited to take part in longitudinal research building in-depth case studies that can serve the humanitarian ecosystem at large.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEMAC

5.   Build a learning agenda on diaspora engagement by highlighting and disseminating successful initiatives as entry points for engagement with DOs: The research notes continued mistrust between actors of the humanitarian ecosystem. Building a portfolio or track record for diaspora organisations – large or small – can go a long way towards ensuring that other actors recognise their added value. Oftentimes, the diaspora is behind actions taken in Syria and Somalia, but institutional actors fail to realise it.

o   Present the actions of DOs on an online platform
o   Include presentations and information-sharing at coordination mechanisms in a routine fashion that establishes a dialogue
o   Present entry points for joint action between INGOs and DOs, governments and DOs, as well as donors and DOs.

6.   Provide capacity-building support: DEMAC can build a program of capacity-building for Somalia and Syria focusing on the weaknesses and opportunities laid out in this report. While all require support on monitoring and reporting, the curriculum can focus on four key aspects:

o   Building partnerships
o   Knowledge management and reporting
o   Referrals and skill-transfers
o   Financial and legal procedures
o   Humanitarian principles and working in displacement -affected communities

7.   Engage the diaspora's voice and capacity to act in displacement contexts: All the communities under review which experienced forced displacement as a consequence of conflict, persecution and natural disasters had in common a tendency to develop a dependency on aid, while those living outside of camps often remained invisible to traditional humanitarian actors. DOs are better placed to access the forcibly displaced but may not be familiar enough with the dynamics within displacement-affected communities. Guidelines for protection programming, alongside roadmaps for durable solutions, need to be established and understood. At a time when the voices of IDPs are being left outside of global compacts , DOs can help address this gap by lobbying on their behalf.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IOS AND INGOS

8.   Consider DOs as partners who can do what IO/INGOs cannot do: the value of diaspora organisations rests in using different methods and strategies to fill in the gap left by IOs and INGOs. They should not be pushed to replicate the standards used by IO/INGOs, but encouraged to use different methods to achieve a common objective. Similar to how UN agencies work with contractors to ease security restrictions and gain access, diaspora organisations' value is in working more flexibly and under a different set of rules. They can be asked to document their methods more thoroughly, but should not be asked to mainstream them.

9.   Engage in a twinning program: Work with DOs and DEMAC to identify the most relevant areas for IOs and INGOs to engage in twinning programs with diaspora organisations active in specific fields or contexts. Identify which elements of capacity the IO can build – from operational to technical, security to financial, proposal-writing to reporting – and how DOs can further the strategy of IOs and INGOs in countries such as Somalia, Syria, and Nigeria.

10. Include DOs in resilience consortia: In Somalia specifically, the social investment objective of DOs can align with the resilience agenda. While resilience consortia focus on creating a stronger capacity within communities to absorb and transform shocks, some DOs are already participating in similar initiatives without branding it so. A possible link then, between the traditional humanitarian system and Dos, can be explored by linking them up with existing resilience consortia. This is particularly fitting as humanitarian actors lead resilience activities in Somalia.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DONORS

11. Initiate co-creation requests for proposals that will require diasporic and traditional actors to generate joint project ideas: This will additionally require allocating funds for networking events, creating synergies within and beyond the humanitarian sphere, and identifying common geographical and thematic areas of work, cost and resource-sharing practices.

12. Generate opportunities for non-conditional funding to explore new approaches: Diaspora organisations require stable sources of funding but cannot accept them if they are accompanied by extensive conditionalities. A pilot funding for diaspora organisations can be made available over a period of 2-5 years to fund humanitarian action. The only prerequisites should be to demonstrate non-discrimination and area-based approaches that include members of different groups, tribes and affiliations.

13.   Define   cross-border   possibilities: International NGOs have struggled with the demands of cross-border programming by donors, while diaspora organisations are nimble in their movements. Their lessons learned should be recorded and cross-border requirements defined: from negotiating authorizations with local authorities to negotiating access and local buy-in, how can organisations be based in multiple locations while retaining their effectiveness?

14. Scale successful DO initiatives: Identify community-based DO initiatives that can be scaled and assess the financial cost of scaling such initiatives. Building a 'business case model' for successful interventions, using DOs as a basis for creative thinking and inspiration and for piloting different approaches. The pilots can be an investment borne by DOs, while the scalability can be ensured by larger organisations. This could be applied to specific initiatives on environmental degradation and waste management, initiated by DOs.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENTS

15. Apply tax exemptions for members of diaspora organisations: Diaspora organisation members can be required to pay taxes in both their country of origin and of residence. Tax exemptions can be provided for those that work in diaspora organisations as long as they are accompanied by conditionalities. Regular reporting and coordination are needed to ensure fund allocation earmarked for humanitarian and early recovery activities.

16. Include the role of DOs in humanitarian action in existing or future diaspora engagement policies: Diaspora engagement policies allow origin states to create stronger links with 'their' diasporas. A dedicated focus on DO actions in the humanitarian field should be included, alongside outlined national priorities. DOs have been seen as stronger on alignment with local needs than with national programmes. This gap can be addressed through fostering diaspora engagement policies. Diaspora organisations need information and guidance to align their work with national priorities. The government in the source country can use such a policy to outline its preferred areas for diaspora interventions while providing an opportunity for the diaspora to contribute to a more sustainable outcome.

Where national governments are not active or unable to accomplish this task, the UN-led coordination mechanism can lead on developing a diaspora engagement policy with a humanitarian component and roadmap for coordination.

6. ANNEX

QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

NIGERIA

Type	Name	Position	Organisation	Location
National NGO	Adewale Adeniyi	Founder/CEO	Global Solutions and Sustainable Development (CENGSSUD)	Lagos
INGO	Zinnah Kamah	Head of Programmes	Danish Refugee Council (DRC)-Nigeria	Remote
INGO	Blaise Aboh	Founder	Orodata Science Nigeria (OSN)/ The IDPS Tracker Project	Lagos
UN	Emeka Mhah	UNHCR/UNICEF Coordinator	Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR)	Lagos
UN	Tshilombo Mbav Cesar	Head of Sub-Office Maiduguri, Borno State	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	Maiduguri
CSO	Mrs Hassan Waziri	Co-founder and Coordinator	University of Maiduguri Muslim Women Association (UMMWA)	Maiduguri
CSO	Falmata Mohammed	Founder/Director	Sublime Foundation	Maiduguri
CSO	Isah Lawan Bukar	President	Borno Youths for Positive Action Initiative (BoYPAY)	Maiduguri
CSO	Umar A. Maina	Project Coordinator	NEEM Foundation	Maiduguri
CSO	Dr. Tina Aduke Olayemi	Director	Samaritan Care and Support Initiative	Maiduguri
CSO	Ambassador Shehu Ahmed	Director	Network of Civil Society Organisations in Borno State (NESCOB)	Maiduguri
Local Authorities	Usman Dahiru Askira	Secretary Administration/ Secretary Inter-Sectoral Synergy	Borno state Humanitarian Authority, Ministry of Inter-Governmental Affairs and Special Duties	Maiduguri
Local Authorities	Saada Bello	Field Coordinator	National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) – Nigeria (Adamawa)	Maiduguri
Diaspora	Gambo Wada	Director, Borno Office	Foundation for Refugee Economic Empowerment (F.R.E.E.)	Maiduguri
Diaspora	Abimbola Junaid	Founder	Arise Nigeria Woman Foundation	Maiduguri

SYRIA

Type	Name	Position	Organisation	Location
UNOCHA	Fadwa Baroud	Public Information Officer	UNOCHA	Gaziantep
UNOCHA	Aisha Hummeida	Deputy of Head of HF Unit	UNOCHA	Gaziantep
Other UN	Francesco Baldo	ER Cluster Coordinator	UNDP	Gaziantep
Other UN	Dher Hayo	CCCM Cluster Coordinator	UNHCR	Gaziantep
Other UN	Izzat Hafez	Information management associate	UNHCR	Gaziantep
INGO	Ghaida Rashmawi	Area Manager	IMMAP	Gaziantep
INGO	Mohamad Katerji	Partnership Officer	NRC	Gaziantep (manage remotely projects in the NW Syria)
INGO	Azzad Ali Othman Ato	Protection Officer	DCA	Kobani
National Goverments	Ibrahim Zama	School Principle	Directorate of Education	Western Aleppo countryside
National Goverments	Ismael Ahmad Mohammad	An employee in the district administration	Kobani	Kobani
Local Authorities	Abd Al Ghani Maaz	President of the Local Council	Local Council (Dier Hassan)	Northern Idlib countryside (Der Hasan)
Local Authorities	Berevan Mohammad Iesa	Office of Humanitarian Organization Affair	Kobani	Kobani
Local Organizations	Ahmad Al Hammoud	Project Coordinator	Spirit Organization	Northern Idlib countryside (Al Dana)
Local Organizations	Sherzad Yahya	Board of Directors Member	Kobani Organization for Relief and Development	Kobani
Local Organizations	Alaa Wafaii	Operation Manager	SARD	Antakya
Diaspora	Ahmad Shiekho	Center Coordinator	DOZ e. V.	Kobani
Diaspora	Mustafa Slyeiman	Office Manager	Syria Relief	Idlib - Sarmada

SOMALIA (GALMADUG)

Type	Name	Position	Organisation	Location
Community representative	Omar Gurre Abdulle	Community Leader	Community	Guriceel
Local Authorities	Jama' Hussein Mohamed	Secretary of District security issues	District Administration	Guriceel
Local Authorities	Ali Abdullahi Ibrahim	Finance Administrative	Local Authority	Guriceel
Local Authorities	Suleiman Mohamed Salah	Chairman	CERELPA	Guriceel
Local Authorities	Mohamed Hirsi Nur	Area Manager	KAAH	Guriceel
Local Authorities	Sharmake Hassan Hussein	Scooper	KAAH	Guriceel
Local Authorities	Abdullahi Hussein Ibrahim	Paediatric Consultant Doctor	SRCS	Guriceel
INGO	Abdullahi Mohamuud Nur	Assistant Field Officer	ICRC	Guriceel
INGO	Zainab Ahmed Farah	Nutrition Field Analyst	UN-FAO	Guriceel
INGO	Abdulkadir Gure Barre	Health Promotor	Swiss Kalmo	Guriceel

SOMALILAND

Type	Name	Position	Organisation	Location
LO (implementing partner of Rajo)	Ahmed Osman Abdi	Operation Manager	Al-Rahma (Rajo works through Al-Rahma)	Hargeisa
Local Authorities	Abdi Ismail Qalib	Head of the Village Committee	Village Committee	Lafta Faraweyne
Local Authorities	Faysal Mohamed Jama	District Mayor	Faraweyne	Faraweyne
Local Authorities	Mohamed Hirsi Nur	Chairman Project Manager (Pastoral)	HAVAYOCCO	Hargeisa
Local Authorities	Abdirahman Ali Kahin	Cash project officer	SRCS	Hargeisa
INGO	Ahmed Adam Mohamed	Head policy and programme	Action Aid	Hargeisa

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