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LOCAL INTERMEDIARY LANDSCAPING STUDY



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Acronyms

AVAS	Association of Voluntary Actions for Society
CBO	Community Based Organization
DAC	OECD's Development Assistance Committee
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FFC	Fonds pour les Femmes Congolaises
GBV	Gender-based violence
FSA	Friendship Support Association
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LCA	Local Coalition Accelerator
LIST	Local Intermediary Spectrum
LNO	Local and National Organization
LRPF-SS	The Local Response Pooled Fund - South Sudan
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
JAP	Joint Action Plan
KCDF	Kenya Community Development Foundation
MPCA	Multi-purpose cash assistance
MJSKS	Mahideb Jubo Somaj Kallayan Somity
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NNGO	National Non-Governmental Organization
NIDDA	Sudanese Development Call Organization
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OECD	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSIWA	Open Society Initiative for West Africa
SHG	Self Help Group
SRHR	Sexual and reproductive health and rights
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
TST	The Share Trust
UN	United Nations
WACSI	West Africa Civil Society Institute
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WEE	Women's economic empowerment
ZGF	Zambia Governance Foundation

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Finally, we would like to note that this landscaping is “live,” and we will continue to identify local intermediaries through more deep dives in individual countries whilst refining our approach to categorizing local intermediaries.

Executive Summary

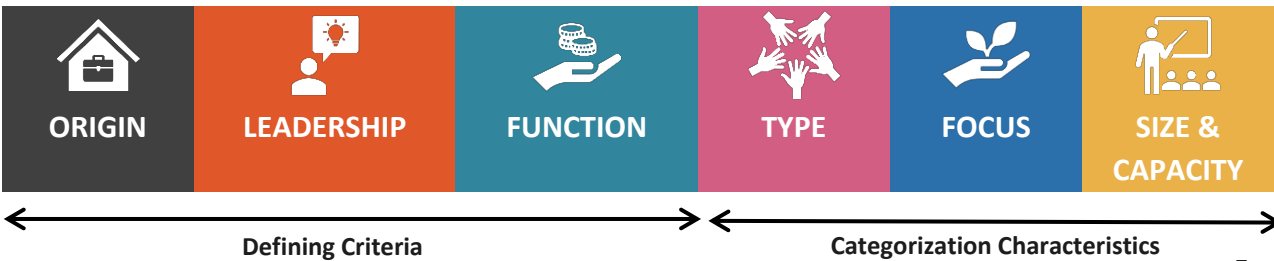
In a context of increasing donor commitments to shift power and funding to local actors, there has been mounting interest in understanding the global ecosystem of ‘local intermediary’ structures. Intermediary organizations act as a conduit for large scale donors - who can only engage in a limited number of grants - to channel funds to larger ecosystems of local actors. Between 2022 and 2024, the Share Trust led a series of seminal studies on the cost-efficiency of local intermediaries. The [“Passing the Buck: The Economics of Localising Aid”](#) found that local intermediaries could distribute funding up to 32% more cost efficiently than international intermediaries such as the United Nations (UN), international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), and other private enterprises.

The Share Trust undertook this study – an initial mapping and categorization of local intermediary partners – as a follow up to this earlier research. It identifies the landscape of local civil society organizations and entities in aid receiving countries that currently or potentially could serve as a local intermediary for donor funding. Shifting more resources to local and national actors is imperative to advance donors’ commitments to more locally led action, and even more so in the face of significant global aid cuts. This (living) landscape analysis can help funding partners better understand opportunities to redeploy more of their funding through local intermediary structures.

This study defines “intermediaries” as entities that act as conduits, receiving funding from a funding partner and channeling that funding on to multiple other local organizations and/or providing a capacity sharing function. Being an ‘intermediary,’ in this study, is therefore defined according to a function served by an entity, rather than reflecting the core identity of the entity, which is likely to be far more complex, with most intermediaries having diverse missions, functions, and relationships.

As a starting point to this landscaping study, the “Local Intermediary Spectrum” (LIST) was developed. This tool maps out the criteria for defining “local” (in terms of origin and leadership) and “intermediary” (based on their function), and further categorizes local intermediaries by type, size/capacity, and focus), accommodating the wide range of different intermediaries that exist (see Table 1).

Table 1: Local Intermediary Spectrum - Defining Criteria & Categorization Characteristics



Our research recognizes that defining “local” is not binary and instead uses a spectrum to represent the diversity of “local” entities. The definition used in this study draws upon local intermediary “origin” and “**leadership**” and includes regional, national, subnational, and community-based entities established and led within Global South contexts. However, the spectrum recognizes that some local intermediaries have had to relocate to neighboring countries, or, at the far end of the “**origin**” spectrum, are internationally grown entities that are supported by diaspora or have transitioned to local leadership (in the case of several local pooled funds).

The global landscaping involved internet searches for potential local intermediaries, identifying 167 potential entities (“mapped intermediaries”). Supplemental data was also collected through surveys with 28 of these organizations (“surveyed intermediaries”). The global sample relied heavily on the existing networks of the Share Trust and Warande Advisory Centre (the study authors) and hence is not intended to be representative nor comprehensive.

ORIGIN

From the large number of entities reviewed:

- ✓ **167 were mapped** on the Local Intermediary Spectrum as they had both a funding (regranting) function and/or capacity strengthening function;
- ✓ **126 were confirmed as “local intermediaries”** having met the defining criteria (origin and headquarters in Global South countries; local leadership; and funding and/or capacity sharing as a prime function);
- ✓ **23 were identified as “regional intermediaries”**, with origins in one Global South country, but regionally led and usually proving support across countries; and
- ✓ **18 were classified as “locally-led international intermediaries”** because despite being internationally grown, they were supported by diaspora and have strong local presence and leadership, or they are transitioning pooled funds.
- ✓ **The majority of the 167 intermediaries mapped to date have origins in Sub Saharan Africa (84).** The remaining intermediaries were located in Asia-Pacific (47), Latin America and the Caribbean (21), and the Middle East and North Africa (15). The range of organizations is disproportionately focused on Africa as the study team had local networks in this continent. There are many more examples of local, regional and locally-led intermediaries that will need to be investigated as this work expands and highlights the importance of maintaining the global landscaping as a living study, so it can grow to be more representative.

LEADERSHIP

- ✓ **The majority of the 126 mapped local intermediaries are nationally-led entities** with national headquarters. Only 11% have sub-national headquarters and leadership and a further 3% are community led.
- ✓ **Of the remaining 41 intermediaries mapped on the LIST**, 23 have regional headquarters and leadership team (regional intermediaries), and a further 18 have primarily local or regional leadership but given international origins (e.g., diaspora) some decision making is carried out in the global north (locally-led international intermediaries).

FUNCTION

- ✓ **65% (109) of mapped intermediaries have funding (on-granting/passing on) as a primary function**, although it is rarely the sole function (only 27).
- ✓ **60% (100) of mapped intermediaries have capacity sharing as a primary function**, although again this is rarely the sole function (only 15).
- ✓ **The local intermediary survey confirmed the diversity of functions** carried out, with direct programming, a function for most local intermediaries.

TYPE

- ✓ **63% of mapped intermediaries are individual entities** and 37% are collectives or membership entities (e.g., networks, coalitions).
- ✓ **30% of mapped intermediaries self-identify on their websites as NGOs**, 26% as foundations, 15% as funds, with the remaining 29% identifying as other types of organizations/entities.

FOCUS

- ✓ **Most mapped intermediaries tend to have a specific thematic focus** in the areas they fund (e.g. protection, human rights, food security, etc.,) or specific groups that they target (e.g., women, pastoralists, children). Funds, foundations, and trusts are most likely to have these focal areas.

SIZE & CAPACITY

- ✓ **The scope of some mapped intermediaries extends beyond their country of origin** including supporting diaspora or collaborating on regional development. However, most mapped intermediaries have a national level focus, with only 18 primarily focused on subnational regions.
- ✓ **Nearly half of the local intermediaries surveyed have existed for over 20 years** and nearly half have more than 40 staff members.
- ✓ **15 surveyed local intermediaries reported receiving grants of USD 500,000 or more** (although the survey did not systematically identify those even larger grants).

- ✓ **14 surveyed local intermediaries reported raising funds from domestic and international sources;** 10 solely raise funds from international sources.
- ✓ **Only 2 surveyed local intermediaries reported providing grants above USD 50,000 to grantees;** 5 intermediaries reported giving grants between USD 11,000 and 20,000. The other 21 offered smaller size grants to grantees.
- ✓ **Risk management.** 9 surveyed intermediaries reported that they have simplified their risk management and compliance processes for downstream partners.

A critical next step will be to convene, mobilize and network key stakeholders to expand the global landscaping and conduct country deep dives; categorize the range of intermediaries and assess the pros and cons of viable models able to absorb large funding partner grants; unpack the respective roles of local, regional, and international intermediaries; and ensure funding partners are able to access information on the spectrum of intermediaries to foster connections.

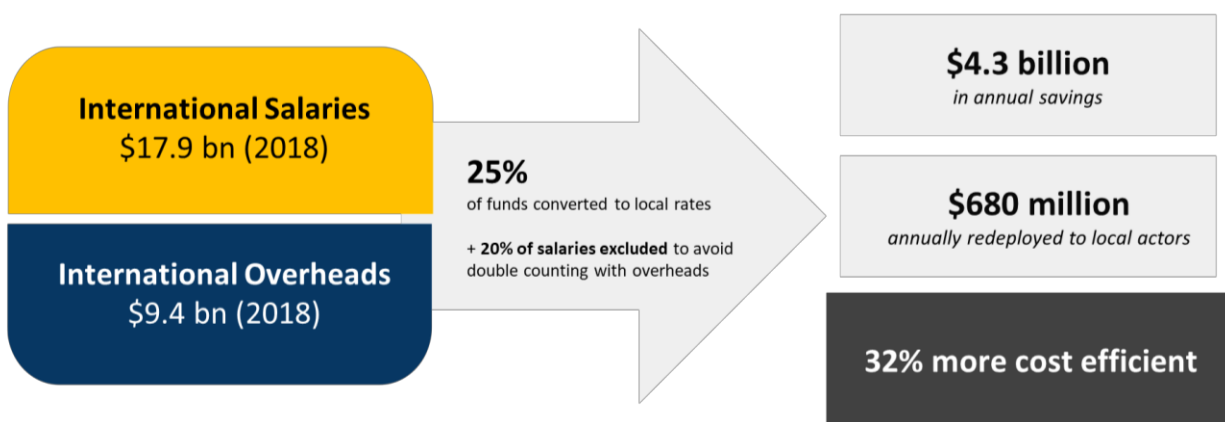
1. Introduction

1.1. Study Rationale

Local intermediaries play a critical role in the development and humanitarian ecosystem by bridging the gap between international funding and locally led action. Local intermediaries often have strong ties and accountability to the communities they serve and can have greater trust and legitimacy. Existing within the same broad society further creates mutual incentives and shared interest in community and national development. Similarly, local intermediaries can be integral to local systems, operating in regions, countries, and communities even in the absence of international donor funding and continuing in their work after external funding ends, with an ability to adapt responses to local community needs. These attributes, among others, uniquely position local intermediaries to channel resources, support capacity strengthening, and advocate for locally led responses.

Channeling funding through local rather than international intermediaries can also be more cost-efficient. In November 2022, the Share Trust and the Warande Advisory Center published a study [Passing the Buck, the Economics of Localizing International Assistance](#), which estimated that local intermediaries could deliver programming between 15 and 32 percent more cost-efficiently than international intermediaries, due to lower overhead and salary costs.

Figure 1: Total Cost Efficiency of Shifting Funding to Local Intermediaries



The *Passing the Buck* study prompted the following questions:

- **If local intermediaries can deliver aid more efficiently, who and where are these intermediaries** so that funders can work with them?
- **What are the characteristics, functions, and priorities** of these diverse local intermediaries?

1.2. Study Context

This follow-up study was initiated in response to these questions and to specifically identify and categorize local intermediaries to help funding partners identify opportunities to redeploy funds via local intermediaries. This is imperative in the face of significant transformation of the global aid landscape and increasing calls for locally led action amidst global aid cuts.

In identifying local intermediaries, it is acknowledged that the term “local intermediary” is in itself contested. Global South civil society have challenged the term on the basis that it reduces the complex and dynamic roles of Global South funders to simply channeling funds on behalf of others, reducing their agency (Rodericks *et al.*, 2024; Carrión, 2024). Other terms, such as “Global South intermediary” are also being used, within efforts to map Global South funding ecosystems (Carrion, 2024; Rodericks *et al.*, 2024).

Funders have many reasons to work with intermediaries to bridge the gap between them and the communities they aim to support, beyond their ability to disperse smaller grants. These include their proximity and accountability to communities, their contextual knowledge, experience, networks and skills, and their ability to provide capacity strengthening (Carrión, 2024; Robert Wood Foundation, 2023; Kingman, 2003). Efforts to map Global South funding ecosystems have focused on the role of local intermediaries in specific issues or sectors, including governance (Carrion, 2024 a & b), climate, the environment, and intersections with human rights and social justice (Rodericks *et al.*, 2024; Mohamed-Katerere, 2024).

Recognizing the evolving and dynamic role of “local intermediaries” in global humanitarian and development financing, this research is ongoing. The Share Trust will continue to identify and profile organizations and entities that support locally led action through intermediary functions.

2. Approach and Methodology

2.1. Approach

Aim. The overall aim of this landscaping is to support funding partners (e.g., bilateral, philanthropic) to identify local intermediaries that can disburse funds to smaller local initiatives and entities, support locally led capacity sharing; and can underpin shifts in power and funding for locally led action.

Objectives. To carry out: i) a **global landscaping** to identify local intermediaries through internet searches; and ii) **surveys** in each research region¹ to gather further information on a select group of local intermediaries.

Scope. Whilst the global landscaping was high-level and used online information to define local intermediaries and inform basic categorization, the surveys resulted in a more comprehensive identification and assessment of local intermediaries across the focus regions. These surveys gathered more detailed information on local intermediaries, including governance structures and practices, programmatic areas, main functions, target population, entity size, scope and implementation locations.

This study, which largely relied on publicly available information, is an initial step towards mapping local intermediaries and is by no means comprehensive or systematic. The Share Trust intends to continue to build on and expand this work.

¹ Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Asia Pacific (AP), and Latin America and the Caribbean.

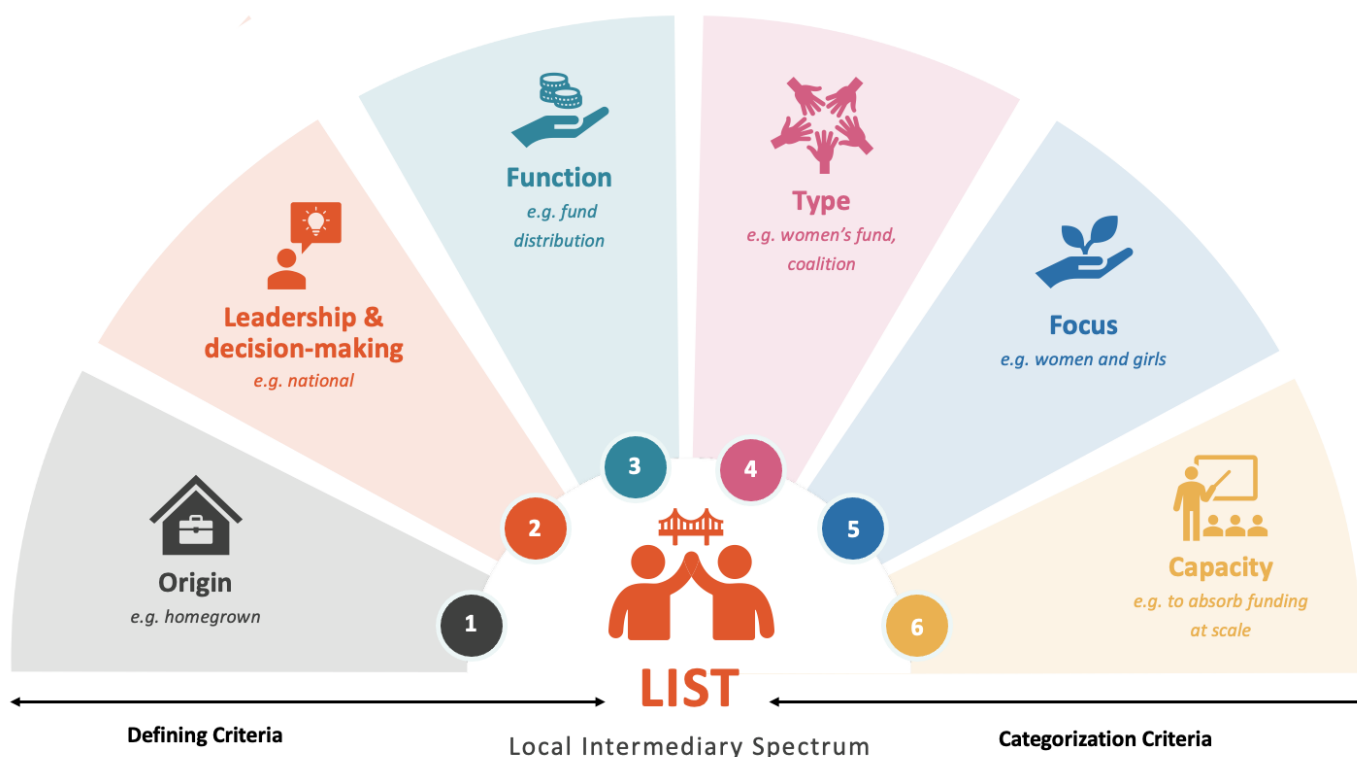
2.2. Defining and Categorizing Local Intermediaries

An initial step in the research was to agree a definition and criteria for identifying local intermediaries. For the purposes of this study, a local intermediary was defined as:

1. “**LOCAL**” if: i) their **origins** are in a Global South country; ii) their **headquarters** are based in the country they serve; and iii) their **leadership team** is based in the country they serve.
2. “**INTERMEDIARY**” if one of their prime **functions** is to redistribute funds to a wider ecosystem of local organizations in their country, and/or to support capacity strengthening of a wider ecosystem of local organizations.

To further categorize the range of entities that qualified as a local intermediary, the “**Local Intermediary Spectrum**” (**LIST**) was developed. The LIST acknowledges that categorizing intermediaries is not clearcut and that a range of different local intermediaries exist. Data on the characteristics were gathered through both online research (primarily organizational websites) and surveys.

Figure 2: The Local Intermediary Spectrum (LIST)



The LIST also includes a broad range of characteristics to help funding partners further identify the local intermediaries with which they may wish to explore a partnership. Whilst data were collected on these additional characteristics for all surveyed intermediaries, it was not always possible to find this information for all mapped intermediaries from entity websites.

Additional "Local" Characteristics

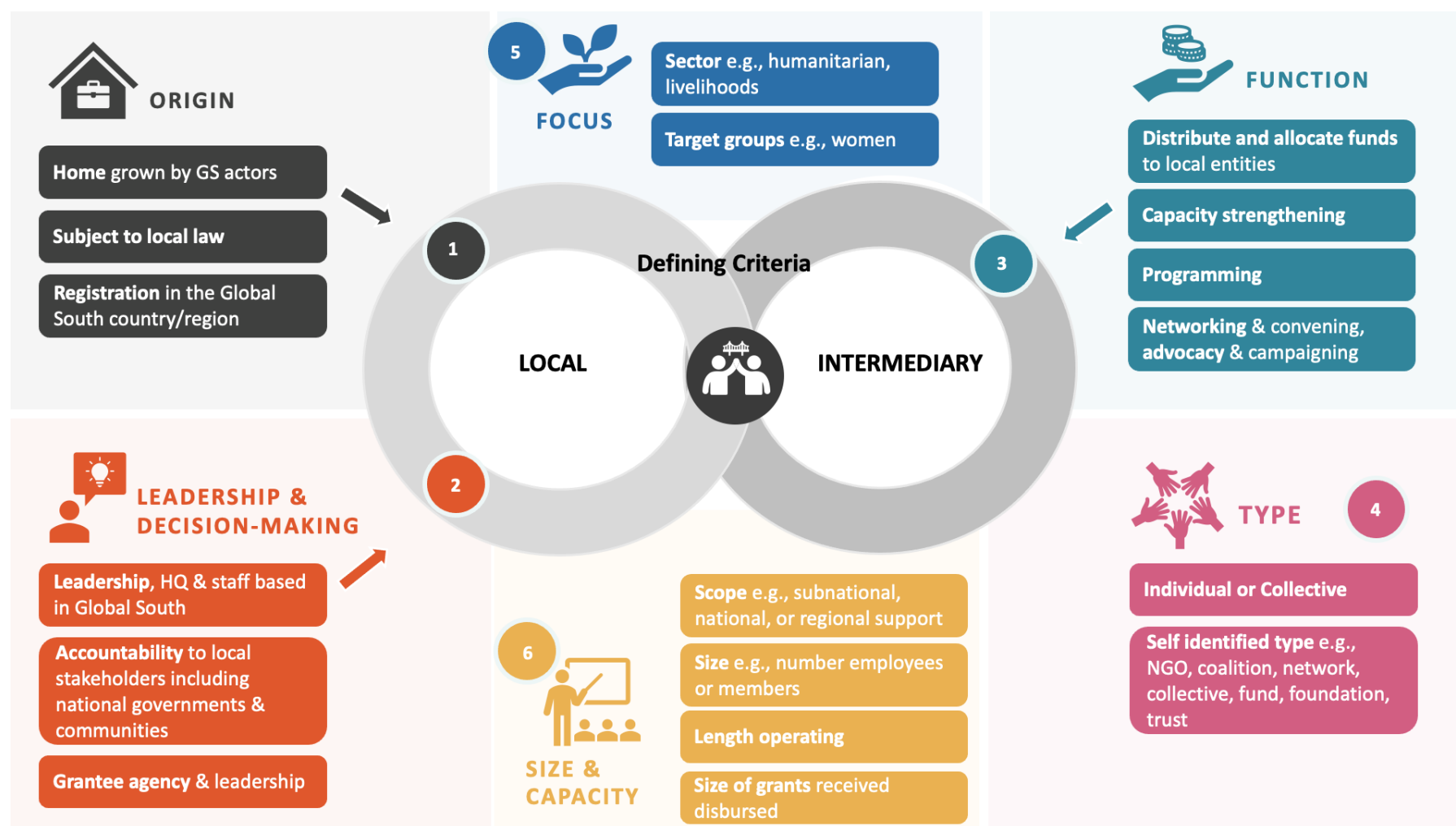
- **Origin:** normative requirements (e.g., subject to local laws), registration in the country/region of operation.
- **Leadership and Decision Making:** governance structures (e.g., that support locally led and inclusive decision-making); accountability (e.g., centered on supporting local stakeholders including national governments and communities); and grantee leadership/agency in decision making.

Additional "Intermediary" Characteristics:

- **Function:** beyond funding and capacity strengthening, to what degree are local intermediaries involved in programming, networking and convening, advocacy and campaigning.
- **Type of intermediary:** self-identification as either a fund, coalition, consortium, collective, network, foundation, trust, consultancy, NGO, or community-based organizations (CBO); and then as an individual entity or membership entity or collective.
- **Area of focus:**
 - *Sector* e.g., humanitarian, food security and livelihoods, education, health; and
 - *Target groups* e.g., women, girls, people with disabilities, youth, displaced.
- **Size and capacities:** scope of support (i.e., subnational, national, regional); size of individual entity (number of employees) or size of membership entity; length of operation; size of grants received, and size of disbursed grants.

The full local intermediary categorization characteristics are shared in *Figure 3*.

Figure 3: LIST: Local Intermediary Defining Criteria & Categorization Characteristics



2.3. Methodology

The study gathered data on the range of characteristics of local intermediaries through a global desk-based review and a survey shared with selected entities.

- **Desk-based global mapping.** A desk-based review using online searches for key words (e.g., “local NGOs,” “local CBOs,” “networks,” “consortiums,” “coalitions,” “pooled funds,” “foundations,” and “regranting”) was used to identify potential ‘local intermediaries’ in each country, using the OECD DAC list of [ODA eligible countries](#) in our regions of focus: **Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)**;² **Middle East and North Africa (MENA)**; **Asia Pacific (AP)**; and **Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)**. The desk-based mapping also drew upon existing literature and other online resources (e.g., blogs, reports, social media) to identify local intermediaries.³ All potential local intermediaries were reviewed against the “local” and “intermediary” definition criteria (see *Section 2.2*). From the large number of entities reviewed, **167 were included in a database** and mapped in more detail to categorize them using the additional categorization characteristics, depending on the availability of online information.
- **Country surveys.** Simultaneously, 100 entities identified through the desk review were selected (ensuring a spread across regions) to receive a survey to gather additional data not available from a desk review alone. The Share Trust developed an online questionnaire and shared it with these entities to collect information on entity type, registration status, entity activities and support, localization practices, policy and processes, the quantity and quality of funding distributed, management processes, and partnerships. **Responses were received from 37 entities** (a 37% response rate) between 14 November 2024 and 19 January 2025. Following a review of the survey findings, 9 entities were dropped from survey analysis given these did not meet the local intermediary criteria. Findings from only **28 local intermediaries from 11 countries are included** in the final survey analysis.⁴

The research was limited by the availability of online data. Not all potential local intermediaries have an online presence nor share sufficient online data to allow categorization. Whilst the survey attempted to capture additional data, and the response rate was good, given the short research period, it is recognized that this is not a representative sample, particularly as some entity survey responses had to be discounted from the findings as they did not meet the local intermediary definition. However, **this research is ongoing**. The aim is to build on this first stage of the mapping with more in-depth country deep dives.

² Further subdivided into East and Southern Africa; and West and Central Africa.

³ These resources included: the Oak Foundation (2024) studies on philanthropy ecosystems and intermediaries in [Africa](#) and [Latin America and the Caribbean](#); the TAI (2024) study on [Global South intermediaries](#).

⁴ Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Nigeria, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda, Zimbabwe, and Zambia.

3. Findings

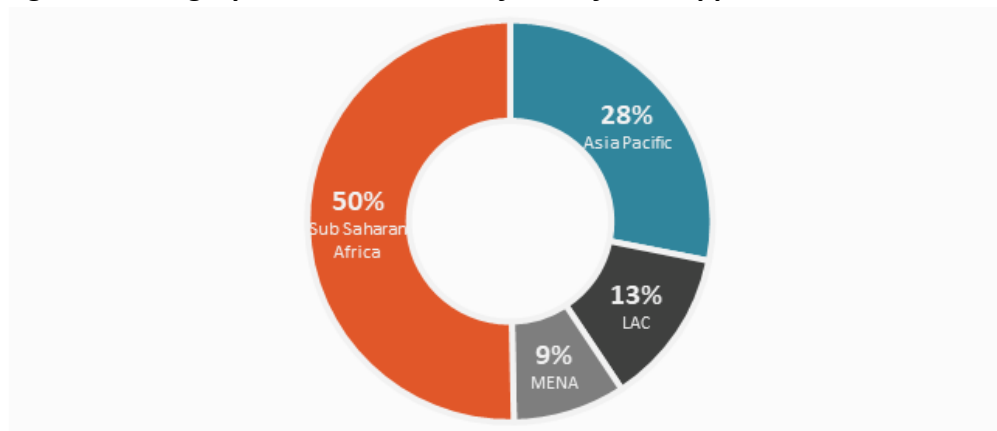
3.1. Origin

The global landscaping mapped 167 entities on the Local Intermediary Spectrum of which:

- **126 are categorized as “local intermediaries.”** These meet our working definition of having Global South origins and headquarters, local leadership (community, subnational, national), and having a funding and/or capacity sharing prime function.
- **23 are categorized as “regionally-led intermediaries.”** This is because they are founded locally (with origins in one country) but are regionally led and have leadership teams across multiple Global South countries. These entities generally also provide support (funding and capacity sharing) beyond the original country.
- **18 are categorized as locally-led international intermediaries.** These intermediaries are internationally grown but considered along the spectrum because they have strong local presence and leadership. For instance, these were intermediaries established by Global South diaspora or pooled funds that are transitioning to be registered as national organizations and operating independently at the national level (e.g., the Local Response Pooled Fund, Sudan).

Geographic distribution. Of the 167 intermediaries mapped to date, the majority (50%; 84) are in sub-Saharan Africa. The remaining are in Asia-Pacific (28%; 47), Latin America and the Caribbean (13%; 21), and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (9%; 15). This geographical distribution is not necessarily a true reflection of the geographical spread of entities, but a reflection of the Share Trust’s and Warande Advisory Centre’s existing networks used to identify local intermediaries.

Figure 4: Geographical Distribution of Identified Mapped Entities



Source: The Share Trust Global Landscaping

Most of the intermediaries mapped in the global landscaping have origins in Global South countries and are identified as “home-grown.”

- **Home-grown.** 89% (149) of the globally mapped intermediaries were categorized as “home-grown.”⁵
- **Internationally grown.** 11% (18) were classified as internationally grown given their origins outside of Global South countries; these include intermediaries supported by diaspora.

The country survey completed by 28 local intermediaries further unpacked origin criteria:

- **Registration.** 24 entities reported being formally registered in their respective countries of origin. However, 4 of the 28 participating entities have yet to formally register in the countries where they are working.

3.2. Leadership and Decision Making

The majority of the 126 local intermediaries (those that met the “local intermediary” definition criteria from the 167 mapped in the global landscaping) are national entities with headquarters based in their respective countries.

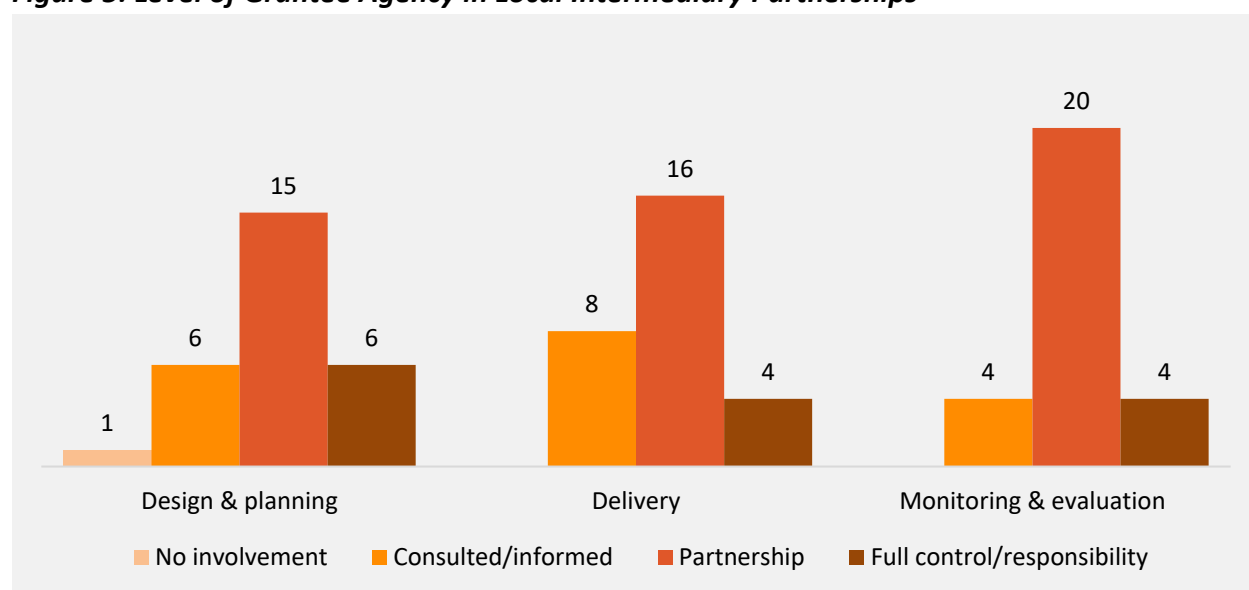
- **Local intermediary headquarters and leadership.** 86% (108) of the 126 local intermediaries are national entities operating in, and supporting initiatives across various contexts in one country, with national headquarters and leadership. Only 11% (14) are sub-national entities with leadership and headquarters in sub-national localities, and 3% (4) are categorized as community led.
- **Regional and international intermediary leadership.** Of the remaining 41 intermediaries mapped on the Local Intermediary Spectrum that do not meet the local intermediary definition, 23 are defined as **regional intermediaries**, as they have regional headquarters and leadership teams. A further 18 have primarily local or regional leadership but given their international origins (e.g., diaspora) some decision making is carried out in the Global North, and these are the ‘**locally led international intermediaries**.’

⁵ While it was not always possible to know from entity websites what the origin of an entity is, most include a narrative indicating how and when they were formed.

The survey completed by 28 local intermediaries further unpacked leadership and decision-making criteria:

- **Leadership composition.** All 28 surveyed local intermediaries are nationally, sub-nationally, or community led, and all reported that their executive leadership teams were composed exclusively of nationals (as per the definition for “local intermediary.”) In terms of gender, 17 had male executive directors, and 9 had female executive directors. The remaining local intermediaries did not respond to this question.
- **Governing board composition.** 23 of the surveyed local intermediaries reported that they had a governing board, with an average of 7 board members. All but one of these reported having at least one woman on their board, with an average of three women per entity. All local intermediaries indicated that their board members were from the Global South and primarily nationals from the country of origin.
- **Governing board representation.** Of the 23 surveyed local intermediaries with boards, 12 stated that their boards were representative of the communities they serve, including marginalized or minority groups, conflict-affected communities, and people living with disabilities. One local intermediary implemented a quota system to ensure representation of youth, youth with disabilities, and young women on their board.
- **Grantee leadership and agency.** 15 of the survey respondents shared that they adopt an equitable partnership approach when it comes to planning and designing initiatives that they fund. An equitable partnership approach involves incorporating grantees into formal systems and programming processes, with joint decision making. A partnership approach was also the most prevalent model for monitoring and evaluation, with 20 respondents. Meanwhile, 16 local intermediaries noted that the local initiatives they fund have full control and responsibility for their own projects in the design phase, with grantees taking the lead in decision-making and operating independently. When it comes to delivery, 8 reported that they maintain a consultative relationship with the local initiatives they fund. This relationship is achieved by sharing information through meetings, hearings, and surveys, as well as actively seeking feedback (see *Figure 5*).

Figure 5: Level of Grantee Agency in Local Intermediary Partnerships



Source: The Share Trust, Local Intermediary Survey

3.3. Function

Of the 167 intermediaries mapped during the global landscaping, 65% (109) have funding as a prime function, meaning that they on-grant or pass on funding to local initiatives or entities, whether using resources from private sources/philanthropy or regranting from other bilateral or multilateral donors. The remaining 35% (58) of intermediaries have capacity strengthening as a prime function.

- **Funding.** Regranting is rarely the sole function of the mapped intermediaries. Only 27 (16%) of the mapped intermediaries - primarily funds, foundations, and trusts - have regranting as their sole function.
- **Capacity sharing.** Many local intermediaries provide other types of support or partnership to local initiatives/entities, often in the form of technical support and capacity sharing. Whilst 9% (15) of the mapped intermediaries are solely focused on capacity strengthening, the remainder identify capacity sharing as a prime function amongst other functions. Surveyed local intermediaries with a focus on capacity sharing reported providing support *inter alia* on grant making and regranting, primarily to strengthen the capacities of local actors and NGOs to access donor funds. They achieve this by fostering environments where these entities can learn from one another through peer-to-peer training and workshops. These sessions cover areas such as how to apply for funding, how to report to donors, the systems (e.g., for financial, monitoring,

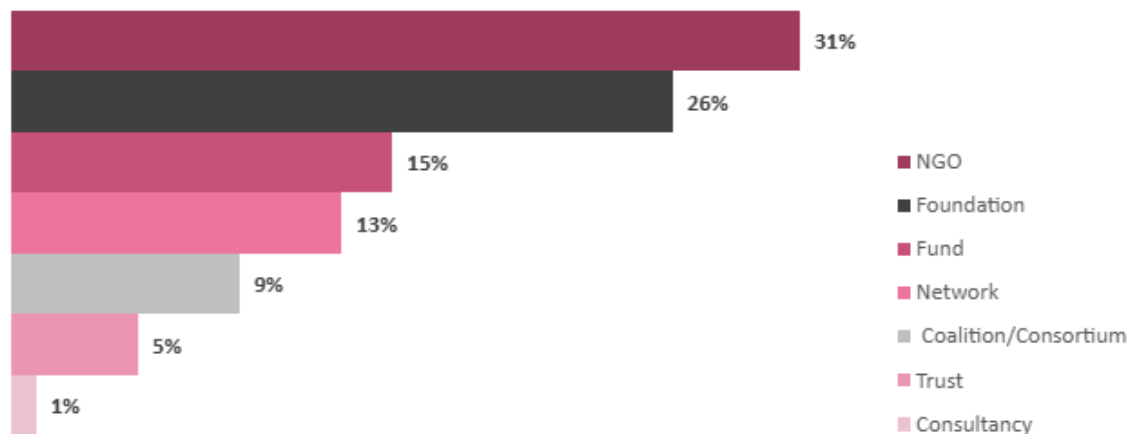
evaluation) that can be implemented to improve their entities, and how to connect with potential donors. These capacity-focused intermediaries are increasingly playing a significant role in advancing philanthropy in the Global South, encouraging local actors to move beyond traditional fundraising methods and to innovate.

3.4. Type

The largest proportion of the 167 entities mapped in the global landscaping self-identify on their websites as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (31%). The remainder self-identify as foundations (26%); funds, including pooled funds (15%); networks (13%); coalitions/consortia/collectives (9%); trusts (5%); and consultancies (1%). It is acknowledged that there is an overlap between types and further work is required to rationalize these “types” for broader categorization.

- **Individual versus collective intermediaries.** The global mapping highlights that 63% of mapped intermediaries were classified as “individual” organizations. 37% were mapped as groupings of multiple entities (i.e., networks, coalitions) highlighting the role that collectives can play as local intermediaries. CBOs did not significantly feature in the research, given that on the large part, these entities do not have websites; however, four community-led intermediaries were included and self-identified as collectives/coalitions.

Figure 6: Percentage of Intermediary Types from the Global Mapping



Source: The Share Trust, Local Intermediary Global Landscaping

3.5. Focus

From the global mapping, it is evident that many local intermediaries tend to have a specific thematic focus in the areas they fund. They secure funding for these focus areas before regranteeing the funds to local initiatives aligned with the same focus areas.

In relation to the 28 surveyed local intermediaries:

- **Target groups.** Overall, 21 survey respondents reported that their entity focuses on women and girls, 25 indicated a focus on children and youth, while 7 reported that refugees are their target population.
- **Programmatic focus.** 24 of the surveyed local intermediaries also have a programming function with a specific thematic focus. Of these, 2 identified protection as a programming theme, 2 work on human rights programs, while 24 work on food security, livelihoods and agriculture centered programs.

3.6. Size and Capacity

From the global mapping, the scope of some of the local intermediaries extends beyond their country of origin.

- **Scope of support.** Some local intermediaries (besides regional intermediaries) work outside their country of origin. In some cases, this includes supporting/connecting with diaspora in neighboring countries or collaborating on regional development.

It was only possible to systematically collect data on size and capacity from the local intermediaries surveyed. The survey findings highlight the following:

- **Length of operation.** Nearly half of the participating organizations (13 of 28) have been in existence for over 20 years, a further 6 between 10 and 20 years, 2 between 5 and 10 years, whilst 7 were established within the last 5 years.
- **Local intermediary size.** 10 of the 28 survey respondents reported having more than 40 staff members. A further 5 reported 30-40 staff members, 4 reported 20-30 staff, 6

reported having 10-20 staff, while only 3 local intermediaries reported having fewer than 5 staff members. 15 survey respondents whose individual organization was also part of a network or coalition, reported the number of members in these collectives. 9 reported that they had more than 15 members, 2 reported that they had 5 to 10 members, and 2 of the respondents reported that they had 10 to 15 members.

- **Grant size received.** 15 local intermediary respondents reported that their entity had received a grant of USD 500,000 or more within the last 5 years. Whilst the data did not systematically unpack the largest grants absorbed by the local intermediaries, total budgets reported by several local intermediaries were substantive (i.e., up to USD 8 million). This is an area that will need further interrogation, given the importance of donor preference for a single contracting vehicle and/or disbursing high volumes of funding rapidly.
- **Grant size given.** Of the 16 local intermediary survey respondents who regrant, 2 provide grants exceeding USD 50,000; 2 reported providing grants between USD 21,000 to 50,000; 5 reported distributing grants ranging from USD 11,000 to 20,000; 2 provide grants between USD 4,000 to 10,000; and 4 provide grants between USD 1,000 to 3,000.⁶ Of these, 4 reported disbursing grants once a year, one distributes grants twice a year, 5 disburse three or more times annually, and 1 respondent did not respond.
- **Funding source.** 14 of the local intermediary survey respondents reported raising funds through a combination of domestic and international sources, while 10 indicated that they raised funds solely from international sources. The remaining 4 reported that their local intermediary sourced funds from both regional and international sources. When asked about their specific sources of funding, 8 of the survey respondents reported that their local intermediary received funds from government, while 13 reported that their local intermediary obtained some of their funds from private philanthropy, and 3 reported that they received some of their funds from membership fees.
- **Grant making processes.**
 - **Calls for proposal.** 14 of the survey respondents reported that they use thematically focused calls for proposals to allocate funding to local entities and initiatives. Additionally, 10 indicated that they use open calls for proposals, while 4 reported using donor-defined calls for proposals.

⁶ One respondent did not share a response.

- **Application process.** 19 survey respondents reported that their local intermediaries had implemented mechanisms to streamline and simplify grant application processes for grantees. Some respondents noted that grant application materials were developed in local languages, better enabling staff in grassroots organizations to read the calls for proposals and respond appropriately. Others reported that grants for local organizations are designed in consultation with those organizations. This collaborative approach allows grassroots organizations to provide input on the sectors they wish to focus on, while intermediaries negotiate with donors to address the organizations' specific requests.
- **Risk management and compliance.** 9 of the survey respondents noted that risk management and compliance processes in grant applications have been significantly simplified. Only 1 reported making no effort to streamline these processes.
- **Overhead pass through.** 11 of the survey respondents reported that they have an equitable policy regarding the proportion of overhead funding passed on when regranting to local initiatives from other funders. These policies varied among the 11 intermediaries that cited having a policy. Some stated that if the work is equally divided, the overhead is shared proportionately, whereas if the work is entirely handled by local entities, the full overhead is allocated to them. Another local intermediary reported that its overhead allocation is based on government regulations, which stipulate 20% for overhead costs and 80% for program costs. Of the 10 respondents who reported that their entity had no policy on the proportion of overhead funding passed on when regranting to local initiatives, 5 noted that only part of the overhead allocation from funders is fully passed on to their grantees in their grant agreements.

4. Conclusions & Next Steps

The findings presented above represent a first step towards understanding the spectrum of intermediaries that can help channel funding and services to ecosystems of local actors.

However, the study was not representative nor comprehensive, and several areas of work have been identified that can build on these findings.

- **Expand this global landscaping.** This could include expanding to regions not covered in depth in this research (i.e., Latin American and the Caribbean, the Pacific), updating the LIST criteria to ensure all local intermediary characteristics are mapped, as well as expanding the local intermediary mapping by carrying out deep dive landscaping in specific countries and developing a categorization or grouping of the range of intermediaries across the spectrum.
- **Carry out a more detailed assessment of larger local intermediaries.** This exercise could include updating the survey and carrying out targeted interviews to assess more deeply the absorptive capacity of local intermediaries and assessing the pros and cons of different models, unpacking the respective roles of local, regional, and international intermediaries alongside collecting a compendium of case studies on different intermediary models.

A critical next step will be to convene, mobilize and network key stakeholders to expand the global landscaping and conduct country deep dives; categorize the range of intermediaries and assess the pros and cons of viable models able to absorb large funding partner grants; unpack the respective roles of local, regional, and international intermediaries; and ensure funding partners are able to access information on the spectrum of intermediaries to foster connections.

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