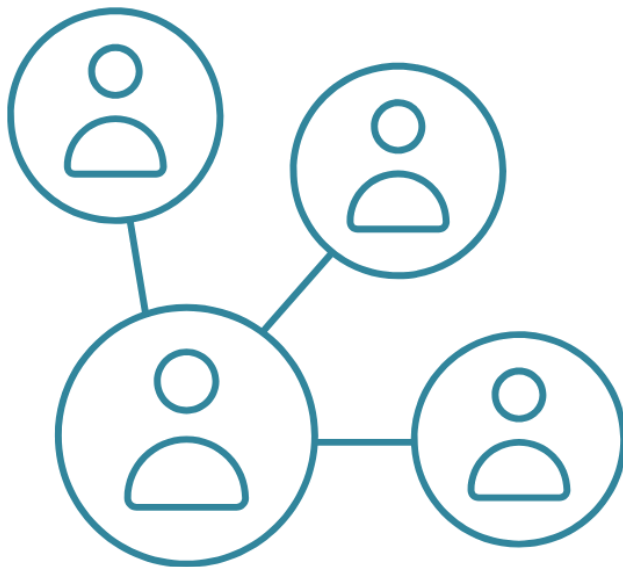


SEPTEMBER 2026

COUNTRY REPORT

INTERMEDIARY MODELS FOR LOCALLY LED ACTION

UGANDA





Intermediaries in the room: Ugandan NGO leaders discuss their comparative advantages in delivering programming for refugee and host communities in Uganda.

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List of Acronyms

LNGO	-	Local Non-governmental organization
INGO	-	International Non-Governmental Organization
UN	-	United Nations
UNHCR	-	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	-	United Nations Children's Fund
RLO	-	Refugee Lead Organization
FCDO	-	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
USAID	-	United States Agency for International Development
MEL	-	Monitoring Evaluation and Learning
CBO	-	Community Based Organization
CSO	-	Civil Society Organization
QuAM	-	Quality Assurance Mechanism
VAT	-	Value Added Tax
YARID	-	Young African refugees for Integral Development
AYAN	-	African Youth Action Network
RELON	-	Refugee-Led Organization Network in Uganda
AWYAD	-	African Women and Youth Action for Development
CECI	-	Community Empowerment for Creative Innovation
URCS	-	Uganda Red Cross Society
SHGs	-	Self-Help Groups
WASH	-	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
UCC	-	Uganda Cash Consortium
TPO	-	Transcultural Psychosocial Organization
DRC	-	Danish Refugee Council
KIIs	-	Key Informant Interviews

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	6
Context.....	6
Landscape	6
Key Issues.....	7
Comparative Advantages.....	7
Barriers to Locally Led Action	9
Recommendations	10
1. Introduction	12
2. Methodology	13
2.1. Mapping of intermediary models	13
2.2. Intermediary Convenings.....	14
3. Intermediary Models	15
3.1. Local and Regional Intermediaries	15
3.2. International Intermediaries	18
4. Comparative Advantages.....	21
4.1. Priorities for shifting key functions within the system.....	23
4.2. Key barriers/enablers	26
5. Action Points.....	28

Executive Summary

Context

Uganda is Africa’s largest refugee host. By April 2026, it hosted approximately 2 million refugees and asylum seekers, primarily from South Sudan, the DRC, and Sudan. Ongoing instability continues to drive new arrivals due to Uganda’s proximity and for its relatively permissible and hospitable approach to refugees. Although Uganda’s progressive refugee policy protects rights such as access to land, education, healthcare, livelihoods, and freedom of movement, the protracted reality of displacement challenges national and local systems. Refugee-hosting districts face escalating demand across education, healthcare, water and sanitation (WASH), protection services, natural resources, and livelihoods, and have limited opportunities for economic self-reliance and require external support.

This report focuses specifically on how intermediary organizations—entities that manage and pass-through donor funding to local and national actors—support a refugee-serving and refugee-led response. An emphasis on refugee-led response sits within a broader localization conversation in which donors have committed to shifting funding and decision-making power to local and national actors—even as global aid budgets shrink. Intermediary organizations play a central role in determining how much of that shift materializes in practice.

Landscape

In Uganda, refugee-led organizations and networks, alongside a small number of larger Ugandan intermediaries, operate within a system heavily structured around UN agencies and INGOs. This report mapped nine relatively large local intermediaries and two regional intermediaries as well as five international intermediaries with intentional efforts to shift power and funding to local actors. Because these organizations are not fully representative of the entire landscape of intermediary organizations supporting refugees in Uganda, the findings should be read as illustrative of, rather than generalizable across, the sector. However, an overarching finding was that the local intermediary ecosystem in Uganda remains thin at scale. Only two organizations, URCS (US\$21M operating budget) and TPO-Uganda (US\$8M), currently absorb funding at a level comparable to international intermediaries.

In addition to mapping intermediaries, the Share Trust implemented a “Separation of Functions” analysis through three in-person convenings of local and regional intermediaries, international intermediaries, and UN agencies. Each group was asked to reflect on the comparative advantages of local, international, and UN actors in delivering refugee programming, and identify which functions each group could, should, or is likely to lead both now and over time. Notably, there was a high

degree of convergence across the three groups: local, international, and UN participants arrived at largely similar views on where comparative advantages lie and which functions should shift toward local leadership.

Key Issues

Local refugee-led organizations remain heavily dependent on regional and international intermediaries for funding access, capacity building, and systems strengthening. While all nine local and regional intermediaries act as intermediaries themselves, managing grants to a wider ecosystem of refugee-led and refugee-serving organizations, donor requirements often present a structural barrier to receiving direct donor funding. Obstacles include audits set to international standards, cash-based (rather than in-kind) cost-share requirements, exhaustive expense documentation, minimum annual budget thresholds that exceed most local operating budgets, mandated accounting systems, and reporting burdens designed around INGO capacity. These barriers are compounded by limited donor investment in overhead, staffing, and organizational development.

Respondents also highlighted that localization should not be treated as a cost-saving exercise. Several intermediaries cautioned donors against expecting cheaper delivery from local actors, given the real costs of building out governance, fundraising, and reporting capacity. Flexible, longer-term funding was identified as the more consequential lever: where donors already offer adaptable reporting and flexible use of funds, local organizations described being able to strengthen systems and diversify their funding base.

Salary parity was raised as a further constraint. Local organizations' inability to compete with international pay scales limits their ability to retain staff with specialized compliance, finance, and MEL skills, pushing many organizations to rely more on generalist staff or short-term consultants.

In the comparative advantages exercise, local, international, and UN participants independently converged on the same conclusion. That functions like technical capacity-building, knowledge generation, and coordination or management of programming resources sit with international actors mainly because of historical donor trust and existing coordination structures, not because local actors are inherently less capable of leading them. Shifting these functions, participants agreed, depends on two conditions: donors building trust directly with local actors, and deliberate investment in a broader ecosystem of intermediaries able to absorb larger grants.

Comparative Advantages

Comparative Advantages of Local Actors

Function	Comparative Advantage
Program design	Contextual knowledge and needs identification, grounded in deep understanding of local cultural, social, and political dynamics
	Long-term presence and community trust, enabling strong relationships and networks with communities and effective community mobilization
Programmatic delivery	Last-mile delivery in remote, hard-to-reach, or high-risk areas, including beneficiary identification, registration, and distribution during acute emergencies
	Faster response and project start-up, due to existing community embeddedness
	Program sustainability through continued geographic presence beyond short-term project cycles (where resourced to do so)
Risk sharing and management	Early identification of emerging risks, tensions, or vulnerabilities from proximity to communities, enabling adaptive programming
Advocacy and Representation	Gathering and channeling community feedback into program adjustments and policy discussions, with particular legitimacy in advocacy to local and national government
	Establishing feedback mechanisms with international partners to improve partnership practices and share in decision-making

Community trust and contextual knowledge were the most consistently cited comparative advantages of local actors, and notably, all three groups of actors that participated in the Separation of Functions workshops shared this view. International intermediaries described local organizations' long-standing relationships with community leaders and grassroots groups as enabling faster mobilization and more accurate program design than would otherwise be possible. One local intermediary described its role not as absorbing large-scale funding but as coordinating, representing, and strengthening an ecosystem of refugee-led organizations.

Comparative Advantages of International Actors

Function	Comparative Advantage
Fundraising	Ability to mobilize resources from major donors and philanthropic actors, supported by offices and networks in major global policy centers
Program design	Access to large-scale research, evaluations, and global datasets, supporting evidence-based program design and learning
	Co-creating programs and transition plans with local partners including capacity-strengthening and risk-mitigation planning
Fund management	Strengthening local organizations' governance, financial management, safeguarding, MEAL and compliance systems over time
	Established systems for donor reporting, financial accountability, and procurement that meet international compliance standards
	Backend and compliance support to local partners, including coordinating international standards, risk management, and financial systems
Programmatic delivery	Time-bound transition plans that progressively shift implementation responsibility to local partners while maintaining program continuity
Risk Sharing and Management	Institutional systems, financial reserves, and insurance mechanisms that allow INGOs to absorb operational, financial, or reputational risks donors may be reluctant to place on local actors

	Perceived neutrality relative to local actors (who may be shaped by local political or social dynamics) or UN agencies (formal government relationships), facilitating engagement across stakeholders
Advocacy and Representation	Presence in global policy centers enabling participation in development and humanitarian policy and funding debates

International intermediaries' comparative advantage centered on their capacity to absorb and manage risk at scale in ways donors are often unwilling to place directly with local actors. This was closely tied to their compliance infrastructure: donors continue to hold INGOs contractually accountable for fiduciary oversight even where implementation is locally led, which participants across all three groups agreed keeps core financial management functions concentrated internationally for now. At the same time, several INGOs pointed to concrete examples of using this position to build toward more devolved models rather than to retain control indefinitely. Examples of "mentorship-to-leadership" roadmaps and resourced transition and closeout plans were cited as ways international intermediaries use their role to plan deliberately for its own reduction over time.

Comparative Advantages of UN agencies

Function	Comparative Advantage
Fundraising	Ability to mobilize resources from multiple governments and international financing mechanisms to fund large programs across multiple countries
Program design	Drawing on global knowledge and cross-country learning to inform program design, improve quality, and support adaptation of proven approaches to local contexts
Fund Management	Government-to-government donor trust. As intergovernmental institutions, UN agencies are trusted by many donors to manage large-scale funding
Programmatic delivery	Time-bound transition plans that progressively shift implementation responsibility to local partners while maintaining program continuity Leading regional and global negotiations, cross-border diplomatic engagement, and coordination with other actors where global presence and influence are required System-level coordination and resource management, including mobilizing and pooling donor funding, allocating resources across sectors and implementing partners, and coordinating technical expertise
Risk Sharing and Management	Described as the gold standard for security management and operating in high-risk environments
Advocacy and Representation	High-level diplomatic access and legitimacy enabling direct engagement with governments and international actors on sensitive political, humanitarian, and security issues Advocacy to national government, particularly on refugee resettlement and political rights Global policy development. Central role in developing international frameworks, policies, and technical standards that guide humanitarian and development response globally Leading global coordination among governments, NGOs, and donors through global coordination mechanisms and clusters

UN agencies' comparative advantage rests principally on the legitimacy and trust conferred by their intergovernmental status. Donors continue to entrust them with large-scale funding management and engage with them on political and security matters not always available to NGOs. The UN also retains special operational privileges. The UN leads most refugee response procurement in Uganda because it holds a value added tax (VAT) waiver. Participants across all three consultation groups agreed the UN could use its position and comparative advantages to greater effect. Both local actors and UNHCR pointed to a need for greater UN advocacy on refugee resettlement and rights,

with some suggesting the VAT-linked procurement role itself could eventually shift toward national organizations.

Barriers to Locally Led Action

Barrier	Description	Dimension of Locally Led Action
Operational and Organizational		
Salary parity gap	Local organizations cannot compete with international pay scales, limiting their ability to attract and retain staff with specialized compliance, finance, and MEL skills; many rely on generalist staff or short-term consultants, contributing to persistent compliance gaps.	Local actor capacity
Thin ecosystem of large-scale local intermediaries	Only two local/regional organizations (URCS and TPO-Uganda) currently operate at a scale able to absorb large donor funding directly, limiting the pool of local actors ready for greater direct funding and decision-making roles.	Funding local actors
Communication and Coordination		
Donor trust concentrated in UN/INGOs	Donor confidence and established relationships remain concentrated with international actors; trust was described as building only when donors engage local actors directly, including in donor meetings	Local decision making
Donor Policy and Practice on Partner Selection		
Complex donor compliance requirements	Audits set to international standards, cash-based cost-share requirements, exhaustive expense documentation, minimum budget thresholds exceeding most local operating budgets, mandated accounting systems, and reporting burdens designed around INGO capacity all limit local organizations' ability to access funding directly.	Funding local actors
Uncertainty over the pathway to direct funding	Local intermediaries sometimes receive capacity strengthening around compliance to manage direct donor funding without clarity on whether donors are willing to fund them that way; some interviewees suggested compliance-heavy functions may be better suited to international actors.	Local decision making
Risk of power concentrating in a few large national intermediaries	Without deliberate investment in a more diverse ecosystem, gains in direct local funding risk concentrating decision-making and resources in one or two dominant national intermediaries — a concern LINGOs raised directly	Local decision making
Donor Policy and Practice on Project Design and Management		
Insufficient overhead and cost coverage	Limited donor investment in overhead, staffing, and organizational development compounds compliance barriers, leaving local actors under-resourced to meet the very requirements donors impose	Funding local actors
Localization misunderstood as a cost-saving exercise	Donors sometimes expect cheaper delivery from local actors without accounting for the real cost of building governance, fundraising, and reporting capacity	Funding local actors
Capacity strengthening treated as short-term training	Capacity strengthening is often delivered as isolated training rather than sustained, resourced investment (mentoring, secondment, peer exchange), and is not consistently tied to accountability for improved local performance.	Local actor capacity

Recommendations

A note on these recommendations:

Localization is not a property of actor type. It is a property of practice, at every level of the system. The measure of whether localization is being achieved is not whether a donor funds an INGO or a local actor. It is whether, at the end of that chain, the people most affected by the response are genuinely shaping it. This means the question "are you working with local partners?" is the wrong question. **The right question is whether the partners you work with, at every level, are genuinely connected to and accountable to the communities they serve, and whether the way you work**

with them actively supports that accountability rather than undermining it.

For Donors

- **Invest in strengthening the local intermediary ecosystem**, ensuring capacity-strengthening support is matched with funding for the systems needed to sustain it, such as technology and software.
- **Fund overhead costs for smaller local actors**, recognizing these as essential rather than discretionary expenses.
- **Provide dedicated funding to international intermediaries for the backend support** they are asked to deliver, including duty of care, technical capacity transfer, and international fundraising on behalf of local partners.
- **Embed clear expectations for locally led action within partnership agreements** with international actors, selecting partners in part on their ability to devolve leadership, funding co-creation processes, and holding them accountable for progressively transitioning responsibility to local organizations.
- **Pursue partnerships with private philanthropy to complement bilateral funding**, given the constraints government donors face in how and what they can fund.
- **Establish a dedicated fund offering flexible, accessible financing to smaller local organizations** and mutual aid networks through simplified processes.
- **Hold INGO and UN partners accountable against a defined set of localization metrics**, including full passthrough of overheads, incorporation of local systems and practices, demand-driven capacity strengthening, meaningful co-creation, functioning local feedback mechanisms, and clear handover planning.
- **Require greater budget transparency from UN agencies**, including visibility into overheads, management fees, sub-granting arrangements, and the proportion of funding ultimately reaching local and national actors.

For UN Agencies

- **Play a more substantial advocacy role in shaping Government of Uganda policy on refugee resettlement** and consider whether functions such as the VAT-waiver-linked procurement role could shift toward national organizations over time.

Cross-Cutting Recommendations

- **Donors, UN agencies, and INGOs should jointly pre-identify NGOs that meet agreed standards on governance**, financial management, safeguarding, and program delivery, enabling faster and more consistent engagement while reducing duplicative due diligence.
- **A subset of donors or INGOs should pilot a shared due diligence passporting system**, drawing on existing models such as Uganda's Quality Assurance Mechanism (QuAM).

1. Introduction

The last year has seen a major contraction in development and humanitarian assistance. Even with fewer resources, however, many donors have redoubled their commitments to locally led development and humanitarian assistance, seeking to shift more funding and decision-making power to local and national actors. Part of this “localization” conversation revolves around intermediary organizations – organizations that manage donor funding, passing aid resources to other, often smaller, local and national organizations, institutions, or communities. Many funders are seeking to understand (a) how they can channel more funding through local intermediaries and (b) how they can partner with international intermediaries in ways that promote equitable partnerships with local actors and devolve more resources and decision-making power to local levels.

This report on intermediary models in Uganda is part of a multi-country body of research that seeks to:

- Map the landscape of local organizations that are currently playing an intermediary role—or those that could potentially play such a role.
- Highlight international intermediary models that emphasize local leadership and resourcing.
- Identify steps donors can take to create the incentives and expectations for intermediary models to devolve more resources and decision-making power to local levels; and
- Understand the relative strengths of different local and international intermediary models to fulfil different functions, including devolving decision making, managing donor compliance, reaching target populations, and achieving outcomes.

This report on intermediary models for locally led action in Uganda focuses on refugee-serving and refugee-led Organizations

- Through a combination of a mapping exercise, key informant interviews, and targeted convenings, this report contributes to an evidence base of Ugandan organizations with strong potential to become bilateral grantees. The research also highlights the types of capacity support and system-level inputs that can strengthen these organizations’ role in delivering cost-efficient, inclusive, and locally led assistance to refugees in Uganda and their host communities.



In Uganda, refugee-led networks such as RELON Uganda play a distinct intermediary role by aggregating, representing, and strengthening diverse refugee-led Organizations. Unlike traditional intermediaries, these networks operate as ecosystem actors - bridging grassroots Organizations with national, regional, and global policy and funding spaces while shaping localisation agendas from within refugee communities.

Source: Feedback from the ED, RELON

2. Methodology

The methodology consisted of: (1) a **mapping** of intermediary models supporting locally led response **in Uganda**, including a **survey** and **key informant interviews** with Ugandan intermediaries and international intermediaries, and (3) a series of **intermediary group convenings** to unpack the comparative advantages of different actors in delivering refugee response using a “Separation of Functions” framework.

2.1. Mapping of intermediary models supporting locally led response in Uganda

The mapping focused on (1) local and regional intermediaries that (a) have regranting as a main function; and (b) are able to help absorb and channel larger scale funding streams (grants greater than \$2m) to ecosystems of local actors; and (2) international intermediaries that are intentionally shifting resources and decision making power to local levels to better partnerships to support Ugandan- and/or refugee-led response.

The mapping process began with a desk-based review of existing Refugee-Led Organizations (RLOs) and intermediaries in Uganda, conducted through web searches. The Share Trust was able to map further relevant organizations based on the recommendations targeted refugee supporting organizations made of other actors working in this space. The aim was to identify who is doing what, where, and how. In total, we identified ¹12, two regional², and eleven international intermediaries engaged in supporting refugee response. This review is not fully comprehensive of all intermediaries supporting refugees in Uganda and host communities, though it does capture most of those seen to be prominent in this area.

The mapping process entailed a combination of surveys and KIIs to gather data on each of these organizations:

- A **survey** was distributed to the eleven local and two regional intermediaries. It asked about a range of key characteristics such as geographic footprint, funders, programmatic focus, leadership, functions, and existing capacities. Eight local intermediaries and one regional organization responded.
- In addition, **KIIs** were used to better understand each intermediary's approach to locally led action, their readiness to implement, capacity gaps, and risk profiles. Four local (YARID, AYAN, TPO-Uganda, and AWYAD) and one regional intermediary (Cohere Charity) opted in to participate.

¹ URCS, AYAN, YARID, TPO-Uganda, I-Profile, RELON, AWYAD, CECI, Hanger Fighters Uganda, AfriChild, and ANCHOR

² Oxfam in Uganda, CARE International Uganda, AVSI, Village Enterprise, Relevant Ventures, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Save the Children Uganda, Lutheran World Federation (LWF), Mercy Corps, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC Uganda) and, Action Against Hunger (Uganda).

- Five international intermediaries³ were selected for KIIs based on our learning about their distinctive approaches to shift in power and funding within their programmatic models. For this set of organizations, KIIs were used to better understand how they employed “better partnership” practices with local grantees/sub partners and used innovative funding models to bridge large-scale donor financing with grassroots implementation.

2.2. Intermediary Convenings

The second phase of research used three in-person convenings of (1) local and regional intermediaries, (2) international intermediaries, and (3) UN agencies. During these convenings, The Share Trust employed a “Separation of Functions” analysis to explore each group’s perceptions of: (1) the comparative advantages of each group of actors’ comparative advantages in delivering refugee programming; (2) the functions that each group of actors could or should lead now; (3) the functions that each group is expected to gradually lead in the future; and (4) a discussion of the barriers and enablers to making such shifts possible in practice.

³ Relevant Ventures, Village Enterprise, Mercy Corps, AVSI and DRC

3. Intermediary Models

3.1. Local and Regional Intermediaries

PROFILE: The intermediaries mapped vary in age and origin, with URCS, established in 1964, standing out as the oldest. Others, such as CECI and RELON, are much younger, in the 6–10-year range. All are locally founded and fully registered.

LEADERSHIP: The leadership of intermediaries is predominantly African, with Ugandan, or nationals from neighbouring countries (South Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo) at the helm. Most leadership teams are based in Uganda.

FUNCTION: While all nine intermediaries do regrant funds to local actors, the functions of these intermediaries go beyond re-granting. They also emphasize transferring decision-making power and agency to grassroots actors. COHERE Charity and RELON regrant funds as a main function without direct programming. YARID, AYAN, URCS, I-Profile, CECI, and AWYAD combine re-granting with direct programming such as capacity strengthening, advocacy and campaigning, and resource mobilization and fundraising. AYAN also identified fiscal sponsorship as one of its key functions.

- ❖ **3/9 intermediaries** (COHERE Charity, CECI and RELON) primarily raise funding from international sources, while the remaining 6/9 (TPO-Uganda, YARID, AYAN, I-Profile, AWYAD and URCS) raise funding from a combination of domestic and international sources.
- ❖ **TPO-Uganda, AWYAD, AYAN and URCS** receive funding from bilateral government donors through intermediaries.



“RELON operates as a network intermediary, distinct from traditional grant-managing Organizations. Its primary value lies in coordinating, representation, advocating, and strengthening an ecosystem of refugee-led Organizations, rather than directly absorbing large-scale funding.”

Source: Feedback from the ED, RELON

FOCUS: The surveyed intermediaries collectively work across a broad range of sectors, with particularly engagement in development programming. All nine organizations reported working **in development sectors, most notably education and livelihoods/economic development**, each sector supported by eight organizations (89%).

At the same time, seven organizations (78%) characterized at least part of their work as humanitarian response, indicating an overlap between humanitarian and development programming. All organizations engaged in humanitarian response also reported working across multiple development sectors, indicating that interventions such as **food security, WASH, and climate change** are often delivered within broader crisis-response frameworks. In contrast, only

two organizations (22%) reported exclusively development-focused programming (*Refer to annex 2 for details*)

Intermediaries fund a diverse group of grantees, with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and Self-Help Groups (SHGs) being the most common recipients. URCS was distinct in that it uniquely funds national and regional NGOs.

CAPACITY: The number of employees per intermediary varies from 11-20 to over 100, with YARID and URCS having the largest teams (100+). Notably, 6 out of 9 organizations - including TPO-Uganda, COHERE Charity, CECI, RELON, YARID, and AYAN - have completed the U.S. Equivalency Determination process, which is necessary for accessing US foundation support.

Table 1 maps key characteristics that indicate local intermediaries that have the capacity to take on larger scale funding – namely their overall budget, whether they have US equivalency determination,⁴ and whether they have previously received bilateral funding indirectly through intermediaries.

There are few “large scale” Ugandan or regional intermediaries. There are only two local/regional intermediaries with a budget over around US\$2M, including the URCS, with an operating budget of US\$21M and TPO-Uganda with an operating budget of US\$8M.

Table 1: Capacity Indicators, Local Intermediaries

Local/Regional Organization	Budget (USD m)	Receives bilateral funding (indirect -via intermediaries)	Equivalency Determination
URCS	\$21.0	√	X
TPO Uganda	\$8.0	√	√
YARID	\$2.3	X	√
AYAN	\$2.1	√	√
COHERE Charity	\$2.0	X	√
AWYAD	\$1.0	√	X
RELON	\$0.6	X	√
CECI	\$0.3	X	√
I-Profile Foundation	\$0.1	X	X

⁴ Equivalency Determination (ED) is a process used by donors especially foundations to confirm that a non-profit Organization in another country is legally and functionally equivalent to a recognised charity (for example, a U.S. public charity), even if it isn't registered in that donor's country

The Share Trust conducted in depth interviews with the five organizations whose level of fund absorption was above \$1m: TPO-Uganda, AYAN, COHERE, YARID, and AWYAD. The objective of these interviews was to better understand the enablers and constraints to local intermediaries having greater power and funding.

Local RLOs depend heavily on regional and international intermediaries for access to funding, capacity building, and systems strengthening. Interviewees noted that rigid donor requirements- especially from UN agencies and some government-funded programs-limit grassroots Organizations' ability to directly access funding. Examples of donor requirements that pose barriers for smaller local actors include mandatory audits that meet international level standards; cost sharing requirements especially when donors require monetary vs in-kind cost share contributions; the need for documentation for every expense (receipts, vouchers, timesheets); minimum annual budget requirements which are larger than most local organization operating budgets; requirements for specific accounting systems/software; and heavy reporting burdens including required use of complex reporting platforms or templates designed for INGOs. These barriers are exacerbated by limited investment in overhead coverage, staffing, and Organizational development, that could support an organization's ability to better meet some of the requirements.



Regional intermediaries like COHERE focus almost entirely on supporting RLOs, including small informal groups that would otherwise be excluded from donor systems. COHERE often form long-term partnerships with RLOs (up to nine years), a factor that helps grow meaningful participation of RLOs in the aid ecosystem.

Source: KII with Cohere team



Evidence from other contexts suggests that intermediaries operating through **distributional models** where funding and decision-making are channelled through networks of local actors, may have greater potential to scale compared to primarily operational models. However, this evidence is context-specific and should be interpreted with caution when considering its applicability to Uganda.

Source: TST Caritas Ukraine Case study



Core to AYAN's approaches is a number of power-shifting practices, such as participatory decision-making, community-led business selection, and co-designed loan repayment schedules, but these approaches remain informal and are not yet captured in written policies. Capacity strengthening of such actors in formalising and documenting these practices would help institutionalise a locally led approach and strengthen accountability for consistent implementation across its program and could offer approaches that other local actors could uptake to ensure ongoing decentralization of power and funding to downstream partners.

Source: KII with ED, AYAN

Flexible, long-term funding significantly improves local partners' ability to grow and remain competitive. Intermediaries like COHERE, AYAN and AWYAD noted that when donors offer flexible reporting and adaptable use of funds, local Organizations have the opportunity to improve systems,

innovate, and access new funding streams. This promotes the value of long-term investment in capabilities rather than a sole focus on projectized funding.

Localisation should not be considered a cost saving exercise. Various responses from intermediaries such as DRC, COHERE, TPO-Uganda and AYAN indicated that donors should not expect cheaper delivery by local actors due to the cost of investments required to strengthen their organizational and functional capacities, for example for fundraising, governance, reporting and more.



In 2020, TPO-Uganda received funding from USAID to implement the Keeping Children Health and Safe initiative. Through this initiative, TPO Uganda strengthened the capacity of key implementing partners, including REPSSI, Masaka Diocese, AVSI and ACCORD while enhancing the capacity of district local governments to effectively deliver on their mandate including child protection and health services.

Source: Feedback from Head of Programs – TPO-Uganda.

In addition, lack of salary parity between local and international organizations poses a barrier to successful capacity strengthening. Lower salary bands limit local/national organizations' ability to attract and retain staff with specialized skills in compliance, finance, governance, and MEL. Instead, many national and local organizations over-rely on overstretched generalist staff or short-term consultants, contributing to persistent compliance gaps.

The extent to which local intermediaries can and/or want to directly receive international funding should not be assumed. Local intermediaries raised several key points in this regard. First, organizations are often "capacitated" to take on direct donor funding without a sense of whether donors will be willing/able to fund that type of organization directly, even if they meet certain capacity requirements. Further, it is not clear that building the capacity of local intermediaries to receive bilateral donor funding is the more desired pathway. Several interviewees highlighted INGOs as having a comparative advantage in this space, noting that many compliance roles may sit more readily with international actors.

3.2. International Intermediaries

The Share Trust conducted KIs with five international intermediaries, including AVSI, DRC, Mercy Corps, Relevant Ventures, and Village Enterprise - each selected because they had been identified as implementing a range of significant efforts to shift power and funding to local actors.

International intermediaries incorporate a range of efforts to shift power and funding to local actors. For example, all interviewed INGOs indicate that they have tried to localise staff and decision-making power as much as possible and that they co-design budgets and create joint governance structures with local partners. Many attempt to establish clear hand over plans. For example:

- **DRC** plays an important role in cash programming in Uganda by working closely with Lutheran World Federation, URCS and the Office of the Prime Minister i.e. providing coordination role) through platforms like the Uganda Cash Working Group and the Collaborative Cash Delivery network, and by leading large, multi-partner initiatives such as the ECHO-funded Uganda Cash Consortium. Through these collaborative efforts, DRC helps bring different national partners, RLOs, and CBOs together to deliver cash assistance in a coordinated and practical way. The coordination leadership roles make DRC well placed to support cash-based approaches to reach refugee communities. They emphasize efficiency and dignity and seek to ensure that cash programming is responsive to local markets, and can be delivered at scale, through local partnerships, and with strong accountability. DRC applies a phased localisation approach to transition leadership for cash programming to capable local partners; it pursues locally led design, decision-making, and implementation of multi-purpose cash assistance, while retaining within DRC roles that include time-bound technical accompaniment focused on systems, compliance, and quality assurance. This model combines local operational leadership with targeted international support to ensure accountability while strengthening long-term partner capacity.
- **Mercy Corps and Village Enterprise** have been working together since 2021, ending August 2026 through the DREAMS (Delivering Resilient Enterprises and Market Systems) program to help refugees and vulnerable host communities, particularly in northern Uganda and across East Africa, move towards self-reliance. The program has brought together Village Enterprise's practical, household-level support through graduation programming, incorporating small start-up grants, business training, savings groups, and mentoring, with Mercy Corps' focus on strengthening local markets, linking people to suppliers, buyers, and services so their businesses can grow. DREAMS was designed as a gradual journey away from aid, where support is reduced over time as people build stable incomes.
 - **Village Enterprise** delivers its Ultra-Poor Graduation Model through local partnerships with government entities, local organizations, and community groups. Its country office, which co-designs interventions, is 100% locally staffed.
 - **Mercy Corps** implements a structured localisation strategy that positions local partners to lead program design and delivery, embeds resourced transition and closeout plans within partner budgets to ensure continuity beyond the grant period, and strengthens partner compliance systems while also engaging donors to promote more flexible and context-appropriate requirements that reduce administrative burden without compromising accountability.
- AVSI Foundation is operationalizing a high-impact localization model through several of its programs, using a structured engagement that transitions leadership proactively to local partners over a fixed time. In practice, this is achieved through a phased 'mentorship-to-leadership' roadmap: in Year 1, AVSI acts as the international prime, establishing the fiduciary and safeguarding systems while providing all the required training and mentorship

aligned to capacity assessments and in Year 2/3, local partners take on significant co-implementation roles with increased budgetary control, direct targets and reporting responsibilities, while AVSI pivots to a light supervisory role . By Year 3, the model pivots leadership in full to a local partner leading on strategic oversight and full implementation while AVSI maintains a 'back-end' support role.

- **Relevant Ventures** is an example of a private sector or entrepreneurial model of fund distribution that differs from the traditional humanitarian grant making. They work closely with local business partners and community leaders, emphasizing that program design and implementation should come from the grassroots level. They Prioritize building the capacity of local businesses for funding readiness. In addition, their due diligence process is adapted for start-ups that may lack formal documentation. Relevant Ventures focuses on working with local business partners to develop building plans, building trust, assessing motivation, and conducting peer assessments within the community. One of Relevant Ventures' more unique approaches is its peer-selected investment committee, which includes as members entrepreneurs they have previously supported, to make decisions about future investments. Relevant Ventures establishes capital pools to invest in local businesses and start-ups and provides "patient loans" that are flexible in their repayment schedules to align with the needs of early-stage businesses.

4. Comparative Advantages

Through participatory workshops, The Share Trust actively engaged groups of intermediaries to define the comparative advantages of UN, INGOs and LNGOs in delivering programming for refugee and host communities in Uganda. A summary of key findings is listed in *Table 2 below*. **Of note, there was a great deal of convergence in the findings – all three groups had very common views throughout.**

Table 2: Comparative Advantages

Intermediary	Key comparative advantages
Local, National & Regional NGOs	▪ Last mile delivery of services - Often closest to communities, LNGOs are well positioned to deliver services directly to beneficiaries, particularly in remote or hard-to-reach areas where larger international actors may have limited presence. ▪ Faster in responding and kicking off projects - Because they are already embedded within the local context, LNGOs can mobilize quickly during emergencies or when new programs start, reducing delays often associated with international coordination and administrative processes. ▪ Strong relationships and networks with communities/good at community mobilization - LNGOs tend to have long-standing relationships with community leaders, grassroots groups, and local institutions. This trust enables effective mobilization of communities and stronger participation in program activities. ▪ Program implementation based on context - LNGOs have a deep contextual understanding of cultural, social, and political dynamics. This allows them to design and implement programs that are better tailored to local realities and needs. ▪ Able to identify risk issues from within the communities - Their proximity to communities enables early identification of emerging risks, tensions, or vulnerabilities, allowing programs to adapt quickly and prevent potential challenges. ▪ Lower cost for same services - LNGOs typically operate with lower overhead and administrative costs, making them more cost-efficient in delivering program activities compared to UN/INGOs. However, this cost-efficiency often reflects structural underinvestment in administrative and compliance systems, which can disadvantage LNGOs in meeting donor requirements and accessing funding. ▪ Program sustainability due to their geographical presence - Because LNGOs remain present in communities long after short-term projects end, they can sustain program outcomes, maintain relationships, and continue supporting communities over the long term (assuming they are resourced to do so).

Intermediary	Key comparative advantages
	▪ Support for accountability and feedback on policy issues - LNGOs are well placed to gather feedback from communities, and channel this feedback into program adjustments and policy discussions. They are often particularly effective in advocating to local and national government actors due to their embeddedness and legitimacy, while engagement with donor decision-making is more frequently done through intermediaries, depending on the Organization's scale and positioning.
International NGOs	▪ Absorb/buffer risks - INGOs often have stronger institutional systems, financial reserves, and insurance mechanisms that allow them to absorb operational, financial, or reputational risks that donors may be reluctant to place on LNGOs. ▪ Absorb larger grants - INGOs have financial management systems, compliance mechanisms, and staffing needed to manage large-scale donor grants and complex multi-country programs. ▪ Donor compliance/relationship management - Many INGOs have established systems for donor reporting, financial accountability, procurement, and other functions that meet international compliance standards; these systems enable them to effectively manage donor expectations and contractual requirements. ▪ Large scale research and learning/access to accurate data for decision making - INGOs often have resources for conducting large-scale research, evaluations, and learning initiatives, and may have easier access to global datasets and analytical tools that support evidence-based decision making. ▪ Ability to advocate for resources globally - INGOs often maintain offices or networks in major global policy centers, enabling them to participate in—and influence—debates on development and humanitarian assistance policy and funding levels; they are also well placed to mobilize resources from major donors and philanthropic actors. ▪ Neutrality - INGOs are sometimes perceived as comparatively more neutral actors than local NGOs, which may be shaped by local political or social dynamics, or UN agencies, which often maintain formal relationships with governments. In some contexts, this can facilitate engagement across different stakeholders.
UN Agencies	▪ Advocacy and negotiations – political, security, funding, etc. - UN agencies often have high-level diplomatic access and legitimacy that allows them to engage directly with governments and international actors on sensitive political, humanitarian, and security issues. ▪ Global policy development, development of standards and norms - The UN system plays a central role in developing international frameworks, policies, and technical standards that guide development and humanitarian responses globally. ▪ Coordination at the global level - UN agencies often lead or facilitate coordination among governments, NGOs, and donors through global coordination mechanisms and clusters.

Intermediary	Key comparative advantages
	▪ Large scale/global procurement - The UN has procurement systems capable of purchasing and distributing goods on a global scale, which can help ensure efficiency and standardization during large humanitarian operations. ▪ Government to Government donor recipient/donor trust - Because UN agencies are intergovernmental institutions, they often have strong relationships with national governments and are trusted by many donors to manage large-scale funding. Global fundraising - UN agencies have the ability to mobilize resources from multiple governments and international financing mechanisms, enabling them to fund large programs across multiple countries.

4.1. Priorities for shifting key functions within the system

Building on the discussion of comparative advantages, each group of actors was prompted with a “Separation of Functions” analysis; The Share Trust asked them to think about the key programming functions or activities that each group of actors could/should lead. Discussions with intermediaries highlighted several areas where roles and responsibilities could gradually shift to enable stronger local leadership. While the intention of the workshop was not to unpack who was best suited to lead every core function and activity, it did start a discussion on how functions could be separated for greater devolution of leadership—and potentially greater effectiveness. For example, participants noted that many core functions currently sit with UN agencies and INGOs largely because donor trust, technical expertise, and coordination structures have historically been concentrated within these Organizations. However, there was broad agreement that the majority of these functions do not inherently need to remain with international actors.

Table 3: Separation of Functions: Who Could/Should Lead Which Elements of Program Design and Delivery

FUCNTIONS	UN	INGOs	LNGOs
Policy and Coordination	• Lead global coordination on standards and policies while supporting their contextualization and application by local actors. • Interpret between government policies and programs - help translate national policy frameworks into operational guidance for local actors. • Advocate to the national government, especially for refugee resettlement and their political rights. • Support global fundraising.	• Coordinate design of international standards and guidelines including risk management and financial systems. • Play a role in setting and disseminating technical and compliance standards, and support their uptake among partners to ensure alignment with international norms	• Implement standards and guidelines to ensure global and national frameworks are translated into practical actions that respond to local needs and contexts, while also playing a critical role in advocating with national and subnational authorities, using community-level evidence to influence policy, practice and accountability, with international actors (e.g. the UN) often supporting or amplifying these locally driven efforts • Establish communication processes for feedback on policies ensuring LNGOs can regularly share their perspectives and experiences to help improve partnership practices and decision-making. ▪ Lead structured representation and agenda-setting processes that inform national and global policy discussions through coordinated RLO networks.
Program Design	• Draw on global knowledge and cross-country learning to inform program design, improve quality, and support the adaptation of proven approaches to local contexts.	• Deliver global learnings/evidence generated from programs evaluations • Co-create programs with LNGOs to ensure local relevance • Co-create transition plans, including capacity strengthening and risk	• Co-create programs with INGOs for a more locally led and sustainable response, rooted in local knowledge and systems.

		mitigation plans, to shift more responsibilities locally • Build in local accountability and feedback and plan for adaptive design.	
Program Delivery	• Lead regional and global negotiations, for example cross-border negotiations, diplomatic engagement, and coordination with other actors where global presence and influence are required. • Play a role in large-scale procurement through established global supply systems and framework agreements, enabling access to international, regional, and national suppliers. • System-level coordination and resource management, including mobilizing and pooling donor funding, allocating resources across sectors and implementing partners, and coordinating technical expertise to ensure coherent, prioritized, and needs-based responses. • Provide security - gold standard for security management and operating in high-risk environments.	• Provide backend/compliance support to local actors • Promote time-bound transition plans where INGOs progressively shift implementation to local partners.	• Establish community feedback that includes building response mechanisms to community complaints. • Enable last-mile delivery in acute emergencies, including beneficiary identification and registration, community engagement, and distribution of assistance in hard-to-reach or high-risk areas.

4.2. Key barriers/enablers

Across all actors, a range of functions were commonly identified as currently sitting with international actors, but which should sit with local actors. The three groups specifically identified the following three areas that should be shifted to sit with local actors: technical capacities, knowledge generation, and coordination and management of resources for programming.

- **Technical capacities.** The consultations highlighted repeatedly that international actors are valued for bringing technical capacities that local actors do not possess. More deliberate investment in and focus on capacity strengthening is therefore important, including:
 - a) using diverse methods of capacity strengthening that may go beyond training to include mentoring, secondment of high skill staff, peer to peer exchanges, etc.;
 - b) investing in technical and relational capacity to strengthen local organizations' ability to carry out new or existing roles within a local system, not just donor compliance capacity;
 - c) emphasizing that capacity strengthening goals are of equal importance as sectoral goals, rather than (as sometimes happens) an afterthought; and
- holding capacity strengthening partners to account for their success in supporting local organizations' improved performance, in alignment with these organizations' goals (i.e., the results of how they exercise their capacities).

TPO, a large national NGO, was highlighted as an example of successful capacity strengthening investment. Dedicated technical strengthening resources have resulted in TPO becoming the lead organization for delivering mental health services in refugee settlements in Uganda.

However, investing in capacity strengthening alone has limits. One of the reasons certain technical skills are limited in local organizations is because international actors with higher salary scales often hire and retain the highest capacity local staff. Strong local technical capacity can be built, but funding or seconding high technical capacity roles to reside within local vs. international organizations is an important complementary action

- **Knowledge generation.** Monitoring, evaluation, and learning tend to sit with international actors. However, much about knowledge generation should sit with local actors, with some learning activities being undertaken by local implementing organizations and local research firms playing a key role in generating evidence. Local actors should also lead on setting the learning agenda, defining goals (perhaps within funding parameters), ensuring cultural appropriateness, and aligning with relevant local decision- or policymaking needs. International organizations can be important partners, maintaining a key role in

bringing local evidence to bear in global forums and as needed, supporting local MEL leaders' access to data, information, and evidence.

- **Coordination and management of resources.** UN and INGOs currently act as intermediaries coordinating programming and managing resources on behalf of donors. However, local intermediaries can fulfill this function when resourced to do so, and several LNGOs in the group expressed their interest in doing so.

While participants identified functions that could shift to local actors, they emphasized that this transition depends on certain enabling conditions.

- **Donor trust needs to shift from UN/INGOs to local actors.** Both international and local actors identified that when donors work more directly with local actors, trust builds organically, and that measures as simple as ensuring that local actors are in all meetings with donors is very effective for shifting trust.
- **Development of a broader ecosystem of local intermediaries that can channel large-scale donor funding.** The local intermediary mapping showed that there are currently very few local actors that can receive large-scale funding and work across networks of local partners. Evidence suggests that local intermediaries, on average, may be more cost-efficient than international intermediaries that have high international staff costs. However, in Uganda there are few large-scale Ugandan entities that can intermediate large scale funding. It will be important to not only identify more opportunities to work with existing Ugandan organizations with high administrative capacity, but also to invest in other Ugandan organizations and institutions, including those that wish to work more directly with donors and expand their role as an intermediary. Cultivating the emergence of a diverse ecosystem of potential intermediary partners allows funders to take advantage of the specific strengths of various organizations, distributes risk, and helps avoid the distortionary pitfall of entrenching power with large national intermediaries. The LNGOs included in the consultations raised this latter point directly as a significant concern.

5. Action Points

The discussions highlighted several practical enablers that could support a gradual and effective transition toward more locally led leadership within the system.

- **INVEST in building the local intermediary ecosystem, where there are organizations that are interested in working more directly and on a larger scale with donors:**
 - **Match capacity strengthening with funds to implement systems.** Capacity strengthening has often been treated as a short-term training opportunity, is often repeated by different international prime partners, and is often unaccompanied by investment in organizational and administrative systems. Capacity strengthening for staff must be matched with funds for technology, software, etc.
- **Support prospective local partners to work with FCDO.** Provide resources to “demystify” FCDO’s award making processes, hold “prospective partner days” with sessions on areas of highest interest to prospective partners (e.g., due diligence, financial compliance), foster networks of current and prospective local partners to share peer learning. To manage expectations and respect organizations’ time, these efforts are recommended only if FCDO intends to increase its direct local partnerships.
- **Pre-identify NGOs that meet agreed standards** on governance, financial management, safeguarding, program delivery, etc. This would allow donors, UN agencies, and INGOs to engage local partners more quickly and consistently, while also reducing repeated due diligence processes.
- **Fund excluded costs for smaller local actors/CSOs.** Local intermediaries noted that downstream partners frequently face challenges sustaining core operational functions when indirect cost coverage is insufficient or when organizations lack support to accurately budget and claim eligible overhead and administrative costs. **Fund international intermediaries adequately for providing backend support.** As functions shift from international to local actors, a key set of activities identified for international actors center around backend support to local actors – such as duty of care, transfer of technical capacities, and international fundraising on behalf of local actors. Often, INGOs are asked to undertake these activities without dedicated funding, and yet these functions are critical to support a transition of power and funding to local actors, as well as maintain an international ecosystem that can amplify their work.
 - **Set expectations for locally led action in partnership agreements with international partners, fund them to engage in locally led approaches, and hold them to account for their successful execution.** Select international partners, in part, on the basis of their relationships with local actors, their ability to devolve leadership, and key personnel attributes that enable these factors. Request that partners budget for co-creation and other processes to elevate local leadership. And ensure accountability focuses on how partners elevate local leadership, co-create activity design and

implementation, co-develop risk mitigation plans and share risk, support local capacity strengthening, and progressively transition responsibility to local organizations.

- **Forge partnerships with private philanthropy to complement the bilateral funding ecosystem.** As government funders, bilateral donors face constraints on what they can fund and how they can work. Private philanthropy can play a key role in providing complementary funding to allow bilateral funds to shift to local actors.
- **ESTABLISH A FUND that provides flexible and accessible funding for smaller local organizations and mutual aid networks.** Smaller local CBOs and CSOs are never going to meet rigid compliance and reporting requirements attached to large donor grants, and even more importantly their time is better spent ensuring that they are working in their communities. However, they are essential to a well-functioning system, and mechanisms that allow smaller local actors to access modest, flexible grants through simplified processes, enabling them to respond quickly to community needs while still maintaining accountability within the broader humanitarian coordination system, are essential.
- i. **HOLD INGO and UN partners accountable to a set of qualitative and quantitative localization metrics.** Donors have considerable power in establishing the rules of engagement and expectations for locally led action. They should require and hold partners to account not just for the funding they pass through to local sub-partners or grantees but also for elements such as:
 - Full passthrough of overheads from international to local partners for their portion of the budget.
 - Incorporating local systems practice into project design.
 - Using demand driven capacity strengthening approaches.
 - Demonstratable, meaningful co-creation of project design, work plans, MEL plans.
 - Local feedback and accountability mechanisms, including participatory MEL, and demonstration of how local feedback drove program adaptations
 - Handover planning for key functions.
- **REQUIRE budget transparency from UN agencies to ensure the best use of taxpayer dollars.** This should include greater visibility on overheads, management fees, sub granting arrangements, and the proportion of funding reaching local and national actors.
- ii. **IMPLEMENT a passporting system for common due diligence.** For example, the Quality Assurance Mechanism (QuAM) is a Ugandan led, quality assurance mechanism for NGOs; and the UN uses a common portal for all UN grantees. While common due diligence across all donors may not be possible, a handful of donors or INGOs can begin to test a common system.

- iii. **COLLABORATE with the UN on Government of Uganda policy and practice for refugees.** Both local actors and UNHCR said that the UN should be playing a much bigger role in advocacy for refugee resettlement. The UN currently does most of the procurement for refugee response because it has a VAT waiver from the government but could easily advocate for that to sit with national organizations.

Annex 1: Detailed list of Intermediaries that participated in the Uganda mapping exercise

Name	Level of entity	Website	Nature of Entity	Intermediary's program model
Young African Refugees for Integral Development (YARID)	Local intermediary	https://www.yarid.net/organization	National, refugee-led NGO registered in Uganda	Refugee-led, community-driven model. Focuses on skills development (business, ICT, English), job readiness, and protection. Program are co-designed with refugee and host communities to ensure relevance and sustainability
Transcultural Psychosocial Organization Uganda (TPO Uganda)	Local Intermediary	https://tpoug.org/	TPO Uganda is a national NGO with a community-based, family-oriented program model	TPO Uganda's model is a community-based, family-oriented approach that integrates mental health, psychosocial support, and protection services by strengthening local structures and building resilience among vulnerable groups, especially refugees, children, and women
African Youth Action Network (AYAN)	Local intermediary	https://ayanafrica.org	A regional/national refugee youth-led NGO (registered across South Sudan and Uganda)	Youth-led advocacy and empowerment model. Promotes civic engagement, leadership training, and community mobilization among young people, including refugees and host communities.
COHERE	Regional intermediary	https://www.wearecohere.org/	Regional NGO registered in Uganda, Kenya, and UK	COHERE funds and strengthens RLOs in Uganda, providing flexible cash transfer support and capacity building to help them deliver on their programs
RELON Uganda	Local intermediary	https://relonuganda.org/	Refugee-Led Organization (RLO) Network in Uganda. Acts as an intermediary network and coordination hub, bridging refugee-led organizations, donors, INGOs, and government actors.	Network-based model. Functions as a coalition of refugee-led Organizations to strengthen collective capacity, amplify refugee voices, and influence localisation in humanitarian response
I-PROFILE FOUNDATION	Local Intermediary	I Profile Foundation – Creating a new generation of African leaders.	An Organization in Uganda focusing on equipping children, youth, women, and refugees with the financial literacy, entrepreneurial skills, and innovative tools needed to build	The I-Profile Foundation in Uganda uses a child-centered, experiential learning model that focuses on leadership, financial literacy, and entrepreneurship, while also supporting integration of migrants and refugee communities

			resilient communities and self-reliant individuals	
African Women and Youth Action for Development (AWYAD)	Local Intermediary	https://awyad.org/	A women-led grassroots national NGO operating across Central, Eastern, Western, and Northern Uganda including refugee-hosting districts. Works closely with UNCHR, StC and ECW.	Gender and youth empowerment model. Focuses on women's rights, youth livelihoods, and inclusive development through training, advocacy, and community mobilization.
Community Empowerment for Creative Innovation (CECI Uganda)	Local intermediary	https://www.ceciuganda.org/	A national NGO that is refugee-led and directly working with youth, women and girls from refugee and host communities to prevent, reduce, and transform violent conflicts.	Grassroots empowerment model. Works with communities to foster innovation, entrepreneurship, and creative solutions for livelihoods and social inclusion.
Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS)	Local intermediary	https://redcrossug.org/	An auxiliary humanitarian partner to the Government of Uganda, coordinating emergency responses and refugee support.	Humanitarian service delivery model. Provides emergency response, health services, disaster preparedness, and community resilience program, leveraging its national volunteer network.
AVSI	International intermediary	https://www.avsi.org/en/what-we-do/countries/uganda	INGO but frequently plays an Intermediary role.	Integrated development model. Combines education, health, and livelihoods interventions with strong donor compliance systems. Works through partnerships with local actors to implement large-scale program
Danish Refugee Council (DRC) – Uganda	International intermediary	https://drc.ngo/	Strong international intermediary, implementing both directly and via partnerships with local actors, particularly in refugee and host community settings	Rights-based humanitarian model. Focuses on protection, livelihoods, and advocacy for refugees and vulnerable populations. Uses participatory approaches and strong compliance systems
Mercy Corps	International intermediary	https://www.mercycorps.org/where-we-work/uganda	Mercy Corps is a global team of humanitarians working together on the front lines of today's biggest crises to create a future of possibility, where everyone can prosper.	Market systems and resilience model. Implements large-scale livelihoods, youth empowerment, and peacebuilding program. Emphasizes evidence-based design, adaptive learning, and donor compliance
Village Enterprise	International intermediary	https://villageenterprise.org/	An international NGO focused on poverty alleviation and	Poverty graduation model. Organises ultra-poor households into business savings groups, provides seed capital,

			entrepreneurship in rural Africa (including Uganda).	mentoring, and training to launch microenterprises. Strong focus on monitoring and evaluation
Relevant Ventures	International intermediary.	https://relevant.is/	An impact investment platform that works with displacement-affected communities, including refugees, in Uganda.	Social enterprise and innovation model. Supports entrepreneurship and creative ventures among youth and communities, linking them to markets and investment opportunities.

Annex 2: A list of Local intermediary focus areas

Organization	Humanitarian Response	Education	Livelihoods / Economic Development	Climate Change	Migration	Food Security	WASH	Gender & Social Inclusion	Social Protection	Health	Governance	Infrastructure & Shelter
COHERE CHARITY	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
TPO-Uganda	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Community Empowerment for Creative Innovation		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			
Refugee-Led Organization Network (RELON)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Young African refugees for Integral Development - YARID	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			
African Women and Youth Action for Development	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				
African Youth Action Network (AYAN)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Uganda Red Cross Society	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓
I PROFILE FOUNDATION		✓	✓		✓							