



MIGRATION

SUMMIT

2023

SAMUEL HALL.



ReACT



Na'amal



KARAM



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Localising Research with Refugees: An Ethical Way Forward

Organised by Samuel Hall -East Africa



House Rules

- This session is being **recorded**.
- We have a **20 minute time slot** earmarked for **questions** at the end of the session. Please save your questions for then.
- Please ensure your **camera and audio is off** until the interactive session so as to ensure minimal disruption.
- Feel free to **tweet and post on social media** by tagging the speakers and Samuel Hall at (@Samuel_Hall_) and use the hashtag **#LocalisingResearchWithRefugees #MigrationSummit**
- Feel free to use the **chat box** to post any comments, feedback and ideas.





What is the Migration Summit?

A month-long global convening **designed to build bridges** between diverse communities of displaced learners, universities, companies, nonprofits and NGOs, social enterprises, foundations, philanthropists, researchers, policymakers and employers around the **key challenges and opportunities for refugee and migrant communities.**

This year's theme is focused on
"Co-creating Pathways to Learning,
Livelihood, and Dignity"



Localising Research: Event Agenda



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Welcome and Opening Remarks:
Jared Owuor, Samuel Hall

Localising Research : What do we mean?
Nassim Majidi, Samuel Hall

Ethics of Localising Refugee Research &
Advocacy - Challenges and
Opportunities: Samuel Binja, KI4BLI

Ethics of Field Research in Refugee
Camps - Lessons from Kakuma:
Franco Ohisa, Refugee Researcher

What Do Ethical Migration Research
Partnerships with RLOs Look Like?
Jean Paul, RELON - Kenya

Q/A + Panel Discussion





Speakers



NASSIM MAJIDI

*Co-Founder,
Samuel Hall*



SAMUEL BINJA

*Founder,
KALOBYEI INITIATIVE FOR
BETTER LIFE*



FRANCO OHISA

*ICT Consultant
& Refugee
Researcher*



JEAN PAUL

*Programmes
Coodinator,
RELON-KENYA*

Key Definitions



- **Migration Research:** Any activity that involves **data collection** and **knowledge creation** with and by people in situations of displacement.
- **Localisation:** Localisation refers to the process of **shifting decision-making power and resources** from external actors to local actors in order to foster more sustainable and locally-led responses to development challenges.
- **Advocacy:** Advocacy is the act of supporting or promoting a **particular cause or idea** to bring about **social or political change**.
- **Ethical Research:** Ethical research is the practice of conducting research in a manner that is consistent with ethical principles and standards, such as **protecting the welfare and rights of refugees** and ensuring that research is **conducted in a transparent and responsible manner**.



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**Localising research
vs.
Fitting us into a box**
Nassim Majidi,
Co-founder Samuel Hall

1. Defining what "local" is



Who is « local »? What does it mean to localise research?

We have long argued that we should localise research the way we aim to localise aid (World Humanitarian Summit 2016).

Is being local a matter of :

- Registration and legal status?
- Nationality?
- Language skills?
- Cultural know how?
- Networks?
- Ability to influence decisions?



It is about the capacity to:



Assess changes with eyes and ears on the ground



Validate



Co-design



Evaluate



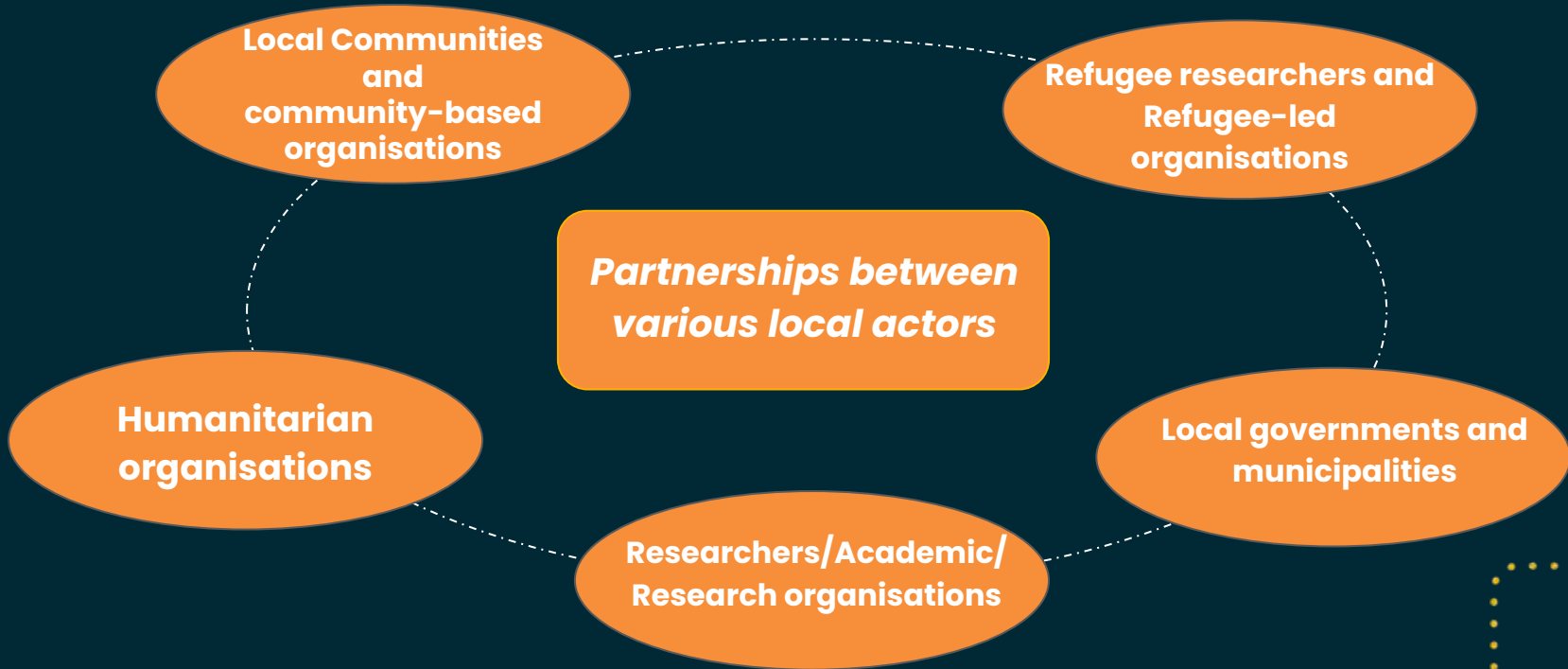
Tell Stories



Advocate



2. Mapping the Local Research Ecosystem



3. From a local presence to a global voice



Advocacy

Local researchers want to speak to **issues that are societal issues of our times.**



Representation

Local researchers are not just « local » or « national » or... but first and foremost researchers.



Partnerships

How can we avoid fitting in researchers in boxes or labels that do not define them?

Through meaningful, equitable partnerships that include not just one but all actors of the local research ecosystem.



ETHICAL RESEARCH

Ethical research is grounded research , situated within specific research contexts over time.
This requires us to discuss equitable and meaningful partnerships.
No one actor can do it alone. For this we need capacity, responsibility and funding.

Capacity

- Being aware of the potential impact of research on individuals
- To minimize harm & maximize benefits
- Being able to urgently and efficiently respond to their needs and concerns

Responsibility

- To understand & acknowledge our positionality
- To ensure authentic representation
- To co-design programmes, policies, .. And research priorities.

Funding grounded research



Funding Capacity Building to Facilitate Transfer of Responsibility



Participatory Action Research

We aim to build momentum for locally-led, locally-owned research.

OUR COMMITMENT TO ETHICAL AND COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH



Each research project opens up spaces for academics, practitioners, policymakers, and communities to engage with us

1

Space for Collaboration in Design and Analysis

- country/area expertise
- method expertise
- thematic expertise

2

Space for Peer Review and Quality Control

Apply standards of scientific peer review to our research and outline steps for quality control and oversight

3

Space for Field Level Problem Solving

Anticipate and communicate on risks and mitigation strategies before, during and after fieldwork

4

Space for Exchanges with Partners

Identify issues to advocate for, identify opportunities for translation and opportunities for dissemination

5

Space for Feedback and Thanks

Engage in validation exercises and give thanks to key informants and research participants

ETHICS AND MECHANICS

Space for Co-Design and Participation

Space for Training and Capacity Building

Our manifesto for ethical and collaborative research



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Being one and partnering with more local organisations and representatives from the community level to the policy levels, including migrant and refugee-led organisations has been crucial to providing contextual expertise, navigating access to research sites, and working with local and national administrations. Partnerships is at the core of the work we do. However, we have realised that this space has been shrinking rather than expanding and we felt the need to uphold and encourage **ethical standards for collaborative research** to create nurturing and respectful spaces.

We aim to build momentum for locally-led, locally-owned research.

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Ethics of Localising Refugee Research & Advocacy – Challenges and Opportunities

Samuel Binja

*Founder & Director of KALOBEYEI
INITIATIVE FOR BETTER LIFE*

1. The life of a refugee researcher today

- We are often not **trusted as refugee researchers** regardless of our academic experiences or lived experiences.
- We are generally **employed only for data collection** and not analysis, design or dissemination, **or asked to work with very limited resources** to achieve very high ambitions.
- We are not given equal value: research findings are **rarely ever shared with us and with the community**

“The contribution of refugee community as respondents is key for thousands of institutions in the world, so it is an obligation for them (institution) to come back and make the community aware of how their contributions help academic world”

– Andhira Kara, East Africa RLOs research Lead, Kenya

2. What does trust and value mean to us?



We depend on **external forces to do our work**. We need to build a two-way relationship built on:

- **Trusting local** researchers:
 - Infrastructural Barriers To Access
 - No **direct funding channelled** to refugee actors sometimes because...we don't have a physical address, or a bank account.
 - We create **livelihood opportunities** and we reduce the **costs** of research
- **Valuing local** refugee researchers
 - Less value for **lived experience**
 - The global perception of the 'Refugee' status
 - Not given equal value as **national researchers**



3. Localising Advocacy & Why It Matters?



GRC paragraph 34 says, "the humanitarian response is effective when it engages fully the persons it serves" and my panelist Jean Paul Kasika had said "*You cannot feel the pain of a shoe that you do not wear.*"

Refugees are the right persons to advocate for refugees – as they have the lived experience.

This matters for the following reasons:

1. providing accurate information
2. representing the right community
3. help donors and funders understand the field reality
4. enhance the meaningful participation of local actors in high level meetings
5. Inclusivity in decision making

"I will not be honored to be at a table where other refugee leaders are not"

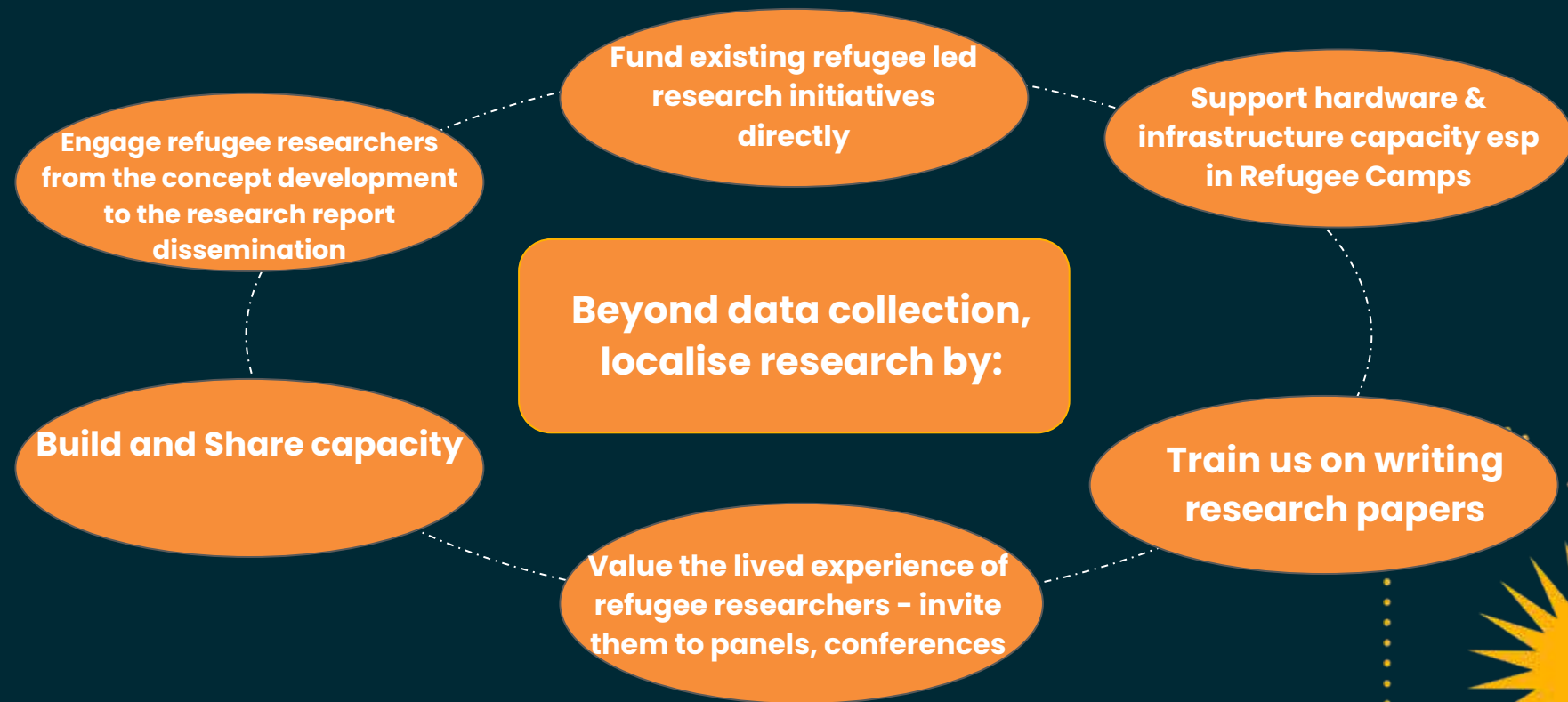
– Nhial Deng, Refugee Advocate.



How To Localise: Beyond The Field, A Seat At The Table



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Ethics of Field Research in Refugee Camps – Lessons from Kakuma

Franco Ohisa

*ICT Consultant & Refugee
Researcher*



1. How can research in refugee camps be less extractive?

My experience as a researcher working with various humanitarian organisations in Kakuma has brought forth this question as one of the most urgent ones for us to address. We need to:

Build trust –

- **The day I had half a million in my bank account**

Build relationships that are not only contractual + over time –

- **The woman who travelled by foot to our focus group discussion**

Ensure that local communities see our value, too.



2. Research Ethics at the Local level



**Respect
Confidentiality
& Privacy**

**Community
Participation
(from inception)**

**Community
Engagement (to
dissemination)**

**Informed
Consent**

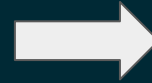
**Protection of
Vulnerable
Populations**



3. Addressing challenges facing Refugee enumerators in data collection

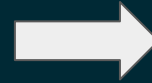


Perception issues: Participants may participate for the monetary value of an interview, not its impact



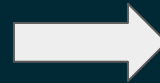
Clarify from the start how research can help

Trust issues: Some refugees may be wary of providing information to enumerators.

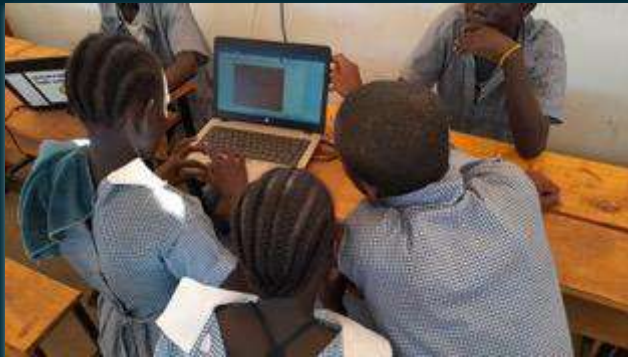


Seek help from their leaders.

Language barriers: In Kakuma and Kalobeyei, there is a diverse group of refugees who speak different languages.



Working with translators from the community





How can we ensure research is less extractive? Approach researchers and humanitarian actors should take to localise research on field.

Build relationships with local communities, prioritise informed consent, respect cultures

Use Participatory Research Methods by mobilising community leaders and empowering refugees

Share findings with the community

Invest in capacity building through mentorship programmes

Ensure financial considerations are not an obstacle – fair compensation



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What Do Ethical Migration Research Partnerships with RLOs Look Like?

Jean-Paul
Programmes Coordinator,
RELON – Kenya

1. RELON: The strength of the network is our local response

Background on RELON Kenya will help you see how we have built in trust and relationships into our network: so that we can in turn be counted on as a local force by global actors



We exist to unite refugee-led organisations (RLOs) in Kenya, provide a platform for them and key potential partners – from the local to the global.

2. Why localising research is key to our network?

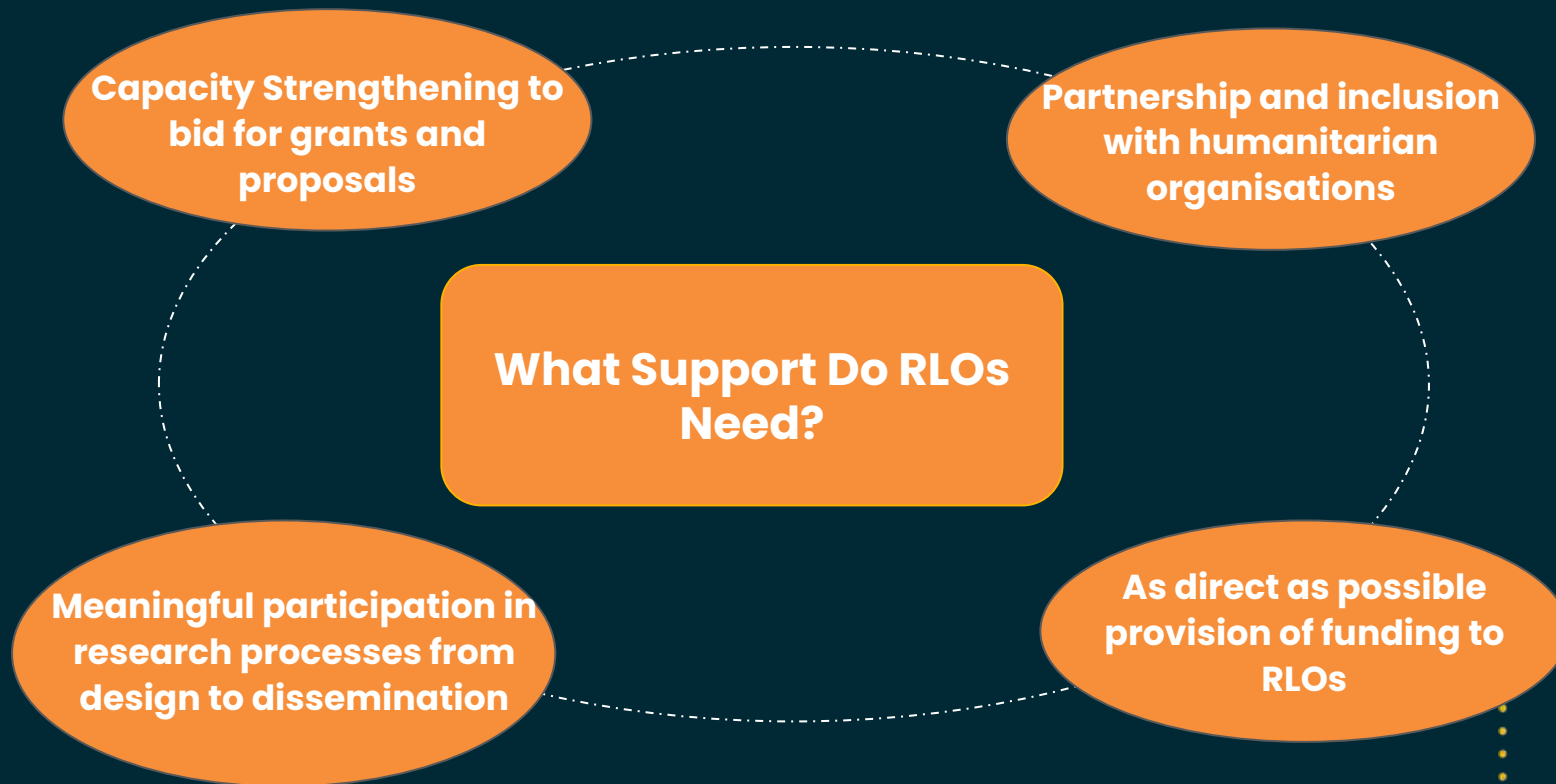
- Awareness of **own limits and referrals** when research respondents demonstrate needs and/or request information
- Through localised research we can have better **feedback and understanding** of the research for the community
- We need **research partners on-ground** to lead urgent responses with the appropriate **cultural understanding and authentic findings** based on lived experience
- We want to **acquire training, screening, and supervising skill** as researchers and interpreters.

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3. RLOs need support to localise research



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BREAK

5 minutes



Q/A
+
Panel Discussion

Discussion: Shortcomings To Address



1. How can we improve the language and how we refer to researchers: local researchers, refugee researchers, researchers with lived experience?
2. How can we address the infrastructure and financial challenges for local research, so that the relationship goes beyond a monetary one?
3. What accountability, monitoring and evaluation efforts are needed to see whether research projects and proposals are sufficiently localised? Can we think of a system of refugee peer review?
4. How can we link you – in Kenya – with other refugee researchers and RLOs beyond borders? What investments are needed across borders and space?





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Thank You

Our research connects the voices of communities to changemakers for more inclusive societies.

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