Preparing for localization in humanitarian practice

What can be learned from the Nairobi Community Ihub?

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Abstract

With localization becoming a best practice in the aid sector a critical perspective needs to be applied on the term and what it means for people in vulnerable positions affected by it. Simultaneously the current aid practice between international and local actors (referred to as programme-level- or non-program level actors herein) needs to be assessed to make challenges visible in the status quo of aid practice that stands in the way of the turn towards localization.

SOS Children's Villages definition of localisation has a "transformative" nature that is committed to shifting the current top-down approach to humanitarian practice by putting decision making power into the hands of the users of aid programmes.

By comparing non-programme- and programme level practice of aid from a case-study perspective I seek to answer the following problem statement:

> *How do socio-technical practices within SOS Children's Villages Denmark and SOS' Ihub programme in Kenya provide situated knowledge disclosing challenges surrounding the current localization agenda, and how can these insights foster a localization benefitting the end-user of aid-programmes across the humanitarian sector.*

To answer the problem statement I draw on field work from a programme level context in Buruburu, Nairobi, where the Ihub is implemented as well as interviews with informants from the Global North and South.

By drawing on Donna Harawys cyborg terminology I find that the current socio-technical amalgamation of the Ihub, the user and the staff creates a new identity on the programme level that breaks with non-programme level actors' perception of programme participants. Furthermore I draw on Annemarie Mols theory of multiplicity and enactment to illustrate how this identity fosters a programme level enactment from the staff and the users, that also deviates from non-programme level actors enactments in multiple ways.

In the case of the Ihub programme I find that it is enacted by non-programme level actors as a programme that promotes employability, ICT-literacy and monetary growth, while on a programme level it is enacted as a programme used for networking, combating mental health issues, and more. Thus there are incongruities between different actor-levels. Furthermore these incongruities remain hidden due to feedback frameworks through which programme level actors must provide feedback that lives up to non-programme level actors demands to keep the programme sustained, even though this does not reflect the user needs in the community. This keeps programme level actors under a surveillance paradigm creating a paradox where they, to sustain their practice, must live up to contradictory donor demands.

What builds this gap between programme- and non-programme level actors' enactments is primarily how progress or "success" is monitored differently between the various levels. In a non-programme level context, quantitative monetary value is still the standard for assessing the success of aid programmes. However, at the programme level, there is a want for a qualitative way of evaluating the impact of the programme, that is focused on how it benefits the community.

Localization is a novel initiative at SOS Children's Villages, and new ways of working that seek to better reflect programme- and national level practices are currently underway. Although this is the case, some internal frictions in enactments between departments in SOS Denmark still poses a challenge. Especially because communication that favors donor demands and monetary gains are still the standard for fundraising, further sustaining the current top-down structure.

To ensure a localization that meets programme level needs, the gap between programme- and non-programme level actors' practices, displayed in this report, must be recognised across organizational levels. From there, localization can proceed to have value on a programme level by prioritizing a bottom-up approach that puts a programme enactment in the center of organizational areas such as communication, feedback, and defining success criterias.

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1. Preliminary thoughts

I have previously been engaged with a project between the Global North and the Global South in the humanitarian sector. During the final year of my bachelor in techno-anthropology, my project group and I were operating as interactional agents between an NGO and a company that was implementing a solar powered school kitchen in Uganda. It is the insights I gained throughout this venture that sparked my interest for the humanitarian sector, especially in relation to technology transfers from a Global North to the Global South. The challenges that we found in the relation between actors from the Global North and -South and the technology they sought to implement, was what prompted me to continue to seek solutions and ultimately led me to my current occupation at SOS Children's Villages in Denmark.

From this previous experience I have learned that there is still much work to be done in terms of how aid projects are being designed, implemented and run. Through reports and post-project-feedback my project group and I raised critiques to the company and the NGO that wanted to implement the mentioned technology, concerning how users input had not been sought in the project design phase. Furthermore, we criticized the NGO and company for solving problems with a too broad and global focus and that this resulted in neglection of the situated life of the inhabitants of Kinakeytaka Uganda. Also we found that no efforts to mobilize or engage the on-site communities had been made or on-site networks studied, and that users had not been thoroughly asked their opinions on the outcome of the project (Ibsen et al., 2022).

Little did I know at that time that what we experienced was not a standalone but an ubiquitous set of challenges across aid programmes. It is not difficult to find related issues of user exclusion from participation, lack of understanding of social systems at a given site of implementation, or unnoticed leadership in literature. To name a few: Mulder (2023) raises points about how "external actors" take the lead on aid programmes excluding users from design processes while also raising concerns on how the programme is still, after implementation, evaluated from an external actor perspective, referring to this as a *surveillance paradigm* in humanitarian aid (Mulder, 2023).

With a case from the Gambella region of Ethiopia, Gidron and Carver (2022) argues that there is a lack of international actors' adaptation to "local" networks in the humanitarian sector and an existing practice of choosing standardized frameworks of aid programmes that mimics normative structures (Gidron & Carver, 2022). Barakat and Milton (2020) talks of challenges when it comes to the humanitarian sector's attempts on "localization", especially in regards to a missing definition of "the local" and the lack of importance that is given to "getting the local right" and building on "local knowledge" in conflict responses (Barakat & Milton, 2020). Owiso and Manji (2020) finds that implementation processes of an aid programme in Kenya remains top-down and that the desired programme participants are not left enough space for participation, leading to limitations of "local ownership", while some actors remain left out or overseen in the process (Owiso & Manji, 2020).

Such learnings are the basis for the critical perspective this thesis seeks to provide. With the rising localization agenda an objective has been set by SOS Children's Villages (SOS CV) to listen to- and share decision making power with programme level actors (N. Houe, personal communication, April 4, 2024; Houe & Godiksen, 2023). But to do it right I argue that learnings from previous and contemporary mistakes must be used to provide the turn towards localization with the context it needs to avoid becoming a pseudo solution.

2. Introduction to the problem field

In this introductory I will first present the reader with an organizational overview of SOS CV, as well as outline Ihub programme from the perspective of programme level (The Nairobi Community Ihub users, indirect users and staff) and non-programme level actors, as well as the tangible, technical aspects of the programme. I will then define what the term "localization" is in relation to SOS CV and expand on the organization's first steps towards a localized way of working.

By doing so, the reader should feel equipped with the necessary background knowledge for a later analysis regarding the current organizational practice surrounding aid programmes and the challenges these practices provide in terms of implementing localization.

2.1 SOS Children's Villages

SOS Children's Villages is a non-governmental federation established in Austria in 1949 with the primary target of *"ensuring that children and young people without parental care or at risk of losing it grow up with the care, relationships and support they need to become their strongest selves."* (SOS Children's Villages, n.d.-e)

Since its founding 75 years ago, SOS Children's Villages has, like much of the humanitarian aid sector, undergone comprehensive changes in its organizational structure and core programmes, as well as having expanded its capacity to work in over 137 countries or territories around the world. Although the organization still practices its two core programmes of '*Family Strengthening'* (Building community and family resilience) and *'Alternative Care'* (Caring for children in "children's villages", providing housing, education etc.) they continue to expand with new solutions to emerging humanitarian challenges presented by the changing climate or the digital age (SOS Children's Villages, n.d.-b, n.d.-a).

2.1.1 Digital initiatives and the "Ihub"

In regards to the latter there has in recent years been an impetus within SOS CV to ensure that children directly, or in the communities, under SOS CV care get access to digital opportunities. With this novel focus the organization is currently implementing their 'Digital Villages' (DV). DV is an umbrella under which new ICT initiatives are to transform the children's villages (CV's) into places that provides digital literacy to the children in SOS CV care, so that they meet the standards of their peers and the requirements of the countries education- and job sector (International Office et al., 2021).

Currently the DV's are implemented across 60 countries and is estimated to have an impact on 40.000 people according to SOS CV (SOS Children's Villages, n.d.-c).

> *"Our children urgently need early skills and access to modern technologies in order to improve their education and match the skills of their peer students in society. Within competitive employment markets and high unemployment rates, ICT skills are essential for young people in order to meet market requirements, and increase their employment chances."*
> (International Office et al., 2021).

It is widely recognised that people living in places without access to the internet have decreased possibilities of employment, as well as a limited access to printing of documents or online application forums, further hindering access to opportunities (UNICEF, 2017, 2023). Therefore, SOS CV put emphasis on digital initiatives to improve access to education and employability, in extension of their 2030 agenda (SOS Children's Villages, n.d.-d).

2.1.2 What is an Ihub?

One facet of the digital agenda specifically, was to implement so called Ihubs (Also referred to as Ihub programme or programme level in this report) where digital technology such as computers, tablets, wifi and more are readily available along with support and teachings from on-site ICT coaches.
As evident in the quote above, a heavy emphasis is put on the accessibility to the job sector and the Ihubs were therefore mainly targeted at "young care leavers" in the age between 15-25 although, in practice, there are also users outside of this demographic.

Five Ihubs are implemented in Kenya alone. In this report I will draw on a case from one of these Ihubs in a Kenyan context, more specifically the Nairobi Community Ihub (NCI) located in Buruburu, Nairobi.

The implementation phase of an Ihub consists of four steps. The first phase relies on *access and outreach* where the Ihub is established, and users are mobilized from the communities. Once the first phase has taken hold, phase two, *the skills training phase* begins where users are being trained in ICT skills by the staff. In the case of the NCI the staff teaches ICT all day and users from the CV and the surrounding communities can attend one class a day from 9-12 or 13-16, to acquire digital literacy. Many users also stay at the Ihub even if they are not in class or before or after attendance. As will also be covered throughout this report, the initiative extends further than technical skills which introduces a new set of challenges in relation to localization. Phase three builds upon new found digital literacy to create *economic empowerment* where users should be taught skills that will help them in gaining employment or accessing income generating opportunities online. Phase four encompasses further innovations that the Ihub might introduce.

2.1.3 The Nairobi Community Ihub

The NCI is placed in a building in the SOS CV vicinity where users from the CV and the community have access to wifi, computers, tablets, headphones, printers and more, as well as assistance from the two ICT coaches on-site, that that also teaches the ICT classes.
The Ihub consists of 12 rooms, where different activities can be held, connected by a long hall. In the following I outline some of these rooms and different activities in NCI:

In one of the rooms a large table is placed so that the users seated at the table can see the content. This room, called *Simba*, is primarily used for ICT teachings, although the Ihub staff is currently seeking ways to rent it out for conferences, generating extra income for NCI.

Picture 1: ICT class in session. The users are learning how to make invitations for events.

Around the corner from Simba is the *Kifaru* room with a printer, as well as seven stationary computers placed along the walls. Here the users are able to work individually and help each other with the assignments they get from the ICT coaches during class. The users do not own their own computers, so many try to be at the Ihub as often as possible. Finding time is a challenge as daily chores, work, or school also needs to be taken care of (Anonymous user, personal communication, September 12, 2023).

On the other side of the hallway is the *Ndovu* room. Here, users can sit and work on devices they have borrowed from the Ihub. This room can accommodate 8 users separated by partitions. There is a quiet and focused atmosphere here.

In a larger room, called *Nyati* or *the fireplace room*, situated on the opposite side of the building, there is a small stage where speakers and experts are invited to address users on a variety of topics including mental health, hygiene, technology, job opportunities and more. The room is also being used for self-organized meetings where the users, in groups, are able to practice theater or discuss their problems and open up to each other. For many, the the Ihub provides a sense of belonging and the possibility of networking This is illustrated by a user:

> Anonymous user: *"It's not just a place to learn, it's a place to interact with people, build a network and to grow - mentally, socially [and] in [ICT]. [...] I think most people are committing suicide and failing into depression since they don't have a place to speak up. [...] Here I would make sure that people feel loved and accepted and not just talking to them but engaging them in activities making sure that they are interacting with people."*
> (Anonymous user, personal communication, September 7, 2023).

Across the hall a room called *Chui* holds old technical artifacts that can be studied by the users to get a sense of technological development. The staff also uses this room for teaching how computers are built and how to maintain them.

Picture 2: Rodgers Ochieng (ICT coach) sharing his knowledge on CPU's to a user in the Chui room.

There is also an outside area for studying or relaxing, a dedicated work area for the ICT coach, a kitchenette, toilet facilities and a room with tablets, mostly used for leisure activities, although some research on school or community projects also take place there.

Having covered the historical founding of SOS Children's Villages, its current shift into digital aid, and Nairobi Community Ihub which I will use for a later case-study. I will now shift perspective to a global level.

Believing that a programme level perspective is needed to study the possibilities and challenges that stand in the way of localization, I make this shift to later be able to assess the gap between programme level and non-programme level practices. This enables me to find answers to the questions: What is standing in the way of localization and how should this be considered when implementing it.

2.2 A localization agenda

At the Humanitarian Summit in May 2016 The Grand Bargain (GB) was presented; a voluntary commitment by multiple major donors and INGO's. The impetus behind this joint venture was to facilitate a structural change within the humanitarian sector creating a *"level playing field where all meet as equals"* (Inter-Agency Standing Committee, n.d.). To facilitate this, the aim was to create a more direct funding to "local" actors that puts the decision-making power in the hands of the so-called "beneficiaries" of aid programmes. A later revision of the GB (also referred to as GB 3.0) emphasizes localization as a key component to realizing this potential.

Although gaining a newly found attention, especially within the last decade, the concept that localization embodies is not revolutionary. In the last two decades it has been referred to as *"strengthening of local capacities"* (Brabant & Patel, 2017). The difference however lies in the massive appeal that localization has received recently, and how this has led to local leadership and participation being a focal point in internationally led aid programmes.

In summary the localization presented in the original GB focused on more direct aid to local actors, as well as the breaking of administrative barriers. By doing so, it aimed to make aid sustainable and not as dependent on money streams from private donors.

On a more ideological level, localization can hence be seen as a self-critique from, and of the humanitarian system, that seeks to decentralize and diminish the need for remote aid and instead build local capacity. Even so, there is no concrete explanation of what localization is, since it takes on different meanings amongst various actors. (Ibid.)

With the above in mind, Brabant and Patel (2017) highlight two directions or ways of understanding localization within the humanitarian aid sector. The authors argue that the two overall understandings present different success criterias for the localization agenda and adhering strategies for reaching these goals. Thus, underlining that there is not one clear understanding or work with localization across the humanitarian aid sector (Ibid).

The first understanding presented by Brabant and Patel (2017) is called the *decentralization interpretation.* This interpretation focuses on the funding and cost-efficiency-aspects that come with localization, and puts a heavy focus on shifting the organizational structures of aid. It is therefore seen as the more *"technical-operational"* of the two. For example, for those with a decentralization approach, 25% of resources should be distributed *"as directly as possible to local actors"*. Also, the inherent idea of local actors as first responders and the focus on the cost-efficiency or practical value that comes with that, can arguably be seen as decentralization-related aspects (Ibid).

The second understanding, called the *transformation interpretation,* is perhaps more historically reflective as it, to some degree, challenges power structures between Global South and Global North actors and the status quo of aid work where premises are set by donors (typically from the North). Within this understanding, 25% should be given directly to local actors, as these have a better knowledge of the present issues, and a social or organizational structure better suited in the given environment (Ibid).

Of course, the term should not be viewed in this binary sense as heterogeneous understandings may be found even within smaller organizations.

In the following I will outline SOS Denmark's first steps into working with localization. The interpretation of localization can be viewed as a more transformative one although some variants may occur.

2.3 Localization at SOS Children's Villages

> Godiksen: *"With an organization like ours, (SOS CV) which has grown significantly over the past 5-10 years, it is clear that our systems need to be adapted to a new and larger program portfolio. Additionally, we have several million that need to be put to good use in the world. Therefore, it is not surprising that we have reached a point where we need to look at how we are organized in relation to our partnerships."* (L. Godiksen, personal communication, April 8, 2024).

In the spring of 2022 the international department (IA) reached out to Nicolai Houe to cooperate on a new strategic direction incorporating localization. Houe has previously been

working with SOS Denmark as an external consultant on strategic development and is currently the Head of Capacity Development in "Civil Society in Development" (CISU). The reason behind the outreach was that SOS Denmark has received a new directive from The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (DANIDA) to begin a localization process in relation to their partnership 'Leave No Youth Behind' (LNYB). As it was a first step into a new domain some perimeters of the initiative had to be established. During the following years, meetings were held, where it was discussed how to facilitate the process. Here some steps were agreed upon. First a coordination had to be made in regards to the meaning of localization. To do so, SOS Denmark wanted to have "listening exercises" where they would "Listen as much as we should need to explain. Or perhaps more." (N. Houe, personal communication, April 4, 2024). These exercises were originally meant to take place in Copenhagen but were changed to take place in Nairobi due to logistical reasons. Here the first workshop was put in place with representatives of the three parts of the partnership LNYB. The national directors from Ethiopia and Somaliland attended, as well as the national director who also joined for a shorter duration. Ingrid Johanson, the acting CEO of SOS CV until March of 2024, was also present and shared her perspective on localization. Moreover the meeting was also attended by programme level staff who also shared their insights.

From these preliminary sessions the definition of localization used in present day in SOS CV was formulated:

> *"Localization is a process of recognising and strengthening local leadership by shifting power and resources to local actors to advance development processes that are initiated, developed, and implemented by the affected communities."*
> (Houe & Godiksen, 2023).

From this definition, actions were then made to further integrate the localization agenda in SOS Denmark. One way of doing so was through the presentation held by Houe for the whole of SOS Denmark which also included a call for employees from all departments to attend localization workshops. The idea behind these workshops was that the attendants should work together and explore what localization contained in terms of possibilities and challenges in regards to the current ways of working. Specifically, in Houes words the idea behind these workshops was to find out:

> Houe: *"How can we integrate this agenda into the work we already do as organizations to become clearer about what we do, and how we collaborate with local partners? How can we transfer knowledge, power, decision-making authority as close to reality as possible? [...] It's essentially about ensuring that as many participants, as possible are involved as decision-makers regarding their own lives. 'If you want to make a difference in my life - please start with me.'"*
> (N. Houe, personal communication, April 4, 2024).

To reach this goal, Houe and SOS Denmark have sought to implement localization in four phases as seen below. It should be noted that a complete localization is a long term process and is expected to take hold over a 10-15 year period (N. Houe, personal communication, April 4, 2024).
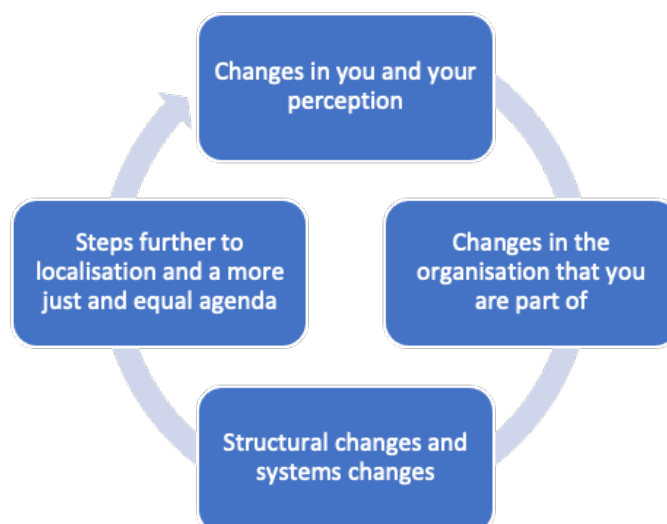
Figure 1: The four phases of implementing localization in SOS Children's Villages.
(Houe & Godiksen, 2023).

To grasp what a complete localization of the organization entails, requires an overview of the current structure. The organization of SOS CV can generally be outlined in the following way, mostly representing a top-down structure, although ways of working (WoW) are subject to change. The headquarters, also referred to as the ***IO*** (International Office), are located in Innsbruck from where it extends to the ***IOR*** (International Office Region). Generally, directives are issued from IO and IOR but being a federation there are some differences in WoW. Then there are the ***PSA's*** (Promoting & Supporting Associations) which each have their own "priority countries". SOS Denmark is characterized as a PSA and has 7 priority countries, of which Kenya is one (SOS Children's Villages, n.d.). The priority country classification entails that there is a close relationship with SOS CV offices in these countries across funding, programme management, as well as donor initiatives. Offices in these countries are referred to as ***MA's*** (Member Associations), although communication also flows through a ***regional office*** that administers multiple countries in a region. The regional office of the East African region (ESAF) is located in Kenya in the Karen district of Nairobi. The MA's are the on site partners for the roll out of the SOS CV programmes as is the case with the Nairobi Community Ihub (NCI). MA's are also responsible for the direct implementation of the programme. Lastly the ***programme level*** (such as the NCI programme) is where staff and the people that use the programmes recide. This level contains an amalgamation of site-dependent practices. In many cases, these practices also extend to the community and indirect users.

In this report when talking of the "community" in regards to the programme level it refers to a specific or group of people that are in the area of the implemented programme. Users or indirect users refers to people who are either directly engaged in ICT training sessions or uses the Ihub in other ways, or people who are indirectly affected by the users engagement at the Ihub, such as family members.

The term "local" is generally used in literature and communication in the humanitarian sector. However, in this report "local" will instead be framed as programme level and in some cases MA level.
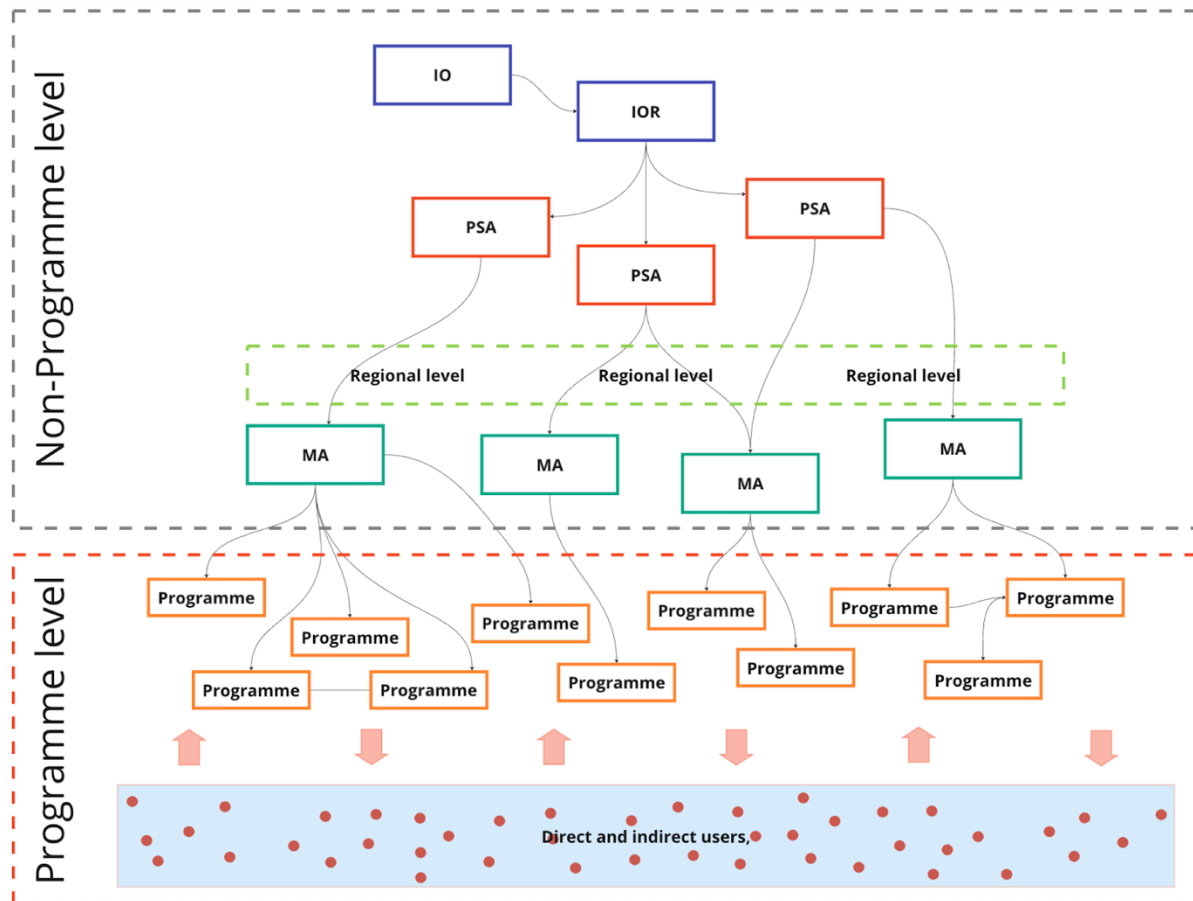
Figure 2: Digital reconstruction of drawing made by an SOS Denmark Programme Officer during a preparational meeting before doing fieldwork in Kenya. The model has been modified to fit this report. To the left the programme- and non-programme level is exemplified. The dotted lines showing which actors inhabit these.

Following the previously mentioned definition of localization within SOS CV and putting it in relation to a transformational interpretation of the term, localization in a Danish-Kenyan context thus seeks to listen to participants of these programmes and give them decision making power. This necessitates changing the top-down organizational structure to a more equal playing field, where participant, and MA opinions are listened to and acted on, on a Regional-, PSA- and even IOR- and IO- level.

2.4 Seven critiques of localization

> *"[L]ocalisation has been transformed from a policy choice to a necessary, default option—which calls for a critical interrogation of its meanings, potentialities and shortcomings."*
> (Barakat and Milton, 2020, p. 148).

With localization steadily becoming a standard for the humanitarian sector and NGOs, a critical perspective is needed to supplement decision making with reflection on its hidden challenges. Below I will share 7 points of critique I have found in literature regarding both of the above mentioned interpretations. These critiques should act as a foundation to later empirical examples from my work at SOS Denmark and SOS Kenya NCI.

1) Localization risks diminishing local actors to a cost-efficient way of reaching problem areas, thus losing its transformative meaning and instead resemble subcontracting that does not create any true empowerment or participation from local level actors. Instead, it ends up making local actors a practical extension of an international agenda.

2) What is meant by "local" has yet to be defined. This creates an array of challenges. Most dominantly, if there is no clear definition of what is local, INGO's and international donors will be able to meet localization goals by channeling funds to branches that can be deemed local on account of being in proximity to the target areas, or have a majority of a given nationality employed. This does not shift power to be more local, but could instead lead to local organizations that are larger than others gaining an advantage over other smaller grassroots such as Community Based Organizations (CBO's). These become minoritized even though they might be better suited operationally and more knowledgeable about a given issue.

3) Following this point, direct funding creates competition to live up to donor demands, even if the feedback demands do not reflect what is needed locally. This is also said to, in some cases, be the cause of pseudo participation, where LNGO's only report feedback on what they think INGO's want and not what could better benefit the project in local terms.

4) The spirit of localization is referred to as a shift in power and a new way of thinking about aid. That being said, bureaucracy makes it a slow process where much of its original incitements ends in decisions that – once again – ends up benefiting international donors and INGOs (For example sub-contracting of LNGO's and expecting too much from LNGO's that ends up overworking the employees). This in spite of the localization agenda as a means to rid the humanitarian sector of administrative processes that diminishes Global South actors' agency (such as said actors not being able to apply for funding directly.

5) The localization debate sets the norm as being that international support, -donations, and -projects would benefit from being locally grounded, but does not thoroughly consider that this perspective necessitates giving power to local actors to define what the problem and the solution is.

6) Ultimately, international donors and INGOs remain in a position of power, being the ones who evaluate whether or not localization is effective, if a systematic shift of perspective does not happen, where local actors are seen as valuable partners in the design phase of programmes. The current status quo means that international actors can – under the banner of localization – choose their agenda, decide who should participate, set demands for feedback and surveillance and coin it as a successful project if the feedback shows positive results on their international goals. They can do so even if the same project is better at solving other more locally meaningful problems than defined by Global North actors.

7) In some cases, even if participation is present, it can be undermined simultaneously if non-local actors keep demanding surveillance of how the programme lives up to international non-local targets.

This is referred to as "empowerment through external control" by Femke Mulder (2023) and can ultimately lead to users having to be part of a project that ends up not being sustainable. A practical example of an outcome of empowerment through external control is when feedback is meant for non-programme level actors to consider if it is feasible to sustain the program. This leaves no trust and wiggle room for programme level actors WoW, which diminishes empowerment and cooperation. In short, a paradox exists where programme level actors are free to do what they think is best for the programme, but only as long as it fits with donor and INGO interests (Barakat & Milton, 2020; Brabant & Patel, 2017; Gidron & Carver, 2022; Mulder, 2023; Owiso & Manji, 2020).

3. Problem statement

Backed by above knowledge, I commit to answering the following problem statement in this report:

> *How do socio-technical practices within SOS Children's Villages Denmark and SOS' Ihub programme in Kenya provide situated knowledge disclosing challenges surrounding the current localization agenda, and how can these insights foster a localization benefitting the end-user of aid-programmes across the humanitarian sector.*

4. A techno-anthropological project outlined

Having outlined the problem statement, I will now take the reader through the field as I have chosen to portray it - my project design. To do so I equip myself with the techno-anthropological triangle (TAT) for a multitude of reasons: *1)* It allows me to delineate the problem field. *2)* It makes it easier to define and distinguish between actors and their roles in the field. *3)* It guides my work towards an outcome and provides clarity as for whom these actions might provide value to, the TAT can be seen here as a compass of sorts used for navigating the problem field. *4)* It reminds me that I am not a passive observer but driven by an agenda and that this might provide a change to the status quo through careful engagement.

4.1 The techno-anthropological triangle

The techno-anthropological triangle is presented by Botin and Børsen in their book 'What is Techno-Anthropology' (2013) as a visualization of the *"techno-anthropological field"* where technology is at the center. Here, the researcher engages with the field and its actors not as a passive observer as an *"agent of change"* (Botin, 2013).
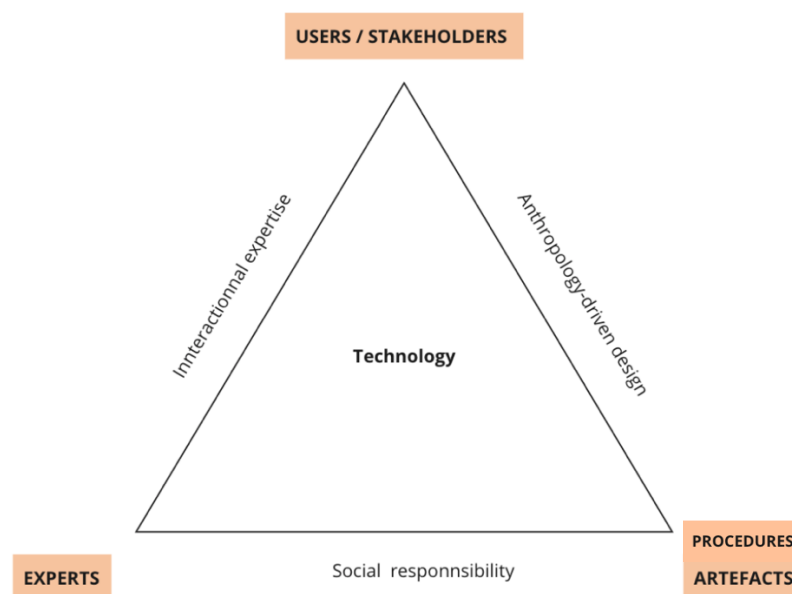
Figure 3: The techno-anthropological triangle (own reconstruction) (Botin 2013).

Expert is in this report mainly understood in a broad sense, as a draw on Lars Botins definition of an expert as *"[A]n actor that has in depth knowledge of a field of practice in relation to technology."* (Botin, 2013, p 68). Here, the line between the expert and the users might seem blurred. After all one is best able to understand one's own actions. But the expert should in this case be understood as someone that has both the ability to reflect on his/hers own practice as well as the technology that he/she interacts with (Botin, 2013). For example, an ICT coach might be classified as an expert if the person possesses knowledge about Excel, Word or how to use wifi and are able to teach this understanding to the students. Expert knowledge might also refer to practical knowledge in the same way that a tailor holds knowledge of fabric and using needle and thread.

Users and stakeholders refers to those that are using the technology or are affected by it directly or indirectly. Using this definition in amalgamation with Donna Harraways cyborg, I argue that the users are defined as an active part of the technology since their identity is tied to the technology and vice versa - they are one (Botin, 2013; Haraway, 2016).

An empirical example of an *indirect actor* might be a mother who has been able to work as a fishmonger due to her daughters putting the mothers fish up for sale online at the Ihub. In effect she takes on the role of a programme participant, a working individual and more, depending on the perspective. An example of *direct users* is found in the daughters that put their mothers fish for sale, as well as do their homework, amongst other things, at the Ihub. Identities tied to the daughters might be "students" or "salespeople" or other. The point is that users, like the experts, are not static, but that they become users and actors in different ways, due to the technologies agency and that they are in fact shaping the technology in turn leading to an iterative change in identity (Botin, 2013).

Artefacts + Procedures are the software and the hardware that the technology is constituted of as well as the processes and practices that it facilitates. As mentioned before the technology has an agency and affects the users in various ways, thus we can say that an artefact is the wifi at the Ihub and that this artefacts engagement with users fosters a number of procedures. For the user, the wifi might lead to users coming to sit and their phones. For the regional office the wifi accessibility might lead to safety procedures to protect users from scammers and online addiction and so on. Artefacts and procedures are in other words inseparable (Ibid.).

If the *poles* (the points of the triangle) represent the different human and non-human actors as well as their effects in the problem field, the *bridges* (the lines between the points) represent how the techno-anthropologist (me) moves and "constructs" between these.

As mentioned, the TAT provides me with agency. This agency is represented on the bridges. Each bridge represents its own form of product from a techno anthropological enquiry (Ibid.).

In my case the center is exchanged for a concept rather than a technology as I study localization. However, the Ihub could also be referred to as a technology in some situations and I will therefore use the term "technology" interchangeably. The point is that what is at the center of this study is the localization agenda.

Within this field I apply interactional expertise to build knowledge on user and expert practice and formulate findings to be used as the basis for an *anthropology driven design* of localization in terms of how localization should best benefit the users.

4.2 Trading zones

At all poles of the techno-anthropological triangle different actors exist that interact, identify and therefore constitute practices in relation to an artefact in their own way. These differences in practice are especially obvious when comparing practice of a PSA level to an MA- and programme level. However, at the same time as they seem to be different from each other we cannot separate them as they both, through technology, constitute each other's being. Through the Ihub, the MA, PSA, IO and IOR are programme implementers and relates to the site of implementation and its users as *"people in vulnerable positions"* (L. Godiksen, personal communication, April 8, 2024), and through the Ihub on a Programme level it constitutes the staff as being ICT coaches and having to make feedback for PSA and MA levels. The point is that each actor's identity is relational to the other through the Ihub.

As for the users, through the Ihub they become salespeople, students, community leaders and

more.

So how to define this wide and fractured field? I here draw on Collins et al. and their concept of *trading zones*. Having provided an overview of the field in the TAT, the concept of trading zones allows me to look into how the actors interact with each other and the nature of their interaction. The "trade" in a "trading-zone" is here understood as the inherent conflict or un-agreed that exists between the actors (Collins et al., 2007). If there is no conflict there is only a "zone". Collins et al. outlines these trading zones in the following way:

Figure 4: The four trading zones presented by Collins et al. in their article 'Trading zones and interactional expertise' (Collins et al., 2007).

In the matrix above Collins et al. argues that there exist four overall ways that groups can organize and communicate. Either as a homogeneous- or a heterogeneous group through either collaboration or coercion. In this report I focus on the heterogeneous row, since it best resembles the fractured nature of my field. In a later analysis I will also provide examples on how the communication and practice between the actors respectively resembles a fractioned zone and an enforced zone depending on the perspective of the actor and situation. For now I will elaborate shortly that: A fractioned field exists within SOS Denmark across silos of understanding. An enforced trading zone can be seen from IO, IOR and PSA level versus a more enforced MA-, and especially, programme level, as difference in power relations dictates decisions in spite of difference in opinions.
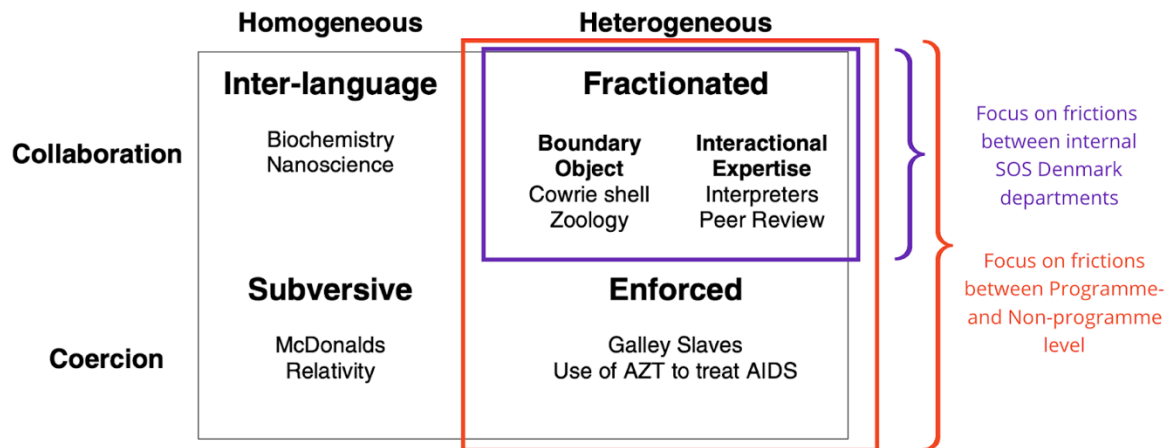
Figure 5: The four trading zones presented by Collins et al. (Collins et al., 2007). *The colored brackets and related colored squares exemplifies my analytical perspective on the different trading zones and between which levels I seek to apply interactional expertise.*

4.3 Interactional expertise: Translation across borders

In the TAT I highlighted that the techno anthropologist "constructs" between the actors in the field, and that what I intend to construct is the basis for an anthropology driven design of localization. I then concretised that there exists different meanings and conflict between the actors in the field through Collins et al. term "trading zones" and that some holds power over others. I will now focus on how I move between the *poles* and how knowledge is intercepted and communicated between the trading zones they inhabit. I refer to such a person as an *interactional expert*.

Being closely engaged in SOS Denmark and having worked for two months as an intern in Kenya some differences between practices has emerged. Working interactionally means putting differing understandings between these fields and the actors in relation to each other and trying to mend the gaps that I have found. Examples are found in the differing understandings between programme- and non-programme level actors on what an Ihub staff's role is in practice, and more.

To create understanding across above exemplified boundaries, boundary objects can be applied. Boundary objects are an analytical term that Star and Grisemer use for describing:

> *"[...] Objects that are both plastic enough to adapt to local needs and constraints of the several parties employing them, yet robust enough to maintain a common identity across sites."*
> (Star & Griesemer, 1989, p. 393).

"Objects" should here not *only* be understood as tangible although it can, but also actions and a way of presenting something to the world. The criteria is that this object "translates" meaning between different understandings.

> *"[A boundary objects] materiality derives from action, not from a sense of prefabricated stuff or "thing"-ness. So, a theory may be a powerful object."*
> (Star, 2010, p. 603).

Throughout this thesis I have used my previously gained knowledge from my fieldwork in a Kenyan programme level when engaging with my co-workers, thus enabling translating understanding and reflections regarding the programme level in relation to PSA actors. I have done so through presentations, meetings, informal talks about the Ihub in the office hallways and during interviews for this report. It is my hope that this reports findings will also act as yet another object that translates the needed understanding between trading zones in the future. This is my presence in the field - my movement between the poles.

5. Methodology

5.1 My position in the problem field

Due to my close relationship to SOS Denmark I will try to be transparent and reflect on the implications such a relationship entails. To do so, I first want to start by taking you, the reader, through my daily work at the Danish office and my fieldwork in Kenya to show you what the relationship entails .
From the what i will shortly present, I find two questions important to answer. The first has to do with *what is lost* from such close proximity to the problem field, as for example the ability to point out critical points in what one has gotten used to. The second is the antonym; *what is won*.

5.1.1 Insights from my work at SOS Denmark

I was hired at SOS DK in January in 2023 as a student worker in the 'Service department' where I work 15-20 hours a week mostly with administrative work. Practically this firstly means helping private donors with enquiries about their donorships. Examples of this could be facilitating communication between donors and the CV or making sure that donations flow to the intended programme. Besides handling donor requests I also take care of general enquiries. This could be questions or complaints about our ways of communicating or WoW with communities as well as SOS Children's Villages position in relation to conflicts and crisis situations. A typical question could be how donations are specifically made valuable in a programme level context. How they benefit the end-user.

To do my job properly it necessitates close contact with all the departments in the office such as human resources-, the finance-, the international-, the communications-, and the digital department. Hence I find myself embedded in the humanitarian sector in a way that gives me knowledge on some of the following in relation to SOS SV DK:

1. *Donor expectations and critique*
2. *Ways of communicating internally and externally*
3. *Ways of working and implementing programmes*
4. *Internal and external hierarchies*
5. *Non-programme level actors view on the programme level*
6. *The new age of aid towards localization*

The above have proved important points of knowledge for this thesis and will also influence the later analysis. In a way these insights act as points of departure for the report since they make it possible to understand otherwise hidden WoW and organizational structures:

1) First, handling requests from a donor or questions about donations from colleagues, I gain an insight into what people or a company expect to gain from their donations or why they have chosen to donate. Here I have found that a certain expectation is often tied to the donation. A donor may for example request feedback on how the money is spent or require information about the general work that is being done in the CV before donating to make sure

that it aligns with what the donor finds to be a good action. Donors may have a wide array of expectations to their own role (ie. what they require from the programme level).

2) Secondly, to communicate properly to donors and colleagues I have to be aware of the general ways of communicating in SOS Denmark and SOS Denmark's position in relation to certain topics. This knowledge is gained from emails as well as meetings and informal talks with Danish and Kenyan colleges, that all give me an embedded knowledge on how SOS Denmark wants to portray themselves and what they are building their knowledge base on. For example new knowledge could be found in academic or gray literature that changes the way that SOS Denmark communicates. This leads to new donor requests and questions which in turn puts new demands on our ways of communicating. The point is that my embeddedness provides me with insights on how there is a fragile relation with how aid is communicated that needs to live up to donor demands, while SOS Denmark simultaneously seeks to benefit programme- and MA level needs.

3) The third point is correlated to the second as WoW and 'ways of communicating' are mutually dependent. However, the reason for this point is to say that my embeddedness also provides me with a unique insight into if the WoW around aid programmes live up to what is being communicated and how communication is sometimes carefully highlighting certain aspects that fits well with donor requirements while others are more left out. This is also the case in relation to how WoW are formed by donor demands or government interests. In short my embeddedness gives me some basis of understanding on how aid is practiced and why it is practiced in this way due to internal or external influence.

4) From my position in the field I see first hand the otherwise hidden organizational hierarchies. Examples are the relationship of power between Danish aid projects and the Danish government. SOS Denmark needs to live up to standards that are set by DANIDA. Furthermore, SOS Denmark's "added value" to problem areas are thoroughly assessed to make sure that SOS Denmark lives up to government demands. Through my work I also have an insight into the power relations between SOS Denmark and other branches in the African continent and how these power relations play out in practice, be it in terms of how SOS Denmark is surveying aid programmes, how communication between the branches are facilitated and who sets the objectives.

5) As with point 2 and 3 there is a strong correlation between power relations and SOS Denmark's perspective on programme level actors and -practice. This point also relates to communication as a new focus has been put on how the Danish department frames their programme level partners. The view on the direct and indirect users of programmes also seem to be changing from terming these as beneficiaries but instead as "people in vulnerable situations" separating the person from the circumstance they are in to leave room for a targeting of root causes for a given problem (L. Godiksen, personal communication, April 8, 2024). When speaking to colleagues who are familiar with the current localization agenda it seems clear that some believe that a change of perspective, and ultimately a shift in power, starts with how the organization communicates about programme- and MA level. Point 5 thus relates to my knowledge regarding SOS Denmark's look on themselves and their outlook on their position in regards to the programme and MA level. Thereby I have seen the first steps towards the attempt for a more even playing field between programme-, MA- and actors from other levels.

6) Again, point six relates to point 5 as the current shift that I am witnessing in how aid is done on a daily basis also relates to how SOS Denmark perceives themselves and the world. I have an array of examples from my daily work, of how aid is shifting to encompass new ideas about even power structures and how aid is slowly taking a new form where building a mutually beneficial relationship is at the center. Examples include my participation in meetings where changes of acronyms that I use in my daily work were changed to not refer to MA's as National

Offices (NA) but instead "MA" so that the notion of what is "national" is not at the center. I have also participated in meetings with MA's from Malawi, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somaliland in discussions on how to enable MA to be able to apply for EU funding and witnessed first hand the hierarchy that exists between North and South actors within SOS CV, what issues are broad up and how these are met by danish colleagues.

5.1.2 Insights from a Kenyan context

Besides my daily work I have also been working as an intern in IA in SOS Denmark. Here I studied the Ihubs to relay feedback to SOS Denmark (to be used for the LNYB partnership) and SOS Kenya (in relation to their digital village initiative). On my internship I conducted fieldwork from the 29th of August until the 28th of October in 2023 at the 5 different sites where the Ihubs have been implemented in Kenya. I have continuously drawn from this experience and knowledge when writing this report. Thus, the knowledge regarding Programme-, MA- and regional levels stems from an amalgamation of documents, presentations and meetings before and during my fieldwork in Kenya.

On the 31st of august 2023 attended a meeting at the Regional Office in the Karen District of Nairobi. Present was the Regional ICT advisor, Regional ICT Director, National ICT manager and The Ihub Officer responsible for the implementation of the Ihubs in Kenya, Ethiopia and Somaliland who laid out their perspectives and future plans for the Ihub initiative. I also conducted separate interviews with each of them. Before my arrival I had received the "Digital Village Handbook (Version 3.0 from 2021)" (DVH3) and powerpoint slides on the implementation stages which was also discussed at the meeting. The DVH3 is used as a guidance tool for each MA when implementing the initiative. It has been created with input from the IO and constructed by the Regional Office. This practice is not uncommon as regional departments are often the first point of contact for INGOs.

I have also had interviews with 58 direct and indirect users of the Ihubs and focus group discussions with approximately 45 attendants consisting of users, indirect users, previous users, staff and community leaders.

Some findings I have also used more directly. Specifically fieldwork conducted on the 11th of September in Kiambiu slum has been used as a case for both analytical purposes - providing the reader insights into practices and identities of users of the Ihub programme - and methodologically, as a boundary object to facilitate a reflection during an interview.

5.1.3 The double edged sword of embeddedness

As mentioned, the above presented relation to the field creates some challenges while simultaneously posing as an argument for how I can legitimize my claims.
This is a double edged sword, and ignoring the challenges of my embeddedness would only undermine the positives. I will now share some reflections on this balancing act.

Staunæs & Søndergaard (2005) talks of "Deep hanging out" as a way that the ethnographer is able to acquire knowledge simply by "hanging out" in the field. The purpose should however not be an *active* focus on acquiring knowledge. Instead the idea is that what is gathered from sensory knowledge and impressions all help the ethnographer to understand the field that is being studied (Staunæs & Søndergaard, 2005). In my case, deep hanging out is practiced on uncountable occasions, when having lunch with colleagues, engaging in private talks as well

as topical discussions. This has helped me develop an insider understanding of the organization that would not be possible from an outsider perspective or from having less time.

Of course, the risk of such a relationship to the field is that one should be careful to not "go native", changing one's ethnocentric views to be that of the very people or thing that you are studying. Such ethnocentrism makes it harder to take an analytical distancing as things might risk becoming ordinary. Becker frames the danger of the ordinary well when he says that: *"...it takes a tremendous effort of will and imagination to stop seeing only the things that are conventionally 'there' to be seen"* (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1995, p. 103). This has also been the case on multiple occasions. Being fed with positive stories about the Ihub, and having been tasked with writing "success stories" for our communications department I have sometimes had trouble to take the analytical distancing that was required for a critical perspective. Such reflections could be: "Why is it even a problem how we talk about the local if the programme works?" Of course having becoming ethnocentric and turning the SOS Denmark practice of aid programmes into something ordinary it took effort to see that there are many perspectives to this question - even in regards to who decides how something "works" or that the term "the local" fails to describe the socially and organisationally complex networks that the term is meant to define.

This balance between the perspective of an insider and outsider is also framed in a perhaps more practical way by James Spradley in his "types of participation" (Spradley, 1980 p. 58). Here Spradley describes 5 steps of participation ranging from non-participation where one is not in relation to a problem field, to complete participation where one is fully ethnocentrically embedded or native. I have in many cases been doing what could be termed as an active participant observation in that I have had to participate myself completely in a given task, while trying to stay reflective of my role and remember important information. This has resulted in me sometimes having to quickly save emails for later reading, or having ethnographic reflections in meetings, not being able to write them down immediately.

Staunæs & Søndergaard raises some points in regards to how research is often led by corporate interests and describes this relationship as a dance - a tango - between the research between the company and the researcher (Staunæs & Søndergaard, 2005). Although being in a different setting I relate to the issue of being influenced by corporate interests. After all, I want my findings to matter and impact the current practice but is it possible to do so without also living up to the demands of the organization? Following this point, providing critical insights on a given practice to one's colleagues also comes with a set of challenges. Liebling, A. et al. points to the balancing act existing between pleasing gatekeepers of a field, building reports to gain access to knowledge, while simultaneously trying to stay "objective" (Liebling et al., 2021).

Again, a positive outcome is that one is able to acquire *emic* words by staying close to informants. Sjørslev refererer to these as: "*[...] terms ideas and knowledge within the subject area"* (Sjørslev, 2015, p. 24). Such understanding of internal language has also proved essential to better help communicate and build understanding between trading zones and different meanings as an interactional expert (Collins et al., 2007).

With my embeddedness in the field put on display and reflected on, I will now continue to lay out my meeting with localization and informants.

5.2 Initial encounter with localization

I first stumbled upon something called localization on the 13th of Ooctober. While at work I received an invitation to a "house meeting" (a common practice in SOS Denmark where all employees are invited to participate). Here a new "localization agenda" was to be presented by Nicolai Houe that would talk about the need for a new emerging practice and the work that has already been done. Having recently done my fieldwork in Kenya at the time of the house meeting on the 13th of November, I recognised many of the issues that Houe raised, especially in relation to how the end user is being communicated and that the current representation of the user in many cases is not representational.

At the meeting Houe explained how SOS Children's Villages localization agenda is currently in the starting phases and that it draws on the organization Bond's framework of anti racism and decolonization. He also highlighted some areas on which SOS Denmark is currently working in a way akin to localization and somewhere there are still some gaps or challenges that need to be overcome.
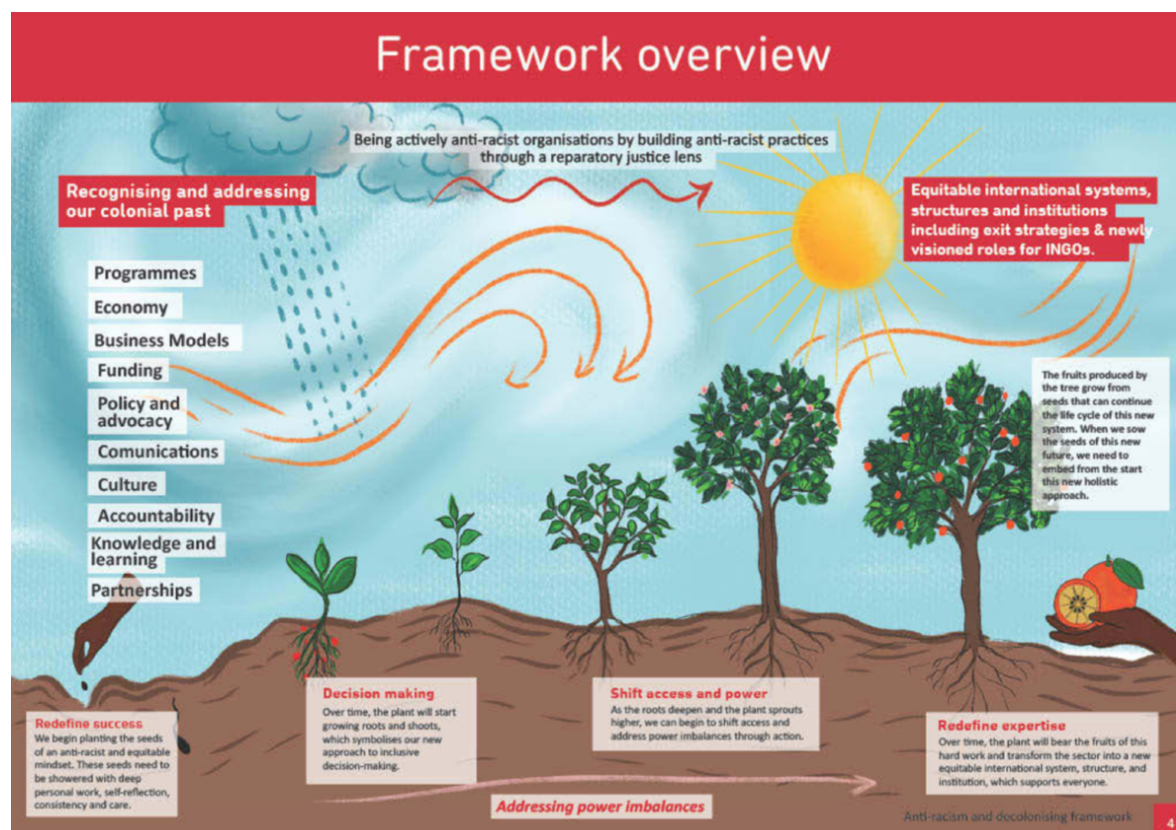
Fig 6: Bonds overview of their anti-racism and decolonising framework presented by Nicolai Houe as part of the localization meeting at SOS Denmark (Bond, 2022; N. Houe, personal communication, April 4, 2024).

In the days leading up to the presentation I was in my assessment phase of how to put some of my previous data into use. I had at that point in time, wanted to focus on the Ihubs and the aspect of participation of users building on a Participation Paradigme. However, I got a feeling that there were some deeper critical aspects to be found when attending the localization presentation – a sort of root cause to the challenges with participation. With the understanding I had from engaging with programme, MA- and regional level actors the angle of localization in SOS CV presented me with an opportunity to use this previous data to take such a critical look into areas

in which the localization turn of the organization should be aware of shortcomings and opportunities, by holding the term of localization responsible towards the end users.

5.3 Gatekeepers

Besides my previously mentioned data the report builds on four interviews of which two are with Global South actors and two are with Global North actors. The informants were chosen for the reasons stated below. All four interviews draw on James P. Spradley's semi-structured interview approach where a frame has been loosely used, allowing me to adapt and draw on the informants *"cultural scene"* instead of only relying on my own *"frame of reference"* allowing me to better build on informants' answers (Spradley, 1979, s. 47).

5.3.1 Rodgers Ochieng

I also held an interview with Rodgers Ochieng on the 29th of March 2024. Ochieng who was recently hired at the Ihub in Buruburu, Nairobi as an ICT coach has also previously worked at the Ihub as an intern. Since I knew from my visit that Ochieng has a close relationship to the users I wanted to gain his perspective on how the Ihub helps to facilitate the youth in the community, what their issues are, how the users are helped and if this posed any challenges in regards to the localization agenda. Especially I wanted to know if user issues were listened to by actors on MA-, Regional- and PSA.

To answer this I had constructed a semi structured interview drawing inspiration from Donna Haraway's Cyborg- and Annemarie Mols Multiplicity terminology. This manifested into what can be covered as three overall questions I wanted to answer: How are you practicing your role and how is that different from MA-, Regional- and PSA actors perception? How does the user practice their role and how is that different from SOS perception? Are these roles and actions breaking the status quo of humanitarian aid? And finally leading to a fourth: How can these insights be used in the localization agenda?

More practically I also sought an update on the youth group Badilisha Mtaa in case there were some updates I needed to add to the case.

5.3.2 James Mwanthi

On the 10th of April 2024 I had an interview with James Mwanthi who is also hired as an ICT coach at the Ihub in Buruburu. Although I used the same semistructured interview guide as for the interview with Ochieng, some questions changed or were disregarded due to the semi-structured approach.

Through my interview with Mwanthi I wanted to gain an insight on the relationship and work practices between the Ihub staff in relation to MA-, Regional- and PSA actors as the interview with Ochieng mostly provided me with an insight between user and staff practices. Since Mwanthi was first hired as the ICT coach the responsibilities of communicating with the MA level and regional level mostly falls under his purview.

I have previously interviewed both Mwanthi and Ochieng in relation to my fieldwork at the Ihub. We have also stayed in contact between this thesis and my internship which has helped to build a good report with both. Spradley terms such a relation as being crucial in regards to achieving a less ethnocentric view and avoid *"distortion"* in ones data and also enabling the necessary space for one's informants to go from a stage of *"apprehension"*, where the informant does not know my intentions to even *"participation"* (Spradley, 1979). The latter was also the case for me where the informant also on some occasions analyzes his own answers and relays them to me as it becomes clear when asking questions in relation to their role as social, contra technical, actors.

This built report made it easier for both to answer critical questions since they now understood my position in relation to SOS Denmark and have read my previous reports on the Ihub.

5.3.3 Nicolai Houe

I also conducted an online interview with Nicolai Houe on the 4th of April. Houe has recently occupied the position of Head of Capacity Development in CISU (Civil Society in Development). CISU is a member based organization focused on: *"advanc[ing] democracy, human rights, and sustainable development"* (CISU, n.d.). The reason for the interview was that I wanted to hear Houes perspective on localization but also learn about his relationship with SOS Denmark since I knew that he had previously worked with them as a consultant. I also saw the interview as an opportunity to get an semi-outside perspective from an actor who also has been a part of top-level strategic organizational decisions.

I had constructed a semistructured interview guide for the interview that at its core consisted of 3 different sections that the sub-questions revolved around. These sections were: What was the strategy behind the implementation of localization and what challenges they had considered or been surprised by?; How is SOS DK seeking to facilitate an equal partnership with Global South actors and how does this deviate from the status quo?. In the third section I presented the case that I had constructed from my fieldwork in Kiambiu slum, accompanied with pictures. The case (which is also presented in section 7.1) revolves around a group of young users of the NCI and the way that they use the staff and artefacts to better their own lives and their community. By presenting Houe with the case I wanted to show a programme level setting which might lead to some new insights or facilitate a deeper discussion into how localization can understand and incorporate programme level users.

> Houe: *"Well, this is a really good case and it also highlights - in my opinion - one of the sensitive points regarding this (localization). Many people tend to say: "We are localized. [...] It is pulling the wool over one's eyes. Localisation is a different process than what we worked with previously. And so, for some organisations localisation becomes a leaning back exercise of confirming that we are doing things right. 'We may have tried but it may not have been properly implemented yet.' So, there is a huge process involved. What then becomes the added value, what becomes the role for SOS Denmark going forward? It will be to help facilitate creating that local connection because there is no doubt that that [...] connection is harder. That transfer of power or decision-making authority that needs to be transferred to programme and*

community level is more difficult than it is from Denmark to the national office." (N. Houe, personal communication, April 4, 2024).

As seen above, the case helped to start reflections from Houe in regarding how to transfer decision making power to a programme level and not just between PSA- and MA levels. This helped put some perspective on how far localization has come in regards to incorporating the end-users in decision making and SOS Denmark's new role that comes with localization which has also sparked inspiration for the analysis in section 7.2.8.

5.3.4 Lene Godiksen

On the 8th of April 2024 I interviewed Lene Godiksen at SOS Denmarks office. As 'Senior Programme Manager' in the danish international department Godiksen has insights into how SOS Denmark strategizes its aid programmes and works with new processes such as the localization agenda as well as extensive knowledge on programme development and implementation processes. Godiksen was also the one who reached out to Nicolai Houe to start the localization process in a Danish context.
Through an interview with Godiksen I wanted to get her perspective on how localization plays out in practice. Holding it against the knowledge from previous ethnographic data and my interviews with Rodgers Ochieng and James Mwanthi I tried to gain a critical perspective on the localization agenda and where possible challenges and opportunities remained hidden. In other words, the interview would hopefully enable me to see where programme level actors' needs were not yet fully incorporated into a SOS Denmark perspective.

5.4 Processing of interviews

The interviews were transcribed using a mixture of Microsoft Word AI transcription mode, Sonix and qualitative evaluation where misprinted words were corrected. A rough coding of the interviews where then conducted with a theoretical frame in mind that built on: *a)* Haraways Cyborg terminology where text where chosen that contained an aspect of breaking with status quo of aid and perception of users as well as highlighted the relationship between users and staff in the program level and the programme level and MA-, Regional and PSA level *b)* Molls multiplicity terminology in terms of where discrepancies were found between the enactment of respectively the users, indirect users and staff and the MA-, Regional and PSA levels *c)* Cyborg- and Multiplicity terminology of interactional expertise and boundary objects as well as *d)* general reflections and implementation practices on localization that did not directly fit into mentioned categories.

When writing out quotes I have indicated changes to the informant's answers in the following ways: Parentheses: "()" are additions made by me such as added information in cases where reference is missing as to what the informant is referring to or an informant's action is needed to deepen the readers situational understanding. Square brackets: "[]" are used where distinctive changes to the spoken word have been made such as change of words or letters and removal of words or sentences for the sake of showcasing a chosen point.

The interviews with Lene Godiksen and Nicolai Houe have been translated from Danish using ChatGPT for the sake of time optimization and qualitatively assessed afterwards.

6. My ontological lens

In this section I will outline the theoretical foundation that my analysis is built on. To do so I will first expand on how my different theoretical "tools" play together and the overall worldview that they help to convey. The overall ontological perspective I have adapted stems from feminist STS.

As localization seeks to level the playing field and create even partnerships across organizational levels there is need for an understanding of how different actors that are willingly or inadvertently part of this agenda participate in aid programmes and if any challenges exists between actors.

I draw on Annemarie Mol's praxiographic terms **multiplicity** and **enactment** to help me highlight how the NCI is not only one, but many different technologies respective of how the programme is practiced by different actors and what meanings these actors adjoin to it. Mol's terms of *multiplicity* (that different realities co-exists due to difference in how actors use and work with a technology (here a programme) and *enactment* (the construction of reality through engaging with non-human actors) thus equips me with the capacity to map out the different programmes that the Ihub *is* (Mol, 1999, 2002).

With participation and autonomy playing a central role in localization I also seek to understand what identities the Ihub programme produces in the users and how users in turn enact the programme as these new identities. To do so, I use Donna Haraway's *cyborg* term to cast focus on issues that relate to embodiment in a technology-mediated world.
The cyborg perspective also helps to facilitate a critique on the current status quo in aid as it enables an understanding of the user that nuances the perception of the users as a "receiver of aid" to being individuals with their own identity and autonomy, in relation to the NCI (Lupton, 2013).
As such, the multiplicity and cyborg terminology helps to facilitate a new perspective on "the ordinary" in formulating a new description of the programme level users to be recognised in the localization agenda.

Throughout the analytical section I also draw inspiration from Davide Nicolinis chapter *'Zooming In and Out: Studying Practices by Switching Theoretical Lenses and Trailing Connections'* (2009) by studying localization as organizational practice which meanings are best identified when switching theoretical lenses (in a metaphorical sense). Practically this means that I will, In a later analysis, zoom in on practices in a Kenyan or Danish context to understand their effects on a specific level and zoom out to analyze their effects across levels. This provides an understanding of how practice is produced and interconnected in and by broader networks. I lean on Nicolines' argument for doing so as the most comprehensive way to understand practice and its effects (Nicolini, 2009). Following this point, it also gives a beneficial multisided dimension to studying enactments

6.1 Multiplicity: How reality is enacted

In the article *"Ontological Politics. A Word and Some Questions"* (1999) Mol presents the term *multiplicity*. With the term the author argues that different realities co-exist and are made by different actors through their engagement with non-human artifacts. Reality is *enacted* as

she calls it and is thus multiple because each individual holds their own use of a technology and in turn their own reality.

In the book *"The Body Multiple - Ontology in Medical Practice"* (2002) Mol explores how medical practice can have an effect on how we perceive and understand the body (Mol, 2002). Again, here emphasis is put on practice as what determines reality. These different realities do not by default overrule or conflict with each other. However, in some cases certain situational power structures can lead to some realities being argued as the right one due to specific actors pushing an agenda (Ibsen et al., 2022). Mol argues that what leads to this difference in realities relates to peoples historical, materiel and cultural backgrounds that are all factors that plays a part in how people enact something and thereby determine what a thing is. The author describes this focus on how realities are made real through practice in the following way:

> *"Talking about reality as multiple depends on another set of metaphors. Not those of perspective and construction, but rather those of intervention and performance. These suggest a reality that is done and enacted rather than observed"*
> (Mol, 1999, 77).

This position takes a critical stand towards positivism as it challenges the singular view on objectivity. Following this point, it is important to underline that the *multiplicity* of realities does not mean that there are different views of a singular objective reality, but that there are in fact multiple realities co-existing (Mol, 1999).

Let me provide you with an empirical example of how Mols' *multiplicity* and *enactment* helps to facilitate a new perspective on the actors.
There can be two different ways of understanding the Ihub and its agenda depending on the actors. Through MA-, Regional and PSA and IO practice - their enactment - a heavy focus is put on the programme to help raise employability opportunities of young care leavers. Thus, in this reality, actors from these levels might analyze the area where the programme was to be implemented before implementation, to make sure that the area could benefit from the opportunities an employability generating programme could create. Actors from these levels may also construct procedures on behalf of the programme level actors that fit with their perception of non-programme level enactment. In effect all such practices are ways for the non-programme level actors to enact the technology as an employment generating programme.

As for the Programme level consisting of staff and direct and indirect users, as well as the community that these constitute, the implemented programme - disregarding if users have been part of the design stages - may present something else that are not necessarily directly related to employment. For example, the programme might be enacted as a way of engaging with each other, building social networks, dealing with mental issues, personal skill development, mutual capacity building and more. So, the technology is through enactment from the user made into something else, be it a "Knowledge generating technology" or something else. Broadly speaking, a discrepancy thus exists between the programme level and actors from other levels.
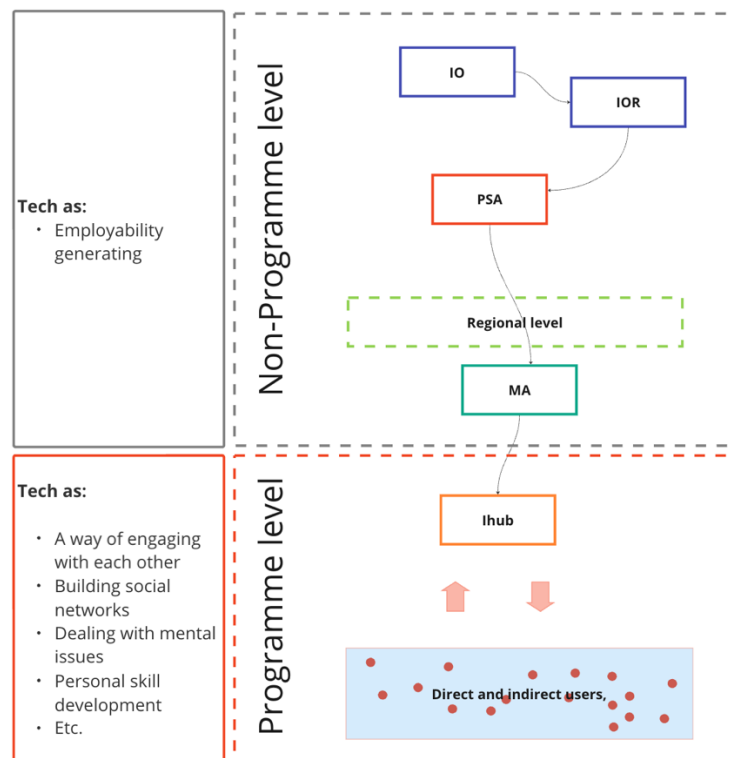
Figure 7: A cross-cut of the previously presented organizational overview, here showcasing an example of the programme- and non-programme level actors enactments of the Ihub programme as indicated to the left.

As I will later argue, bringing fourth such discrepancies in realities should be at the center of the localization agenda so that a foundation of understanding is fostered as early as possible and a bridge can be sought to be built between them, for a more programme level embedded localization.

6.2 Cyborgs: The amalgamation of human and technology

Donna Harraway is one of the central actors to the post humanist movement that seeks to decentralize the human subject. Instead, Harraway argues that the boundary between what is human and what is technology is blurred. The blurring results in what the author terms "the cyborg" - an amalgamation of the technical and human. Cyborgs does not possess a clear or coherent identity, but rather an identity that is made up from human- and nonhuman actors' interconnectedness (Haraway, 2016; Madsen & Lauritsen, 2008).

Under this premise a critical reflection on how we perceive given actors in relation to society can take place. After all, if we are all cyborgs then we all produce knowledge and identify in relation to the socio-material relationship we are a part of and thus challenges or nuances the roles that society puts on us (Madsen & Lauritsen, 2008). Connecting this notion to Mol's *enactment* of a given technology, new doors are then opened that allow for an analysis of how users, or staff or others engages in the world through a connectedness with the Ihub programme and what this engagement means. For example, in my case it allows me to ask questions related to how a new identity in the community is rising from users using the Ihub as well as questions on autonomy in relation to the users pushing their agendas through the technology in ways that they would not have been able to do without it. This helps to reveal what "hidden" possibilities

might stem from the amalgamation of the users and the programme that may not be seen from the perspective of non-programme level actors.

From this socio-material perspective follows that materiality is not passive, but "fights back" and in this way takes its position within a larger societal perspective (Madsen & Lauritsen, 2008). The user is formed by the technology as much as the other way around, and this allows for a breaking of the status quo. Within the cyborg terminology thus lies a critique of technology design processes where the user is not included: If users are always a part of the technology and vice versa but often have poor influence on decision making processes, it then constitutes a problem when technologies are implemented regardless, leading to cyborg relations (Ibid).

7. Analysis

In the following analysis I move between trading zones (different actor-levels) and zoom in out of practices within or between the levels, searching for frictions. It is my hope that putting these frictions on display will help the actors in positions of power to take the necessary actions to fulfill localization's transformative definition, equalizing the current power-imbalance.

I start this journey by presenting a case-study. Bent Flyvbjerg argues in his article *'Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research'* (2006) that case-studies help to provide research with *"concrete context-dependent knowledge"*. Furthermore, Flyvbjerg points out that one can also use such knowledge for making legitimate "*generalizations"* within a given field, and that this, contrary to popular "misconceptions", helps to develop scientific research (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

Backed by Flyvbjergs arguments about the *"force of example"* that the case-study provides, I will now present my own narrative from my meeting with a group of direct and indirect users of the Ihub programme. I do this for the following reasons: 1) it gives a *concrete context-dependent* perspective as to what identity the users hold and what enacted reality is in the community where the Ihub implemented and 2) it provides a *generalized* target as to what localization should be working towards supporting. From here follows that by having such an anchor point to aim for 3) it becomes clearer to see where there are frictions between the different levels that should be highlighted in the localization agenda, as well as if there are critiques to be found in the localization agenda itself.

7.1 Case-study: 'Badilisha Mtaa'

> *It's hot and humid in the air as I arrive at Kiambiu slum, located about 4 kilometers east of Nairobi center. The air is heavy with the smell of burning plastic trash on the uneven dirt roads that separate the rugged concrete complexes without windows and thousands upon thousands of small houses, built of corrugated metal sheets, wood and dirt. It is in this environment that 35 young people have taken it upon themselves to change their community. They call themselves "Badilisha Mtaa Youth Group & Community Ark" (Badilisha Mtaa is Swahili for: Change [the] Community).*

Picture 3: Picture from the Mathare and Kiambiu area showing the different housing situations and litter (Tushinde, n.d.).

After Ihub came into the picture in 2022, the area has progressed rapidly with the help of the group. Through the Ihub, a few members have used the computers and wifi to find knowledge online to improve their community. Projects that benefit the community have now prospered because of this new found knowledge, and new projects steadily emerge.

However, knowledge and support is not only found online. Through the Ihub the group has benefited greatly from the support from Rodgers and James, the employees at the facility. Because of their presence, the youths have daily access to strong role models that have helped them succeed in building resilience to the challenges they face, such as mental illness, drug abuse and stepping outside of their comfort zone. The group has also received more practical guidance on how to present themselves, how to build structures, how to talk about their problems, reflect on their wants and engage their community. Although money and materials are scarce, Rodgers constantly reminds them to "use what you have". *And so they do; to build their fence that protects their garden, to clean the river to stop pollution, and seek funding for their projects as well as an array of other life improving undertakings*

.

Teresa, who herself lives in Kiambiu, is my guide through the maze of what seems to be improvised shops and homes, which together constitute the reality in which about 50,000 people live every day. Along our walk she repeatedly points to things and explains - and on a couple of occasions raises her voice to tell people off that get too curious about my peculiar presence. "He's drunk" *she says after a man confronted me in a slurred voice.* "Many people here turn to drugs or alcohol" *she continues, giving the incident a seemingly commonplace stature. Without her this place would be hard to comprehend and navigate for foreigners such as myself.*

Today, Teresa is an older woman who has lived her entire life here in the slum where she has become a strong and experienced role model for the group, constantly passing on her skills and teaching the youth group a new mindset of engaging oneself. She tells them to think with their heads and not with their

stomachs in order to develop and sustain themselves, just as she herself has learned. They all refer to her as "mother".

5 minutes after walking through the unproclaimed borders of Kiambiu to Kiambiu slum, Teresa leads me across a small bridge over - she tells me and points - "The Nairobi River" where, shortly after, two members of the group approach us and greets us. They tell me to follow them to their office which is nearby.
Teresa, 15 members of the group, and I converge in their office, a small blue building which the group rents, constructed of dirt, wood, and corrugated metal sheets. Outside on the facade they have written in large uppercase letters: "Badilisha Mtaa" (Swahili for "Change Community"). Along the walls inside, plastic chairs are placed, which they occupy one by one. In the middle of the room, on the dirt floor, stands a pool table, against which I lean. This is our space for discussion for the next hour or so where we talk about problems in the area and how they use the Ihub to combat these.

Picture 4: From the right: Johnson, Patrick, Ramadan, and an unknown group member in front of the Badilisha Mtaa office in Kiambiu.

They put words to their reality where many young people have nothing to do because job opportunities are scarce and where one's network is the most important thing to have if you want to survive. If one does not possess such a network, especially young people are more likely to be drawn towards a life of drug

abuse, mental problems, violence and more. For many, the lack of job opportunities imposes a life of crime to get through the day.

But today, things are slowly changing. Ramadan, a member of the group, laughs while reflecting humorously on the change: "If you had visited this place a year ago, you would have come out with only your shoes on. You would have been robbed of everything". And you can sense the development that has taken place over the last few months. Ramadan was taken in by the group when he was in a difficult place in his life. He had turned to drugs and faced death, but the group took him in and gave him a purpose. And Ramadan is not the only one, more and more members are joining the group.

At my side stands Patrick, helping to direct the conversation. He was unanimously elected as their leader. Patrick has undergone education through SOS Kenya and when asking the others why Patrick was chosen it is mentioned that part of it is that the education has given him the skills that have contributed to him being a good leader but that he also has a natural ability for it.

Patrick explains that the community they have formed here gives them empowerment, and that the network they build is crucial to getting the opportunities in life that allow them to develop. He mentions that it started when James called them and told them about the Ihub. Since then, James and Rodgers, who also work in the hub, have helped them with how they can use the programme and guided them in some of their projects.

Also present in their office is Johnson, who is Patrick's second-in-command, and together they are responsible for keeping track of the many tasks that must be solved on a daily basis in the group and the community. There is plenty to do.

After our talk, Patrick, Johnson, and Ramadan eagerly show me their many projects, all of which in one way or another contribute to improving life for themselves and their peers in the slum. All the projects relate to the Ihub in some way.

First they show me their garden. We must pass through a narrow wooden door to enter, and once we're through the passage, a flourishing green patch reveals itself, where the group has planted various vegetables. There is a calm and almost idyllic atmosphere, standing in stark contrast to the life unfolding on the other side of the thin enclosure of rusty metal sheets, wood and old, torn pieces of fabric. Patrick, noticing that I have my eyes on the enclosure, points to it and smiles as he explains that the construction is the result of "using what you have".

The garden is located next to the river and is still in a testing phase. The river is filled with plastic and other kinds of health hazardous waste, so the group seeks knowledge through the hub on how pollution can affect the plants and, in turn, the body when ingested. Additionally, when it rains heavily, the river can overflow its banks, so the group has paused on investing more into the garden until they know the risks.

Picture 5: (Left): *Patrick and Johnson are seen showing the garden the group is currently experimenting with. In the background is the fence that is made with the mentality of "using what you have".* (Right): *The polluted Nairobi River next to the fenced-in garden.*

At the Ihub, James and Rodgers have also helped give the group the necessary skills to make and present a project that seeks to clean up the polluted Nairobi River, for a local innovation panel.

> Ochieng: "They (the group) wrote it (the project and presentation) from scratch and they did not know computers (before). So, we aided them [in] gaining the skills and acquiring the knowledge that [they] have [...] because they were not computer literate, [...] Johnson, Patrick and the team. [T]hey had a deadline whereby if they didn't provide any documentation or any presentation, they [wouldn't] qualify to contest for the funds. It's a major [...] success story for us [...]. Many youths are coming over here (to the Ihub) because they saw what we did for those, how it has helped them, and how it has impacted their lives positively."
> (R. Ochieng, personal communication, March 29, 2024).

With the newfound knowledge on using the digital technology and drawing on the employees at the Ihub, the group was able to win the grand, which consisted of 130.000 Kenyan shillings which enabled them to start a cleanup process that they hope will have a positive impact on their own projects as well as the community's overall health.

Picture 6: (Top left): *From the left: Patrick, Johnson and an anonymous group member working on the ground plans of their project to clean up the river.* (Top right): *Closeup of ground plans over their projects.* (Bottom left): *The group members, and Ihub staff showing the grand of 130.000 Kenyan shillings won by the group for their project to clean the river.*

Next to their garden, car tires are buried in a way so that they stick up above the ground at knee height and the group can sit comfortably on them. They have been put side by side in a long u-shaped row, under the shade of a tree. The tires and the space in the middle constitute the group's so-called "meditation area" which has its opening facing the garden. The meditation area acts as a space for knowledge sharing where the members meet every day and talk about what they have learned from the Ihub and their personal problems, a trait they have also picked up at the Ihub with the help from the staff. Mental problems constitute a major issue in the area, and having a safe space to talk about saves lives, although some, especially men, do not know how to speak about such issues.

We move out of the group's space into the community. Just outside the entrance to the garden is an open area that the group has big plans for. Here they want to create their own hub, a place where especially young people can develop their talents. They want to spread the benefits that access to computers and the internet has given them to others through this place. But it is about more than digital skills and artefacts. Just as the Ihub has done for them, they want this place to provide their peers with a space where they can get help with their everyday challenges. They want to do so by providing what they term as "focus" through access to knowledge and combat the idleness that in many cases leads to a downward spiral.

Picture 7: (Left): *Meditation area occupied with group members and Teresa.* (Right): The group standing on the area they have reserved to build their own future hub.

A group of young children has joined us, they are younger siblings of the group members. Patrick explains that they want the place to be passed on to their siblings and for them to carry on their work. They think that a place like their own hub would be able to help their younger siblings discover their talents and strive toward their goals from an early age which could help them have a less challenging life.

We move on to another small house. To enter, one must pass through a hole cut in the wall in such a way that what is on the inside cannot get out. In this small yard, the group keeps rabbits and ducks, which they sell online through the Ihub. In the Ihub, they have also researched how to run an online business and do marketing. Since the group spread its business online, sales have increased, and over the last 7 months, they have managed to sell 150 rabbits. The money from the sales goes to the group's collective loan-pool and projects.
In this small courtyard, a member of the group, Rashid, acts as the caretaker of the animals. Rashid is blind, and as we talk, he absentmindedly gazes into the air, holding his white cane in one hand. Because of his handicap his access to the outside world and information is limited. So Johnson and Patrick make sure that one of the first things they do when they return from gathering knowledge from the Ihub everyday is to pass it on to Rashid.

When walking from the courtyard to another of the group's projects, Rashid hands the white cane to Ramadan and switches it for a pickaxe, which he then begins to turn the soil with. The piece of land that Rashid is working on is to become another garden, Ramadan explains. This will provide additional income for the group as they will be selling the vegetables and roots they get from the garden through the Ihub in the same way they are doing with the animals.

Picture 8: (Left): Patrick showing the rabbits that the group sells. Behind him are also cages for other animals such as chickens. (Right): *From right to left: Ramadan and Rashid showing how they are preparing another garden to be able to sell the crops.*

The group has also developed a system of hoses that transport water to several of the residents in Kiambiu. The idea was developed through the Ihub, where the group researched how water can be transported and came up with an idea on how garden hoses could be arranged to provide water to some of the households in the community. The hoses are buried under the dirt roads in the slum except for its connecting parts where multiple hoses meet. Here they stick up above the ground so the part that connects them can be screwed on and off and repaired if necessary. An elevated water tank ensures that there is pressure so the water is distributed to the household.

Finally, the group has also created a soccer field where people can come and watch matches. On the outer edge, they have planted trees so the spectators can stand in the shade. Many members of the group have formed a football academy and have been able to register into FIFA online with the help of Rodgers and the devices at the Ihub.

Ochieng: "They're also doing the tournaments and all that. Just to keep the youths around Kiambiu busy, for them (the community) to be engaged and not to be idle. [W]e encourage Patrick and Johnson [...] because they have a lot of influence in their place"
(R. Ochieng, personal communication, March 29, 2024).

Some hours after my arrival Patrick and Teresa followed me back to the Ihub which is located around 150 meters from the northern border of the slum. On our way we pass the large soccer field the group has made. They explain that it's not easy to hold onto such large areas even though their group is respected around these parts and many in the community see the potential they are creating. Vacant slots are scarce, and the group has trouble keeping the space free for community benefitting activities. The same issue is present in regards to the plot of land where they dream of building their own hub.

Picture 9: (Left): The water-hose system built by the group, with the connecting parts revealed above the ground. One hose can be seen going into the house on the right. (Right): Teresa and Patrick on the football field made by the group. The trees they have planted for shade can be seen in the back to the right.

Under the leadership of Patrick and Johnson, the Badilisha Mtaa Youth Group has established a daily routine:

They wake up early every day and meet in their office at around 6am in the morning. Here, they start the day by going through their own and the community's needs, after which they delegate tasks to all members, seeking to solve these in a smaller or larger scale.

From 9am-10am, most days, Johnson and Patrick go to Ihub to gather necessary knowledge that they need to develop and work on their projects. Then it's "hustle time" as the members call it. Here the members work on scraping together money through various informal jobs such as selling water from their water tank while some members stay guard of their areas and ensure that the area is not taken by others.

When the day's work is done, a portion of the money is divided among the group for future projects and for their loan fund which each individual is able to apply to draw from if in need.

To end the day, in the afternoon they meet in their meditation area thereafter most of them head down to the field to play soccer.

7.1.1 The Cyborg of Kiambiu Slum: Some comments on user practice

So what can be learned from the case I have presented? Let's take a look at how the Ihub programme is enacted on a programme level. As mentioned this should provide an anchor point, keeping the user central in highlighting discrepancies by looking into how the programme is enacted differently between different organizational levels.

When beginning to take notice of the direct and indirect effects that a programme such as the Ihub can have on the community it becomes clear that there is a need for a new way of looking and perhaps engaging with programme level actors. After all, despite what might be written on a programme formulation in an office in Austria, such actors engage with the technology on their own terms. In this case the boundary between technology and human has become so blurred that we can no longer separate the programme and the user. I would even argue that the programme now more resembles a state of mind inherent in the user or an identity that holds agency, digital and social skills and networking capacity. This new identity is a new type of programme participant that does not resemble the "beneficiary" of the past. Instead we find a capable, self-organizing, co-constructive body of actors.

This "Cyborg of Kiambiu" made up of the programme and the users enacts a set of different realities. First, with the mentorship the group receives at the Ihub, the group enacts a "social gathering place" through which they are able to self organize, enabling them to delegate workflows and create income and loan groups. Furthermore, the importance that has been put on dealing with social issues in the Ihub has been taken up as a priority of the group that they have implemented themselves. Thus the mental attitude and ideas that stems from the group's meeting with the Ihub permeates their daily habits.

Secondly the Ihub is enacted as a *knowledge generating programme* which constitutes two things: First, through access to knowledge (in combination with mentorship) the group is enabled to find a "focus" as they term it; something to strive for that keeps the members out of negative engagements with their environment. Furthermore, the digital and cooperative skills they have gained enables them to seize opportunities that would otherwise be out of reach such as is the case with the funding that were able to procure from the innovation fund.

These two overlapping enactments create a third layer which has to do with how the group actively uses the Ihub to alter the reality in which they exist. This is seen in already mentioned ways of procuring funds to clean the river for the community, leading to a better state of the area in general. The breaking of the status quo both in relation to how they are perceived but also in relation to their area, can also be found in how the group plans to construct a hub for the younger generation to keep ensuring a continued positive change in the future.

7.2 Assessing the gap between identity, practice and localization

In the following eight sub-sections I put a Programme-, MA-, Regional, and IO level on the enactment of aid programmes and localization and how these overlap or cause discrepancies in how aid programmes or localization itself are practiced. These sections by and large cover:

1. How programme level actors enacts the Ihub programme
2. How programme level staff perceive their identity in relation to non-programme level actors perception of them
3. The exchange and power relations between programme- and non-programme levels
4. How progress and programme targets are measured on a non-programme level in relation to how the programme actors measures progress
5. The paradox of localization under a surveillance paradigm
6. Internal frictions and bureaucracy in SOS Denmark
7. Changes in organizational structures and WoW towards a localization agenda.
8. Committing to a new role of the PSA (and some reluctancy)

7.2.1 Perception and practice of the Ihub-programme

To the programme level actors, as showcased above, the Ihub can be a big success since here the Ihub is enacted as a social gathering place, an incubator of ideas, as something that gets people a purpose. However, from the perspective of non-programme actors, programme level actors do not always get to choose what should be the target of the programme. In the case of the Ihubs specifically, a focus was put on the Ihubs as an employability generating technology for mending the digital divide in Kenya through technical skills by non-programme level actors. But as we see, the Ihub programme is made into *more* by the programme level actors (section 6.1; figure 7).

Ultimately, failing to address this uneven power balance means: When the success criteria is termed as being that the Ihub for example must create jobs but fail to do so, it will be seen as a failure for the actors who determine the reality that is enacted while simultaneously providing a value on a programme level.

In the following Mwanthi addresses this paradox in how the Ihub provides a space for the young people of the community to learn from each other and find ways of living that also not necessarily is dependent on accessing the job sector.

> Mwanthi: *"One of the ways I feel like we can make the community a better place for these young people [is]: [...] We have this group where we have a young person who is doing farming, rearing chickens. [He] is a blind student. And we are incorporating that [the Ihub participants] are going to have a discussion on some of these activities which these young people are doing in the community. How can the other youths be able to do that, because this guy is earning from the chicken farm and [is] also doing vegetables. How did he do it? [W]e are also planning to go and visit his farm in groups so that he shows us and we are able to learn. And seeing that he is blind… (stops mid-sentence). They will be able to feel challenged and see they are able to do activities in the community and get money from that."*
> (J. Mwanthi, personal communication, October 4, 2024).

Here Mwanthi comments that the Ihub shows the youths different ways of living than relying on employability. An opportunity that is made possible through him and Rodgers at the Ihub that step out of their roles as being technical ICT-Coaches. An enactment of the technology as a social gathering and learning place is carried out here that once again is different from a non-programme level enactment. Instead of curating the users towards the job market they provide a safetynet where the technology is practiced in amalgamation with the community.

> Mwanthi: "*Other things we discuss with the young people is they do not have to rely on employability. They can do self employment. And, after having these skills now, they know they can begin small business enterprises whereby they can find a small room and put computers and (in) those computers, they can install applications like games, they can install applications for word processing, whereby they can be charging a fee to the other community members to utilize their enterprises.*
> *When we are discussing [...] employability and entrepreneurship skills. We involve members from outside who are experiencing this and they are able to tell the young people to go out of their comfort zones because most of them are in their comfort zone. Yeah. So to go beyond that and come up with ideas."*
> (J. Mwanthi, personal communication, October 4, 2024).

Rodgers Ochieng also conveys the point of the Ihub as a social gathering place. In the following quote he explains that there is a drive and motivation to make positive changes that comes with the technology:

> Ochieng*: [...] "This has been like an incubator place for them (the participants), whereby they're hatching different ideas by using the resources that we have at the Ihub. Because we are providing them with internet, we provide them with computers so they can be able to sit down and see, like: "ah, what can I do with my free time? I'm good at this. Let me do this. Who is going to help me on this? Let me contact James. Let me maybe contact Rodgers... Rodgers, how can I do this? I would like to do this, and how can I do this?" And then I give [them] my perspective and how I am able to help [them]. That is how we are doing things over here at the Ihub."*
> (R. Ochieng, personal communication, March 29, 2024).

Drawing on Donna Haraway's Cyborg terminology, what can be derived from this quote is that the programme facilitates new ways of engaging with the world and new capabilities for the users. The combination between the technical artifacts such as the internet and computers gives a new dimension to the ways of enacting with the world in the area. It is no longer possible to distinguish the user from the artifact because it has influenced their ways of being. Examples of this are users engaging in youth groups that has been made possible through the social fireside room at the Ihub, which would not have been possible without the youths ability to work together and teach each other, a skill that has derived from the ICT classes, where objectives are solved together and the youth are engaged. Furthermore, the ability to create powerpoints, to write emails, to seek for local funding through the internet and engage in competitions have all become a part of the group of users of the Ihub. Notice that none of this is related to employability (at least directly). Instead these examples represent a reality where togetherness, purpose and creativity are at the center.

When asking Rodgers Ochieng and James Mwanthi about how they feel that their work is being perceived this point becomes more clear. The enactment of the Ihub as an employability generating programme is by programme level actors seen as a non-programme level misconception of the values that it provides. The identity that the technology facilitates is overlooked since the user wants and needs formulated by non-programme level does not fit the

new identities of the users and staff. As a consequence, the programme misses out on opportunities for programme level enactments.

To combat this, Ochieng and Mwanthi are curating the youth that come through the doors by enabling them to work on whatever projects they want to work on. This means that instead of only teaching ICT-related skills, soft skills are also in focus. The enactment of the Ihub as a gathering place and identity generator, as well as other programme level enactments, are thus prioritized over the enactment of an employability generating Ihub where ICT- and marketing training alone would suffice to meet the target of employment and digital literacy.

To make sure that the needs of the community are better lived up to, Ochieng has even established so called "mentorship programmes" where he engages the youth in activities that empowers young users with the ability to engage and motivate themselves; something he would like the non-programme level actors to bear in mind.

> Ochieng: *"I would like them (the non-programme levels) to know about the mentorship programs that I handle because clearly they don't [...]. I would like to let them realize that the area has different spaces whereby it conducts different activities apart from it being [...] as people maybe say "[...] an ICT place whereby they don't do much apart from ICT". As you've clearly seen, as you clearly heard [...] there's a space (in the programme) to do the mentorship programmes. And also [...] what they need [...] to know is that it's supposed to be also a studio for the youths to engage in. Apart from them just learning and all that, they can be able to acquire some skills or develop themselves [...]. Because, most of the youth that [we] teach over here, they're not [...] going to [...] the ICT-sector. We actually did a small survey whereby I asked [...] all the members "just write down, after you're done acquiring this skill: What are you going to do with it and are you going to follow this path of ICT?". Do you know, we had around only 15 people out of 50 who were going to pursue a career in the ICT industry. Most of them were just acquiring the skill [...] for them to be able to be computer literate. That was the agenda. Apart from that they won't pursue any ICT skill, but they loved the mentorship programs."*
> (R. Ochieng, personal communication, March 29, 2024).

The friction between the enactments of the programme that is present in the quote persists perhaps because of a missing understanding or participation of the programme level reality from the side of the non-programme level actors. Because of the lack of autonomy facilitating a discussion on the subject is an action that is challenging to start from a programme level but has to be initiated by non-programme actors.

Ultimately, decision making power still resides in the MA-, Regional-, PSA-, and IO levels which means that the status quo is preserved. This uneven power balance enables an enactment of the Ihub as something that is not in accordance with programme level actors' reality. And since the programme level actors and the programme is amalgamated they must comply when changes to the programme are made.

> Mwanthi: *"Now when the regional office started this [...] Cisco training program they gave us [...] a goal that by the end of June, we should have reached [...] at least a hundred [...] members. So that's something I'm working on. So those are some of the goals we are given. [...] [B]ut*

in general, the goals or the objectives which I have is [...] this targeted outcome towards the students or the members within a certain framework. So [...] when I write [...] an appraisal form, [...] by the end of June, [it highlights] [...] what I have achieved.”
(J. Mwanthi, personal communication, October 4, 2024).

When non-programme level actors implement such new initiatives with new goals that fall outside of programme-level enactment the programme level staffs enactment gets harder to achieve due to a higher workload, while also making it harder to live up to non-programme level demands due to a misconception of users wants and needs.

7.2.2 The socio-technical experts? How programme staff self-define

What does the non-programme level enactment mean for the perception of the Ihub staff and what challenges does this conception foster? While Mwanthi and Ochieng are hired as ICT coaches that, on paper, teach digital literacy, their roles, in practice, expand into the purview of a social worker. Ochieng explains how he often steps out of the role he was told by MA-level actors he would possess, to one that better accommodates the needs of the users.

Ochieng: *“I undertake, like, the mentorship role most of the time because currently our youths (users of the Ihub) are struggling with maybe being abused from home [...] and [...] maybe some of them are even depressed because of [...] different backgrounds [...]. So I tend to create an open space for them to be able to [...] talk to me. [...] [They] can just come and tell me [...]: "Today I was beaten at home because of this and this. I came home late, I did not feel well" [...] stuff like that. And then me, I can be able to create time and talk to [them] because, you know, if you engage with these youths, you will be able to see how they are challenged a lot and most of them don't talk about [their challenges], especially the boys. Because, [...] they think that they are tough. But you [can] see on how they behave towards other people, how they get aggressive, how they conduct themselves. [...] (Gives an example) [S]omeone comes to the hub, he has not showered [...] their clothes are dirty. That is someone who is dealing with something. [...] Apart from me being the trainer, I can be [...] the person to confide to as well. [...] So [...] I deal with a lot of issues. [...] I realized that part as well.”*

Me: *“It sounds like you're becoming more than a technical expert.”*

Ochieng: *"Yeah." (laughing) “It's like I'm trying to give myself a new role.”*

Me: *“The socio-technical expert.”*

Ochieng: *“Yeah, exactly. That's the word.” (laughing)*
(R. Ochieng, personal communication, March 29, 2024).

In this quote from Ochieng it is exemplified how the Ihub programme is enacted by the staff as a way to help young users with the specific issues they are dealing with and that this change also has an impact on their identity.

As now exemplified, there are frictions between the organizational levels of the aid programme. So, where does localization fit into this? Again, we we stick to the SOS CV localization definition of "*recognising and strengthening local leadership by shifting power and resources to local actors to advance development processes that are initiated, developed, and implemented by the affected communities.*" (Houe & Godiksen, 2023) it would mean gaining insights from- and creating room for a further facilitation of an already existing programme level enactments. Ultimately, in the case of the Ihub this would also mean changing the programme target to one more easily enacted and understood across trading zones.

If programme level enactment is put at the center of the localization agenda it could create the needed acknowledgement of the self organization, and self-defined roles in the community to ensure that it benefits the users. In the following statement James Mwanthi exemplifies one way the non-programme level actors could take into account the community needs:

> Mwanthi*: "[W]e could be having discussions on youth wellness in terms of awareness, entrepreneurship skills, drugs and abuse, those things. We could be having open forums in which we could be having such discussions and many more which affect young people. Apart from now having the (laughs while finishing sentence) ICT training."*
> (J. Mwanthi, personal communication, October 4, 2024).

Mwanthi continues to comment on his surprise as to how his perceived role as an ICT-coach did not fit the reality practiced amongst the users at the start of his employment.

> Mwanthi*: "Let me be frank, when I was applying for this role or for this job, it was advertised as an ICT coach. And those were the [...] description of the responsibilities and mostly, [...] actually entirely, it was about training ICT skills [...]. But I won't mind doing other activities because that's learning."*
> (J. Mwanthi, personal communication, October 4, 2024).

What we find here is ultimately how Mwanthi committing to users' needs identifies him in a newfound socio-technical role that demands alterations to the enactment of the programme to - again - better accommodate these users' reality. When young users come with their issues, Mwanthi does not say no but engages with the users on their terms. Because of Mwanthis amalgamation with the programme his change in perspective towards the users reality facilitates a change in the programme itself, in that it, through Mwanthi, now is enacted as other than an employability- and digital literacy creating technology. In short, Mwanthis change in perspective on what the users' needs are, facilitates a change on the whole programme level and an enactment of the programme as something *other* than what was conceived by non-programme level actors.

New identities springing from the Ihub programme are not limited to the staff. As we have already seen with the Badilisha Mtaa case It also extends to the users in the community, and when asking Mwanthiwe also find that the users present *on site* to some degree changes identity through an amalgamation with the Ihub and staff:

> Mwanthi: "*Actually, Fredrick is a good guy [...] who has been volunteering some of the time to assist [...] especially when I give them assignments - the practical assignments. [...] [H]e is able to go around and assist, and sometimes he gets his own class, but under supervision [...]. And he does very well."*
> (J. Mwanthi, personal communication, October 4, 2024).

The identities now begin to blur the line between experts and users as described in the tech anthropological triangle (section 4.1). In other words the Ihub also facilitates new roles that are not described in the DVH3 and thus remains hidden to non-programme levels including donors. This situation seems ironic since there is still a reluctance from the MA level to let NCI act as an autonomous body driven by the community, when practically it is already community run. Rodgers Ochieng underlines this point:

> Ochieng: "*Currently, most of them (the users) just help me because I've taught them on printing and also on photocopying, scanning and all that. So they help me on bureau services. If we don't have [...] an attaché at the front desk over there, because I've trained them, that are some of the skills that they know. So maybe if I'm handling a class or [...] a matter on the other side (in the CV or the office buildings), and there is a client who has come to take [...] services [...] I can be able to call any student that we have here. He or she can be able to conduct the activity very, very well and efficiently. [...] And also, uh, if you have maybe [...] a major cleanup of the equipment or maybe maintaining the equipment over here (they can help with that). So we [,,,] engage them [...], as part of them learning on how to be able to maintain the equipment and facilities at the Ihub."*
> (R. Ochieng, personal communication, March 29, 2024).

The effects of non-programme levels miscategorising identities that comes from the amalgamation of the users and the Ihub and the enactment of the Ihub across the programme level has some negative effects on the effectiveness of the Ihub for all involved actors across *all* levels: For the programme participants it means that there is reluctance to implement programme changes that stray too far from a non-programme level enactment of the Ihub as an employability and digital literacy generating technology and that such initiatives much be approved according to the target and budget of the non-programme level. As we have seen, digital sub-programmes such as the CISCO-initiative are for example prioritized over fewer ICT classes. For the non-programme levels the programme level enactment of the Ihub may cause unwanted results that do not meet set targets for employment and donor demands.

In the following example we additionally see how the misperception of the users identity resulted in the MA level actors enacting the programme as an *income-generating programme*. Mwanthi contemplates on this perception of the users and their reality:

> Mwanthi: "*They (non-programme level actors) need to do that [...] community analysis in terms of assessing and using the Ihub. Because most of the discussion which has been tabled is about how sustainable we can be (in regards to monetary income). So before that, sustainability can come in a maximum [...], we need to, to know some*

things [...]. [T]he Youth and education manager [...] works from the National office. She's the one coordinating [...] all the Ihubs in the country. And she's trying to come up with a way in which these Ihubs they are going to be very self-sustainable.

In one of the statements she [said], [...] that "these young people", "we should be getting a lot of money from these". Ummm yes, if it was possible. But you see, what is our target? Who are we trying to target? Because if we want a lot of money, these people who have a lot of money, they can get these services from universities or colleges, they can access that. But who are we targeting? The person in the community who might not have that income. So [...] we need to see [an] analysis of what amount are they able to pay [...] so that we don't say we need a lot of money [...] and [...] when you're going to ask for a lot of money, then they are not going to be able to pay."

(J. Mwanthi, personal communication, October 4, 2024).

A missing analysis of the reality enacted by the community and enactment in relation to the programme can thus lead to detachment to the agenda from users and staff since they cannot live up to the enactment of non-programme level actors. Ultimately this might lead to the Ihub not being able to target those most in need of it since these non-users' reality will not be compatible with the enactment of the Ihub as an *income generating programme*.

7.2.3 The hidden exchange

In spite of exemplified frictions, the programme- and nonn-programme levels are co-existing. But how so? In her article, Femke Mulder points to ways that programme actors are able to make sure that international demands are met while maintaining their own enactment through what she calls *impression management* (Mulder, 2023). I have found that there are some parallels to this in regards to the programme level actors at the Ihub, in that these actors seek to give the impression of living up to non-programme level perceptions while maintaining their own agenda. The point is that programme actors' enactments are to some degree concealed by programme staff. This section seeks to answer *how* and *why* that is.

When programme level actors are excluded from decision making-processes a multitude of cascading events happen throughout the chain of implementation. First, if not these actors are listened to and their ideas implemented in the programme design, non-programme actors might risk valuing more broad issues over programme level enactment, which leads to a lack in solving the actual needs of the community (Ibsen et al., 2022). This is a balancing act, because, who determines what is the right problem to solve? In the case of the Ihub, the core problem that non-programme actors found was one of lack of employability and missing digital literacy. And because of this, from this point on, the Ihub is enacted by non-programme actors as a employability generating programme. In turn this means that an identity is put on the employees of the Ihub that fits this description. "ICT coaches" are in this non-programme actor reality technical experts that give the youths the needed digital literacy that has been assessed is needed in the contemporary digital Kenya to penetrate the job-market. The user's identity is also perceived as being with the technology in a way that promotes digital skills. Of course, as stated through the case study this is a misinterpretation of the programme level actors enactment.

Commonly, SOS Children's Villages work with feedback on their projects. The reason being that it must be conveyed to MA-, Regional-, PSA levels and donors how the problem that was determined from the preceding analysis has been mitigated through received earmarked funds. With an enactment of the Ihub as employability generating and a view on staff as technical experts and the users as learners of digital literacy, the feedback frameworks put emphasis on aspects that fits into these perceptions even though it might deviate from the enacted reality on a programme level.

> Mwanthi: "*The feedback frameworks come from the national office and also from management. [...] We (at the Ihub) are looking forward to introducing another form of feedback, because, you see, there are outside variables which we cannot control. Whenever you have a program there's that qualitative value. In terms of employability, getting money, there is that quantitative value. When [...] you [measure] in terms of employability it becomes a challenge [...]. This is something I've been discussing with my peers: What value is employability, because, yeah, some of the youths after this, they go and get jobs, but the jobs they get… (Pauses) As much as they are asked for ICT skills you feel like… (Pauses) For example, a shop attendant or let's say a supermarket attendant, is that a success story? That's something I usually ask myself.*
> *[...] [In terms of] the outside environment then it becomes very difficult for me (to make feedback). Actually, that's one of [the] challenges I face because I feel I should do follow-ups, but there's nothing I can do, because I cannot provide jobs. [...] As much as I feel like, If I could… (Pauses) Go beyond. But you see, it becomes difficult. [...] Especially when it comes to the job sector.*"
> (J. Mwanthi, personal communication, October 4, 2024).

While these feedbacks are not negative in themselves they might cause blindness to the actual reality that the Ihub *is* solving. In the quote, Mwanthi reflects on how the current feedback framework that they are required to fill out does not thoroughly take into account that perhaps jobs are not what terms a success. He also questions how quantitative value in terms of how many jobs they have provided is put higher than qualitative value in terms of what impact the Ihub has had on the community.

It seems that there is a top-down approach inherent in the Ihub programmes throughout the country. We see that non-programme level actors decide on what there should be feedback on and the programme level staff have to comply. Furthermore, where horisontal knowledge sharing spaces between the Ihub programmes used to be prioritized in the beginning stages of implementation, now the focus is on vertical top-down feedback that mainly focuses on getting feedback on programmes that have been implemented by non-programme levels. Programme level initiatives such as Ochiengs mentorship programmes or the youth groups is not asked for in the feedback sessions and therefore not discussed:

> Ochieng: "*[W]hen the Ihubs began, you know, we just met with [...] Gabriel because Gabriel was the first one to start the Ihub (in Kisumu) [...]. But we've never met anyone from Meru or from… (Pauses) [...] Okay, Basically every Monday we have meetings on Cisco, on the update on how the students are progressing and how they are taking it*

*and all that. So we'll be able to share our details to [a person], which
is from the regional office in Karen. [...] So, we will just share [...]
what we are doing, the progress so far. That's just like a progress
update on each Ihub so far, how they are, and all that. But we do not
talk much on how the programs run and all that."*
(R. Ochieng, personal communication, March 29, 2024).

Bottom-up feedback where programme level staff or users can share their views to
management are thus not incorporated, cementing the status quo of power relations and a non-
programme level actors enactment that strays from the localization agenda as portrayed by SOS
CV.

This difference in enactment of the programme creates different ideas of how the programme
is helping to solve user needs further constitutes a challenge when looking into questions of
autonomy. To keep itself sustained the Ihub must live up to standards set by non-programme
actors by reporting feedback on goals set by these. If the feedback lives up to the goals the
programme staff secure funding. This means that they have no autonomy or decision-making
power to make changes to the programme that requires funds without reporting feedback on
goals set by no-programme actors. In the following the staff of the Ihub comments on the
problem with accessing funding due to this dependence on the non-programme levels:

> Mwanthi: "*The problem is [the money] goes to an account known as a
> "trust account". And remitting money from the trust account becomes
> a challenge even for asking for the small things like printer paper, you
> are asked "where is your budget [going]?" So [...] we don't have our
> own budget. [...] We are going to discuss [...] having [...] our own
> account [so] whenever we [...] need to arrange for programs, we can
> use the money collected through the means from the Ihub. And then
> there will be no challenges or questions [...]."*
> (J. Mwanthi, personal communication, October 4, 2024).

Ochieng also comments on the issues that comes from subordination in the following way:

> Ochieng: "*If they (MA, regional, PSA actors) clearly set up maybe a
> payment scheme for this Ihub so we don't have to go and request on
> what we need from the Ihub so we can do managing by ourself, manage
> our own resources, manage our own funds and all that. [...] Because,
> why I'm talking about the resources is [that] currently [...] we don't
> have papers for us to print. And, you know we also handle those
> services over here (that requires paper). [...] We had requested for
> papers since January. Up until now, there are no papers. So you can
> see that's a long duration of time. [...] We would be able to manage
> ourselves independently instead of depending on other people. [...]
> Because if we're doing requests and then there's nothing that is
> happening. Yeah. And then they expect like (pauses to think)… Maybe
> they'll set a goal for us to achieve. And as you can see, right now, we
> are at this quarter of the year. [We've] not done anything since this
> first quarter."*
> (R. Ochieng, personal communication, March 29, 2024).

When the programme is enacted in a way that does not consider programme enactment, programme actors are perceived as being without agency and receivers of aid. Framed differently, the programme-level actors are deprived of decision making power. Dominant non-programme actors then hold the power to stop funding if the programme level does not live up to their reality. At the same time, even when the programme makes requests for funding and complies to the wanted feedback, the process of receiving funding is slow and bureaucratized to a degree where basic functions of the programme are impaired and programme level actors will not be able to make use of some of the functions of the programme, such as printing or scanning documents (an important procedure for Kenyans before engaging with the government, for example in relation to procuring drivers license etc).

> Mwanthi: "*I feel like [having] more [...] autonomy and freedom to run the Ihub. You see, something I don't like is internal politics whereby different departments prolong things to take effect because of taking long in discussions. So such kind of - let's call it bureaucracy. Then [our work] will be limited because we are [not] able to do it without having to [wait on] the other departments. [...] Beginning of this January, I requested for three reams of paper. 'Till now, I've never received even a single ream to print certificates (for the users). Never happened. (Laughs). You become frustrated and you just say you are a small person, (laughs while finishing sentence) so there's nothing you can do about it.*"
> (J. Mwanthi, personal communication, October 4, 2024).

This uneven power balance is then upheld in feedback frameworks creating a situation where frictions between the engaged actors are not solved but instead remain hidden as explained previously. The "exchange" is thus one of the programme actors giving information that fits with non-programme actors to be able to uphold their own programme level enactment. The "hidden" lies in that this exchange is a form of *impression management* rendering a change of perspective on a non-programme level impossible.

Such a paradox leads to a situation where the programme must live up to non-programme- and donor demands to self-sustain but cannot sustain itself because of living up to such demands. This hidden challenge needs to be brought forth in relation to the localization, so that programme level actors enactment stands in the center of this agenda and can have an impact on feedback frameworks wherein the feedback is determined by programme level actors.

7.2.4 What's the target? How to measure success in humanitarian work

As we will see below this issue of a missing autonomy and easier access to funding for self-sustainability is not unknown to non-programme level actors. So why not just localize and turn the tables if this better helps to solve the needs of the community on site? Houe argues that this is already on the drawing boards:

> Houe: "*What we need to be good at is - through localization - ensuring that local communities become able to start accessing some of the support that today doesn't really reach them. But they need to be geared up for this, and that's what we need to use the small funds for. That's what the CISU funds should be used for, that's what the SOS Children's Villages funds should be used for. It's to enable them to*

access the large, multilateral funds themselves and to be able to define what we should use them for, and what direction we want to take. Then some kind of cycle begins to close a bit. And, of course, this raises a lot of questions for us: What is our role then? What is our added value? Should we be there, how should we be, and so forth. It's probably something we are only just beginning to unfold a little bit." (N. Houe, personal communication, April 4, 2024).

However, as we see, an emphasis is put on the capacity building of programme level actors. In the case of the Ihub, capacity and a knowledge on how to use the funding is already present, but what is lacking is wiggle room from the non-programme levels to discuss and implement a programme enactments more thoroughly and thus tackle the top-down path dependency.
On another note, the questions that Houe asks towards the new roles of the PSA also hints towards a new uncertain territory for this actor. A realization of needed change to conform to programme level actors enactment would mean for non-programme level actors to reflect on their own identity in relation to such programmes and ultimately - perhaps - the need for their existence.

This process of uncovering the new identity of PSA level organizations has only just started and even though localization is widely seen as a solution to better encompassing community needs, there are still structures that prevent such a change from taking place. Houe has a comment on what might obstruct a change of existing organizational structures of SOS CV more widely:

> Houe: *"Well, it's a huge problem (how we measure success), and I've discussed this with your dear colleagues at SOS since 2013. So, what is it that we measure? Typically, we measure growth [...]. The task I get from the board is not... (Pauses) Well, they think quality is good, but at the same time, they say we need more money. That's the most important thing, and that's a growth parameter. And the article (from Bond) asks very wisely: What can we [measure] instead? It's not interesting how much we grew, but what impact we are creating. And we need to get better at setting that up and saying that's what we want to be measured on. I remember having a dialogue with Camilla many, many years ago at SOS where we talked about whether you (SOS Denmark) want to raise more funds, or you want to have a greater impact. And sometimes those two things… (Pauses) They can sometimes be contradictory."*
> (N. Houe, personal communication, April 4, 2024).

The quote underlines that currently, success in the sector is measured in monetary measures. As long as this is the case, other values might succumb even in cases where they might benefit the community. As Houe mentions, a contradictory practice exists, especially when we put in perspective to what we see in the case of Badilisha Mtaa where the programme enactment does not relate to monetary value and where the qualitative aspects are in the forefront.

Houe is no longer part of the localization process at SOS Denmark and has therefore no insights as to if this issue has been considered between the board members. If not, this might keep the benefits of localization at bay.

Houe: *"I can't say what happened when the findings from the localization workshops was brought up to a board level, and whether they said: 'Okay, you're absolutely right, but it might cost a lot.' And then we're back to: What do we want to be measured on? Do we want to be measured on how much money we bring into play? Then it might be fine that we just to keep on portraying children in vulnerable positions waiting for someone to come and help them. Because there's undoubtedly more money in that. I still think there is. But we have ourselves helped create that paradigm - that problem. It's because we have gone further and further in our efforts to raise money."* (N. Houe, personal communication, April 4, 2024).

In short, a paradox is present: Economic growth in the sector, as it is practiced right now, stands in steep contrast to programme enactment of aid and the measured target thus needs to change if localization is to benefit programme level users and the wider community. This change in targets and how to approach a programme level setting is already under way Godiksen comments, describing how such a change will affect the implementation process:

Godiksen: *"If we ask SOS in Kenya 'What is most important for you?', they wouldn't start by saying, 'We need 100 million,' because for what? They would say, 'We need to pass a new child law.' 'We need to implement this change process.' [...] 'We want to support that everyone who has grown up in some form of foster care has access to aftercare [...].' It's just a completely different dialogue if you start there rather than saying, 'We need more money.' And I believe our next strategic process will be based on: What change do we want to create, and what funds do we need to create that change?"*
(L. Godiksen, personal communication, April 8, 2024).

Although it might be the case that strategic changes include having more input from a programme and MA level one needs to be wary of who sets the target and based on what enactment. For example if actors from a programme level seeks to implement a new child law through the government in their country, the target of that programme cannot remain monetary or in interest of donor needs. It *must* be based on supporting and reporting feedback on a programme level enactment. Only this way can programmes begin to be localized since it fulfills the shift in power at the source of the problem.

7.2.5 The paradox of localization under external control

While targets, feedback and misconceptions are some of the challenges that stand in the way of localization, yet another can be summed up as *trust towards programme- and MA level actors* from non-programme and -MA level. To hand over power requires trust, and that trust is hard to earn for MA-, and especially programme level actors since these are often informal and decentralized (Gidron & Carver, 2022). The issue of trust has also been brought up at the localization workshops at SOS Denmark.

Houe: *"One of the things I've heard that has been a major obstacle for SOS in terms of localization, nationally, is compliance issues. This is*

because people are afraid there might be a case of corruption or misuse of funds. The issue was also brought up at the very first workshop. It was essentially about the risks associated with the localization agenda. I think I have a slightly different take on it than SOS Denmark, I must say. Because I can see that there are a lot of risks related to compliance. But at the same time, if you start with those young men you're showing (Badilisha Mtaa), at some point they might start getting involved in things like budget tracking: What is the actual budget for the local area here and how is that budget being utilized? And they start holding both SOS (CV) and perhaps even the local municipality accountable."

(N. Houe, personal communication, April 4, 2024).

Trust is needed if localization is to succeed, but is at the moment lacking. In the future however a programme level enactment needs to contain holding accountable non-programme level actors in regards to how money is fundraised and spent.

The idea of such a bottom-up accountability is made visible when using the Badilisha Mtaa case as a boundary object. As in the case with Houe, an understanding of the programme level actors enactment is translated to a non-programme level actor which enables a new perspective on accountability in relation to localization. Such an understanding across the sector might prove to be a step towards a localization that helps non-programme actors imagine and practice a more programme centered approach to funding, feedback, targeting, and in this case, accountability.

Ultimately, using boundary objects such as stories and presentations of the programme level, or even inviting to discussion with actors from a programme level, might help translate understanding between trading zones and build trust that could help to abolish the paradox of localization under external control.

If trust is not found, the programme level might remain under what Femke Mulder term*s "The paradox of externally driven localization [...]"*. In the article the author uses a case study in a community in Ethiopia to showcase how an aid project can have contradictory legitimacy requirements. Mulde argues that: 1) there is an uneven hierarchy in the humanitarian sector in relation to the implementation of aid programmes resulting in external actors taking decisions on programme design. 2) This in turn makes it impossible for envisioned localization to materialize. The overlying reason, she argues, is that the aid paradigm is built on two contradictory paradigms. One of which favors *resilience* and the other *surveillance*. What we can learn from Mulders case study is that surveillance (in our case due to a lack of trust) can hurt the objective of building resilience.

However as it is, this *surveillance paradigm* is still inherent in the current way that localization is enacted in a danish context:

> Godiksen: *"There is a greater risk (with localization), and that needs to be addressed when we talk about it with DANIDA [...] and with some of the other large NGOs. But that is precisely what we are discussing. How do we create the right frameworks for local leadership, so that our partners in the South can have greater autonomy over how they use the funds, what they prioritize, but in a way where they are still compliant, still meet donor requirements, still have transparency in their accounts, and where we can still ensure they are not using the car for personal purposes or taking funds when they are short at home and*

paying back later. But if we want to ensure greater local ownership, we must also accept that risk. Because, of course, there is a risk, but it can be managed by closely monitoring the projects."
(L. Godiksen, personal communication, April 8, 2024).

The question that should be asked in relation to this is then: When is the time to put that trust in the programme- and MA level, and is there even room in the current enactment of programmes from non-programme- and MA level actors to let this happen? What holds non-programme- and MA level actors back from trying out this new partnership and lending out trust? If not the localization takes these considerations into account it will meet its limitations quickly when it comes to giving programme level actors any true decision-making power.

7.2.6 Internal frictions: What determines the agenda of SOS Denmark?

Some practices that might be causing reluctance in the organizational structure to embrace change have to do with SOS Denmark's enactment of localization itself. Drawing on Houes statement that the changes that drive localization happen – to begin with – on a personal level I want to take a critical perspective on some organizational structures that might make such a change difficult. In the following statement Godiksen describes that there are structures that make it hard to implement personal values about putting programme- and MA level actors first due to some friction between the different departments.

> Me: *"I am quite interested in hearing what the communications department had specifically discussed in [the] workshops [with Nicolai]. Because [...] what seems to hinder localization and local leadership is that money still holds power, and much of what generates money is branding, and what sells is typically what localization actually wants to move away from [...]."*
>
> Godiksen: *"Well, I have a clear opinion [...] but I think it's important to say that it's not SOS' stance. I try to influence the way we work in the organization, but… (Pauses). However, it's also a place where there are some areas of friction and where we don't necessarily see eye to eye. It depends on where we sit in the organization and what type of function we have. Obviously, when you're in the international department like I am, we have a focus on advocating for our partners. So, I try [...] to advocate for the participants and ask, how does it look from their perspective? [...] Have they had an influence on this decision-making process? [...] Or are we continuing as we have done before, maybe talking a bit over their heads by using professional jargon that may be somewhat inaccessible to them? Are we making decisions about where the money should go and how it should be used because things need to move quickly, or because a donor wants influence, and then we let the donor have that influence because it means we can get more money? [...] Sometimes you have to draw a line in the sand and say, "[...] There may also be some funds we need to say no to if it means compromising our values and the way we want to work." And if you're a fundraising manager, well, your primary focus*

> *is to raise funds, and you might be less inclined to think that you need*
> *to draw that line in the sand."*
> (L. Godiksen, personal communication, April 8, 2024).

Dissecting this statement we find that one can not simply change one's personal opinions and expect a change in WoW. Being a cyborg in this constellation means that personal wants are sometimes set aside from the organizational agendas. It becomes clear that also on the PSA level separately, a wide array of different realities exists. In the case of IA, localization is enacted when they become spokespeople for programme- and MA level actors. For the fundraising department the reality is different, here it is enacted as something that needs an income to be sustained.

Present, but less clear in the quote is also the enactment of the donors. Donors enacts aid as problem solving through donations and more. A donor's enactment still holds a veto in the way that aid is done since, as we have seen, progress is often evaluated on funding and monetary gains.

Summing up, frictions in ways of working might hinder a personnel change that is the first step in localization agenda and thus delaying the second step where a discussion of the organizational structures takes place (figure 1). In effect that means that a localization agenda that is implemented by SOS Denmark might be hindered by these internal organizational frictions.

7.2.7 Localization through communication: Expanding the vocabulary

While there are still large gaps in understanding and practice between the different internal departments there is also a present focus in SOS Denmark to mend these. The localization agenda has sparked discussions about how understanding might be created across the sectors internally to make sure that a common goal is worked towards. Godiksen describes some considerations:

> Godiksen: "*We are really in a process now of both writing down some*
> *criteria and procedures and discussing a lot: What does Local*
> *leadership, local ownership mean? [A]lso [when we] talk about a part*
> *of it being about communicating in a different way. How do we*
> *communicate in a way so that people are not "beneficiaries," but are*
> *participants, agents, actors, or individuals with agency and resilience?*
> *How do you communicate that while we are still a fundraising*
> *organization, which also has a major focus on raising money?"*
> (L. Godiksen, personal communication, April 8, 2024).

We see that there is a change in enactment happening at a PSA level where the programme level identities and worldviews are conveyed in a way that takes the enacted realities of the programme level more into consideration.
However, as Godiksen also points out, such a change proves difficult while retaining an organizational identity that has monetary donorships at the core.

Godiksen continues to argue that diminishing structural obstacles standing in the way of localization also lies in a shift in the vocabulary that SOS Denmark uses in their work with all different levels of SOS CV and how such a new vocabulary might change donor perception of

the programme level participants, leading to funding that more thoroughly understands and adapts to programme level demands.

> Godiksen: *"There are a lot of obstacles [to localizing aid] internationally in terms of [...] structures that hinder us from having systems that are actually conducive to shifting the balance of power. Here in the organization, it's about how we make decisions about how the money should be spent, who influences that process, to what extent we have involved those we work with in the Global South [...]. It's also a question of how much we communicate in a way that also clarifies to the people from whom we receive funds [and] [...] to what extent we involve them in a consciousness-raising process where they also understand what's at stake."*
> (L. Godiksen, personal communication, April 8, 2024).

This means that the reality that is enacted at a PSA level through communication to donors needs to use terms that stem from the reality that is enacted at programme level and its inherent identities. Naturally, to thoroughly communicate in such a way requires a deep programme- and MA level understanding and a safe space for transparency for programme- and MA actors to display normally hidden enactments that go against nonn-programme level enactments.

As of now PSA level actors communication towards donors has yet to be changed in favor of communicating a programme- and MA level based enactment of programmes. This status quo is self made by PSA level since their enactment has not previously used a vocabulary that stems from programme- and MA level enactments. Godiksen words this reflection in the following way:

> Godiksen: *"People (donors) know what we have told them for many, many years, so if we have only told them that things are going really, really badly, then that's what people will believe.*
> *[...] I think that with such initiatives where we try out new formats, we can find ways to communicate where we both talk about a need but also provide nuance, giving the people we are talking about an agency, and also showing that we believe those who support us can understand the nuances. [...] This, of course, places certain demands on [our] communication [department]."*
> (L. Godiksen, personal communication, April 8, 2024).

By changing the current path dependency in how programme level enactment are communicated, this might help other practices of aid to become localized. However, communicating programme and MA level actors identities and enactments correctly requires finding a way to experience and convey correct programme level enactment to donors. As mentioned, preliminary steps might need to be taken before this is possible, such as creating a space for discussion between actors, building trust and more.

7.2.8 Finding one's place: The new role of SOS Denmark

By now it should be clear that, to fulfill the definition of localization means largely changing the whole current organizational structure. On a PSA level, this leaves room for questions as to what the new identity of oneself, or the role of SOS Denmark, will be in a future localized organizational structure. Godiksen suggests that the roles of the PSA might change to that of a mediator through which the money that is gathered from donors are funneled.

> Godiksen: "*I believe what we're going to see is that from the Danish side [...] we're going to have a greater acceptance that some of the work we do - including the fundraising we do - doesn't necessarily mean that the money goes into our account [...] so they don't count towards our assets [...]. The money needs to work. Our goal* must *be: [...] 'In what way have we helped some children? In what way have we created social change? [...]'* Those *are goals we can only achieve if we raise some funds, and* that's (said with emphasis) *why we're raising funds. But today, the argumentation is a bit opposite - we raise some money, and then we have to figure out how we're going to use it. And [then] the goal is that we should raise some more money (laughs)."*
> (L. Godiksen, personal communication, April 8, 2024).

Today, when doing aid, the money is acquired and later questions are asked as to where to spend it. The quote makes clear that the PSA enactments has a path dependency where monetary gains have been at the center and becomes a goal in itself, overshadowing the actual programme- and MA level actors needs. Fundraising for the sake of fundraising is one the practice that the localization seeks to diminish. Instead, a solution is sought for where fundraising is made on programme- and MA level actors terms.
Houe also puts his perspective on non-programme level actors roles in the future of the humanitarian sector:

> Houe: "*Localization is a different way of working, a different way of doing things and approaching things. [...] It is much more of a facilitating role than an expert role, and that applies throughout the entire system."*
> (N. Houe, personal communication, April 4, 2024).

One question in regards to localization still stands however, which has to do with if there is a motivation and willingness to change. After all, what happens when an organization starts to undermine its own position of power, which is a necessary step if localization is to take hold. As we see in the following, with uncertainty about what the future holds, also comes hesitation. House words that in the following way.

> Houe: "*I discuss localisation with my colleagues [...] and I can hear that localization it's a bit… (Pauses) There's a bit of alienation still, because there isn't much willingness to really think it through: 'what does it mean for our role going forward?' To be completely honest, there is fear and anxiety involved in that. But I think it will come, because again, it's about not being able to force the process of realization. It takes time."*
> (N. Houe, personal communication, April 4, 2024).

8. Conclusion: Mending the gap?

In this report I have laid out the contemporary turn towards localization of aid globally and in the context of SOS Children's Villages. The meaning of localization in SOS CV resembles a "transformative" one where top-down aid must be set aside to leave room for a strengthening of programme level identities and a shift in decision making power to programme- and MA level actors.

I have then drawn on a case of the Nairobi Community Ihub programme to explore how programme level actors enact such programmes. Employing a feminist STS approach, through Donna Haraway's *Cyborg*- and Annemarie Mols *Multiplicity* terminology, I have found the following:

a. The amalgamation of the Ihubs technical artifacts as well as its staff and the direct, and indirect users, creates an identity within the users and indirect users that has a self organizing, and co-constructing capacity. This reality also compels the staff and users to step out of their perceived roles to better deal with programme level actors issues.

b. In turn, this new identity facilitates a programme level enactment that strays from non-programme level enactments which creates the following fractions that must be considered and acted on before the SOS CV definition of localization can take hold.

c. At the moment, these frictions between programme level and non-programme level actors remain hidden due to a top-down structure necessitating programme level actors to live up to non-programme level actors demands to keep the programme sustained.

d. This creates a negative spiral upheld by feedback frameworks since programme level staff only give feedback on targets set by non-programme level actors. Programme level needs and enactment are thus not implemented in the feedback framework, and remain hidden to non-programme level actors.

e. Through interviews with non-programme level actors I find that what primarily precipitates these challenges is how progress in programmes is measured at a programme level versus on a non-programme level. On a non-programme level the growth parameter quantitative monetary gains while growth or success is measured on qualitative programme level actors values on a programme level such as having a supporting network or being able to deal with mental health issues etc.

f. Because the programme level has to live up to a non-programme level enactment where the target is monetary this puts the programme level staff under a *surveillance paradigm* creating a paradox where the localization agenda seeks to shift decision making power to programme level actors while they are simultaneously kept compliant to non-programme level demands.

g. Holding the programme level compliant seems to be related to lack of trust from non-programme level actors. However, localization necessitates trust to go both ways. Therefore there needs to be given wiggle room for programme- and MA level decision making and in turn a mutual compliance where programme level actors have autonomy and are also able to hold non-programme levels accountable.

h. A present initiative to start challenging the current power structures is currently being rolled out. With a new more programme- and MA situated vocabulary, SOS Denmark seeks to change donor expectations and demands.

i. However, internal frictions in enactment between SOS Denmark presents a challenge since funding that comes with donor demands is still chosen over enactments based on

programme level needs leading to a programme level that still has to adapt to funding rather than the other way around.

j. More broadly I find that uncertainty in relation to how localization might affect the role of non-programme level actors is suspected to lead to some hesitation before fully adopting a localization approach.

Power to implement localization lies in the hands of non-programme level actors. If the above challenges are not discussed openly and acted on by IO, IOR and PSA level actors, the localization agenda risks undermining its own transformative purpose. It is my hope that these findings might be used as suggestions for furthering understanding across levels, and actions that help to put the end user in the center.

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