

Sclr Learning Analysis - Haiti

A review of the survivor and community led response approach

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Contents

Contents	3
List of acronyms	4
Executive summary	5
Background and Context	6
Purpose and Scope of the Learning Review	6
Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in Haiti: A Brief History	7
Sclr in Practice: Sud and Grand’Anse	8
Sclr: Core Components in Action	9
Sclr: A New Method and Experience for CBOs	12
Psychosocial Activities: Valuing the Intangible	23
Recommendations	24
Sclr: Phase 2 Implementation	25
Conclusion	28
Case Studies	29
Works Referenced	34

Cover: Community members and representatives of local community based organisation MOSOPRO thank partner SJM for the micro-grant to support their initiative to repair the pathway access to the local market following the earthquake.

List of acronyms

ASEC	l'Assemblée de la Section Communal
CA	Christian Aid
CASEC	Conseil d'Administration de la Section Communal
CBO	Community Based Organization
CBTWG	Cash Based Technical Working Group
CFW	Cash for work
CW	Concern Worldwide
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ERFS	Emergency Response Fund Team
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HFH	Habitat for Humanity
KORAL	Konbite pou Ranfose Aksyon Lakay
PALC	Participatory Action Learning in Crises
Sclr	Survivor and Community-led Response
SHG	Self Help Group
SJM	Service Jésuites aux Migrants

Executive summary

On Saturday 14th August 2021 a 7.2 magnitude earthquake struck southwestern Haiti with devastating consequences. Christian Aid worked with local partner organisations Konbite pou Ranfose Aksyon Lakay (KORAL) and Service Jésuites aux Migrants (SJM) to implement the Haiti Earthquake Response which would test the sclr approach at scale for the first time in a complex emergency response in Haiti.

Sclr is an emergency response approach developed to support and resource individuals and communities affected by sudden or protracted crises. Local to Global Protection Initiative (L2PG) established the approach with aspirations to build on and support the spontaneous self-help actions of crisis affected population. The approach brings together the cash, localisation, nexus and participation agendas of the Grand Bargain.

Following analysis of the approach the overarching findings indicate that people are happier when they are in the driving seat of emergency response projects.

The sclr approach promotes mutually beneficial outcomes and leaves community members with the tools, skillset, and most importantly the will to continue to advocate for their communities and its development.

“This is the method that is good for the community because the community is involved more. When they impose things on us, it is in the cadre of restraint. But when they give us the liberty of choice, we enlarge the cadre more.” Community participant

Background and Context

The Men nan Men (Hand in Hand) Consortium, comprising of Christian Aid, Concern Worldwide and Habitat for Humanity, is rooted in its founding members' technical expertise, networks of local partners and geographic reach. The consortium's approach is organized around elevating local agency and engagement that starts with local ownership of locally identified problems and then responds with locally defined and driven change. Following the earthquake in Haiti on August 14th, the response was an opportunity for the Consortium to put its expertise into practice, and in particular around the Survivor and Community-led Response (sclr) approach, which was the first time it was utilised in an emergency response in Haiti, as an innovative way to put the affected population in the decision-making seat.

The sclr approach aspires to bring together the cash, localization, nexus and participation agendas of the Grand Bargain. Using the approach, the Haiti Earthquake Response project aimed to provide lifesaving assistance and respond to the immediate needs of the most affected, including displaced women, men, boys and girls located in remote communes in the Sud and Grand' Anse departments. The Consortium utilized micro-grant distributions to Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in the two departments.

The planned output was that communities would be enabled to respond under crises collectively, resulting in concrete results to support their community. The desired impact was that communities, using their local leadership, would be able to meet their basic needs by identifying their own priorities and enacting their own planned solutions. The project cycle was 45 days for the Start Fund sclr projects while the Emergency Response Fund Scheme (ERFS) project terminated in January 2022.

Purpose and Scope of the Learning Review

This Learning from Implementation Analysis serves as a mid-point in the Haiti response and will inform future response (Phase Two) where sclr will be scaled up. It will inform not only how CA and partners can improve the delivery of sclr work but also inform other ACT Alliance and Start Network members planning to use sclr in their programs. The Learning review will showcase the benefits of sclr and self-help initiatives at Cluster level and possibly engage more actors in testing this approach.

Specifically, the Analysis aims to:

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of the sclr approach and overall intervention to inform the Second Phase of the response
2. Build evidence of effectiveness for people-centred approaches and accountability
3. Influence the sector in Haiti and global level on use of sclr and accountability

Multi-level Coordination

In the response, Christian Aid (CA) engaged in three levels of coordination throughout the efforts:

1. Internal Coordination: CA, local partners, such as Konbite pou Ranfose Aksyon Lakay (KORAL) and Service Jésuites aux Migrants (SJM), and with the Consortium members Habitat for Humanity (HFW) and Concern Worldwide (CW). CA was responsible for training HFW and CW staff in how to use and implement the SCLR approach. KORAL and SJM received follow-up training and education. SJM and KORAL were the organizations that then trained the CBOs on the approach

and how it would be utilized throughout the response, application cycle, and execution timeframe.

2. External coordination - Organizations: CA coordinated with the Cash Based Technical Working Group (CBTWG) network in Haiti at the national level to discuss the Minimum Food Basket. Initially there was a conflict as the recommendations from the CBTWG came after the CA proposal was approved by external donors and thus was not able to be fully integrated into the plan.
3. External coordination - Government of Haiti/State: The Ministère De L'intérieur Et Des Collectivités Territoriales (The Ministry of the Interior and Territorial Communities) was engaged as it has the authority to issue guidance and standards for all Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) projects through its Directorate of Civil Protections guidance. Messaging campaigns were agreed upon by both parties that including flooding and what actions/measures to take during aftershocks.

Ministère à la Condition Féminine et aux Droits des femmes (Ministry of Women's Affairs) were also a coordination partner as psychosocial programming had Gender Based Violence (GBV) components. A series of community meetings and focus groups were held with CW at the helm, in the target areas to identify the GBV risks in the community. Secondary activities were to conduct to community awareness events and map out the referral institutions that were undamaged and operational. The purpose of the mapping activity was to inform communities of the organizations and resources that may be of assistance.

Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in Haiti: A Brief History

Community Based Organizations (CBOs) serve as a vital point for citizen engagement within their areas of operations.

While the areas of operations and engagement can vary from education, basic healthcare, financial assistance, etc. there are certain characteristics and structures that the groups maintain. Most critically of which is that the CBOs are comprised of active members of their respective organizations. The term CBOs refers to such organizations that are in fact registered with the government, i.e., Bureau of Social Affairs/ Ministry of Social Affairs and Works (MAST).

“The peasantry in Haiti has a long history of indigenous organization, the forms of which vary significantly in terms of size, structure and purpose. There are unstructured groups of neighbours and kin that come together for the purpose of mutual aid in accomplishing agricultural production or other group-oriented tasks (konbit) or smaller groups that work for others for monetary pay. Though these social arrangements and organizational forms have existed for centuries in rural Haiti society, within the last half century there have emerged professionalised and structured community organizations in

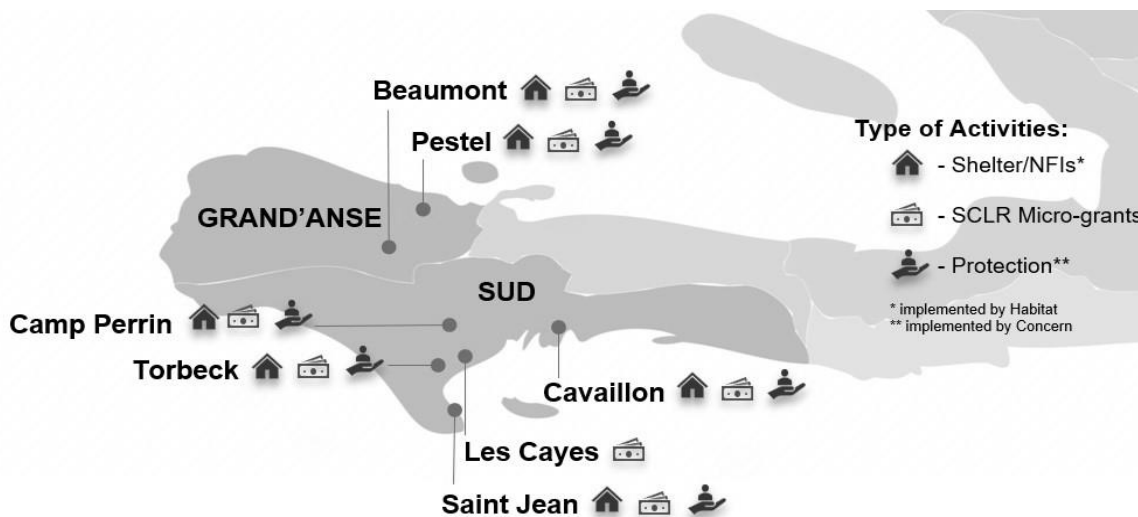
conjunction with international development efforts and mass political movements.”¹

1996 - Present: The election of René Préal began the flood of international aid funds and aid organizations (INGOs, NGOs, and CBOs) that persists today. Successive crises, natural disasters, and continued lack of public services contributes to the perceived need of such organizations to fulfil the roles that the Government of Haiti cannot manage. Specifically, CBOs have had to adapt to the rules and practices of INGOs/NGOs in order to successfully receive financing and/or assistance in order to carry out local development initiatives.

Sclr in Practice: Sud and Grand’Anse

Following the August 14th earthquake, the consortium worked with facilitating agencies and CBOs in the Grand’Anse and Sud regions to implement relief efforts. The two facilitating agencies were Konbite pou Ranfose Aksyon Lakay (KORAL) and Service Jesuit aux Migrants (SJM).

The areas of focus in the two Departments were Sud and Grand’Anse:



The nature of the microgrant funded services provided by the CBOs included:

1. Rehabilitation services via Cash for work (CFW) – time and labour were compensated for workers through microgrant funds. Workers could be both CBO members and/or general community members. Activities in this scheme were centralised on infrastructure rehabilitation and took the form of rubble removal and canal cleaning.
2. Unconditional cash transfers – straightforward cash disbursements for CBO selected beneficiaries funded through the microgrants.
3. Kit distributions – CBOs assess needs, purchase materials to form kits, and distribute kits to target beneficiaries

¹ Vannier, Christian N. "Audit Culture and Grassroots Participation in Rural Haitian Development." *Political and Legal Anthropology Review*, vol. 33, no. No. 2, Nov. 2010, pp. 282`-305.

4. Psychosocial assistance – a series of social and cultural activities organised by the CBOs and financed through the microgrants.

Sclr: Core Components in Action

Sclr has an established framework designed to highlight the components and processes while facilitating integration into existing praxis of multiple organizations at all hierarchical steps found within a community. The Core Components of the framework were implemented.

Core components of SCLR and Observations

1. Participatory Action Learning in Crises (PALC) – a shorthand for a community mobilization and facilitation that combines appreciative inquiry, identifying locally relevant do-no-harm mechanisms and supporting experiential learning and information sharing.

“All of the organizations had to come and sit together for us to see the necessities inside of the section and how we could intervene. It was while we sat together and brainstormed as organizations, and we identified such and such as necessities at this time and moment and identified the priorities.” - *Focus Group Participant*

All CBO members who served as participants in the focus group activities were able to recall the gathering activities that occurred in the initial steps of the processes. Participants were able to mobilize rapidly as the information was shared freely and rapidly along the chain of hierarchy, conseil d’administration de la section communal (communal section board of directors - CASEC)/ l’assemblée de la section communal (the assembly of the communal section - ASEC) /CBO president/lead representative /organizational members/ additional stakeholders from the community. At this stage both PALC Volunteers and Project Managers, who were KORAL and SJM staff “on the ground”, played a crucial part in drawing attention to potential faults in ideas in order to continue critical though thorough processes in the discussions amongst the CBOs. There were neither complaints nor concerns raised by CBO members regarding information sharing along any point during the initial notice to the execution of projects. On the contrary, the transparency was celebrated and referenced as a factor in integrating unsuccessful CBO applicant teams into those of winning proposals.

“This showed us how to live too. The teams that fell, we took them in. If it weren’t for the way KORAL did this with us, we would not have shared. There were four groups that fell, each of the groups represented here took 3-4 members of each in so that everyone could participate in the work.” - *Focus Group Participant*

2. Systems for rapid, accountable and do-no-harm use of group microgrants as one means to enable and scale up collective action by citizens aimed at enhancing survival, protection, well-being, recovery or transformation.

The microgrants were the boost that CBOs needed to enact their projects. The financial means to carry out projects was the most cited barrier. This barrier even hampered some representatives' belief in ideating solutions as the financial means would be present even in the face of a solution. The financing provided was the kick starter to result in the execution of the successful community projects.

The only suggestion was to increase the monetary amount disbursed to the CBOs. While this suggestion was predictable, CBOs cited unpredictable interest in psychosocial activities and kit distributions; increased desire to reach more vulnerable residents with unconditional cash transfers, and to extend road rehabilitation. When questioned by Facilitating Agencies of the capacity of these CBOs to manage larger sums of grants, the response was mixed. Because of the various educational levels observed, the potential success to manage a larger grant is based on the human resources and capacities of each CBO. However, it was agreed that additional training on management and budgeting would prove useful in such event.

3. Rapid provision of demand-led skills training that Self Help Groups (SHGs)/CBOs consider will increase the effectiveness, scale or impact of their initiatives.

Participants agreed the support provided by the agronomist and volunteers was much welcomed. The agronomist in particular helped in debating the merits of some initial ideas. However, there were CBO representatives that were able to leverage their personal skills and experience in past projects with various NGOs and search within their personal networks for particular skills. When queried, Project Managers cited the lack of available human resources, budget restraints, and the travel times to the more rural sites as hinderances to their ability to provide more training and assistance.

Recommendations to counter these issues include creating and maintain a database of local level experts with various competencies in the target regions that can be activated when needed; a survey may be implemented within the target zones to assess what the areas of weakness that were noted amongst the CBOs; a more cost-effective option may be a mapping exercise that occurs concurrently with the volunteer's routine monitoring and evaluation tasks. Training materials may be developed and workshops conducted within various intervals to ensure a base of knowledge is consistent amongst the CBOs.

4. Actively linking, connecting and networking SHGs, both horizontally (within crisis- affected populations) and vertically (to duty-bearers and other organizations and programs that could support resilience).

Difficult to gauge in this activity as the groups within each given community were not foreign to each other. Pre-earthquake and the subsequent intervention, the commune within Torbeck, for example, had established a federation that oversaw the various organizational presidents. The purpose was to share information and establish standards. In Beaumont, multiple groups coordinated their efforts and were accustomed to providing service-in-kind for each other in previous activities. Some groups shared a number of members between groups. Lastly, there existed longstanding relationships between the Facilitating Agencies and the CBOs. In Saut Mathurine, the volunteer has been affiliated with KORAL since 2008. These factors, in conjunction, provided a seamless process. The established trust along the hierarchical chain ensured a level of buy-in that provided a faultless experience in the application of the micro-grant funded projects. As was made clear during multiple

focus group sessions, a random or unproven external organization would not have been able to carry out the sclr projects.

A recommendation is to encourage the forming of such federations as observed in Torbeck. The proposed federations could also serve as the liaison along the vertical chain of duty-bearers and prospective partners.

5. In protracted disaster responses that involve multiple local SHGs and agencies, support for the development of locally relevant mechanisms for improving coordination, collaboration and information sharing. May also serve as platforms for informing and improving synergy with external interventions.

This concept reinforces the need for Federations in each of the communities to facilitate information sharing in an efficient manner. Similar to how the CBOs fund their internal programs such as mutual loans, each member group of the Federation would pay a monthly membership fee that could go towards supporting semi-annual or annual networking events. These funds can be pooled and Facilitating Agencies or Consortium members can support/match these funds and finance trainings or other much needed/requested activities.

Additionally, Consortium members must lobby and promote on the behalf of Facilitating Agencies and CBOs. In Haiti, multilateral agencies and decision making is centralized within Port-au-Prince which is miles away in not only physical distance but in culture from the CBOs.

6. Proactively seeking opportunities for local groups to initiate and sustain their own longer- term transformative processes for tackling root causes of vulnerability.

A request from all the represented groups was for increased assistance in identifying additional opportunities, whether from Consortium members or additional INGOs operating within Haiti. Given the instability of the Government of Haiti, historical adversarial relationship between the State and CBOs, and the lack of available public finances, the State is not seen as a viable partner. With limited funding, Facilitating Agencies are not yet at the stage where sourcing such opportunities for CBOs is sustainable. The recommendation from Core Concept #5 is also applicable for Core Concept #6.

7. Promoting changes in organizational cultures and institutional relationships to allow core SCLR attributes (victims as leaders, power transfer, nexus-friendly, risk tolerance, learning-by-doing) to become standard good practice in humanitarian programming.²

“The president has the right to preside. But it is everyone that comes to discuss what they would like to do.” - Focus Group Participant

It was observed that all of the represented groups had internal mechanisms that promoted equity amongst members:

- Existence of internal committees

² Corbett, Justin, et al. "Survivor- and Community-Led Crisis Response Practical Experience and Learning." Humanitarian Practice Network (HPN), Apr. 2021.

- Membership criteria and selection processes
- Internal participatory processes
- Usage of voting or consensus for decision making

In concert with the CBOs, the FAs also found the sclr method to be a much-needed transformation of the traditional way of aid assistance. Regarding the relationship between Facilitating Agencies and Consortium members it was suggested that there should be more flexibility in terms of the types and scope of assistance that can be offered CBO applicants to take into account the various educational shortcomings, as stated by a CBO representative:

“As Haitians we have what we call a diversity of wit, comprehension, all of that. In a country such as Haiti, that has a problem of illiteracy, as a leader you cannot be worried when you find difficulties in these types of things. In the propositions, all of the propositions will not arrive in the same way. You must a capacity to permit everyone to participate.” -

Focus Group Participant

A recommendation can be to earmark a set amount of micro-grants for the most vulnerable CBOs. The requirements for this group can reflect alternative application procedures such as audio-recorded/video recorded applications, increased assistance from Facilitating Agencies during the application process, or team applications where a more challenged CBO partners with a more experienced CBO to submit a joint proposal for an increased financial award.

Sclr: A New Method and Experience for CBOs

A Modern approach

“This is a method that is very important that each institution, each NGO should apply because it allow you to see/enter the reality of the people, see the needs of the people, and permits these people to participate in the changes that will benefit them. It’s as though the people are able to decide what is good for them.” - *Focus Group Participant*

By name sclr (Réponse Menée par la Communauté in French) was a new concept to many of the groups that participated. When probed further some had experience with participative methods in the past. These participative efforts were implemented both pre and post the 2010 earthquake. However, stark differences were noted in the past experiences, utilizing traditional aid and distribution methods, self-described participative methods, and those utilized on the ground by both KORAL and SJM within the sclr framework.

Over the course of the interviews, it was clarified that the traditional method refers to the current and generally practiced method of external organizations such as NGOs and INGOs coming to various regions with a top-down approach or solution. These solutions are usually devised

internally, with little deviations from globally set standards, and without input from the communities being served.

For the Facilitating Agencies, the sclr training and seminars were conducted by Christian Aid. In return it was the FAs that educated the CBOs, local authorities, and stakeholders of the methods and processes.

As a result of a history with the many of the targeted areas and the participating CBOs, the FAs were cognizant of the fact that the residents were fed up with the status-quo and that there existed desires for change.

The most recurring phrases to describe participants experience with the sclr method were:

1. Transparent
2. Participatory and inclusive
3. Efficient
4. Sustainable
5. Adapted to community needs

These phrases were repeated both throughout the activity itself and when participants were asked for key terms that would summarize their experience.

1. Transparent
 - a. Fluid: all the information and steps that were initially presented was followed methodically.
 - b. Information is accessible to all stakeholders and community members: information was shared equally amongst all people present for the meetings and shared with CBO members.
 - c. Compliance: all rules, regulations, and criteria are respected throughout the entire process by the presenting parties (Facilitating agencies, promoters, and project managers) "the cards were on the table".

"There is no transparency in the other method because they just came to give it to me. I don't know the associated costs or anything. But here, I was the one that calculated the budget, I knew what I was going to do with the budget, what I was going to buy, and what I needed. I planned all of the activities within the budget. They gave me the means for the project and I executed everything I said I was going to execute". - Focus

Group Participant

Participants are aware of the limit of the information they generally receive in regard to projects being implemented in their areas in the traditional system. While individuals may not be able to recall and recite concrete figures, people are acutely aware of the high costs NGOs incur in the execution of projects and are dumbfounded as to how large sums of funds are being allocated with limited diversion to local organizations.

With a lack of publicly available information, communities are left to information shared through informal exchanges and back channelling. This word-of-mouth sharing is often rife with false

information and creates tension between community members, community members and local authorities, and community members and external agency representatives. When information sharing is limited, it is not difficult to believe that it is intentionally withheld as a means to manipulate the population given the historical context of CBOs and their role in mobilizing communities. In regards to their experience in this project:

“If I had to give a grade, I would give the donor organization a 100/100. For what reason? Because they came here and said, “Guys this is how much money we have. See what you can do with it.” - Focus Group Participant

Communities want to feel that they are respected as adults first and foremost. This means that they want to be informed as to what is happening in their area, who is behind it, how much is being spent, who is involved, why are they involved, and what are the intended outcomes. NGOs must be held accountable to both their donors and the community. Information should be shared all along the hierarchical structure, not simply among the “learned” among the chain. This is essentially what SCLR provides, information and accountability.

2. Participatory and Inclusive

- a. Involvement/implication of CBOs
- b. Greater community members assisted in the execution of the work
- c. Took into account the needs of the most vulnerable (disabled, elderly, pregnant women).

“There is something else that is important, let me explain. There are times when external organizations come to the community and they are the ones that choose people and organizations, there is the possibility for them to have resistance from the community. There can be disorder and all types of things. But when there are CBOs that are choosing, the people remain calm and they stay in a respectful order. This method evades conflict.” - Focus Group Participant

“We work to help people understand this is theirs. It is their expertise. All we brought was technical assistance and a little bit of financing that they didn’t have”. – Concern Worldwide Project Manager

Complimenting the idea of sharing information is the utilization of local resources. These resources include physical labour, human resources, and traditional cultural methods and techniques. In the absence of industry and knowledge economy jobs, there is often a lack of meaningful work available. This not only affects the economic state of community members but the overall morale and senses of usefulness and agency amongst inhabitants.

“People feel good about themselves when they participate like this. There are times when they would like to execute a project but cannot or don’t know how to start it., nor do they have the means to start. But, when they have backup, when they find a person or organization that encourages them, it is a pleasure for them. When the project ended there were people that felt that the work could not stop.” - *Focus Group Participant*

Activities provided not only economic dividends (salaries through cash-for-work projects) for direct beneficiaries. Non-official project members, that is to say those not listed as direct beneficiaries receiving payment, supported CBO led projects as people were able to identify themselves as end-line beneficiaries and it was in the interest of everyone that these tasks were executed.

“In my group, our project was road rehabilitation. After the catastrophe there was no connection to any part of the commune. That means not even a moto could pass, you could only travel by foot and then take a moto further down. When I sat down with the community, I said for example if we had 100,000 HTG in our hands right now and we had to solve the most urgent problem in the zone, what do you think it would be? Everyone said there is no other thing, it is the connection that we have to make in the route. I asked, do you think 100,000 HTG can do it because we can’t do anything else? This would be the only thing we could do. They said yes, it could be done. This is how we can do it. A group came with picks, they came with wheelbarrows, they said they would come with all the materials they already had in their possession. This is what they would give as the local participation. - *Focus Group Participant*

What really made people love the activity again, was after about two months after the program ended. There was a truck with a heavy load that was passing on the part of the road that we worked on in order to get further down. Everyone came out to see and felicitate their work. It was a blessing that the truck could pass in order to go dig a well for them”. - *Focus Group Participant*

Participants highlighted challenges that people with disabilities face during times of traditional food/kit distribution such as inability to travel, inability to stand or wait on lines, abuse and theft that

occurs after distribution is received by these individuals. In the distribution projects executed throughout the sclr initiated projects, aid was delivered to the residence of identified vulnerable members. In the event of pregnant women who were identified as beneficiaries, a proxy from their household would work on the team when physical labour was required.

“You cannot satisfy everyone but the most vulnerable and the handicapped...we reached out to them. There is one handicapped woman that is always complaining that there are always things going on but if you’re handicapped, you’re never invited. They never tell you anything. I told her when there is an activity, I will let you know. She said that I never tell her anything, is it because she cannot walk like me? These activities made many people come to live together. If you give someone a loaf of bread, they cannot eat it alone with just their kid. They will have to share with others. The young kids come and bring things, one will bring a mango, another one oranges, and they will share with the others. This is a sign of sharing and a sign of reconciliation.” - *Focus Group Participant*

3. Efficient

- a. Rapid design and planning
- b. Swift execution
- c. Goals were achieved

“After the earthquake there was a state of urgency, we in the community were living with these problems day after day. When they came to talk to us, they encouraged us to think about the best project that we could put together that would be good for the community.” - *Focus Group Participant*

Participants across the board agreed that the speed of which KORAL and SJM were the first organizations to appear in their locales after the earthquake. In the case of Saut Mathurine, as of the day of the activity KORAL remained the only organization that provided post August 14th earthquake assistance. Given the nature of the emergency effort, time was not wasted. CBO representatives, on average, responded that the process lasted around 7 days from the day of the initial information sharing meeting/announcement to the final selection of award-winning teams.

“This was my first experience with sclr and I liked it so much. When you are in a sclr project you don’t see the money. The love you have for

what's being done, the energy, seeing people happy for the things that they are actualizing, this love is being cultivated in you. It is not the money that you see, it's the activity that is being done." - *Focus Group Participant*

Participant

Due to capitalizing on local knowledge of needs and solutions, projects were executed within the project's scope of time (number of days). Several representatives were motivated to the point that once they were made aware of their successful status of their microgrant submissions, they began to start on the physical tasks of their projects. Teams were energized and excited for the opportunities to highlight their capabilities.

"The results come faster because the person says here is my problem and the same person says here is what I need, and they bring the results." - *Focus Group Participant*

"When you do things with transparency, how this experience was, how it always is with KORAL, how it should be at all places, at that time things will be better. And this reinforces us and gives us more credibility in the community." - *Focus Group Participant*

The activities that were presented in the applications were successfully executed and the targets were met i.e., cleared canals, road rehabilitation, soccer tournaments for youth, school kit distributions for predetermined number of beneficiaries. CBO representatives stressed the importance of completing their project related tasks as it was viewed as a test of confidence in the CBOs. If this was a way to challenge the traditional way of aid distribution and assistance, there could be no failure. Consortium members were also impressed with the expediency of the projects:

"If in the times of crisis these results were possible (within 45 days), that means that in more normal times and with more accompaniment, these CBOs would be capable of more if they had more time and more financing." - *Concern Worldwide Project Manager*

Of note in completing the tasks and the motivation behind it was the presence and involvement of the PALC Volunteers, as per the sclr methodology. Both the Facilitating Agencies and CBOs valued the work and stated how critical this role was in execution given their established relationships within the zones of intervention and their physical proximity to all the work and activity sites.

"I would like to thank the volunteers. Even though they are not getting paid one HTG they are the ones who are calling you, putting credit on

their phone to encourage you to go along and help people. This morning they already called to say the guests are here, I don't see you. Where are you? I haven't given them anything but what they have given me I have used to help people in my zone. I always pray for God to help them so that they can find some type of accompaniment too, because they have families. They have kids, they should be able to have something in their pockets too. The little bit that they give us, we help others with it, we have nothing that we give. Even if I say I'll put credit on your phone, they say no. They don't agree. All they want is to encourage you move along. If everyone worked together as one, we would advance far in this country. It's because the people that have means, they say "well I have this 1000 HTG, I'll see what I can do with my brothers and sisters only". But then you always stay in necessity." -

Focus Group Participant

The feeling of gratitude was felt reciprocally by the PALC volunteers. In the case of the Volunteer from Saut Mathurine, he has been affiliated with the community for several years.

4. Sustainable

- a. Capacity development and reinforcement for CBOs
- b. Autonomy reinforced

"This method makes you an actor. Not only are you an actor but it makes you learn the philosophy better. You get more a sense of maturity in the question of execution in the project. Like this it reinforces the capacity of the organization. When there is someone coming to do for you versus when you are the one figuring out how to do it, it is two different things. When it is yourself, you are going through a training process and building the habit so you can continue to do it. But when they come to do it for you, you have no idea of what is being done. It's like you are an assistant." - *Focus Group Participant*

"When it is the CBOs that are bringing in a response, the actions may stop but the knowledge stays in the community. When it is a staff member that comes, they will also leave...Should these CBOs need to

write another project in the future, they will be of better quality and they will be able to deliver better results.” – *Concern Worldwide Project Manager*

Capacity development was felt in two distinct ways. The exercise of methodically thinking through problems and developing options as solutions brought to light (an overture) concerns that were not evident prior to the exercise to all the involved parties. Secondly, representatives who had never been involved in an application process were grateful to have hands-on experience in the process of drafting a proposal, budget, and workplan. These fluid skills can be applied in the future towards other potential funding options. Having real time feedback from the volunteers and Project Manager (SJM and KORAL) helped fill gaps in the earlier iteration of proposal drafts. CBOs reported feeling a new sense of control, being better armed for “the fight” and advancing. Additionally, this has increased the confidence that partner organizations have in CBOs. Transmitting knowledge and allowing the development of such skills is better long terms for the CBOs and in the relationships with partnering organizations.

“We could have come together as a community. We could have put our hands together and done something. This was another opportunity to have people learn to be of service to themselves. You do not always have to wait for someone to come and do for you. There are some means that we can use to serve ourselves.” - *Focus Group Participant*

In determining priority actions and interventions that could take place, the exercise also demonstrated to CBOs that they need not necessarily wait for an external agent/actor in order to take action in various situations. Often overwhelmed in crises situations and immediately afterwards, once again the methodical exercises brought a sense of control. The application process showed representatives what they were capable of accomplishing with targeted assistance from a financial partner. The act of being continued beneficiaries can often feel patronizing, but with SCLR one is brought to the table to advocate for themselves. The community is seen as an equal.

“When you look at the configuration of Pestel there are a series of people that are capable. In the organization there are people that have capacity. We put our capacity at the same level/standard. We sit and we show these people if we do X, Y, and Z this is why it will be good.” - *Focus Group Participant*

5. Adapted to community needs

- a. Needs identified directly by the community members reinforced ideas of ownership
- b. Increased equity in distribution
- c. Increased overall satisfaction

**“The zone is for us. We are the ones who know what is good for us.” -
Focus Group Participant**

“What I liked about the program was that even if a person was not in the activity, they participated too and they didn’t have any problems. It’s because everyone has to pass on the route. In this case there were direct beneficiaries and indirect beneficiaries. The other day I was walking by and I said to myself, look at those rocks that I moved...Since then we make a konbit and every 15 days we do some light work on the route because we cannot rely on the state.” - Focus Group Participant

As evidenced, respondents felt pride in being able to identify their individual tasks within the collective work and seeing immediate results of their efforts. This opportunity varied greatly not only in the direct involvement of the community but also in the sharing of the results garnered. The works that the microgrants stimulated continued in many communities because these were the projects that were needed. The scope of the works also increased in the post intervention timeframe. Groups have added soil conservation efforts and lengthened the meters of roads affected.

“This is the method that is good for the community because the community is involved more. When they impose things on us, it is in the cadre of restraint. But when they give us the liberty of choice, we enlarge the cadre more.” - Focus Group Participant

Sclr supports taking into account the particular needs of individual communities. Amongst the communities, it was observed that there were differences in the ways the projects were executed. Road rehabilitation can take many different forms and it is the community that ultimately decided what it means to them. School kit distribution also vary based on the particular areas needs and the items in demand by parents, students, and educators. There is no one-size-fits all approach and CBOs were able to make the adjustments as necessary to meet their specific needs.

“This (method) implicates us. If it is not us as organizations that is executing (projects) you won’t find this level (of success).” - Focus Group Participant

The process (information, application, execution) went smoothly and left people overly content with the results. Groups stated that this type of win-win is not often experienced in organizational driven efforts. This is because external agency goals are not aligned with the goals of the community no. Citing monitoring and evaluations, representatives believe that evaluations are centred on the activities of the external agencies, i.e., seedlings donated, animals donated, kits distributed. But the

experiences of the beneficiaries are often secondary. One participant recalled an animal husbandry project where goats were supplied and foreign veterinarians were brought to her community. Yes, the goats were distributed to various families/farms however shortly thereafter the animals died. The success of this program varies on whose point of view is taken into context.

Generally accepted yet ineffective

In a comparative analysis exercise, the participating CBO group members were asked to compare and contrast their experiences as beneficiaries with the traditional method utilized by external organizations with the post-earthquake SCLR experience implemented with the micro-grants.

The most reoccurring phrases to describe participants experience with the traditional method were:

1. Predefined method
 2. Imposition
 3. Information asymmetry
 4. Multiple constraints
-
1. Predefined method
 - a. Monopolization of planning by external community actors (NGOs, donors): The agency comes into the community with a plan that meets their needs and objectives.
 - b. Executional control by external community actors: the NGO has established an execution plan that may incorporate local community members for manual labour purposes only. The physical labour is required, not technical skills nor ideas.
 - c. Execution of projects not adapted according to community needs: There is often an assumption by the NGO that they are aware of community needs or that needs are the same across communes, regions, or the country.
 2. Imposition
 - a. Lack of debate in the selection of projects/interventions: There is no participation of the community that is necessary.
 - b. Community needs are not taken into account: reinforces the non-adaptation of community needs.
 - c. Minimizes trust between external actors and the community: The NGO holds all the power in this "relationship" and the community has no negotiation power or leverage.
 3. Information Asymmetry
 - a. Facilitates corruption: the lack of information sharing makes it easy for people to abuse the system. This abuse can come in the form of local authorities selecting preferred participants and beneficiaries, keeping funds or donated items for themselves, or using donated goods for political propaganda.
 - b. Reduces trust and participation: because of a history of questionable or failed efforts of multiple organizations in the past, community members are reluctant to get involved or hesitant to place their faith in the external agent. This also leaves community with a sense of helplessness and lack of confidence. It is paternalistic in nature.

- c. Creates conflict and undermines cohesion: the confusion and perceived underhanded actions leads to conflict amongst various community members who are believed to be beneficiaries through nefarious means.
4. Multiple Constraints
- a. Hinders participation: community is rendered confused and this demotivates participation.
 - b. Reduces opportunities: the unwillingness to be “happy” beneficiaries reduces the likelihood of NGO interventions in communities in the future or in the event of another disaster. Minimises “win-win” opportunities for both the NGO and the CBOs/general community.
 - c. Minimises trust amongst members of the communities: since there is no unity, it is believed that there are some people who may be benefitting at the expense of others. Trust and confidence are also lost between the NGOs and the community when there is questionable past performance.

Effects of the traditional method according to stakeholders

1. Lack of transparency
 2. Lack of trust
 3. Misidentification of ideal projects and beneficiaries
-
1. Lack of transparency
 - a. Rules, regulations, and norms are not explicit: contributes to allegations of corruption and other nefarious activities. community is not certain of what is going on, what is supposed to happen, or who is supposed to benefit.
 - b. Frequent changes in protocols and procedures: NGOs are accountable to no one but themselves. The community cannot share frustrations when plans are continuously changes.
 - c. Work is not aligned with project plans and forecasts: Lack of NGO/state accountability means that the work is not taken seriously. “MTPTC says they were doing a census of the communities but they only focused on the homes/buildings along the national route. No one came into the commune.”
 2. Lack of trust
 - a. Creates/increases tension between CBOs and authorities: community members believe they are at the mercy of local authorities for information.
 - b. Creates/increases tension between organizations and actors: historical experiences of negative outcomes.
 - c. Disinterest: external actors are here for their own needs, not necessarily the community members.

As detailed by the participants, traditional methods of aid assistance and distribution cannot remain as they are. It is time for an evolution in the way that the model works so that outcomes are mutually beneficial.

Psychosocial Activities: Valuing the Intangible

“We saw the state of traumatisation that people were in, we saw that here is where can not only provide some food or some money, but we have to find a small way to help people escape from these problems that are traversing them. This is the reason why we insisted that yes, we are going to take into account the needs but let’s take the psychosocial support.” - *Focus Group Participant*

In the aftermath of a disaster, physical and material needs are often at the forefront. In a resource limited country such as Haiti, it is to be expected that the needs for such items have been exacerbated by the disaster in question. But for many of the groups this was the first time that psychosocial activities were an option. CBO leadership and representatives seized the chance to tackle the mental effects of living through the trauma of the earthquake through the micro-grant option. The psychosocial activities were well received for bringing a sense of community, celebration, and much needed diversion from post-traumatic stress disorders (insomnia, depression, anxiety) while also addressing persistent problems such as malnutrition.

Concern Worldwide supported the psychosocial projects through direct financing of the associated micro-grants. CW wanted to assist the community in reconnecting to their pre-crisis social networks, usher a return to normalcy and restrengthen social cohesion within the targeted areas. CW was aware of the psychological challenges that often arise after these natural disasters and the over-representation and duplication of more tangible aid efforts. As the CBOs who executed these types of projects came to see, community morale was at never-before-seen lows and the problems affected all age ranges and other community demographics.

“The 14th of August, this created a lot of frustration, fear, and psychologic problems for the youth that were supposed to start school shortly thereafter. This is why I chose to work with children. We spoke about the earthquake, conducted a series of trainings for them, what type of compartment they should have during an earthquake. We had an activity like this so we could have more training/framing and reduce the sense of fear in the children. This was a priority because I know after the catastrophe, automatically the person you were before and you are now, psychologically, is a different person.” - *Focus Group Participant*

A representative who benefitted from Cash for Work within a rehabilitation project was able to participate in the psychosocial activities of her area and was able to identify the aspects of her project that evoked the same feelings of those expressed by beneficiaries.

“Even this type of work is based on a type of psychosocial support. People give examples of soccer matches but even when we are on the ground cleaning the road or something, we are telling jokes, it creates an ambiance. It was very good.” - *Focus Group Participant*

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on requests of stakeholder interviewed and observations garnered throughout the qualitative data gathering activities. To improve on future iterations of the sclr method, particularly within Haiti, the following should be taken into account:

1. Reinforcing capacity development initiatives
2. Continued Monitoring and Evaluation by partners/facilitating agencies
3. Adapting the selection criteria of CBOs to reflect dedicated organizations/persons, not just those with capacity to submit winning proposals
4. Increased flexibility in relationships between facilitating organizations, donors, and CBOs

1. Reinforcing capacity development initiatives

Participants most repeated recommendation was increased capacity development opportunities. The options ranges from Continuing Education courses in various technical aspects such as Budgeting and Proposal Writing. In the case of Proposal Writing, it was cited that this opportunity provided insight into what the groups were capable of doing with a limited budget. Grant Writing workshops would help better prepare the groups to bid/apply for continuous funding opportunities in the future and those opportunities would not necessarily be limited to emergency relief efforts. A finding for CW was that these groups would need more assistance on how to refine their beneficiary targeting criteria/rubric.

Each of the communities have lists of desired projects and additional community needs but they, admittedly, need help in sourcing information about funding opportunities and how to strengthen their chances of awards when there is greater competition (not open solely to members of a particular commune/region) on the national level. A possible solution to pooling resources in the targeted areas would be to assist in forming a resource sharing network. There are members across regions with technical expertise (accounting, education, agriculture) and they may be able to conduct workshops on a periodical basis or assist in developing written materials such as workbooks.

2. Continued Monitoring and Evaluation by partners/facilitating agencies

Groups often continued work after the execution period stated in the award, this was limited to projects heavily reliant on manual labour and physical resources (not psychosocial activities or distribution of various kits). These groups have expanded areas of intervention to more complicated road maintenance and repairs and environmental conservation. However well-intentioned the

efforts are, groups expressed a desire for continued M&E to ensure that these efforts minimize unintended or unforeseen consequences.

Additionally, this reinforces the external validation and empowerment aspects that were verbalized by the participants. Having their efforts valorised helps to further keep the CBOs motivated in their work.

3. Adapting the selection criteria of CBOs to reflect dedicated organizations/persons, not just those with capacity to submit winning proposals

As noted, there were unequal levels of education and professional experience amongst the various regions and CBOs that was observed. The concern this recommendation seeks to address is that the selection criteria should be equitable to address the various educational challenges of Haiti. As SCLR programs are scaled up, how do you ensure that CBOs and community associations comprised of members who lack reading and writing skills but are otherwise cognizant of the work that needs to be done and how to execute. Evaluation criteria can be adjusted to reflect longevity in the region or social capital to ensure that awards are not limited to individuals that can write concrete proposals but are not necessarily representatives of a given area.

4. Increased flexibility in the relationships between facilitating organizations, donors, and CBOs

The rules and regulations surrounding funding can be often bureaucratic and limiting in nature given the reporting requirements of donors and lateral/multilateral agencies. However, given the nature of work during times of crises, there is a need for flexibility in terms of modes of operations, the financial amounts of the grants, and the execution timeframes for CBO projects that is needed. In particular case to Haiti, the centralization of resources and utilities within the metropolitan Port-au-Prince area makes it challenging for partner organizations working in more remote areas.

Additionally, in reference to Recommendations 1 and 3, the various educational levels found in more remote and rural areas call for an increased level of involvement of Project Managers and Promoters that work directly with the CBOs. A level of involvement not specified or expressly deterred (assistance in writing proposals) may be called for in order to have the best ideas and projects submitted for the selection committees.

Sclr: Phase 2 Implementation

Early Recovery (Phase 2) of Emergency Management & Disaster Recovery is the transitional period where basic needs such as food, water, and temporary/transitional shelter have been satisfied. Communities can resume some normal life activities while adjusting to a new normal.³

Early Recovery is:

³ "Phases of Disaster Recovery: Emergency Response for the Long Term - World." *Relief Web*, 30 Apr. 2013, <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/phases-disaster-recovery-emergency-response-long-term>.

1. Focusing on local ownership and strengthening capacities.
2. Integrating risk reduction
3. Promoting equality and preventing discrimination through adherence to development principles that seek to build on programs.
4. Catalyse sustainable development opportunities.

It aims to generate self-sustaining, nationally owned, resilient processes for post crisis recovery and to put in place preparedness measures to mitigate the impact of future crises.”⁴

Sclr encompasses the components of Early Recovery in its core as proven by the feedback of the CBOs and stakeholders interviewed. However, there are adjustments that may be implemented to assist in increasing the effectiveness and facilitate a smoother transition into the Early Recovery Phase.

1. Focusing on local ownership and strengthening capacities

By definition sclr puts the community and local inhabitants at the forefront. The groups observed had themes that included agriculture, education, women’s associations, parents’ associations and socialization groups (youth and elderly). Additionally, the integration of local authorities and interested greater community members ensures all members of both vertical and horizontal chains are incorporated in the decision making (debates and ultimately selection as per the Committees). Lastly, the groups are disaggregated into the smallest administrative zones, which is the commune. Thus, ensuring that the projects undertaken are specific to the that particular commune, as these needs can vary dramatically among communes within a department.

Capacity development has been a repeated request throughout each focus group and interview session. Within this series of intervention, there can be both short term and longer-term actions taken. The most accessible and implementable changes can be made to the application process. In lieu of aiming to increase the base level of knowledge, the longer-term option, Volunteers can be tasked with providing technical assistance in the form of assisting in the preparation of proposals and the application.

Because the Emergency phase has come to an end, the length of time to submit, process, and select winning proposals may be a lengthier process, as well as the execution timeframe. Concurrently, during this process Volunteers will be able to assess the cognitive and educational weaknesses of the communities that they are assisting and will be able to give critical feedback on what type of long-term training and/or education materials should be created and disseminated. An idea brought by CW is that the project period may extended to 12 months (in “normal” times). The first six months will focus on continued sclr approach, general training on management, tools development and then 6 months allocated to the execution of the project itself. Lastly, FAs and partner organizations need to remember that there may be variations in needs between rural and urban areas, as well as to keep I mind the seasonality and cyclical nature of day-to-day life.

2. Integrating risk reduction

⁴ “Early Recovery.” Humanitarian Response, <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/clusters/early-recovery>.

Psychosocial: One of the findings was the importance placed on the psychosocial activities. These activities included both social activities such as dancing competitions, youth sports matches, and theatre. Two groups highlighted the completion of psychologically focused activities that targeted mental trauma and coping mechanisms. A third group highlighted their disaster risk reduction project that had a component on techniques to stay safe during an earthquake. Of importance with the later project topic is that the Volunteer was able to see results shortly thereafter as the persistent earthquake aftershocks saw visibly reduced numbers of people rushing streets and walkways. Admittedly, there was no mention of the specific needs of persons with disabilities in regards to the topics discussed. Can micro-grants permit this information and sensibilization to be shared amongst the CBO groups by having leaders conduct trainings throughout the various departments is an option.

Environmental: The selection and execution of the road rehabilitations and canal irrigation/cleanings illustrated the collective resolve of the communities. Not only that of the CBOs that were trained in the method and planned the execution but in the volunteer aid provided by non-beneficiary members. Additionally, the increase in the scope of work highlighted the need for additional environmentally related interventions. Taking into account "breadth vs depth" is it that the Phase 1 projects should have been structured in multiple execution phases and financing tranches or should there have been more individual awards made at the base financing level? Given that the human resources and labour were mobilized beyond planning levels, how can this be capitalized upon on the second round of project executions. The recommendation is that Phase 2 projects should feature a larger grant amount.

The add-ons mentioned above included soil conservation and extended irrigation cleaning and routing. While some CBOs were able to utilize their personal networks for technical assistance, other groups expressed a need for civil engineers to assist in more complex and detailed planning exercises for more complicated road and irrigation works. The will and physical labour exist, but the technical savvy to ensure that things are completed properly is needed. Here the Needs Assessment proposed would support expanded depth of Phase 1 activities.

Economic: In one of the sessions, the CASEC (the local authority) went into detail regarding the economic challenges as it related to livelihoods in the area. After natural disasters, he would find that community members would turn to traditional charcoal production, at first only using fallen trees, but then turning to tree cutting. While fallen trees may always be permitted for such endeavours, an Economic Feasibility workshop and subsequent study would allow community members to share past failed intervention histories and propose alternative methods from their lessons learned.

Examples of lessons learned included a failed animal husbandry project due to the importation of non-suitable animals and foreign veterinarians and failed agricultural seeding programs due to non-respect of planting and harvesting cycles. However, apiculture was reported by one group as an innovative economic activity that exploited the abundance of rural agriculture and plants. Reducing the economic risks would minimize reliance on external funding in the future.

3. Promoting equality and preventing discrimination through adherence to development principles that seek to build on existing humanitarian programs.

Equality, as expressed, was primarily attained through the selection of beneficiaries. Groups stressed the prioritization of the most vulnerable including elderly, persons with disabilities and

pregnant women. However, no group could provide examples of these individuals in the planning or selection of ideas and how to integrate their individual needs. Prior to a second community Needs Assessment for a secondary round of community grants, CBOs can be provided with education and sensitization training on special needs and universal standards moving forward. As well as address existing gaps and how CBOs can be encouraged to incorporate the gaps into future microgrant funding opportunities. Additionally, funds may be earmarked specifically for such disability focused proposals.

4. Catalyse sustainable development opportunities for the long term.

Once again, sustainable solutions are built into the framework of SCLR given the focus on local actors initiating the projects to solve their most pressing needs. As reported by beneficiaries and CBOs because the community was implicated at every step of the process, they were able to build and reinforce on the skills that were prevalent in the area. This autonomy and ownership leads to increased performance and a desire to maintain the efforts of their work in the long terms. Additionally, teams were able to discover ways to build upon and improve their initial projects funded through the micro-grants.

Conclusion

This experience of utilising the SCLR approach within Haiti during a crisis response has demonstrated how not only is the approach practical and effective but also highly adaptive to suit the needs of beneficiaries.

With a country filled with decades of failed interventions despite commitments in the millions year after year, it is clear that a fundamental change is needed if development and stability are the desired results. In lieu of acquiescence to incremental change in the balance of power, sclr offers this conversion in a proven and beneficiary approved method.

As evidenced throughout the sclr micro-grant funded projects CBOs serve a critical role in the lives of the remote, rural, and most vulnerable. These organizations serve as both family and State in terms of health assistance, financial assistance, emotional support, and sustainable development. This approach capitalizes on these local organizations and leverages their relationships, cultural expertise, and social ties to bring the changes that are wanted and needed.

As reiterated throughout each focus group session and interview, the sclr approach is

1. Transparent
2. Participatory and inclusive
3. Efficient
4. Sustainable
5. Adapted to community needs

The approach promotes mutually beneficial outcomes and leaves community members with the tools, skillset, and most importantly the will to continue to advocate for their communities and its development.

Case Studies

Case Study 1

Mme. Mimose was always seen as a *poto mitan* (pillar of the family/community) in her area. A lifelong educator and a determined fighter for women's rights. It is no surprise that the morning of August 14th found her in Jeremie to attend a conference with several other women. After the situation stabilized the group of women decided to brave the roads as some of the women in the group, including Mimose, learned of deceased and still missing family members.

"I had to be strong". Attempting the road home proved difficult as there were numerous landslides that blocked the road. Over the course of three days traveling via car, moto, and by foot the group of women made it back to Camp Perrin. While accustomed to the ever growing and challenging needs of her community, the aftermath of the earthquake brought a new level of crisis to her front doorsteps. The young children in the area were despondent, fearful, and presented trauma responses. Already operating on a shoe-string budget to support the ever-expanding list of support, Mimose was at a loss but knew that there were people that were looking towards her for help in these very moments.

Christian Aid and SJM came with an opportunity and method that would allow Mimose to reiterate why she was a *poto mitan* after all. She held meetings with her two target demographics, youth and elders to gather ideas and discuss options for psychosocial activities. The children, she stated, wanted to move! Suggestions ranged from sports competitions to dancing. The elders, to no one's surprise, also wanted festive activities. Over the course of three consecutive days (Friday – Sunday) the community was alive. "They danced, they played games that we organized, they ate". The only regret was that the activities couldn't exceed the allotted days. This brought a much needed sense of normalcy

While working with donors was not a novel occasion for Mimose, the authority given and the transparency were new. "I have participated in trainings with organizations before. I didn't help with the trainings. The organizations say this is what we are going to do and can you help us find participants". Additionally, this was not the only post-earthquake relief effort that she was involved with. "A person called and said they had 100 kits to deliver, can I find 100 kids. The day of they came with 75 kits. The children were grabbing, shoving, and pushing. The person had to remove some kits from the amount that was set aside for Jeremie... Why would you say to find 100 kids if you know you don't have 100 kits? You could have said you had 10 or 20 kits and I would have found the kids that were really affected, really vulnerable and we would have just distributed to them". While Mimose is never the one to shy from a worthy fight, the SCLR experience provided her with a concrete example to express her frustration, dissatisfaction, and recount a tangible execution with this individual. Whether through sharing her testimony in church meetings or addressing the shortcomings and questionable nature of benevolent individuals, Mimose is doing her part to ensure that the message of SCLR is spread in the South.

Case Study 2

"I do not walk with the *bann rara* (*rara band*). They asked me to serve as the secretary and I agreed. But I do not walk with them". Ms. Milien wanted to clarify for all of us in the meeting center how it

was that she came to participate with the rara members for the project. This was notable because rara bands are relegated as a cultural taboo within greater Haitian society. The basis for this stigmatisation is the affiliation of the bands with voodoo practices, predilection for alcoholic beverages, and activities that take place throughout the dead of night with accompanying music. While an unequivocal Haitian tradition, the bands are not typically seen in neither a positive light nor as a positive force within society.

One of the reported effects of the SCLR method within the groups was increased social cohesion between residents and community members who do not belong to the same CBOs, group or other affiliations. Ms. Milien is a fairly active citizen in her area. The members of a since disbanded CBO, it was she and several peers who decided to launch another organization in order to preserve the momentum and work being done. Always looking for opportunities to shape and improve the area is a passion of hers. Hence, when she was approached by members of the rara band, she did not hesitate to serve as secretary for their activity. She was chosen for her skill and trustworthy reputation and saw it as an opportunity to further their mission. Such a force and supporter of women, Ms. Milien seized the occasion and has since formed a women's group within the greater rara band cooperative, thus ensuring that unreached women can be fully integrated into collective efforts moving forward and strengthening community relations.

The work of the band collective on the canal cleaning and widened scope to include road improvements continue to this day, even though the financial means are insufficient. As an added testament to the increased recognition in her community, Ms. Milien continues to receive gifts including provisions and live animals as gratitude for her initiative and dedication from distant community members.⁵

Case Study 3

Support from the State has always been tenuous at best within Haiti's 200+ years history. Outside of the capital of Port-au-Prince, residents can successfully argue it is non-existent. The effects of this reverberate profoundly in the more rural regions of the country. Within the communes, the CASEC is the representative of the State. "The country's 1987 constitution divides the country into 10 departments, 140 municipalities, and 570 communal sections... the communal sections, designated by the constitution as the republic's smallest administrative territorial entity, are represented by both a popularly elected Communal Council (CASEC) and a Communal Section Assembly".⁶

With limited oversight and the lack of formal recourse for abuses of power, it is not difficult for a CASEC and the residents of his/her commune to have a strained relationship. The lack of resources, be they economic or otherwise, coming in from the central government and the being the local authoritative power also makes this elected position a non-challenging opportunity to engage in corruptive practices and nepotism.

A discovery throughout the focus groups was the increased autonomy that SCLR was able to provide for CBOs and the community overall. This is because the method calls for transparency at all levels

⁵ Largey, Michael. "Politics on the Pavement: Haitian Rara as a Traditionalizing Process." *The Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. 113, no. Summer, 2000, pp. 239–254. No. 449.

⁶ Donais, Timothy. "Bringing the Local Back In." *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, Vol. 10, no. No. 1, Apr. 2015, pp. 40–55.

of engagement. From the onset, the CASEC, CBOs and stakeholders from the community are convened together and receive the same information regarding the project, compliance, rules, and regulations. This in and of itself means that “all cards are on the table”, as the common refrain regarding the level of transparency went. With SCLR people are given the shift the balance in order to achieve stable and equitable systems.

On the surface this may appear to be a tool to subvert the power of the CASEC, however for those that operate with integrity and work to improve their areas of jurisdiction, it serves as opportunities to strengthen the relationships with the community members and shed light on the difficult act of reconciling limited resources from NGOs with habitants needs. A CASEC explained how it is challenging to get community members who do not benefit directly from an intervention, why that may have been the case. Countering feelings with facts, in emotionally fraught circumstances, often leads to resentment and accusations of nefarious practices. Those who feel left out will never understand, no matter how much you try to explain.

At the CASEC level itself, when the authorities convene amongst themselves, there are often complaints regarding the sporadic nature of their remuneration. It is not uncommon for accusations of corruption amongst this level as well, given that not all communes within a municipality are selected for each individual intervention by an implementing organization. Questions regarding preference and underhanded dealings are not unusual. Once again this is where the transparency of SCLR is key, at any point the non-implementing CASECs can access the written materials that were shared during the initial meetings with the facilitating organizations, speak to a project promoter, or a CBO member and receive the same set of facts, thus highlighting the mutually beneficial aspect of transparency along horizontal and vertical chains of communication.

Case Study 4

An unremarkable day in 1985 would change Oxilien’s life forever. On a routine day traveling through Leogane for a day of work, a car accident would leave him in the General Hospital in Port-au-Prince with the loss of an arm. Faced with a new reality and little assistance from the state, he later relocated to his home town commune within Camp Perrin.

To date the small community of persons with disabilities find small ways to sustain themselves, “We all have small gardens and do for ourselves”. The micro-grant projects presented a unique opportunity for Oxilien to contribute to the normalization of his life. Attending the information sessions and his CBOs brainstorming meetings, he listened to the various ideas and shared his own. Ultimately, a road rehabilitation project was agreed upon as the roads were blocked, including those to the markets and to town. Despite enthusiasm and a wanting to be on the labour team, meaning those who were tasked with the physical works of the project, Oxilien was not selected.

After conversations with the Volunteer, an agronomist who proved critical thus far, the leadership team agreed to take him on as a labourer.

As the sole person with a disability on the work site, Oxilien disproved many myths about how such a person could be a contributive member of the team. No task was too much, from shovelling, removing fallen rocks and boulders, even the use of a pick axe, “I already knew that I could do the work”. He received much encouragement from the other team members throughout his efforts, even jokingly being asked to climb a coconut tree. To this day, Oxilien thanks the Volunteer for his intervention and the increased value that this brought to his person. This work brought increased

attention and interest from other members of this vulnerable group within the area as the desire to contribute was not unique to Oxilien alone.

With the payment from the participation in the micro-grant funded project, Oxilien purchased a tarp, raw materials for planting crops, foodstuffs, and small livestock. As the head of the household that he shares with an elderly mother, this relieved great stress for him. The rising costs of food had made reconciling needs and his minimal economic means very challenging, even though it remains a small household. "With the cash for work I feel better than when another organization comes and just gives food...It is better for these organizations to work with us and provide the funds to help with the circumstances, and we can handle our needs". With this option you can purchase your immediate needs or set aside the funds for later.

Case Study 5

Genaise had launched a Needs Assessment prior to the announcement of the SCLR projects in her commune. "I wanted to know what our problems were. Even though we couldn't help, the presence alone encourages people". As the coordinator of her CBO, she felt it her duty to conduct this assessment even though she had no idea if, or when, the information would be useful. During these household visits she would discover that morale was so low, even a close family member had suicidal thoughts. The work could not stop.

While experience had shown her not to expect government assistance nor relief, she knew that since this was the first major earthquake felt in the South, there would ultimately be an effort of some kind. After the initial announcement for the micro-grant projects was held, the findings in her assessment and additional interviews with challenged community members would be utilized to inform her CBOs decision on a road rehabilitation project. The main road was in such poor condition that only younger residents could take the damaged route and make what is normally a 30-minute walk, within 4 hours if conditions were favourable.

As experienced with all of the SCLR micro-grant funded projects, it was a rousing success. But, what marked Genaise with this experience was that she was able to now compare this experience with those of other external organization using traditional aid assistance methods, "I realized we were the ones who were always failed...Thanks to the SCLR training my eyes are open". Around the same timeframe of the SCLR project, another organization constructed a large temporary housing space for people who had lost their home, however it remained empty. This organization did not consult with the community first and failed to realize that it is against cultural norms to share close living space, "For them it was beautiful but for the peyizan it meant nothing". Recalling a past animal husbandry program with another organization, the revelation was more disordered than she initially thought. While this program had a base level of financial transparency, the inequity was still at the forefront "Not only did they tell us how much money they were going to take from the top, but the little amount that was given to us is what we had to pay for them to then go and buy the animals for us".

This newfound knowledge is not limited to assessing past failed programs. The SCLR training has provided Genaise with the skills to advocate on the behalf community members for new projects as well. Over the course of the last several weeks, an external organization brought a construction initiative to the community. Since there are members living in dire housing situations, and after the rapid cycle with the micro-grant projects, community members expected the cycle to be just as rapid (within 45 days). However, it has been over a month since the last meeting with the organization.

There has been a lack of information shared with the community. The few beneficiaries who were selected by the organization were instructed not to share their status with the community at large. At the first communal meeting sessions the community was told that the homes that were supposed to be constructed were to be a certain dimension but after a subsequent meeting where images were shared, the community realized the homes were in fact going to be smaller than originally told. The organization interpreted this as the community not agreeing to the program, but did not take into account the change of plans and promises. The organisation did not hold itself accountable to its initial plans. At this particular meeting both Genaise and other SCLR trained members successfully protested this change of plans and the external organization was forced to return with new plans. This was all due to the training, "Lady, as I told you, our eyes are opened".

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