LHAF

LOCAL HUMANITARIAN ACTORS FORUM

A collaborative platform for local NGOs in Zimbabwe

Knowledge Hub Admins Capacity Strengthening

MEETING REPORT

26 February 2026



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Meeting Details

- **Date:** 26 February 2026
- **Time:** 0830-1530
- **Location:** Cresta Oasis, Harare
- **Meeting Theme:** Strengthening Institutional Uptake and Effective Use of the LHAF Knowledge Hub
- **Facilitator:** Privilege (Hub Super Admin)
- **Chairing:** Ngoni Muchenje (Methodist Development and Relief Agency-MeDRA)
- **Minuting and Workshop Report:** Privilege (MeDRA)
- **Opening Prayer:** Peter (Diocese of Mutare Community Care Programme)
- **Closing Prayer:** Fungai (Mwenezi Development Training Centre)

- **Facebook|LinkedIn|X|Youtube: Local Humanitarian Actors Forum**
- **Website (Hub): https://lhsizim.org**

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1 Opening Session- Introductions, Welcome Remarks and Expectations
Presenter: Ngoni (MeDRA)

The presenter allowed the participants to introduce themselves and spell out the objective of the meeting. The meeting was convened to discuss the strategic use and strengthening of the Knowledge Hub for local humanitarian actors. The session aimed not just at technical training but at fostering a strategic conversation about institutional uptake, effective knowledge management, and collaborative learning to enhance humanitarian response.

1.1 Key Welcome and Expectations Points

- **Knowledge Hub as a Strategic Resource:** The Knowledge Hub was highlighted as more than a digital repository; it serves as a living institutional memory that preserves case studies, tools, and lessons learned from local humanitarian actors.
- **Institutional Uptake and Leadership:** Participants were reminded that the effectiveness of the Knowledge Hub depends heavily on organizational leadership and commitment. Knowledge administrators were described as key actors who do not merely manage accounts but function as facilitators of institutional knowledge transfer. Their role is critical in ensuring that the Knowledge Hub becomes a vibrant, well-utilized resource rather than underused or forgotten.
- **User Experience and Feedback:** Several participants shared their experiences with the Knowledge Hub. While some found the training and registration process helpful and engaging, others expressed uncertainty about how to navigate and contribute to the platform effectively. There was a consensus on the need for clearer guidance and ongoing support to improve user confidence and activity.
- **Collaboration and Communication:** The importance of inter-organizational communication was stressed as a means to enhance the effectiveness of the Knowledge Hub. Participants suggested creating small video tutorials and other engaging materials to support users, as well as employing social media to raise awareness and encourage participation.
- **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL):** Effective MEL practices were identified as essential to track progress, gather insights, and continuously improve knowledge management practices.
- **Registration and Participation:** There was a focus on encouraging more organizations and individuals to register and actively participate in the Knowledge Hub. Some attendees had successfully registered and completed courses, which enhanced their knowledge and engagement with the platform. However, the need to expand membership and increase active contributions was emphasised.

2 Overview of LHAF – Roadmap
Presenter: Tariro (MeDRA)

The Local Humanitarian Actors Forum (LHAF) Roadmap was outlined as a comprehensive strategic pathway aimed at empowering local actors as frontline leaders in humanitarian response and resilience in Zimbabwe. Spanning from 2024 to 2026, the plan

emphasises collaboration, capacity building, innovation, and sustainability to enhance local humanitarian action. This initiative is supported by Christian Aid Zimbabwe and was founded by MeDRA in 2024. The following key timelines and milestones were explained:

2.1 Timeline of Key Milestones and Phases

Timeline	Activity/Phase	Description
August 2024	Establishment	Launch of the Local Humanitarian Strengthening Initiative (LHSI) with Christian Aid support.
Sept–Nov 2024	Mobilisation	Sensitisation and mobilisation of local organisations to build a foundational network.
Jan–Feb 2025	Foundation	Recruitment and collaboration initiation among the first 22 local NGOs.
Jan–May 2025	Capacity Building (Phase 2)	Specialised trainings including CHS self-assessment, core humanitarian standards, and sector-specific topics like decolonisation, protection, psychosocial support, and anticipatory action planning.
Aug–Sept 2025	Scale Up & Transformation (Phase 3)	Transition from LHSI to LHAF; leadership prioritisation; upgrade of knowledge hub; launch of digital platforms; membership growth to 30 NGOs.
Oct 2, 2025	Official Launch	Formal launch event attended by key stakeholders, including government, NGOs, private sector, INGOs, UN agencies, and donors.
Oct 2025–Feb 2026	Governance & Sustainability (Phase 4)	Joint development, adoption, and implementation of the Localisation Charter; steering committee selection and first meeting with focus on anticipatory action planning.

2.2 Key Insights and Conclusions

- **Empowerment of Local Actors:** The roadmap is centred on enhancing the capacity and influence of local humanitarian actors, recognising their critical role in frontline response.
- **Focus on Quality and Standards:** Emphasising Core Humanitarian Standards and capacity strengthening in key humanitarian themes ensures that local NGOs meet internationally recognised benchmarks.
- **Innovation and Digital Integration:** Upgrading of the knowledge hub and deployment of digital platforms demonstrate commitment to modernising local humanitarian coordination.
- **Governance and Sustainability:** The development and adoption of a Localisation Charter and formation of a steering committee underscore efforts to institutionalise local leadership. The forum aims to embed itself as a member-driven entity rather than being seen as a project dependent on any single organization (e.g., MeDRA). This

involves collective ownership, decision-making, and continuous capacity strengthening.

- **Collaborative Multi-Stakeholder Engagement:** Inclusion of government, private sector, international partners, and donors reflects a comprehensive, inclusive humanitarian ecosystem.

3 Overview of the Knowledge Hub

Presenter: Privilege (MeDRA)

3.1 Knowledge Hub: Vision, Structure, and Utilisation

- **Purpose and Goals**: The Knowledge Hub is designed as a dedicated platform for Zimbabwe's local humanitarian actors to network, share expertise, and access locally relevant learning resources. It supports capacity strengthening beyond workshops through an accessible, digital repository tailored to local contexts.
- **Local Contextualization**: Unlike international platforms, the hub integrates local case studies, policies, and practical examples to ensure training materials and shared knowledge resonate with Zimbabwean humanitarian actors.
- **Components**:
    - **Knowledge Base**: A repository of best practices, lessons learned, manuals, and tools categorised under themes such as community engagement, humanitarian standards, disaster risk reduction, legal frameworks, monitoring and evaluation, and organisational capacity building. Files can be uploaded by member organizations and are subject to quality control by a Super Admin before becoming public.
    - **Learning Management System (LMS)**: An interactive, self-paced platform offering courses on governance, fundraising, protection mainstreaming, decolonisation, anticipatory action planning, and more. Courses include animated videos, voiceovers, quizzes, and certification upon passing an 80% threshold. Question pools are randomised to enhance learning engagement.
- **Access and Registration**: Organisations receive invitations to register their admins, who then onboard team members. Public users can view limited resources, while registered members access full content and collaborative tools.
- **Current Usage Metrics as at 25/02/2026**:
    - 85 registered users across member organizations, with ChildLine leading at 15 members.
    - 91 course enrollments with 45 completions and 37 certified users.
    - 61 uploaded knowledge base files, though the platform is currently underutilized, highlighting the need for increased engagement.

3.2 Digital Presence and Visibility

- **Social Media Platforms**: The forum maintains active profiles on Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and X (formerly Twitter), posting updates, member spotlights, thematic

highlights, and network activities. These channels enhance visibility, promote member organisations, and foster stakeholder engagement.

- **Member Spotlights and Challenges**: Spotlighting organisations helps showcase their work and attract attention, but some organisations are hesitant to participate. Despite this, social media traction is growing steadily, with follower numbers increasing since late 2024.
- **Public Recognition**: The forum has garnered recognition from government agencies and international partners, enhancing its legitimacy and influence in Zimbabwe's humanitarian sector.

3.3 Challenges and Feedback

- **Participation and Engagement**: While registration and course enrollment numbers are promising, completion rates need improvement. Encouragement and motivation are necessary to ensure members complete courses and actively utilise the platform.
- **Knowledge Base Utilisation**: Despite having a rich repository, members underutilise the knowledge base, signalling a need for awareness-raising and perhaps user support to maximise its value.
- **Visibility and Profile Updates**: Some organisations hesitate to share detailed profiles or participate in spotlight features, which limits the forum's ability to showcase its collective impact.
- **Feedback Mechanisms**: There have been concerns about the lack of proper feedback from the forum to members, especially the Directors (sometimes not involved in the training sessions), suggesting that communication channels and responsiveness could be enhanced.

4 Hub Demonstration & Practical Sessions

Presenter: Privilege

The session provided a comprehensive overview of a virtual session focused on the features, functionalities, user roles, and challenges of a knowledge management and learning platform designed for local humanitarian actors. The system integrates document management, partner information, and an e-learning management system to support organisational capacity strengthening in Zimbabwe and similar contexts.

4.1 Key Components and Features of the Knowledge Hub

1. **Document Upload and Management**

- **No formal guidelines currently exist** on how to structure or upload documents, but the session encourages uploading documents that could be useful to local humanitarian actors.
- Uploaded documents are **reviewed by a Super admin** before being made public to maintain quality and relevance.
- Documents can be categorised under specific thematic areas such as **Community Engagement, Disaster Management**, etc.

- Files can be tagged as **organisation-visible** (restricted access) or **public** (accessible to all platform users).
- If documents do not fit existing categories, users can request the creation of new folders/themes, which will be reflected with featured pictures and descriptions on the landing page.
- The hub includes functionality for **updating organization details** such as logos and websites by admins.

2. Partner Section

- The platform includes a **Partners section** listing all associated organizations.
- Users can access partner websites or social media pages (e.g., Facebook) directly through the platform.
- This feature helps users quickly identify and connect with partners internationally and locally.
- Admins can update partner details including logos and web links.

3. User Roles and Permissions

The system operates with **three key user roles**:

Role	Access Level and Capabilities
Super Admin	Manages all organisations, reviews documents, creates courses, views all analytics, suspends users, and manages system-wide settings.
Organization Admin	Manages users and content within their own organisation, views organisation-specific analytics, invites members, and updates organisation info.
Member	General system user without admin capabilities.

4. Learning Management System (LMS)

Courses and Content

- The LMS currently hosts **six main courses**, selected based on sector needs and prior polling.
- Courses integrate **contextualised content** specific to Zimbabwe, such as legal requirements and case studies by WFP and OCHA.
- Learning materials include **text scripts, animated videos, and quizzes**.

- Quizzes are randomized, pulling 15 questions from a pool of 25 to prevent repetition and encourage genuine learning.
- Certificates are awarded for course completion with a pass mark of 80%.
- Users can retake quizzes and revisit course content multiple times.
- Plans exist to **co-create new courses** with input from various organizations to keep content updated and relevant.
- There is a proposal to add a **safeguarding course** and possibly other administrative topics.

Course Access and Usage

- Courses are accessible through the dashboard once logged in.
- Course progress tracking allows users to mark modules as completed, unlocking quizzes.
- The system tracks individual and organizational course completion statistics.
- Discussion highlighted the importance of capacity building being continuous, with regular updates to course material reflecting innovation and sector changes.

4.2 System Challenges and Recommendations

- **Technical issues**: Slow system response, invitation emails sometimes not delivered or sent to junk/spam folders.
- **User engagement**: Need for motivation to encourage users to complete courses and engage with the platform.
- **Document categorisation**: Some glitches noted in categorising and uploading; requests for more thematic folders.
- **Feedback mechanism**: Emphasis on collecting user feedback to improve course content and platform usability.
- **Updating content**: Courses should be periodically reviewed and updated to remain relevant to evolving sector needs.
- **User roles**: Clarification and possible expansion of member admin capabilities could improve management.
- **Profile visibility**: Discussion on whether profiles should be visible only within organisations or more broadly.

5 Feedback Discussion Session: System Gaps and Recommendations

Facilitator: Fungai (MDTC)

The section primarily focused on gathering and discussing feedback related to the Hub, specifically targeting four key pillars: the Learning Management System (LMS), the knowledge base of files, potential additional functionalities, and system improvement plans. Participants

shared observations, challenges, and suggestions to enhance the system's effectiveness and user experience.

5.1 Learning Management System (LMS)

Key Discussion Points:

1. **Course Content and Quality:** The current courses offered through the LMS were acknowledged to be well-structured and comprehensive. However, there was recognition of gaps, particularly in terms of the range and diversity of courses. Some participants suggested adding courses related to auditing, administration, and finance to meet organisational needs.
2. **Course Accessibility and Format:** Given that some organisations might lack the resources or expertise to produce highly professional courses, it was proposed to allow simpler formats such as short 5 to 7-minute videos. These would focus on basic skills or self-care topics, providing accessible learning without the pressure of formal certification.
3. **Certificates and Recognition:** The importance of issuing certificates upon course completion was highlighted. Certificates serve as formal recognition of skills acquired, which can be critical for career development and credibility within organisations. Some participants noted that completed courses should be honoured and reflected in personnel records to encourage participation and commitment.
4. **Feedback Mechanism and Continuous Improvement:** To facilitate ongoing improvements, it was proposed that feedback on courses be actively sought and shared within communication platforms like WhatsApp groups. This would keep the discussion dynamic and help identify areas for course enhancement promptly.
5. **Incorporation of Organisational Best Practices:** Participants emphasised leveraging internal organisational experiences and lessons learned as valuable content for course development. Sharing these good practices would enrich the learning materials and ensure relevance.
6. **Reference Materials and Further Reading:** The addition of reference links and supplementary materials at the end of each course module was suggested. This would enable learners to delve deeper into topics and broaden their understanding, enhancing the educational value of the LMS.
7. **Content Variety and Quizzes:** The LMS supports multiple content types — video-only, text-only, or combined with quizzes. Flexibility in course design was encouraged to cater to different learning styles and ensure engagement.

5.2 Knowledge Base of Files

Key Discussion Points:

- **File Uploading and Access Levels:** Discussions clarified the existing two-tier file access system: organisational-level access and public access. There was a suggestion to

introduce an intermediate level that would allow sharing documents beyond the organisation but not publicly, potentially for partner organisations or local actors.

- **Document Approval and Accountability:** It was underscored that before uploading documents, approval must be obtained from designated directors responsible for the content. This ensures accountability and maintains the integrity of the knowledge base.
- **Organisational Policies Compliance:** Uploading and sharing documents must comply with organisational policies, requiring prior clearance to prevent unauthorised dissemination of sensitive information.

5.3 Additional Functionalities and System Enhancements

Key Discussion Points:

- **System Organisation and Navigation:** To avoid clutter and confusion as more content and files are added, a more robust organisational structure is necessary. This includes better folder hierarchies and categorisation within both the LMS and knowledge base.
- **Dashboard and User Interface:** There were brief mentions of improving the user experience post-login, particularly regarding the dashboard layout. Enhancements should facilitate quick access to key modules and relevant information.
- **Flexibility in Content Delivery:** The system should allow diverse content delivery modes, such as video-only courses without quizzes, to accommodate different learning preferences.
- **Collaboration and Interaction:** Encouraging interaction through communication tools linked to the platform (e.g., WhatsApp groups) was seen as beneficial. This would help maintain engagement and foster peer learning.

6 Action Planning and Way Forward

Presenter: Jihad (Nyahunure Community Organisation)

6.1 Key Planning Discussion Points

1. Action Planning: Identification of Practical Priority Actions

- The group emphasised the importance of defining clear, practical actions based on workshop learnings.
- Priority actions include:
    - Extending user invitations beyond the current 24-hour window to encourage broader participation.
    - Enhancing the interactivity of courses and uploading more diverse courses to meet organisational and community needs.

2. Responsibility and Accountability

- Organisations must establish mechanisms for regular feedback and communication, such as weekly or biweekly meetings (Monday or Friday).
- This feedback loop ensures that colleagues who were not present at workshops remain informed and engaged.
- Continuous sharing of updates was highlighted as critical for increasing user enrollment and platform utilisation.
- Addressing gaps in understanding the platform's benefits among staff was identified as a necessity to foster a culture of learning and appreciation.

3. Setting Timelines and Monitoring Progress

- Clear timelines for enrolling staff in courses and completing learning modules were recommended.
- Monitoring progress involves setting specific indicators, such as:
    - Percentage of staff enrolled.
    - Number of courses completed within set timeframes.
    - Growth in platform usage and course engagement.
- The importance of monitoring not just individual progress but institutional impact was stressed to measure the effectiveness of the app.
- The need for indicators to be realistic and adaptable to staff turnover and organisational dynamics was also discussed.

4. Course Content Relevance and Customisation

- There was a call for course content to be contextualised and translated to suit local realities and languages, enhancing accessibility and understanding.
- Organisations recognised their unique capacities and specialisations—such as nutrition or protection—and expressed the desire to leverage these strengths by developing and sharing tailored courses.
- Courses like safeguarding were highlighted as critical and potentially exemplary modules that could be perfected and shared across the network. **Musasa** to support in course content development.

5. Inclusion of Board Members and Volunteers

- The idea of extending access to **board members** and **volunteers** was proposed to enhance organisational governance and capacity building.
- Including board members in relevant courses could improve governance practices and clarity in roles between executives and boards.
- Volunteers and community-level actors could also benefit from access, provided the content is adapted to their needs.

6. Collaboration and Consortium Building

- A strategic focus was placed on leveraging organisational strengths by forming consortia to apply for larger funding opportunities.
- Geographic and thematic specialization was discussed as a way to avoid competition and maximize coverage without overextending organisational capacity.
- Establish provincial hubs for members to coordinate easily
- Sharing success stories and lessons learned helps build collective knowledge and supports collaborative funding proposals.
- The group emphasised the importance of brotherhood and cooperation rather than competition among local organizations.

7. Platform Features and Enhancements

- Suggestions included:
    - Adding a funding opportunities section to the app to share relevant calls for proposals.
    - Creating a centralised database with organizational profiles, including thematic areas and geographic coverage, to allow quick reference and networking.
    - Incorporating a news feed or article section to share research summaries, best practices, and updates on sector trends.
    - Improving navigation by having summarised versions or quick-glance tables categorizing organizations by thematic focus.
    - Embedding mapping tools to show exact locations and project activities for easier collaboration and resource allocation.

8. Sustainability and Funding for the Platform

- The app currently runs on a virtual private server costing $951 annually.
- To sustain the platform, the group considered introducing affiliation fees to cover maintenance costs without discouraging participation.
- Continuous sharing of valuable information and success stories was viewed as crucial to maintaining user engagement and justifying ongoing investment.
- The role of members in producing and disseminating annual reports or data summaries (e.g., child protection statistics) was discussed as a way to demonstrate impact and attract funding.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

- The group proposed establishing robust monitoring indicators to track progress toward shared goals by the end of 2026.
- These indicators will measure app growth, course completion rates, and institutional capacity improvements.

- Conduct research, assessments and data collection to cover the knowledge gaps – done through strategic partnerships of M&E focal points.

6.2 Way Forward and Next Steps

- The meeting concluded with a call to develop a clear roadmap defining where the platform and member organisations want to be in the future.
- Proposed immediate next steps included:
    - Scheduling a follow-up meeting (online) around mid to late March to review progress and refine the action plan.
    - Assigning a lead (Paul-Nutritional Action Zimbabwe) to coordinate mapping of organisations within LHAF for strategic partnerships.
    - Admins to submit their expected number of target members to be registered in the system as a measuring metric.
    - Promoting mutual learning and exchange among member organisations.
- The goal is to integrate the platform fully into organisational learning systems and link it to strategic funding and capacity-building initiatives.

Workshop Gallery