

GUIDANCE NOTE

HOW TO PROMOTE GENDER-RESPONSIVE LOCALIZATION IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION



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HUMANITARIAN ACTION



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ABBREVIATIONS

AND ACRONYMS

CBPF	Country-Based Pooled Funds
CSO	Community-Based Organization
DEPP	Disaster and Emergencies Preparedness Programme
ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
ERC	Emergency Relief Coordinator
FTS	Financial Tracking System
FoGG	Friends Of Gender Group
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GEEWG	Gender Equality and Empowerment Of Women And Girls
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview
HPC	Humanitarian Programme Cycle
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PoP	Principles of Partnership
UN	United Nations
WHS	World Humanitarian Summit
WLO	Women-Led Organization
WPHF	Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund
WRO	Women's Rights Organization
WS	Workstream



INTRODUCTION

1

INTRODUCTION

Humanitarian crises disproportionately affect women and girls and can exacerbate pre-existing gender inequalities. They face the increased prevalence of, and exposure to, gender-based violence (GBV) and are often hampered in accessing life-saving services. Women and girls – and particularly local women-led organizations (WLOs) and women’s rights organizations (WROs) – remain underrepresented in humanitarian coordination and programming, especially those of self-organized crisis-affected women and girls.¹

Women’s leadership matters intrinsically; women and girls are 50 per cent of the population and, among displaced people, they often represent an even higher percentage. The reality in many crisis settings is that women and women’s organizations are first responders, as they are already at the location and know people, structures, networks and needs. In addition, local WLOs and WROs need to be strengthened and engage in humanitarian action given their contextual and cultural understanding of socio-political dynamics, their access to affected populations and their ability to influence social dynamics and transformation at country and local community levels. Local women’s groups, including self-organized civil society organizations (CSOs), community-based organizations (CBOs) and networks are often best placed to mobilize change, identify solutions and respond to crises in their communities. Furthermore, women’s leadership is key in promoting transformative change, resilience and social cohesion in humanitarian settings. The role of local and national WLOs and WROs and the broader civil society is important to ensure an appropriate,

effective and sustainable response to crises and pave the way to self-reliance, recovery and resilience more broadly in crisis-affected communities.

Women responders make diverse contributions to more effective protection programming, which extends beyond protection outcomes to contribute to a more effective, wider humanitarian response and longer-term women’s rights and social justice aims.² Women responders’ contributions are based on a solid understanding of gendered power dynamics in specific country contexts.

Some of the challenges impacting on the extent and quality of local women’s organizations’ engagement in humanitarian response and access to humanitarian funding include: limited capacities and experience in engaging in the humanitarian response, lack of access to Humanitarian Country Teams, lack of access to relevant information and opportunities to engage in humanitarian coordination mechanisms, limited capacity to draft proposals and apply for

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- 1 World Humanitarian Summit (2016). Women and Girls: Catalysing Action to Achieve Gender Equality. https://www.agendaforhumanity.org/sites/default/files/resources/2017/Jul/Women_and_girls_Prospectus_4_ENGLISH_o.pdf
 - 2 CARE (2018). Women Responders. Placing local action at the centre of humanitarian protection programming <https://insights.careinternational.org.uk/publications/women-responders-placing-local-action-at-the-centre-of-humanitarian-protection-programming>

humanitarian funding, and lack of recognition by national governments and/or international actors across different country contexts, as well as threats and violence. Women refugee-led organizations and women's self-organized groups are further marginalized in terms of accessing funding and engaging in decision-making processes both in humanitarian settings and across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

In 2016, at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in Istanbul, United Nations (UN) Member States, donors, UN agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) committed as part of the Grand Bargain to improving local capacities and involvement in the humanitarian response, while providing more aid directly to those who are most affected. Signatories committed to “more support and funding tools to local and national responders” towards “making principled humanitarian action as local as possible and as international as necessary”.³ More specifically, the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream (Workstream 2) focused on six key core commitments:

1. Increase and support multi-year investment in the institutional capacities of local and national responders, including preparedness, response and coordination capacities, especially in fragile contexts and where communities are vulnerable to armed conflicts, disasters, recurrent outbreaks and the effects of climate change.
2. Understand better and work to remove or reduce barriers that prevent organizations and donors from partnering with local and national responders in order to lessen their administrative burden.
3. Support and complement national coordination mechanisms where they exist and include

local and national responders in international coordination mechanisms as appropriate and in keeping with humanitarian principles.

4. Achieve by 2020 a global, aggregated target of at least 25 per cent of humanitarian funding to local and national responders as directly as possible to improve outcomes for affected people and reduce transaction costs.
5. Develop with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and apply a ‘localization’ marker to measure direct and indirect funding to local and national responders.
6. Make greater use of funding tools which increase and improve assistance delivered by local and national responders, such as UN-led Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPF), the IFRC Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) and NGO-led and other pooled funds.

While evidence shows that local and national actors can and do respond to humanitarian crises, significant challenges persist in relation to implementing gender-responsive localization. The 2018 Grand Bargain Annual Report and the IASC Gender Accountability Framework Report⁴ confirm that significant gaps remain. The Grand Bargain Informal Friends of Gender Group works to place the issue of increased, quality and sustainable funding for local WLOs, WROs and CSOs at the centre of discussions on gender-responsive localization, while addressing some of the risks and challenges associated to localization resulting in increased funding for male-dominated local and national organizations.

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide hands-on, practical guidance on how to promote gender-responsive localization at the country level,

3 IFRC (2018). Localisation – what it means and how to achieve it. IFRC Policy Brief. <https://media.ifrc.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/05/Localisation-external-policy-brief-4-April-2.pdf>

4 IASC (2019). The IASC Gender Accountability Framework Report, 2018, pp. 1–29. <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/gender-and-humanitarian-action/documents-public/iasc-gender-accountability-framework-report-2018>

drawing on relevant Grand Bargain commitments and global discussions in the context of the Grand Bargain Friends of Gender Group and beyond. The guidelines address key issues and entry points to advance gender-responsive localization at the operational level with a focus on funding, coordination and partnerships. The primary audience for these guidelines is humanitarian actors and Grand Bargain signatories, including Donors, Member States, international NGOs (INGOs), UN agencies and national and local WLOs, WROs and CSOs operating in humanitarian contexts. The guidance note identifies action points in relation to the potential contribution and role of coordination platforms, decision-making bodies and key actors at the country level to the gender-responsive localization agenda. The note provides initial reflections on the role of Humanitarian Coordinators, the Humanitarian Country Team/Inter-cluster Coordination Group, Cluster Leading Agencies/Coordinators and Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Groups in relation to the operationalization of institutional commitments in this area.

These guidelines complement and expand several other key gender guidance documents and work under global coordination platforms including:

- [IASC Gender Policy and Gender Accountability Framework \(2017\)](#)
- [IASC Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action \(2018\)](#)
- [IASC Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action \(2015\)](#)
- [Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies: Road Map 2016 – 2020](#)⁵
- [Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility, Localization Task Team \(2018\)](#)
- [Minimum Standards for Prevention and Response to Gender-based Violence in Emergencies \(2019\)](#)

- [The Start Network’s Seven Dimensions of Localisation](#)
- [NEAR Localisation Performance Measurement Framework](#).⁶

These guidelines have been developed on the basis of desk research and discussions with FoGG members, in several rounds of consultation. They also draw on the outcomes of the three UN Women/Friends of Gender Group regional consultations with local WLOs and WROs that took place in Addis Ababa, Amman and Jakarta in the period between July and August 2019.

This technical guidance note has been organized along three key considerations for promotion gender-responsive localization in humanitarian action:

1. Access to financing for local WLOs and WROs.
2. Local WLOs’ and WROs’ engagement in humanitarian coordination mechanisms and decision-making bodies, including for example internally displaced people (IDP)/refugee camp committees or camp management in refugee response settings (inclusion and representation).
3. Quality and sustainable partnerships and institutional capacity-strengthening of WLOs and WROs.

5 Canadian Government (2017). Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies. <https://www.calltoactiongbv.com>

6 Start Network (2017). The Start Fund, Start Network and Localisation: current situation and future directions. Smruti Patel & Koenraad Van Brabant. Global Mentoring Initiative. April 2017. <http://coastbd.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/The-Start-Fund-Start-Network-and-Localisation-full-report-WEB.pdf>

ACCESS TO FINANCING
FOR LOCAL WOMEN'S
RIGHTS AND WOMEN-LED
ORGANIZATIONS

2

ACCESS TO FINANCING FOR LOCAL WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND WOMEN-LED ORGANIZATIONS

Four core commitments of the Localisation Workstream relate to funding, including increasing and supporting multi-year investments in the institutional capacities of local and national humanitarian actors and providing at least 25 per cent of humanitarian funding, as directly as possible, to local and national responders.⁷

Regional consultations with local partners by UN Women and the Friends of Gender Group have shown that the humanitarian system only partially, and in a fragmented way, supports or encourages gender-responsive localized responses and presents systemic barriers to access to WLOs and WROs that are structural, operational and financial.

The co-conveners of Workstream 2 have defined the percentage of partnerships or funding agreements incorporating multi-year institutional capacity-strengthening support for local and national responders as a key indicator to measure localization, with optional reporting on the percentage of that funding awarded to local WLOs and WROs.⁸ Women's

rights organizations are “smaller than mainstream organizations and have fewer existing networks and less influence with international actors”⁹ and have often less authority and access to funding mechanisms at the national level. In order to increase the likelihood of being able to receive funding, women's rights actors state that quality funding should be long term, allowing actors to define their approaches and priorities,¹⁰ and that funding should cover core costs, including the overhead costs needed to sustain the organizations in the long term.

The role of civil society and national and local women's organizations is critical to ensure an appropriate, effective and sustainable response to

7 WS2 Localisation (2018). Template for developing the core commitment indicators and target-results (CCTRI).

8 WS Localisation (2019). Core commitment indicators and target-results (CCTRI).

http://media.ifrc.org/grand_bargain_localisation/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2019/03/CCTRI-Localisation-Workstream.pdf

9 WS Localisation (2019). Core commitment indicators and target-results (CCTRI).

http://media.ifrc.org/grand_bargain_localisation/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2019/03/CCTRI-Localisation-Workstream.pdf

10 WS Localisation (2019). Core commitment indicators and target-results (CCTRI).

http://media.ifrc.org/grand_bargain_localisation/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2019/03/CCTRI-Localisation-Workstream.pdf

crises and to pave the way to self-reliance, recovery and resilience of conflict and crisis-affected women and girls. Women have insight into existing and pre-existing gender inequalities, power relations and cultural considerations that can meaningfully provide insight into community-based responses and resilience strategies related to humanitarian crises¹¹ Despite international commitments, funding awarded to WLOs or WROs accounted for only 1.9 per cent of total funding allocations.¹² Similarly, representatives from local WLOs and WROs during UN Women/Friends of Gender Group regional consultations highlight that humanitarian funding does not afford long-term funding modalities in support of institutional capacity strengthening and operational support for WLOs and WROs. Short-term funding does not cover core operational costs which can make it difficult for WLOs and WROs to sustain operations and capacities in the long run and results in high staff turnover. Country Based Pooled Funds funding – one of the key mechanisms to provide direct funding to national and local partners – remain inaccessible for WLOs and WROs, due to capacity challenges, limited access to relevant information, stringent due diligence processes that are complicated for small organizations, and conditions linked to access to funding through the pooled funds that include as a requirement participation in humanitarian coordination mechanisms such as cluster meetings. Participation in cluster meetings and activities is difficult due to barriers of language, frequency and resources. While some of the challenges are common across national and local civil society organizations, WLOs and WROs are less visible and less capable to access and qualify for funding in this space, due to some of the institutional constraints and challenges outlined above.

BOX 1

Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs)

CBPFs are multi-donor humanitarian tools implemented by the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) and handled by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) at the country level under the lead of the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC).¹³ Contributions are pooled together into single funds and made available locally, allowing aid organizations at the front lines of emergency responses – those closest to people in need – to deliver the highest-priority aid where and when it is needed most. CBPF allocations complement other humanitarian funding sources, such as bilateral funding and allocations from the UN Central Emergency Response Fund.¹⁴ In 2018, a record US\$950 million was channeled through CBPFs in support of emergency responses.¹⁵

UN Women/Friends of Gender Group consultations with WLOs and WROs revealed the following key barriers to gender-responsive localization:

- Most funding received by local WLOs and WROs is short-term, service-oriented and designed to respond to emergencies only, without support for gender-transformative outcomes and effective participation of women and girls in humanitarian coordination and leadership – a consideration which is relevant to supporting WLOs and WROs along the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

11 Oxfam (2019). Localisation of women and women's rights organizations – a literature review.

12 ActionAid (2016). On the frontline: Catalysing Women's Leadership in Humanitarian Action. <https://actionaid.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/On-the-Frontline-Catalysing-Womens-Leadership-in-Humanitarian-Action.pdf>

13 OCHA (2017). Operation Handbook for Country-based Pooled Funds, p. 6. https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/Operational_Handbook_for_OCHA_CBPFs_Version1.2.pdf

14 OCHA (2019). Country-based pooled funds: 2018 in review, p. 5. <https://www.unocha.org/publication/country-based-pool-funds/country-based-pooled-funds-2018-review>

15 OCHA (2019). Country-based pooled funds: 2018 in review, p. 6. <https://www.unocha.org/publication/country-based-pool-funds/country-based-pooled-funds-2018-review>

- WLOs and WROs are perceived to have less experience and or capacity in the humanitarian response, so donors were less likely to fund local WLOs and WROs.
- Most local WLOs and WROs were too small to be eligible for humanitarian funding and often did not have information on application timelines and requirements. Establishing larger networks of WLOs and WROs to qualify for and access humanitarian funding has recently been adopted as one of the key strategies to access humanitarian funding.¹⁶
- Donor funding criteria are often unsuitable for local CSOs due to highly earmarked funds, and short-term programme financing, which do not consider the broader mandates of WLOs and WROs around the promotion of the gender equality and empowerment agenda. There has been limited system-wide progress to flexible and long-term funding which stymies progress to increase long-term institutional investments to WLOs and WROs.¹⁷
- Institutional capacity strengthening is seen as not life-saving, non-humanitarian work and therefore, not prioritized as an area for humanitarian funding.
- Linguistic barriers often result in a limited number of elite organizations among WLOs and WROs accessing relevant information and receiving funding against submitted proposals.
- WLOs and WROs representing minority groups often remain excluded from accessing funding opportunities and decision-making processes.
- The legitimacy of working with WLOs and WROs is often challenged by the humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence given WLOs' and WROs' activist engagement and advocacy with a view to changing gender inequalities.
- WLOs and WROs are often seen as non-humanitarian actors, while criteria to assess the legitimacy of local civil society organizations to be considered for funding are not always clearly defined. As a result, WLOs and WROs are not considered for funding under humanitarian pooled funding mechanisms.

Risk sharing and management

Discussions about risk aversion and risk management more broadly in humanitarian aid predominates localized aid. Since 2016, InterAction has observed a marked increase in INGOs' willingness to discuss the topic of risk more openly, promoting more opportunities for peer learning and information sharing that benefits organizational risk awareness and responsiveness across the sector.¹⁸

Many risks surrounding the localization of aid can be mitigated when controls are in place and both international and local organizations share the burden of risks related to accountability. Some of the risks have been clustered across the different categories:

- Security and safety threats around institutional reputation and physical safety
- Fiduciary risks around the possibility of misappropriation of funds

16 See, for example, the experience of the Women in Humanitarian Response in Nigeria Initiative. <https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/new-initiative-puts-women-heart-humanitarian-response-nigeria>

17 Humanitarian Policy Group (2019). Grand Bargain Annual Independent Report 2019. <https://www.odi.org/publications/11387-grand-bargain-annual-independent-report-2019>

18 Interaction (2019). NGOs & Risk: Managing Uncertainty in Local-International Partnerships. <https://www.interaction.org/blog/ngos-risk-managing-uncertainty-in-local-international-partnerships-global-report/>

- Compliance around laws and regulations (including donor reporting requirements)
- Information risk around data breaches or sharing of confidential information
- Reputational risk around an organization's image
- Operational risks which could inhibit an organization to meet its objectives.

Terrorism laws also create unfavorable compliance responsibilities further restricting the space for WLOs and WROs.¹⁹

Risk management and risk mitigation measures can reduce these perceived and actual risks, while offering strategic and operational capacity strengthening to WLOs and WROs. While traditional risk aversion in the humanitarian sector focuses on international actors, risk aversion affects WLOs and WROs potentially through their partnership and therefore risk assessments must be two-way to hold each partner accountable. For example, growing risk aversion among humanitarian actors, particularly related to fiduciary risks, is leading to increased compliance and reporting burdens, less flexible funding and disbursement mechanisms, and significant real and perceived legal risks that diminish operational presence and ultimately, programme quality.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- ♦ Has a multi-year approach to funding for WLOs and WROs been considered by donors and UN agencies?
- ♦ Have funding quotas for first-level recipients for pass-through grants been considered by development partners and UN agencies to promote direct funding support for local WLOs and WROs?
- ♦ Have Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPF) integrated specific considerations for partnerships with WLOs and WROs (for example in relation to resource allocation criteria and minimum requirements for partnerships and funding)?
- ♦ Have entry points around establishing and strengthening partnerships with local WLOs and WROs been considered alongside humanitarian funding, coordination and accountability?
- ♦ Have criteria been set or tools developed by development partners and UN agencies to assess the quality of funding and partnerships with WLOs and WROs, drawing for example on indicators integrated in the NEAR Performance Measurement Framework?

¹⁹ Operationalizing donor's counter-terrorism-related policies has evolved to include risk management approaches in funding agreements with humanitarian implementing partners.

2.1 GOOD PRACTICES CHECKLIST

While the type, breadth and quality of investments in WLOs and WROs can improve, several positive financing trends have emerged over the last years in support of Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls (GEEWG) in humanitarian settings. Below, we outline some entry points to further strengthening and scaling up financial commitments to local women rights and women-led organizations in support of their operations, programmes, institutional strengthening and scaling up outreach and impact.

QUALITY FUNDING FOR WLOS AND WROS

- ✓ Apply the principles of feminist humanitarian policy dedicated to prioritizing gender-transformative practices through partnerships and investments in WLOs and WROs in humanitarian settings and protracted crisis contexts.
- ✓ Ensure increased, specific, global and national allocation of funds – including unearmarked and core funding – to WLOs and WROs. Develop dedicated funding streams for direct funding in support of institutional capacity strengthening of local women’s civil society organizations.
- ✓ Increase access to humanitarian funding, ensure its sustainability and support the capacity for self-sustaining fundraising by local WLOs and WROs, prioritizing multi-year, flexible and sustainable funds, including identifying opportunities along the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.
- ✓ Ensure that funding for WLOs and WROs is flexible and covers core operational and technical costs. These costs are not tied to specific activities but rather focus on the training, skills and support required for women’s and women’s rights organizations to access and influence humanitarian planning, decision-making and prioritization processes.
- ✓ Encourage the integration of dedicated budget lines for WLOs’ and WROs’ institutional capacity-strengthening and increase overhead costs in funding proposals. Flexible, quality funding allows WLOs and WROs to retain staff and build technical capacity, contributing to increasing quality of the humanitarian response and scale up programmatic interventions on GEEWG.
- ✓ Develop a national database of WLOs and WROs working on programming on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus to provide scaleable service delivery to affected women and girls during crises. Such initiatives can be coordinated by the Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group to inform outreach strategy in relation to the call for proposals and various funding opportunities for local actors.
- ✓ Set funding quotas for WLOs and WROs and/or set up specific funding mechanisms to providing direct funding for WLOs and WROs at the country level and sustain commitments towards building the capacity of local and national WLOs and WROs.
- ✓ Invest in the development of capacity and technical skills among WLOs and WROs in applying for funding schemes dedicated to national and local actors.
- ✓ Revise international actors’ operational guidelines and policies to allow specific considerations for partner selection and fund transfers to WLOs and WROs.

Responsible parties: Development partners, UN agencies, Humanitarian Coordinator, CBPF Advisory Board, Humanitarian actors.

FUNDING MECHANISMS – ENGAGEMENT OF WLOS AND WROS IN GLOBAL AND COUNTRY POOLED FUNDING MECHANISMS

- ✓ Establish or adopt funding modalities and mechanisms to target local women’s organizations and to address gender equality and women’s rights in line with existing IASC commitments, including through country-based pooled funds and increased investments in the Women Peace and Humanitarian Fund. For more information on the Women Peace and Humanitarian Fund, please see: www.wphfund.org
- ✓ Engage WLOs and WROs in the CBPF Advisory Board to inform discussions and decisions on resource allocation strategy, allocation criteria and endorsement of strategic priorities at country level.

- ✓ Reserve a minimum number of seats for local actors in advisory boards, strategic review committees and strategic advisory groups. Introduce a standing agenda item on funding for WLOs and WROs as part of CBCF Advisory Board meetings. Please see: <https://www.unocha.org/our-work/humanitarian-financing/country-based-pooled-funds-cbpf>
- ✓ Engage WLOs and WROs in the identification of funding priorities and modalities by development partners, UN agencies and INGOs in the context of Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) and Regional Refugee and Resilience Plans to ensure alignment with the priorities, needs and rights of crisis-affected women and girls. Engage WLOs and WROs as members in the vetting panels of pooled funds and HRP project vetting panels.
- ✓ Determine a dedicated percentage of country-based pooled funds and other pooled funding mechanisms in support of institutional strengthening of women's organizations, networks and movements. Such a discussion should take place in the context of CBCF Advisory Board and Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) meetings with inputs from local partner organizations.

Responsible parties: Humanitarian Coordinator, OCHA, CBPF Advisory Board

TRACKING FUNDING FOR WLOS AND WROS

- ✓ Adapt the Financial Tracking System (FTS) to track humanitarian resource allocations to WLOs and WROs by donors, UN agencies and international NGOs. Aggregated funding should include grants that are directly accessed by WLOs and WROs and do not include pass-through grants.
- ✓ Call upon workstream members to further clarify the current working definitions of WLOs and WROs and create universally accepted definitions and a process to enhance consistent reporting for tracking through the FTS.

Responsible parties: OCHA, INGOs, UN agencies and development partners.

FUNDING CRITERIA, PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ Streamline funding application procedures and criteria for local organizations taking into consideration challenges and capacity gaps faced by WLOs and WROs.
- ✓ Ensure proactive outreach and effective communications with local actors, especially WLOs and WROs, including providing adequate application guidance in local languages.
- ✓ Dedicate funding for organizations that are self-organized and represent crisis-affected women's and girls' priorities and needs.
- ✓ Undertake capacity and needs assessments for WLOs and WROs to inform the establishment of country-based pooled funding mechanisms and bilateral donor funding decisions, including the development of funding criteria, procedures and requirements.
- ✓ Decrease bureaucratic requirements on applying for funding and assign a focal point to work with women's organizations, including on issues related to capacity development and training in the context of CBPF.
- ✓ Adapt calls for proposals to be in local languages with less complex processes and simpler application forms to increase the chances of women's organizations access funding.

Responsible parties: OCHA, Humanitarian Coordinator, development partners, UN agencies.

RISK SHARING

- ✓ Integrate risk mitigation measures in partnership agreements with WLOs and WROs when and where appropriate through monitoring, communication, accountability and capacity-strengthening tools, systems and initiatives for WLOs and WROs.
- ✓ Align institutional strengthening initiatives with existing risk management, financial and accountability requirements to facilitate WLOs and WROs access to funding mechanisms.

- ✓ Donors and international actors are encouraged to develop a common assessment review process for local actors at the country level, including, at minimum, arrangements for assessments conducted by one of them to be accepted by as many others as possible. This may include a tiered due diligence model related to various levels of support and or framework for strengthening compliance and quality assurance.
- ✓ Donor and affected state governments are encouraged to examine legal or policy barriers that may hamper international funding for local humanitarian responders (such as rules on the impact of sanctions on banking, counter-terrorism, nationality preferences for receipt of funds, and currency rules and regulations) with an eye to potential exceptions or reforms.
- ✓ Donors and international actors are encouraged to explore greater flexibility in terms of reporting requirements for local actors (e.g. more flexible deadlines, simplifying language in proposals and reporting templates, potentially through use of the Grand Bargain Reporting Workstream’s “8+3” reporting template).

Responsible parties: UN agencies, INGOs and development partners.

DOCUMENTATION OF GOOD PRACTICES AND IMPACT IN RELATION TO FUNDING WLOS AND WROS

- ✓ Allocate funds for documentation and joint learning by local WLOs and WROs with a view to scaling up good practices around financing and investment in institutional strengthening of local women’s organizations.
- ✓ Gather and disseminate evidence on the impact and contributions of WLOs and WROs in their role as local and national responders to humanitarian response, preparedness and recovery to enhance understanding of the capacities and contribution of local women’s organizations to community resilience, crisis response and recovery.
- ✓ Draw on evaluations, assessments and lessons learnt emerging from partnerships and funding local women’s organizations along the humanitarian-development-peace nexus to inform Grand Bargain signatory institutional practices and strategies. Such discussions can be hosted by the Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group with focus on promising practices, lessons learnt, what works and why.
- ✓ Develop robust monitoring tools and undertake impact evaluations to contribute to the evidence creation and lessons learned around funding and partnerships with women’s organizations, with focus among other areas on what constitutes ‘quality funding’ for local women’s organizations and its impact.

Responsible parties: UN agencies, INGOs, Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group Chairs and members.

FINANCING FOR WLOS AND WROS ALONG THE HUMANITARIAN-DEVELOPMENT-PEACE NEXUS

- ✓ Initiate multi-partner dialogue on financing modalities for WLOs and WROs, including entry points and institutional mechanisms with a view to scaling up financial support.
- ✓ Document good practices and lessons learnt in relation to financing WLOs and WROs along the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus.

Responsible parties: Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group, UN agencies, development partners, INGOs.

ADVOCACY FOR INCREASED FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE HUMANITARIAN PLANNING

- ✓ Scale up advocacy towards UN agencies, INGOs and donors to increase financial and technical support for gender-transformative humanitarian action and crisis response–related interventions.

Responsible parties: Gender Working Group, Humanitarian Advocacy Working Groups, WLOs and WROs.

ENSURING ACCOUNTABILITY TOWARDS GENDER-RESPONSIVE LOCALIZATION

- ✓ Hold multi-partner consultations on the development of accountability frameworks – including the adoption of country-specific indicators to track progress towards gender-responsive localization at the country level. Such frameworks can include gender indicators to track funding and assess quality of partnerships with WLOs and WROs. See: NEAR Performance Measurement Framework.
- ✓ Identify four or five pilot countries and develop country-specific roadmaps with the engagement of multiple partners for the implementation of institutional commitments to gender-responsive localization with the engagement of WLOs and WROs.


Responsible parties: Development partners, UN agencies, INGOs, Intersectoral/Inter-Agency Gender Working Group.

2.2 Promising practice: Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund

The Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) is an example of a global partnership that aims to re-energize action and stimulate funding for women's participation, leadership and empowerment in global humanitarian situations. WPHF operates in fragile contexts and allocates funds to civil society organizations. WPHF's allocations include project-level approvals delegated to a national-level steering mechanism, which often is a multi-stakeholder platform with government, UN and civil society. WPHF contributes to the objective of giving voice

to the most vulnerable by empowering women and local and grassroots women's organizations that are marginalized or outside of formal humanitarian coordination mechanisms. By investing directly in local women's groups, and by engaging with civil society as partners, WPHF is an effective and efficient way to provide significantly higher levels of direct support to local responders and to reach the target of 25 per cent local funding by 2020. WPHF is listed as a mechanism to support localization in the mapping undertaken by the Localization Workstream.

LOCAL WLOS' AND
WROS' ENGAGEMENT
IN HUMANITARIAN
COORDINATION AND
PLANNING MECHANISMS



3

LOCAL WLOS' AND WROS' ENGAGEMENT IN HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION AND PLANNING MECHANISMS

The third commitment of the Localisation Workstream is to “support and complement national coordination mechanisms where they exist and include local and national responders in international coordination mechanisms as appropriate and in keeping with humanitarian principles.”²⁰ The global commitment to localization is predicated on the supposition that a locally led and delivered response is the most effective approach to humanitarian service delivery. The coordination system supports the humanitarian response and is therefore uniquely positioned to guide all actors on when, where and how to deliver responses. The Humanitarian Coordinator is responsible to lead and coordinate inter-agency efforts during humanitarian situations and represent the interests of all members of the cluster, including local partners and organizations; they are accountable to populations in need.

Localizing humanitarian assistance through a gender-based lens promotes women and girls as change agents in humanitarian response. An intersectional approach is needed, taking into account overlapping systems and factors of marginalization, such as age, ethnicity, sexual orientation and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues and disability, thus promoting inclusion and diversity. The inclusion of women’s organizations in all phases of the Humanitarian Planning Cycle provides opportunities for local and national women’s organizations to use

their contextual knowledge, skills and cultural diversity, in order to become more effective change agents in the promotion of gender equality in humanitarian settings.²¹ In turn, this will allow individual women and girls who benefit from the WROS’ and WLOS’ programmes to grow, to be empowered and to be politically, economically and socially involved. Longer-term and multi-year funding could potentially improve WLOS’ and WROS’ technical and operational systems and service provision. Allocated financing towards capacity strengthening would increase the

20 Australia Aid et al. (2016). The Grand Bargain – A Shared Commitment to Better Serve People in Need, p. 5. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Grand_Bargain_final_22_May_FINAL-2.pdf

21 ActionAid (2016). Getting gender in the Grand Bargain: Discussion Paper.

number of potential national and local WLOs and WROs to ensure localized participation and encourage institutional strengthening.

In countries facing protracted and sudden-onset emergencies, which are not refugee responses, the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) is implemented under the leadership of the Resident and/or Humanitarian Coordinator. The HPC focuses on accountability to affected populations, coordination, and the effective planning and management of humanitarian aid. Local actors should be part of coordination groups, as they are first responders, bring cultural and historical knowledge, credibility among affected people, and can help lead to the development of more effective and accountable national humanitarian response strategies.²² Coordination mechanisms do not officially require the participation of national and local women's organizations beyond those receiving grants from international humanitarian organizations. While there is a centralized humanitarian coordination system, there are multiple clusters and subcluster meetings at the national and subnational level, which can lead to multiple meetings, held in different places at different times. This can make the attendance, level and quality of participation by women, girls, WLOs and WROs difficult for multiple reasons such as: language barriers, lack of familiarity with the humanitarian system jargon, lack of staff to attend all meetings, lack of funding to support transportation to meetings and associated safety risks. There are structural barriers for local WLOs and WROs to participate fully in coordination processes. The consultations identified the following **gender barriers** to the meaningful and quality engagement of local WLOs and WROs in humanitarian coordination, including:

- International actors rarely recognize local WLOs and WROs as first responders or conduct a mapping of them in humanitarian settings, rendering it unlikely for them to be involved in

coordination, despite their knowledge of the local context.

- International coordination mechanisms, including the clusters, did not have dedicated spaces for women's representation and leadership.
- The lack of a critical mass of women in coordination structures and consultations results in gender unequal outcomes in humanitarian needs assessments and other decision-making processes.
- Cultural and language biases and patriarchal structures and practices pose additional challenges to women's meaningful engagement in coordination and often the coalitions formed excluded local WLOs and WROs.

Humanitarian actors could ensure the participation, active engagement and co-leadership of WLOs and WROs, especially as cluster co-leads at national and subnational levels so they can lead local responses. To achieve this outcome, INGOs, UN and donors could promote and fund local organizations to take these leadership positions and support existing national civil society forums, if they include WLOs and WROs that can make the views, voices and position of national and local responders heard and influence the decision-making process. The leadership and participation of national and local NGOs in cluster meetings not only enriches discussions and decisions but can benefit these organizations in terms of information, visibility and access to funding. There have been some positive developments in helping humanitarian action become more gender-responsive. The IASC Policy (and Accountability Framework) on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls in Humanitarian Action, 2017 includes a monitoring framework for the collective performance of the IASC. It establishes reporting facilities and

22 Global Protection Cluster (2019). Advancing the localisation agenda in Protection Coordination Groups, Learning Paper, p. 5. http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/wp-content/uploads/Learning_Paper-on-localisatoin-screen.pdf

ways of information sharing in order to foster closer coordination and cooperation.²³

BOX 2

3.1 Promising example: GBV AoR-Localisation Task Team

A positive development is the Global Protection Cluster (GPC) Localisation Protection Initiative, which aims at supporting local partners to take their rightful place at the centre of the humanitarian system and to shape decision-making concerning them in the four Areas of Responsibility (AoR) of the GPC. The Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility (GBV AoR), coordinated by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), provides a strategic coordination platform to help improve international coordination processes around gender-responsive localization. The GBV AoR is a global-

level forum for the coordination of GBV prevention and response in humanitarian settings. Following up with the commitments posed by the Grand Bargain and the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies, the GBV AoR is now dedicated to localization and ensuring it is implemented in practice while ensuring the needs of survivors and those at risk are prioritized.²⁴ The GBV AoR has set a target, through the Call to Action, of 50 per cent of local coordination structures being led or co/led by national partners by 2020.²⁵

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- ◆ Has there been an analysis of capacity constraints and mapping of the role of local organizations, especially of WLOs and WROs, in shaping the Humanitarian Planning Cycle priorities?
- ◆ Is information accessible to WLOs and WROs (in a simplified format and in a local language) both in relation to funding opportunities and cluster coordination meetings?
- ◆ Have Cluster Coordinators developed a gender strategy to inform the operationalization of strategic priorities in close partnership with WLOs and WROs?
- ◆ Have Cluster-leading Agencies and Coordinators considered access restrictions (including security risks, cultural and social norms, child care, transportation costs, translation etc.) facing WLOs and WROs to meaningfully engage in humanitarian coordination mechanisms?
- ◆ Are alternative meeting venues and locations available at the community and subnational level enabling substantive engagement and participation of women's groups at the grassroots level?
- ◆ Are there indicators-monitoring frameworks in place to assess the quality of WLOs' and WROs' engagement in the humanitarian coordination system across different clusters?

23 IASC (2017). IASC Policy (and Accountability Framework) on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls in Humanitarian Action, 2017. <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/gender-and-humanitarian-action/documents-public/iasc-policy-and-accountability-framework-gender>

24 Bennet, K. (2019). A Global Study on GBV Localisation through Country-level GBV Sub-clusters.

25 See Call to Action on Protection of Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies, Road Map 2016–2020. (September 2015). <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Call-to-Action-Roadmap.pdf>

3.2 GOOD PRACTICES CHECKLIST

Humanitarian Coordination and Humanitarian Needs Assessment and Planning

ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

- ✓ Tangibly promote the meaningful and safe participation, transformative leadership and collective action of women and girls of all backgrounds at all stages of humanitarian action, also reinforcing similar efforts in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and state building.²⁶
- ✓ Engage with relevant IASC bodies to consider how to create an enabling environment for women's leadership and decision-making and more specific guidance on enhanced representation of WLOs and WROs in relevant humanitarian coordination structures.
- ✓ Invest in alliance building to increase WLOs' and WROs' influence, visibility and resource base, and to ensure the specific needs of women and girls are met, their human rights are promoted and protected, and gender inequalities are redressed in line with existing IASC commitments.
- ✓ Engage with local women's organizations from the outset in the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and HRP process, including discussions on prioritization, costing and resource allocations across different clusters and sectors in humanitarian and protracted crisis settings.
- ✓ Identify external factors that restrict partnerships with WLOs and WROs. Remove barriers for organizations to participate in humanitarian coordination structures; provide information in local languages and at the subnational level through appropriate information channels.
- ✓ Organize cluster meetings in a way that takes into consideration the challenges that local women's organizations are facing around security, time availability and reproductive work.
- ✓ Discuss feminist approaches to humanitarian action and crisis response and advocate for transformative approaches drawing on the experiences and knowledge of local women's organizations in-country, including in the context of the Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group meetings.

COORDINATION AND NETWORKS

- ✓ Establish a national cluster gender focal points reference group (including representatives from WLOs and WROs), which provides technical expertise across sectors and clusters on gender coordination, capacity building, gender analysis and assessment on gender-responsive planning and programming.
- ✓ Ensure WLOs' and WROs' participation in the Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Groups established to shape priorities, analysis and influence resource allocations under HNOs and HRPs.
- ✓ Enhance coordination between the UN, national and local governments, INGOs and local WLOs and WROs in support of a gender-transformative localization agenda at global, regional and country levels.

VISIBILITY AND CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

- ✓ Invest in WLOs' and WROs' capacities to collect and analyze data that inform humanitarian planning processes (such as HNOs) and assess the impact of humanitarian interventions and their contribution to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

26 IASC (2018). ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK FOR THE INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE POLICY ON GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION 2018–2022.
https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/iasc_accountability_framework_with_adjusted_self_assessment_o.pdf

- ✓ Train WLOs and WROs on the cluster system, coordination and humanitarian funding processes and invest in WLOs' and WROs' capacity to engage and provide services to affected populations, particularly those representing affected populations and women and girls.²⁷
- ✓ Invest in training, mentorship and apprenticeship to enable meaningful WLO and WRO participation and engagement in humanitarian coordination mechanisms and humanitarian response teams.
- ✓ Train humanitarian actors on gender equality and gender-responsive humanitarian planning, and monitoring and evaluation, in collaboration with local women's rights organizations.
- ✓ Capture and disseminate good examples on WRO and WLO engagement in humanitarian coordination mechanisms; ensure that relevant intercluster coordination and subgroups integrate a gender perspective.
- ✓ Explore options for co-leadership between WLOs and WROs, INGOs and UN agencies of coordination groups, including through the secondment of experts within WLOs and WROs, coaching, mentoring, rotating co-leadership and direct funding.

Responsible parties: Humanitarian Coordinators, Cluster Coordinators, UN agencies, Cluster-leading agencies, inter-agency and intersectoral gender working groups.

SUPPORTING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

- ✓ Support humanitarian networks and consortia of WLOs and WROs to enable exchange of information, access to resources and knowledge as well as skills development.
- ✓ Advocate for and support individual women leaders of affected communities, as part of comprehensive leadership programmes, to build support for women's leadership in communities and organizations and enhance women's self-organization and dialogue between women's rights organizations and humanitarian actors.
- ✓ Enhance and expand women's leadership and build on existing cultural notions of women's leadership drawing on the specificities of each country and social context.
- ✓ Ensure that localization include women's grassroots groups and self-organized groups of crisis-affected women and girls.
- ✓ Use existing empowerment and gender hubs in humanitarian settings as spaces for strengthening humanitarian leadership for local women's organizations.
- ✓ Promote progressive social norms on women's leadership, inclusion and gender equality while addressing unpaid work and overlapping types of marginalization through advocacy and programmatic interventions.
- ✓ Create an enabling environment in global spaces for the participation and engagement of local WLOs, WROs and networks.

Responsible parties: Humanitarian Coordinators, Cluster Coordinators, UN agencies, Cluster-leading agencies, inter-agency and intersectoral gender working groups.

27 IASC (2018). The Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action. <https://www.gihahandbook.org/>

BOX 3

3.3 Promising practice: UN Women's humanitarian programme LEAP in Turkey

UN Women's humanitarian programme LEAP (Leadership, Empowerment, Access and Protection) supports women's leadership and capacity strengthening to support more WLOs and WROs to influence the humanitarian planning cycle. Through LEAP programming, refugee, internally displaced persons and host community women become leaders and are economically empowered through regular training, learning and leadership skills development opportunities. Targeted partnerships and funding of local women's organizations that are linked to women leaders from affected communities strengthens their capacities to effectively influence strategic prioritization and resource allocation in the humanitarian response. These efforts help to provide humanitarian services to displaced and at-risk women and girls in humanitarian settings, while addressing the distinct needs, risks and capacities of women, men, girls and boys in affected communities and ensuring that these are incorporated throughout the humanitarian response cycle.

UN Women Turkey has been strengthening the gender-responsiveness of the Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan (3RP) and the Syria coordination mechanism in Turkey, as part of larger measures to

strengthen a gender focus in humanitarian action. The programmatic interventions in Turkey emphasize amplifying the voices of refugee women in decision-making platforms and their active engagement and direct participation in consultations and events organized by UN Women as well as by other humanitarian and development partners. The Future of Women Committee, a solidarity and advocacy group established by refugee women and supported by UN Women through empowerment trainings and one-on-one coaching, is fully engaged in the governance of the SADA Women-Only Centre in Gaziantep. Thirty-five refugee women from all over Turkey attended the Gender Mainstreaming in Refugee Response Conference held in Ankara in January 2019, and representatives from the Future of Women Committee in SADA remotely attended the localization conference in Amman in July and contributed to the women-on-the-move event in Geneva, co-hosted by UN Women and UNHCR in October 2019, a preparatory event for the Global Refugee Forum. Women representatives highlighted the importance of ensuring that the refugee response is gender-sensitive and advocating for greater involvement of refugee women and women from the host communities in decision-making and planning.

TOWARDS MORE
EQUITABLE PARTNERSHIPS
AND INSTITUTIONAL
STRENGTHENING OF
WLOS AND WROS

4

TOWARDS MORE EQUITABLE PARTNERSHIPS AND INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING OF WLOS AND WROS

The relevant commitment under the Localisation Workstream is a “multi-year investment in the institutional capacities of local and national responders.”²⁸ Gender-specific actions are essential to an effective response that includes partnerships that can be created and developed during humanitarian crises. The consultations demonstrated that the following gender barriers persisted in the area of capacity strengthening:

- The amount and type of funding available does not strengthen the financial and operational capacity of WLOs and WROs and often solely focuses on technical capacity strengthening in a specific area.
- Local WLOs and WROs often do not have the capacity to engage in resource mobilization and therefore, they have low staff retention rates. At the same time, very limited funding is allocated to WLOs and WROs thus leading to a continuous cycle of marginalization; advocacy and setting a quota could be considered as potential entry points for engagement and support for local women’s organizations.
- Women’s organizations tend to remain small, as they lack growth possibilities due to limited funding and shrinking spaces for their agendas.
- Women’s organizations question, by nature, leadership norms within NGOs and the practices of coordination among organizations, which means they are often perceived as “difficult” or “not focused on the topic at hand”.
- The emphasis tends to be on the capacity strengthening of WLOs and WROs, and less on making humanitarian coordination structures accountable to gender equality and promoting inclusive partnerships.

²⁸ Australia Aid et al. (2016). The Grand Bargain – A Shared Commitment to Better Serve People in Need, p. 5. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Grand_Bargain_final_22_May_FINAL-2.pdf

- Current funding modalities, such as ‘pass-through grants’ in which a registered CSO acts as a sponsor to receive funding from an international donor and the funds are further passed through to a local entity, can further restrict access to funding for local CSOs.²⁹
 - The Start Network’s Disasters and Emergencies Preparedness Programme (DEPP)’s “Localisation in Practice: Emerging Indicators and Practical Recommendations” which included emerging indicators for periodic partnership review³¹
 - The Accelerating Localisation through Partnerships programme established operational elements of partnerships between local, national and international NGOs, which are most likely to foster the localization of humanitarian action.³²
- There have been initiatives to strengthen humanitarian partnerships with national and local partners, including:
- The Global Humanitarian Platform (GHP) “Principles of Partnership (PoP)”³⁰

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- ◆ Are there specific provisions on institutional capacity strengthening integrated in the partnership agreements between humanitarian actors, WLOs and WROs both in relation to transaction sharing between first-level recipients and implementing partners (for example, between international actors and local organizations) as well as between donors and first-level recipients (for example, UN agencies and INGOs)?
- ◆ Have partner selection criteria adopted by international actors integrated specific considerations on the value and contribution of local women’s organizations in their role as first and national responders in humanitarian settings?
- ◆ Have partnerships integrated considerations regarding the sustainability and quality of funding for local women’s organizations (for example, considerations over multi-year and flexible funding as well as a definition of quality funding in relation to earmarked vis-à-vis not-earmarked funding)?
- ◆ Have partnership agreements integrated two-way accountability tools to assess quality and impact, as well as to critically appraise partnerships in terms of their contribution to achieving strategic objectives in relation to gender equality and empowerment of women and girls in humanitarian settings?

29 Oxfam (2019). Localisation of women and women’s rights organizations – a literature review.

30 Global Humanitarian Platform (GHP) (2007). Principles of Partnership (PoP). <https://www.icvanetwork.org/principles-partnership-statement-commitment>

31 Start Network et al. (2018). Disasters and Emergencies Preparedness Programme. Localisation in Practice: Emerging Indicators & Practical Recommendations. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Localisation-In-Practice-Full-Report-v4.pdf>

32 See Christian Aid et al. (2019). Accelerating localisation through partnerships: Recommendations for operational practices that strengthen the leadership of national and local actors in partnership-based humanitarian action globally. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Accelerating%20Localisation%20Research%20Summary_Global.pdf

4.1 GOOD PRACTICES CHECKLIST

INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING ADDRESSING THE NEEDS AND PRIORITIES OF WLOS AND WROS

- ✓ Adopt multi-year and sustainable approaches to institutional capacity strengthening for local and national WLOs and WROs, focusing on their needs and priorities and basing the approaches on a recognition of the value and contribution of WLOs and WROs as first and local responders in humanitarian settings.
- ✓ Map partners' gender competency, skills and capacities and promote capacity strengthening in areas related to gender-responsive and gender-transformative programming.
- ✓ Integrate an institutional capacity-strengthening plan or strategy addressing the capacity needs and priorities of national and local WLOs and WROs as an integral part of new partnership agreements.
- ✓ Capitalize on the positioning and expertise of WLOs and WROs to link preparedness and response-related interventions across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in protracted conflict and crisis contexts.
- ✓ Support humanitarian networks and consortia of WLOs and WROs to enable exchange of information, access to resources and knowledge building.
- ✓ Capacity-strengthening and capacity-sharing plans focusing on WLOs and WROs are contextualized, mutually agreed, long-term, based on project and institutional needs, and identify a range of training and mentoring approaches, such as secondments, shadowing, peer exchanges and on-the-job training, with follow-up monitoring.
- ✓ Strengthen and invest in local and national WLOs' and WROs' capacities, including financial, human and technical resources, drawing on a comprehensive analysis of the technical, programmatic and operational capacity needs of WLOs and WROs.
- ✓ Invest in longer-term partnerships to strengthen local WLO and WRO leadership in humanitarian settings through training, policy development, contributions to overhead costs, flexible funding and reporting requirements.
- ✓ Review and adapt gender and GBV tools with local actors. Adapt and/or develop localized capacity-strengthening tools that respond to country context needs and specificities.

Responsible parties: UN Agencies, development partners, INGOs.

EQUITABLE PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN INTERNATIONAL ACTORS AND WLOS AND WROS

- ✓ Establish long-term partnerships, allowing for growth and transition in capacity, accountability, transparency, knowledge sharing and management, including in view of the long-term engagement of WLOs and WROs towards gender equality, empowerment of women and girls and addressing the needs of women and girls in humanitarian settings and more broadly along the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.
- ✓ Provide alternative means of partnership and collaboration by providing financial support for coordination hubs, training, consortia development and peer support, focusing on strengthening the capacities of WLOs and WROs.
- ✓ Collect lessons learnt and publish promising practices and examples of mutually strengthening partnerships between international humanitarian actors, WLOs and WROs.
- ✓ Include joint reciprocal evaluations and monitoring in Memoranda of Understanding assessing the quality of relationship between international actors and local women's organizations as a sign of a genuine partnership.
- ✓ Conduct joint monitoring visits with WLOs and WROs to crisis-affected communities, providing opportunities for joint reflection on progress, obstacles and required modifications in relation to programmatic interventions on GEEWG in humanitarian settings.

Responsible parties: UN agencies, development partners, INGOs.

ENTRY POINTS FOR WLOS AND WROS

- ✓ Prioritize partnerships with international actors, which offer reciprocal capacity strengthening.
- ✓ Partner with international actors, which demonstrate a clear intention to adopt an advisory, backstopping role once the capacity of local partners is strengthened.
- ✓ Conduct a capacity self-assessment prior to INGO/UN funding to identify strengths, needs and gaps and request tailored support accordingly.

COUNTRY CASE STUDY:

UWONET, Uganda

In June 2019, UWONET (Uganda Women's Network) mapped organizations focused on women's rights organizations and identified 45 WROs out of 85 registered partners supporting the South Sudanese refugee response as of May 2019 in Yumbe and Adjumani District – over 85 per cent of which are initiated and managed by women. A capacity assessment was conducted for the identified WROs in the two districts. UWONET recognized the need to establish channelled funding to WROs, specifically related to gender and women's rights. UWONET will also collaborate with local governments and other development partners to build partnerships and undertake joint assessments and research. UN Women has supported the district local governments and the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) to establish gender coordination forums for humanitarian and development partners to facilitate joint gender analysis, identify targets and support gender mainstreaming across various sectors, as well as to develop joint monitoring and mechanisms on gender mainstreaming. Additionally, UWONET, with UN Women, has initiated discussions with staff of INGOs on the different aspects of gender and humanitarian response, i.e. a feminist approach to programming and women's movement building, to address the knowledge gap between gender and gender mainstreaming in humanitarian action.

COUNTRY CASE STUDY:

Occupied Palestinian Territories

In the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), local women's organizations in general have a disadvantaged position to gain access to humanitarian financing. A UN Women/OCHA analysis of the gender marker data between 2011–2015 revealed that only 0.6 per cent of the US\$1.7 billion of humanitarian funding in that time period was allocated for gender-targeted projects. UN Women and OCHA, in collaboration with OHCHR and UNFPA, facilitated a more active engagement of Palestinian women's organizations in humanitarian processes. A number of activities implemented aimed at increasing the participation of women's organizations in humanitarian action by providing them with information on humanitarian processes and planning cycles. This information included identifying entry points for participation in humanitarian clusters and activities, building their capacity on the gender marker and the gender with age marker, ensuring their participation in the humanitarian gender group and advocating for increased financing for humanitarian projects submitted by women's organizations. Women's organizations have particularly capitalized on humanitarian funding to provide immediate and essential services to women and girls affected by conflict in the West Bank and Gaza through ensuring their access to economic opportunities, effective multisectoral services, protection mechanisms and empowerment support. This support resulted in the increased participation of WLOs and WROs in cluster meetings, HCT advocacy activities and increased funding.

Progress indicators:

- ✓ In 2015, the participation of women's organizations and their involvement in the humanitarian response in Palestine was concentrated in the Protection cluster. In 2019, more than 20 women's organizations are active members in all clusters.³³
- ✓ In 2018, two donor delegations visited local women's organizations in the West Bank and Gaza which resulted in highlighting the gender-differentiated impact of the conflict on women's lives.
- ✓ In 2019, six women's organizations have benefited from the Humanitarian Fund³⁴ (HF), mainly under the Protection cluster allocations. The six women's organizations received a total of US\$1,395,839.37.³⁵

COUNTRY CASE STUDY:

Bangladesh

Women's rights organizations in Bangladesh have recently formed the Bangladesh Women's Humanitarian Platform. This platform is an effort to systematically work together, learn, strengthen capacity and influence the humanitarian community in order to adopt a strong focus on gender equality and women's rights. Several organizations included in the platform have been able to support gender-sensitive local disaster responses with their in-depth knowledge of the context. Other organizations have been influential actors in the issue of violence against women and girls and would like to see greater attention paid to this topic in humanitarian action. Although relatively new, the platform has already influenced the humanitarian community in Bangladesh to provide an avenue to include WROs in a national policy review. Platform members visited Cox's Bazaar to document the experiences of Rohingya women refugees and held a press conference to call for a stronger focus on gender and women's rights in the humanitarian response.³⁶

33 Some organizations are members in different clusters.

34 For more information on the oPt Humanitarian Fund (oPt HF), see: <https://www.ochaopt.org/page/about-opt-humanitarian-fund>

35 This is considered a significant increase in financing projects submitted by women's organizations compared to 2018 where one women's organization only benefited from HF allocations at US\$250,000; 2017 where two women's organizations received US\$173,686; 2016 where one women's organization received US\$152,140; and 2015 where one women's organization received US\$108,138.7.

36 Oxfam (2018). One Year On: Time to Put Women and Girls at the Heart of the Rohingya Response. <https://www.oxfamamerica.org/static/media/files/bp-one-year-on-rohingya-refugee-women-girls-110918-en.pdf>

ANNEX 1

5.1 Glossary of terms

Capacity strengthening: A deliberate process that supports the ability of organizations and networks to institutionalize new or improved systems and structures, and individuals and groups to acquire or improve knowledge, skills or attitudes, which are necessary to function effectively, achieve goals and work towards sustainability and self-reliance.³⁷

Humanitarian coordination: Humanitarian coordination is the process where humanitarian actors come together to ensure a coherent and principled response to emergencies with the aim of assisting people when they are most in need of relief or protection. Humanitarian coordination takes place in the context of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle, an operational framework setting out the sequence of actions for the planning, management, delivery and monitoring of collective humanitarian responses.³⁸

Humanitarian funding: Direct funding from donors or donations to local and national actors for humanitarian purposes or funding channelled through a pooled fund that is directly accessed by local and national actors, e.g. CBPF, DREF, START (pooled funding) or to a single international aid organization – including a federated/membership organization – that reaches a local or national actor directly from that one intermediary (single intermediary).³⁹

Institutional capacity strengthening: In the context of the Grand Bargain, institutional capacity strengthening means increasing and supporting preparedness, response and coordination capacities, especially in fragile contexts and where communities are vulnerable to armed conflicts, disasters, recurrent outbreaks and the effects of climate change.⁴⁰

Local and national actors: Organizations engaged in relief that are headquartered and operating in their own aid recipient country and which are not affiliated to an international NGO.⁴¹

Localization: Despite the lack of an agreed definition of localization in the context of the Grand Bargain, the overall objective of localization has been defined by the Workstream co-conveners (Switzerland and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)) as ensuring access for all and building on the strengths of local actors in fast, quality, impactful and sustainable humanitarian assistance that is efficient, effective and fit for purpose.⁴²

37 WS2 Localisation (2019). Core commitment indicators and target-results (CCTRI). http://media.ifrc.org/grand_bargain_localisation/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2019/03/CCTRI-Localisation-Workstream.pdf

38 UNHCR (n.d.). Humanitarian Programme Cycle (IASC). Version 2.4. <https://emergency.unhcr.org/entry/41752/humanitarian-programme-cycle-iasc>

39 WS2 Localisation (2019). Core commitment indicators and target-results (CCTRI). http://media.ifrc.org/grand_bargain_localisation/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2019/03/CCTRI-Localisation-Workstream.pdf

40 IFRC (2018). Localisation – what it means and how to achieve it. IFRC Policy Brief. <https://media.ifrc.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/05/Localisation-external-policy-brief-4-April-2.pdf>

41 See “Identified categories for tracking funding flows”. http://media.ifrc.org/grand_bargain_localisation/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2018/06/categories_for_tracking_direct_as_possible_funding_to_local_and_national_actors_003.pdf

42 IFRC (2018). Localisation – what it means and how to achieve it. IFRC Policy Brief. <https://media.ifrc.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/05/Localisation-external-policy-brief-4-April-2.pdf>

Women’s rights organization (WRO): 1) An organization that self-identifies as a woman’s rights organization with the primary focus of advancing gender equality, women’s empowerment and human rights; or 2) an organization that has, as part of its mission statement, the advancement of women’s and girls’ interests and rights (or where ‘women’, ‘girls’, ‘gender’ or local language equivalents are prominent in their mission statement); or 3) an organization that has, as part of its mission statement or objectives, to challenge and transform gender inequalities (unjust rules), unequal power relations and promoting positive social norms.⁴³

Women-led organization: An organization with a humanitarian mandate and/or mission that is (1) governed or directed by women; or 2) whose leadership is principally made up of women, demonstrated by 50 per cent or more occupying senior leadership positions.⁴⁴

43 WS2 Localisation (2019). Core commitment indicators and target-results (CCTRI).
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