

More support and funding tools to local and national responders
Co-Convenors: IFRC and Switzerland
Summary of Workstream Progress, October 2017¹

Coordination of workstream work

- Interested GB signatories have designated focal points to be part of the localization workstream, and this large group holds regular calls (every 2 months). The first was held in September.
- A draft workplan for the workstream has been developed, focussing on how the workstream can promote and facilitate the implementation of the localization commitments by all Grand Bargain signatories. To achieve this, the plan will have four main objectives:
 - Ensure strong information sharing and wide engagement of Grand Bargain signatories and local actors in the work of this workstream, other relevant Grand Bargain workstreams as well as other initiatives and processes.
 - Demonstrate the potential for improvements in localization of aid through cooperative activities in selected pilot / demonstration countries.
 - Share experience and research to develop common understandings of how best to achieve localization goals, including developing guidance and promoting good practices.
 - Support the measurement of progress on local financing goals.
- The workstream has organized 3 multi-stakeholder meetings to explore what localization can and should look like, how to move forward on implementation, what it means for local actors in particular (giving them a platform to raise their suggestions and concerns with signatories), and to increase buy in from all stakeholders. There were significant efforts to involve local actors in all of these activities.
- Moving forward the workstream has agreed to include local actors in regular teleconferences and hope to include them in all activities under the workplan.
- The workstream also supported a localization-focussed interagency P2P mission to Gaziantep, Turkey to collect good practices, and after this a webinar was held to discuss findings. See: <http://www.deliveraidbetter.org/webinars/upcoming-webinar-local-actors-equal-strategic-partners/> and <http://www.deliveraidbetter.org/webinars/localisation/> . Slide show available here: <http://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/deliveraidbetter-wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/26151302/Website-PPTX.pptx>

Overall progress on implementation

According to the Independent annual report on Grand Bargain Implementation prepared by GPPI:

Localisation remains at the forefront of the political agenda. The strongest activities (73 per cent) are related to investments in the capacity of local and national responders. In addition, 51 per cent of signatories report efforts to assess and address legal and technical barriers to funding local and national responders, while 34 per cent report increases in funding, mainly by increasing contributions to pooled funds. A decision on how to track flows to local and national actors is anticipated.

| Work Stream | Donor activity | Aid organisation activity | Activity on joint commitments | Links to other work streams | Links to other existing processes |
|--------------|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Localisation | ● ● ○ ○ | ● ● ● ○ | ● ● ○ ○ | ● ○ ○ ○ | ● ● ● ○ |

¹ This is not an exhaustive overview of all work being done by all actors to implement localization commitments. There is so much happening that this is very difficult to capture. Instead it aims to provide a snapshot of some of the work of workstream, and to increase transparency. Additional information will be posted on the website: <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain-hosted-iasc>

Capacity Strengthening

Commitment (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. We should achieve this through collaboration with development partners and incorporate capacity strengthening in partnership agreements.

Progress by signatories (GPPI independent report)

According to GPPI, 73% of signatories reported activities while 7% had planned activities. GPPI noted that:

Signatories have made considerable investments in building the capacities of local and national responders. The Netherlands, for example, has increased its budget for humanitarian capacity building from 1.7 million in 2016 to 2.15 million in 2017. With funding from UK DFID, six international NGO members of the START Network, including CAFOD and Christian Aid, are delivering the two-year “Shifting the Power” programme to strengthen the capacity of 55 selected local partners in five countries to deliver humanitarian preparedness and response. Aid organisations also report related investments in partner capacities.

However, it is often unclear whether signatories’ investments are multi-year. In addition, most signatories do not have systems in place for comprehensively tracking their funding in building the capacity of governments, communities, Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, and local civil society

Good practices:

- The Nigeria UN managed country based pooled fund has a specific window for capacity building initiatives for local and national actors. Some donors are providing specific capacity building funds or including core costs in their grants to local/ national actors and some INGOs are sharing core costs with partners.

Planned workstream activities:

- Collaboratively develop guidance on how to most effectively undertake institutional capacity strengthening.

Financing and Measurement

Commitments:

(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 transactional costs.

(5) Develop, with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), and apply a ‘localisation’ 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), IFRC Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) and NGO-led and other pooled funds.

Collective Progress

- A sub working group of the IASC HFTT – the localization marker working group (LMWG) was established to look into the issue of measurement. This group felt that the best way to measure funding in the long terms was through the use of existing mechanisms – FTS, OECD as well as IATI. Grand Bargain annual reports and specific research will be necessary in the short term.
- The group recognized the importance of agreeing definitions /categories of local and national actors and direct as possible funding and therefore went through an extensive process of reaching out to multiple stakeholders, including local actors. The IASC LMWG developed a proposal.
- Based on this proposal and on further consultation with signatories, the co-convenors presented a simplified paper with definitions and categories to the signatories for approval (via silence procedure). There was no breaking of the silence.

- Since this time there has been a request for a minor amendment clarifying the definition of local actor. The proposed amendment was approved by the working group members and will be shared with all signatories via silence procedure. Once finalized, amendments to the current GB reporting template will be proposed.
- Work has begun to develop a baseline based on these definitions and categories, with a consultant undertaking specific research in this regards.

Progress by signatories (GPPI Independent report)

GPPI reported that 34 % of signatories reported activities to meet the financing objectives and 8 % had planned activities. They reported that:

42 per cent of the donors and aid organisations with implementing partners report steps or plans to increase funding to local responders, either through pooled funds or directly (self-reports often do not fully distinguish between the two). That said, many donors report that the main way for them to fulfil their localisation commitments is by increasing their support for pooled funds. Germany's contribution to country-based pooled funds increased significantly in 2016 to US\$ 62 million, and Norway's contribution has increased to about \$30 million in 2016. USAID has begun contributing to such funds in Iraq and Ethiopia on a pilot basis. Luxembourg has almost doubled its contribution to the disaster relief emergency fund in 2016. In total, for all 17 country-based pooled funds currently in place, allocations to national NGOs increased slightly from 14.63 per cent in 2014 to 17.88 per cent in 2016.

For other pooled funds, the research team was unable to assess the share of resources that have been channelled to national and local responders. Donors report less progress in increasing direct contributions to local and national organisations, and some note that the 25 per cent target is very ambitious. A good practice example comes from Belgium: 8 per cent of the Belgian humanitarian budget went to local organisations in 2016, and the Belgian Minister for Development Cooperation has recently reconfirmed the country's target of 25 per cent by 2020

Some good practices:

- There has been some progress around accessibility of pooled funds to local and national actors. A number of UN managed country based pooled funds have specific windows for local and national actors. For example in Nigeria there is a specific window for capacity building. The START network, a collaboration of INGOs and NNGOs has developed its own pooled funds and there is discussion around a NNGO led pooled fund. IFRC and ICRC are in the process of establishing a National Society investment fund.

Workstream plans

- Share the proposed definitions and categories with FTS, OECD, IATI and propose their inclusion in GB annual reporting. Develop a baseline through an independent study.
- Undertake a study of pooled funds to identify how accessible these are for local and national actors.
- Collaboratively develop recommendations for pooled funds (of all sorts) on how to better promote access for local and national actors.

Coordination

Commitment: (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.

Progress by signatories (GPPI independent report)

40% of signatories reported work to implement this commitment. GPPI noted:

Our analysis of this commitment is restricted to OCHA and cluster co-leads. Some of these actors have taken first steps. OCHA, for example, is advocating for strengthened ties with local and national actors in its support to field offices through its inter-cluster coordination section. UNDP is involved in discussions in the Global Cluster for Early Recovery on how to transition from externally to locally led responses. CARE reports

that a joint workshop with the Global Cluster Coordinators took place in December 2016 to advance thinking and practice with regard to making coordination more local

Other Good Practices

There have been a number of initiatives undertaken by IASC coordination bodies at a global level and in the field, as well as some initiatives to enhance cooperation with government actors. A number of HRPs specifically include mention of Grand Bargain commitments, including localization and note work under the key themes. The Global Cluster Coordination Group (GCCG) has a localization working group that is developing practical approaches to strengthen the participation of national civil society actors in coordination and reinforce collaboration with national authorities. UNICEF has recruited a dedicated localization focal point to support the UNICEF led clusters and sub clusters to improve their work with local actors.

In the Turkey-based humanitarian operation for Syria, OCHA has dedicated staff working on strengthening the participation of local NGOs in coordination and response. They have provided support to Syrian NGOs to facilitate their familiarity with humanitarian coordination, such as clusters, the HCT and on humanitarian principles and supported the establishment of a Syrian NGO forum to promote coordination between Syrian NGOs as well as with bodies such as the HCT. Outreach by cluster coordinators and OCHA to Syrian NGOs has led to a high degree of participation in coordination, including the co-leadership by national NGOs of 3 clusters. Cluster meetings are held in Arabic or are translated using interpretation equipment purchased by OCHA and made available for all clusters.

In Bangui, Central African Republic, OCHA is working with the central mayor and with local municipalities and has helped established a coordination platform that channels information from the neighborhood level to the central level. OCHA assists with information management and analysis, and brings together the mayor with the main international humanitarian and development actors as well as donors. The aim of the approach is to strengthen the capacity of the local authority to coordinate and respond to needs and to ensure that recovery programming takes place side by side with humanitarian actions.

Similarly, a number of National Governments have implemented disaster laws in order to facilitate international disaster relief and clarify coordination structures and processes. This has been happening for some time. Red Cross and Red Crescent National societies working with the IFRC have successfully strengthened disaster laws and policies in 30 countries since 2007.

Workstream Plans

- Work with OCHA, cluster co-leads and signatories to support development and dissemination of guidance for clusters on how to better engage with local and national actors.

Partnership

Commitment: (2) Understand better and work to remove or reduce barriers that prevent organisations and donors from partnering with local and national responders in order to lessen their administrative burden.

Progress by signatories

According to GPPI report, 51% of signatories reported work to implement this commitment while 5% reported that work was planned. GPPI noted that:

Many aid organisations and donors have assessed the legal and technical barriers that lie before them and taken steps to address these. Italy, for instance, approved new legal procedures in July 2016 that makes local NGOs who have had partnerships with Italian NGOs eligible for direct Italian funding. Belgium is revising its Royal Decree for Humanitarian Aid to allow for contributions to pooled funds managed by international NGOs. Other signatories, such as the European Commission/DG ECHO, are exploring ways to move forward on localisation within the limitations of their current legal environment. Finally, certain signatories such as UN Women and the Netherlands reported that they do not face any impediments to partnering directly with national responders
