

Summary note
Localization workstream teleconference
30 October 2018

The co-conveners welcomed the participants to the teleconference of the Grand Bargain localization workstream.

1. Update on: Demonstrator Country Mission Bangladesh

The co-conveners of the Grand Bargain localization workstream presented an overview of the first inter-agency field mission to Bangladesh that took place from 9 - 13 September 2018. Representatives from the co-conveners, IFRC and Switzerland and other Grand Bargain signatories namely Australia, Australian Red Cross, Christian Aid, Germany, REACH, Oxfam and UNHCR participated in the mission and met with various stakeholders in Bangladesh (national and local organizations, UN agencies, INGOs, donors). The mission team visited two different contexts: Cox's Bazar for the Rohingya refugee response and natural hazard prone coastal districts in the North (Kurigram) and East (Sylhet).

The aim of this multi-agency mission was to promote and facilitate the achievements of the localization commitments. The whole mission was guided by the following main questions:

- 1) What does localization mean for various stakeholders?
- 2) What are the good practices, challenges and barriers on delivering on the four main areas of localization: funding, capacity, coordination, and partnerships; as well as on integrating gender into localization efforts?

The mission report presents recommendations for donors, UN agencies and INGOs, national and local actors and the government. The key recommendations include:

Donors (Institutional and bilateral donor agencies):

- Partnership agreements with implementing partners and their subsequent implementing partners should include good practices, specifically around supporting leadership and capacity of national and local humanitarian actors and passing on a fair coverage of overhead costs;
- Increase the proportion of unearmarked and multi-year humanitarian assistance (as-direct-as-possible / CBPF);
- Work with the Resident Coordinator (RC) and the Government of Bangladesh to identify opportunities to strengthen local and national leadership and decision-making in humanitarian action, including by civil society actors.

UN agencies, INGOs:

- Strengthening ethical human resource standards;
- Mutual capacity building systems (e.g. learning by doing etc.);
- Inclusive coordination mechanisms (providing translation, using simplified language and making joint assessments);
- Support improved access for national and local actors to humanitarian donor architecture (also through donor/donor and donor/government advocacy) and facilitated reporting / reviews;
- Foster engagement of women through the Bangladesh Women Humanitarian Platform (BWHP).

Local and National Actors:

- Local and national humanitarian actors should work together with smaller local humanitarian actors such as Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) or grassroots organizations in networks in a transparent and equal manner (defined standards);
- Use existing networks to agree on ways of how to better collaborate, respect and build on each other's strengths.

One of the main insights was that there is a different understanding of who is a "local" NGO (e.g. local based in Cox's Bazar operating in camps in Cox's Bazar) versus a "national" NGO (e.g. a local NGO based in Dhaka and operating in Cox's Bazar). This differentiation has an influence of the understanding of "localization" and more data and strengthened awareness on first, second and third-tier humanitarian funding is needed (both international and national).

The question came up if **gender** has been looked at in a sufficient manner during the mission. The mission team did meet with the recently formed Bangladesh Women Humanitarian Platform, however,

it was agreed that for the remaining missions, more targeting of women-led or women organizations should be done. Gender-specific questions will be brought up more consistently and extensively.

Please find the complete mission report [here](#).

2. Update on: Upcoming Mission Iraq

The Iraq mission will take place from 18-22 November 2018. The mission will be led by the two co-conveners's Sherpas: Jemilah Mahmood, Under Secretary General, IFRC and Philippe Besson, Head of the Multilateral Division, SDC.

Including the Sherpas, eight members will join the mission: Ms. Lea Moser, Division for Humanitarian Assistance, Federal Foreign Office, Germany; Mr. Nigel Timmins, Humanitarian Director, Oxfam (United Kingdom); Mr. Palmer Okpako, Executive Director, Mercy Vincent Foundation, Nigeria; Ms. Frederique Lehoux, Humanitarian Partnerships Coordinator, CARE International (United Kingdom); Mr. John Bono, Emergency Specialist, MENA Region, UNICEF (Jordan); Mr. Antoine Gerard, Senior Humanitarian Affairs Adviser, Operations and Advocacy Division, OCHA (US). As secretariat/support staff Ms. Coree Steadman, Senior Officer-Localization, IFRC and Mr. Atwa Jaber, Policy Intern, IFRC will join the mission.

Logistics and security will be coordinated by OCHA and the Iraqi Red Crescent Society while additional support on arranging and facilitating the meetings and field visits are also being provided by other agencies such as REACH, Oxfam, CRS, and IFRC.

Itinerary: The Sherpas will visit Baghdad on the 18th to meet with key government agencies, the RC/HC and the Red Cross family. They will fly to Erbil at the end of the day where the rest of the mission team will be travelling to directly. Apart from various meetings with key stakeholders in Erbil, field visits are also being planned around Erbil and Mosul.

A stakeholder survey was sent out to local and international actors to serve as baseline information on their views on different aspects of localization. The results of this survey will be included in the background report that will be shared to be mission team.

3. Feedback from co-conveners's meeting / request from FG (Core Commitments, Priority Actions, Indicators, Workplan)

Core Commitments and Priority Actions – Following the conclusion from the GB Annual Meeting in June and the resulting ODI proposal paper on Core Commitments and priority actions, a co-conveners' meeting was held on 14 September in Geneva. The localization workstream had an extraordinary teleconference on 5th September in preparation for the co-conveners' meeting. The workstream agreed on prioritizing the two Core Commitments proposed – (1) multi-year investment in institutional capacities of local and national responders and (2) funding target of 25% that is as direct as possible. The workstream endorsed/agreed on prioritizing the two Core Commitments but recognizing that the other Commitments remain important and implications on the workstream workplan need to be looked at. It was also agreed that the proposed priority actions require further review, including which ones are for GB signatories and for the workstream as a collective, and how these match with the existing workstream workplan. These messages were transmitted to the co-conveners' meeting.

Indicators – A discussion on indicators was held during the co-conveners meeting on 14 September where a decision was made for workstreams to work/develop 1 or 2 indicators each for their respective Core Commitments. In a separate meeting between the workstream's co-conveners, the Sherpas expressed doubts on the usefulness and added value of indicators. It takes several years to seriously measure and evaluate indicators and they represent only a small piece of reality. Also, signatories will be asked to report on the indicators that will be decided by the end of year. There are at least three existing/on-going projects on indicators. A question was posed to the group on how they would like to go forward on this.

Feedback/Comments:

- Prepare a google doc as a separate exercise for the priority actions. Indicators can be fleshing out what the commitments are;
- Useful way to go would be supporting signatories to learn from best practice and pilots that have been done;
- NEAR is working on a broad set of indicators and it would be difficult to boil this down to one single indicator. While it would be worthwhile to come up with indicators to know how we are progressing, localization is a broad word, there is so much to measure;

- Markers of success will be helpful but this requires more thorough thinking. Lesson from trying to come up with a definition of what is local which turned out to be complicated and divisive. Maybe use the lessons from the gender marker;
- Skeptical with marker given the past experience on this. ECHO is using the gender marker; tool doesn't answer all the questions and is not conclusive. We need a concrete idea on what does success look like. Regarding priority actions, we agreed to define these more clearly specifically in relation to our workplan but this is not done yet. We need clarity on what these priority actions look like and who they are for.

Next Steps:

1. Co-conveners to review and revise the workplan vis a vis the proposed priority actions and send this out to workstream before the next teleconference;
2. A separate in-depth discussion by a small working group to come up with indicator/s using the three relevant pieces of research/work as references;
3. Those who are interested to participate in a working group on indicators are asked to signify their interest to Coree in the coming week;
4. Proposal from the working group to be presented and finalized in the next workstream teleconference (taking place before the 7th of December which is the Facilitation Group deadline for submission).

4. Global and Regional Meetings

- Brussels - a global workstream meeting in Brussels is being planned in 2019 together with partners and ECHO to move forward on delivering concrete actions/results ;
- Regional meetings - Africa Union has approached us to co-host a regional meeting in Addis Ababa with a proposed date sometime towards the end of Q1 of next year. We are planning three regional meetings where we hope to bring in more voices into our discussions specially government and local CSOs, to develop consensus on guidance notes that we will be developing, to promote work on localization, and to share and learn lessons from the missions.

Next steps:

- Co-conveners to share concept notes for the Brussels and regional meetings being planned.

5. AOB

Update on UN women: UN women suggested that they would help to organize a workshop or/and a side-event in the Brussels meeting on gender and localization also focusing on financing issues. Maybe an additional guidance note on gender and localization could be developed, or gender could be included in other guidance notes. Moreover, UN Women offered their help to connect with women's groups for the regional meetings.

6. Workplan review

The workplan will be reviewed in the next workstream teleconference.

Participants: Frederique Lehoux/CARE, Brigitte Mukengeyashi/ECHO, Umar Iqtidar/ActionAid, Frido Herinckx/Netherlands, Janet Puhlovic/OCHA, Elizabeth Ross/USAID, Tove Myhrman/Sweden, Hero Brizw/REACH, Robert White/UNHCR, Anne Street/CAFOD, Badrun Nahar/NAHAB, Jessica Holterhof/Germany, Marie Emilie/IRC, Meixi Guo/ICRC, Palmer Okpako/Mercy Vincent Foundation, Sema Genel/Support to Life, Maria Karadenizli/UN Women, Regina Gujan and Sarah Herrendorff/SDC, David Fisher, Coree Steadman and Atwa Jaber/IFRC