UN WOMEN

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality
and the Empowerment of Women

Guidance Note: Gender and the Localisation Agenda
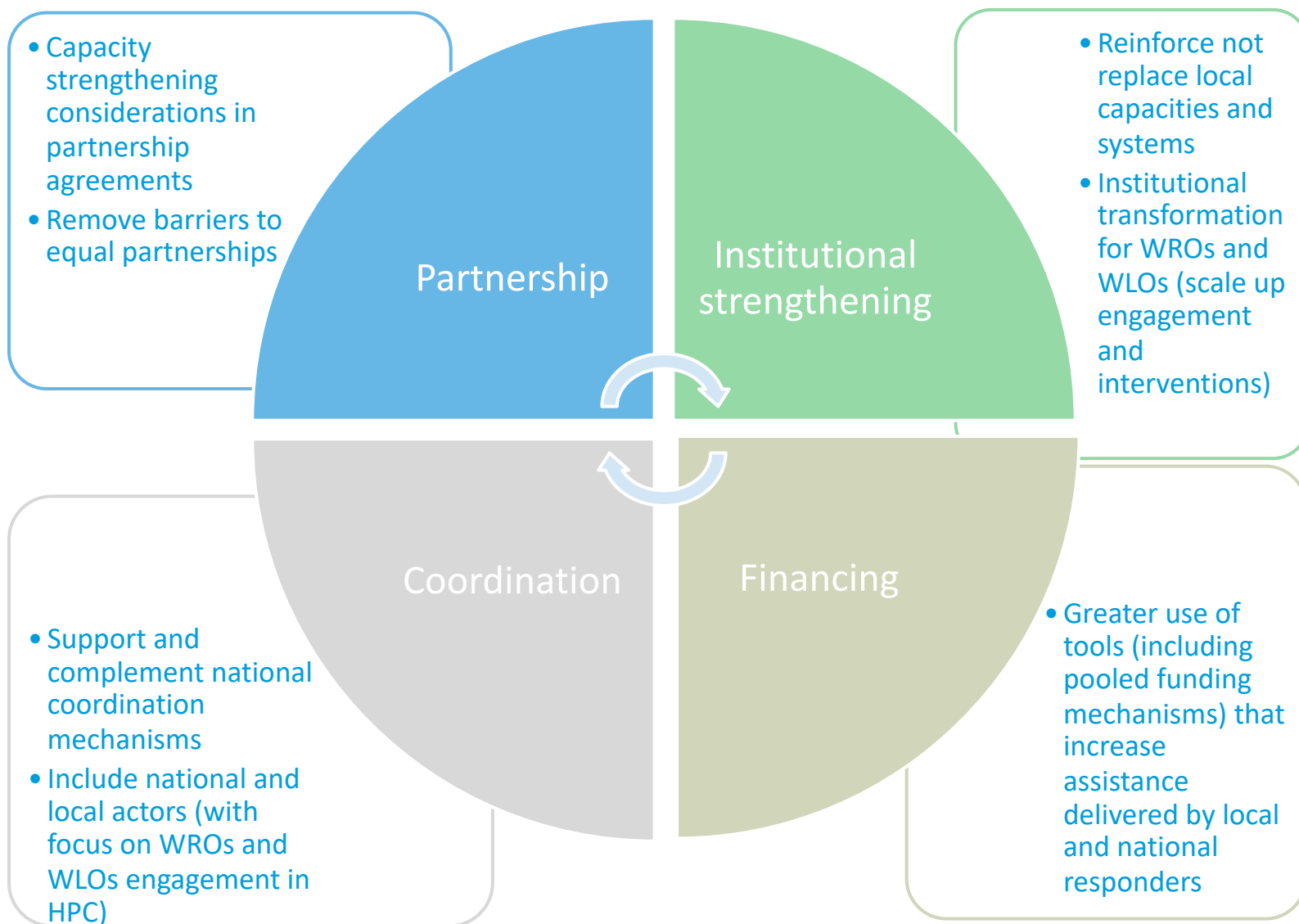
Work Stream 2: Localization

- Literature Review

- Technical Guidance Outline

- Grand Bargain Friends of Gender Group produced an aide-memoire recommending the mainstreaming of gender and protection - with particular focus on four work streams.

- Guidelines follow the operational framework of work streams, based on recommendations from the FoG, work stream members, grey and evidence-based literature.

- Guidelines are both strategic and practical to provide tools, tips and templates to integrate gender dimensions in humanitarian action

- Key issues-entry points for advancing a gender responsive localization agenda

- Review of Grand Bargain signatory submissions (2018 Grand Bargain Annual Report)

- Localization is the commitment for **increased institutional support and direct funding for local and national responders (World Humanitarian Summit and Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream)**

- Focus on WLOs and WROs' leadership, roles and capacities

- Women's led and women's rights organizations' role/contributions as local and national responders in humanitarian and crisis settings

- Access to and tracking of financial resources for WROs and WLOs

- Links between meaningful participation and gender equitable outcomes of humanitarian response plans, including protection and prevention/response to GBV

- Visibility and influence –key considerations around quality of women's organizations' engagement in priority setting in HNOs and HRPs (responsiveness of HRPs to the needs and priorities of crisis affected women and girls)

- Capacity strengthening considerations in partnership agreements
- Remove barriers to equal partnerships

Partnership

Institutional strengthening

- Reinforce not replace local capacities and systems
- Institutional transformation for WROs and WLOs (scale up engagement and interventions)

Coordination

Financing

- Support and complement national coordination mechanisms
- Include national and local actors (with focus on WROs and WLOs engagement in HPC)

- Greater use of tools (including pooled funding mechanisms) that increase assistance delivered by local and national responders

- To provide **practical guidance** to signatories of the Grand Bargain, and humanitarian actors, generally, on **how to promote gender equality through gender-responsive actions**.

- Primary audience for the guidelines are humanitarian actors and signatories to the GB, but serves as an advocacy tool and practitioner framework for women's led and women's rights organizations.

- Guidance note is based on an adapted framework of the 'Seven Dimensions of Localization Framework':

FUNDING	PARTNERSHIPS	CAPACITY	PARTICIPATION REVOLUTION	COORDINATION MECHANISMS	VISIBILITY	POLICY INFLUENCE
25%	Less sub contracting	Institutional development	Of crisis affected communities	National actors greater presence and influence	Roles, results and innovations by national actors	National actors greater presence and influence in international policy debates
As directly as possible	More equitable	Stop undermining	Gender, age, disabilities...			
Better quality						

CHALLENGES	OPPORTUNITIES
Limited funding for GBV and GEEWG programmatic interventions in humanitarian settings	*Earmark funds for WROs and WLOs in support of targeted programming to promote women's leadership, livelihoods and protection in humanitarian settings *Strengthen implementation of commitments to GBV and GEEWG priorities
Donor funding often omits WLOs and WROs due to lack of direct, targeted local funding opportunities and institutional priorities (and/or lack of gender equality and women's empowerment strategy)	*Set funding quotas for WLOs and WROs and/or setting up specific funding mechanisms with a view to providing direct funding for WLOs and WROs at country level *Streamline funding application procedures and criteria for WLOs and WROs *Invest in capacity development among these organizations on applying for funding schemes dedicated to national and local actors
WLOs and WROs are omitted from the humanitarian planning processes	*Invest in WROs' and WLOs' awareness raising of entry points for engagement in humanitarian coordination mechanisms and planning processes *Dedicate spaces for WLOs' and WROs' engagement in HCT and other humanitarian coordination mechanisms at country level (gender coordination mechanisms, cluster coordination)
Short term funding opportunities hinders sustainable program and gender transformative outcomes due to lack of opportunities to address discriminatory social norms.	*Scale up advocacy towards national governments, UN agencies and humanitarian actors by donors to increase financial and technical support for gender transformative humanitarian action and crisis response related interventions *Promote long terms partnerships and financial support to ensure effective and sustainable interventions *Develop and adopt monitoring tools to track funding for local women's organizations and promote accountability among GB signatories
Donors are reluctant to fund local actors due to perceived risks around aid such as contextual risks, institutional risk and reputational risks	*Put in place risk mitigation procedures -when and where appropriate- through monitoring, communication, accountability and capacity strengthening tools and systems for WROs and WLOs.

Best Practices Checklist

- ✓ Improve the FTS indicators to track use of aggregated multi-sectoral financial resource tracking tool for financial allocations to women's led and women's rights organizations.

- ✓ Donors should internally track and direct funding which promote gender equality and women's empowerment and monitor contributions and partnerships established with national and local women's organizations.

- ✓ Include WROs and WLOs in the humanitarian coordination processes at national and local level.

- ✓ Engage women's groups in the design of the country based pooled funds and governance/technical review committees that set the criteria for partner selection.

- ✓ Invest in capacity development of women's led and women's rights organizations to enable them to 'scale up' programmatic interventions on GEEWG across sectors and in stand-alone programming.

- ✓ Promote quality, predictable and long-term funding for WLOs and WROs (with focus on strengthening institutional capacities and systems).

- ✓ Encourage flexible verification procedures for partners with less robust operational and financial systems.

- ✓ Provide varied funding mechanisms to reach women's rights organizations, movements and networks including funding through partnerships with women's funds, INGOs, regional funds and consortiums (e.g. Women's Humanitarian and Peace Fund).

Entry Points Checklist Donors (including UN and INGOs) for Supporting WLOs and WROs

For Donors
- ✓ Develop a feminist humanitarian policy dedicated to prioritize gender mainstreaming and gender transformative practices and align these with the principles and commitments of the localization agenda.
- ✓ Promote long term partnerships and financial allocations to WROs and WLOs in humanitarian settings.
- ✓ Promote a global localization agenda to move away from ad hoc approaches at country level and hold actors accountable to recognized international standards and commitments to GEEWG (for example, IASC Gender Policy and Accountability Framework).
- ✓ Encourage dedicated budget lines for WROs' and WLOs' capacity building and long-term institutional development.
- ✓ Promote GEEWG through the adoption and roll out of innovative programmatic strategies and partnerships in humanitarian settings.
- ✓ Give priority to those organizations that are self-organized target group institutions and represent crisis-affected women and girls' priorities and needs.

For UN and INGOs
- ✓ Earmark standalone GEEWG and GBV programming in humanitarian contexts.
- ✓ Equal partnerships-actively strengthening technical and operational capacity of local partners and integrating a two way feedback mechanism.
- ✓ Develop robust monitoring tools and impact evaluations to contribute to the evidence base and lessons learned around funding and partnerships with women's organizations.

- 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.

- Support the establishment of networks between women's organizations to enable exchange of information, resources and knowledge.

- Invest in WROs and WLOs' capacities to collect and analyze data that inform humanitarian planning processes and assess the impact of humanitarian interventions at outcome level.

- Establish/Strengthen partnerships between humanitarian agencies and local Women CSOs on issues related to **accountability for affected populations** (gender responsive community feedback mechanisms).

- Has there been an analysis of capacity constraints and mapping of local organizations vis-à-vis the priorities integrated in the HRPs?

- Is information accessible to all WLO and WRO actors (simplified format and in a local language both in relation to funding opportunities)? Have local cultural demographic factors been considered such as appropriate communication channels and digital literacy?

- Are alternative meeting venues/ locations/formats available at the community and sub-national level that enable engagement and participation of women's groups at grassroots' level?

- Have humanitarian actors considered access routine restrictions of WLOs and WROs (including external facing security risks, cultural and social norms, child care)?

- Have coordinators included a gender and GBV strategy across all coordination mechanisms?

- Is there a robust assessment system in place to measure level and quality of engagement of WLOs and WROs in the humanitarian coordination system?

Technical Guidance: Participation / Coordination

CHALLENGES	ENABLERS
Limited engagement and influence on humanitarian coordination mechanisms	• Active engagement and co-leadership of WLO and WROs in humanitarian coordination mechanisms. • Support WROs and WLOs to take on inclusive and participatory leadership roles in all stages of humanitarian planning processes. • Conduct gender analysis and humanitarian needs assessments with WROs and WLOs' active involvement.
Structural barriers to local and national responders accessing resources and decision making spaces	• Adopt multi-year and sustainable approaches to capacity investment for local and national responders (focus on long term institutional strengthening). • Adopt pooled-earmarked funding specifically for WLOs and WROs. • Increase flexible funding for women's organizations.
Limited visibility of GEEWG issues in humanitarian response plans and relevant allocations	• Integrate a GEEWG-standalone pillar in HRPs –as well as a mainstreaming approach with commitments across the different clusters.
Discriminatory gender norms-social and cultural barriers	• Prioritize WLOs and WROs' participation and leadership in HNO and HRP related decision making processes and discussions. • Provide safe spaces and localized coordination spaces if women's access is restricted in relation to existing coordination mechanisms.

CHALLENGES	ENABLERS
Humanitarian actors' internal organization and culture	• Focus on women's leadership as a distinct programmatic and institutional priority. • Increase support for individual women leaders and for female staff in humanitarian organizations • Enforce specific indicators on gender equality and women's empowerment for senior staff performance assessment. • Adopt organizational change in culture, structure and policy in support of inclusive leadership (also intersectionalities). • Invest in feminist humanitarian networks' establishment and strengthening to scale up their influence, visibility and resource base.
Limited attention and resources in support of programmes/strategies advancing women's leadership in humanitarian settings	• Support national and local WLOs and WROs on women's leadership (with focus on local communities/affected populations). • Promote social norms towards inclusion and GE and remove practical and social barriers to women's leadership. • Develop comprehensive leadership programs building support, skills and capacities for women's leadership in local communities and within local and national organizations.
Restricted access to coordination mechanisms/Limited peer support schemes	• Coordination hubs at the community level or combine cluster meetings to enable women's and girls' participation. • Promote mentoring and peer support between international and national partners (towards more equal partnerships).

Best Practices Checklist

- ✓ **Assessment of capacity gaps/needs and priorities of WLOs and WROs (elaborate strategies and approaches to institutional strengthening).**

- ✓ **Expand participation of WLOs and WROs to promote inclusion-GEEWG across clusters.**
- ✓ **Conduct an inventory of leadership roles that women and girls already take on and a thorough understanding of the socio-cultural practices and norms of leadership (before and during a humanitarian crisis).**

- ✓ **Conduct a thorough needs assessment and gender analysis before a crisis occurs in order to understand socio-cultural practices and norms of leadership in local settings.**

- ✓ **Invest in WLOs and WROs' capacity to engage and provide services to affected populations giving priority to organisations representing affected populations/women and girls.**

- ✓ **Support WLOs and WROs' meaningful participation in multi-stakeholder formal and informal coordination mechanisms.**

- ✓ **Provide alternative means of partnership/collaboration by supporting coordination hubs, training, consortia development and peer support.**

Entry Points Checklist Donors (including UN and INGOs) for Supporting WLOs and WROs

✓ **Capitalize on the existence of gender hubs and safe spaces to act as localized coordination spaces for local actors with resource and logistical constraints that are accessible and safe to women.**

✓ **Establish an advisory group to connect international actors with WLOs and WROs to promote inclusion and peer mentoring.**

✓ **Leverage the new GBV AoR Task Team on Localisation as an entry-point for local women's groups to engage with the cluster system, including use of GBV Coordination Handbook**

✓ **Promote local inclusion across sectors and coordination as well as funding mechanisms (HPC, CBPF) to conduct awareness-raising and capacity building across sectors.**

✓ **Train WLOs and WROs on the cluster system, coordination, and humanitarian funding processes.**

✓ **Contribute to the evidence-base through evaluations of WLO and WRO approaches to promote best practices from lessons learned to inform funding decisions.**

Technical Guidance: Partnerships

CHALLENGES	OPPORTUNITIES
Partnerships do not integrate specific considerations/funding for institutional capacity development in the long term	*Donors should provide overhead funding in support of sustainable programming. *WLOs and WROs should be consulted at all stages of the program cycle and strategy development by humanitarian actors.
Programs are not well designed and local actors are not consulted, resulting in increased risks and unintended consequences for crisis affected women and girls and institutional challenges for local organizations	*Identify risks jointly with partners and hold a discussion on mitigation measures, including mitigation of security risks for partners in humanitarian settings.
Partnerships solely focus on technical capacity building (e.g. gender or GBV for a specific project) and often do not consider operational support (such as financial, logistical) through funding and capacity strengthening	*Invest in WROs and WLOs' institutional capacity strengthening with a view to improving and strengthening the quality of their engagement, service delivery and programming in crisis contexts.
Partnerships are considered short-term on circumstantial, often tied to pooled funding mechanisms.	*Promote long-term partnerships with WROs and WLOs contributing to their ability to receive stand-alone funding and scale up their programming in humanitarian settings.

Essential Questions

✓ Have partner selection criteria integrated specific considerations over the value and potential contribution of the women's organizations (delivery of results, AAP, responsiveness of humanitarian interventions to the needs and priorities of women and girls in humanitarian settings)?

✓ Have partnership structures and agreements considered two-way accountability tools to assess quality and impact, but also to critically appraise partnerships in terms of their contribution to gender equality and empowerment of women and girls?

✓ Have partnerships integrated considerations over the sustainability and quality of funding?

✓ Are the priorities/capacity gaps of the partner organization considered and reflected in capacity needs assessments?

✓ Are there specific provisions on institutional capacity strengthening through earmarked and un-earmarked funding integrated in the partnership agreements?

Technical Guidance: Partnerships

Best Practices Checklist

✓ Integrate relevant sections in the project proposal development by requesting local and national partners input on the type of support they require and include logistical and operational capacity strengthening elements in capacity plans.

✓ Assess partner gender competency (through the gender analysis or gender marker), skills and capacities and promote capacity strengthening in areas related to gender responsive programming and planning.

✓ Integrate a institutional capacity strengthening plan/strategy on the basis of capacity needs/priorities of national and local WLOs and WROs.

✓ Introduce a long term approach to capacity development with institutional transformation in mind.

✓ Strengthen technical, programmatic and operational capacities of local and national actors so they can effectively scale up their work.

✓ Review and adapt gender and GBV tools with local actors. Adapt and/or develop localized capacity strengthening tools.

Technical Guidance: Partnerships

Entry Points Checklist Donors (including UN and INGOs) for Supporting WLOs and WROs

- ✓ Support WLOs and WROs to develop their own institutional capacity strengthening plan.
- ✓ Include operational and technical support in partnership agreements.
- ✓ Focus on longer term partnerships to strengthen local WRO / WLO leadership through training, policy development, contribution to overhead costs, flexible funding and reporting requirements rather than transactional project-based partnerships.
- ✓ Align operational capacity building with existing risk management, financial framework and accountability frameworks and performance index (e.g. CBPF and CERF) to facilitate WLOs and WROs access to pooled funding mechanisms.
- ✓ Encourage partnership and coordination between international humanitarian actors and WLOs and WROs for the access to funding and feedback to affected communities.
- ✓ Principles and criteria for partnership are clearly articulated, inclusive and transparent for both partners.

Entry Points Checklist for WLOs and WROs
- ✓ Prioritize partnerships which offer reciprocal capacity strengthening.
- ✓ Demand the right to participation in local and national coordination forums.
- ✓ Use existing networks to agree on definitions, collaboration and communication points (e.g. safe spaces, gender hubs) as local and national actors to leverage access to humanitarian spaces.
- ✓ Partner with INGOs which demonstrate a clear intention to adopt an advisory, backstopping role once capacity is strengthened.