

LOCALISATION GUIDANCE NOTES

The Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream issued a series of guidance notes in May 2020 covering the main themes/components of localisation: (1) partnership; (2) financing; (3) capacity strengthening; (4) coordination; (5) gender and; (6) donors and intermediaries arrangements. The guidance notes draw from existing and bespoke research projects, findings from the 'demonstrator country' missions, and discussions with Grand Bargain signatories and local actors in a series of regional and global conferences in 2018-2019. These very brief notes set out priority findings, recommendations and considerations that signatories are encouraged to consider as they implement their localisation commitments as set out in the Grand Bargain.

1 / PARTNERSHIP

2 / FINANCING

3 / CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

4 / COORDINATION

5 / GENDER

6 / DONORS AND INTERMEDIARIES ARRANGEMENTS

GUIDANCE NOTE ON PARTNERSHIP PRACTICES FOR LOCALISATION

More than 400 humanitarian agencies contributed to identifying the priority partnership practices for localisation; approximately 85% of them were local/national actors. The basis of the guidance note is the findings of the research conducted in Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria and South Sudan in 2018 as part of the *Accelerating Localisation through Partnerships programme*¹². It was further reviewed by participants of the regional and global Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream conferences in 2019 and Localisation Workstream members. This guidance note is a product of the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream but does not necessarily represent the official position of Workstream members and co-conveners.

'Local actors/partners' refers to the full diversity of local and national government, NGOs, CSOs, CBOs, women-led organisations, youth groups and more. 'International actors/partners' refers to the full diversity of international NGOs and UN agencies. 'Humanitarian actors' refers to all those engaged in humanitarian action.

Project and financial management

- 1 Local actors design projects and budgets or co-design with international actors who provide technical expertise on proposal writing and technical issues, including conducting joint needs assessments, where needed.
- 2 Local actors are treated as equal partners, not as sub-contractors presented with already agreed projects and budgets. Partnership agreements include roles and responsibilities of both parties, risks are shared, and mitigation measures are mutually agreed, including to ensure safeguarding is addressed.
- 3 Partners conduct joint monitoring visits to beneficiaries, providing opportunities for joint reflection on progress, obstacles and required modifications. Local partners maintain relationships with local communities, and international partners and donor agencies visit communities in agreement with, or when accompanied by, local actors when appropriate.
- 4 International actors and donors are open to discussions on findings from local partner monitoring and allow flexibility to adapt programmes and budgets in response to evidence of changing needs and community feedback as much as is practicable.
- 5 Project budgets include funds for local partners, relevant to the context and needs, for: 1) overheads including set-up costs; 2) indirect costs (as % of project budget); 3) assets vital for project implementation, safety and/or organisational financial sustainability; and 4) organisational strengthening. Budgets should clearly show core funding allocations.
- 6 All humanitarian actors follow ethical recruitment practices. International actors attempt to keep salaries/benefits within as close a range as practicable to local actors. Local actors strive to support staff to do their job effectively and treat them fairly and equitably.

12. Funded by ECHO. For more about Accelerating Localisation through Partnerships visit: <http://caid.org.uk/54>

- 7 All actors support the active participation of crisis-affected people in project design, monitoring, implementation and evaluation with particular focus on involving marginalised, minority and groups in vulnerable situations such as women, children, young people, and persons with disability.
- 8 All humanitarian actors identify their added value in any partnership and work on the basis of complementarity. International actors provide support to local partners based on demand (rather than supply) and ideally through longer-term strategic partnerships tailored to partner needs, with complementarity identified before crises.
- 9 International actors highlight the role their local partners play in external communications and media.

Capacity strengthening and sharing – see also capacity guidance note [here](#).

- 10 Capacity assessments are conducted jointly for both local and international partners. Strengths are recognised, and gaps used to develop tailored, long-term, capacity strengthening/sharing plans which are shared with other partners to coordinate effective support and investment.
- 11 Capacity strengthening/sharing plans are contextualised, 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.
- 12 International actors and donors include/allow capacity strengthening and organisational development budget line(s) in all projects and partnership agreements. Ideally an explicit % of budgets and/or specific funds are earmarked for this. Local actors commit time and other resources to invest in their own capacity and organisational development.
- 13 International actors assess their capacity strengthening skills, and address gaps by either strengthening staff skills or investing in local training providers and accompaniers.
- 14 International actors articulate plans to adopt an advisory, backstopping or secondary role once adequate local capacity exists from the outset, including review and partner 'graduation' strategies.

Financing – see also humanitarian financing guidance note [here](#).

- 15 International actors and donors support local actors to build their sustainability (including retention of key staff) by providing multi-year funds, allowing core funds in project budgets, and supporting local actors in income-generating activities or generating local funds.
- 16 Local actors actively participate in meetings, communication and coordination with donor agencies to support relationship building, facilitated by international actors if needed.

17 International actors credit the role of their local partners in communications with supporters and donors, recognising the positive impact narratives on reframing perceptions of local leadership of humanitarian response.

18 Donor agencies coordinate to identify minimum standards for accountability and compliance, reforming processes where necessary. International actors and donors support local partners to meet these minimum standards, mitigate risks, and ensure safeguarding. Local organisations invest in meeting these standards.

Coordination – see also coordination guidance note [here](#).

19 International actors, particularly UN and cluster coordinators, promote and facilitate active participation of local partners and other local actors in relevant coordination fora, and ensure a diversity of organisations represented, including women and youth led organisations.

20 International actors highlight the role their local partners play in partnership-based/joint humanitarian response at cluster and other humanitarian coordination fora meetings.

Safety and security

21 Training, advice and timely information on security and risk management, and safeguarding is provided to local actors for operations in high-risk areas. Donors and international actors allocate funds/budget to establish and maintain sustainable national provision of such services.

22 Local actors are involved in decision-making about security risk management with their international partners, with adaptations made for local context as advised by local actors.

Advocacy

23 International agencies support local actors to engage with relevant governments, when requested and appropriate, to influence humanitarian response decisions to ensure effectiveness.

24 Local actors are facilitated to connect crisis-affected people with relevant international actors and government authorities for advocacy related to the humanitarian response, including safety of local aid workers.

For the *Accelerating Localisation through Partnerships* research reports, and global paper *Pathways to Localisation*, visit the webpage: caid.org.uk/54. Refer also to: [Principles of Partnership](#) (Equality, Transparency, Results-Oriented Approach, Responsibility, and Complementarity); [Charter 4 Change](#); [NEAR Localisation Performance Measurement Framework](#) (Section 1: Partnerships); and [Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability](#) (CHS).

GUIDANCE NOTE ON HUMANITARIAN FINANCING FOR LOCAL ACTORS

This guidance note draws on best practices identified in consultations in three regional conferences on localisation conducted by the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream in 2019, as well as from a research project commissioned by the IFRC with support from ECHO, consisting of a literature review and key informant interviews and country case studies in three country case studies (Colombia, Ukraine, and Ethiopia).¹³ This guidance note is a product of the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream but does not necessarily represent the official position of workstream members and Co-Conveners.

Better quality financing for local actors¹⁴

- 1** Donors are encouraged to draw on lessons specifically around addressing compliance issues and administrative burden from the development context in order to increase their direct funding to local actors. Recognising that many local civil society actors are both development and humanitarian actors, they are also encouraged to explore how project funding streams might be brought together to more flexibly support these two areas of work. Special attention should be paid to ensuring funding opportunities for women's rights organisations and women-led organisations working on humanitarian response.
- 2** International actors should consider consortium arrangements with local actors, with joint reporting. They are encouraged to develop and/or expand rapid response fund facilities for local actors. Local actors are also encouraged to consider consortia with each other.
- 3** Donors and international actors should ensure that adequate overhead/indirect allowances are provided to local actors receiving funding for humanitarian project delivery. At the minimum, there should be transparency on the criteria for and or the percentage of overhead/indirect funding for both international and local actors. This overhead/indirect funding should adequately cover costs of risk management and compliance requirements for both international and local actors (partners).
- 4** International actors' project budgets for local actors should also include assets vital for project implementation, safety and/or organisational financial sustainability (e.g., laptops, vehicles, salaries for interim periods, insurance for staff and volunteers) and organisational strengthening (e.g., staff training, development of policies). These budgets should be transparent in showing what international partners receive to support the project (e.g., % admin fees).
- 5** Donors and international actors are encouraged to move beyond short-term project funding for local actors towards longer-term arrangements that also include support for capacity strengthening, as needed, with an eye to future sustainability. The viability of developing multi- year Humanitarian Response Plans should be analysed as and when appropriate. International partners receiving multi-year funding for humanitarian work in a particular setting should seek to pass along multi-year funding arrangements to their local partners.

13. The full research report, *Country-level Financing Solutions for Local actors*, can be found [here](#) and the three case studies [here](#).

14. This guidance note uses the term "local actors" to refer to responders with a national or sub-national scope.

6

Local actors should take the necessary steps to ensure their capacity to transparently and accountably manage and report on donated funds, requesting outside capacity strengthening support as needed. They are encouraged to fully explore domestic resource mobilisation opportunities including with the private sector in order to reduce reliance on international support.

Strengthening the impact of pooled funds for meeting localisation goals

7

Pooled funds, including the UN's Country-Based Pooled Funds (UN CBPFs), have a proven potential for supporting localisation goals. In order to strengthen this potential, the following steps are recommended:

- ➔ Ensure proactive outreach and effective communications with local actors, especially women-led/women rights organisations, including providing adequate application guidance in local languages
- ➔ Consider budget flexibility as to the proportion of allowable staff costs, with an eye to organisational sustainability
- ➔ Ensure that adequate indirect/overhead costs are passed on to local actors, including those acting as sub-grantees. UN CBPFs should continue to allow local actors to use up to 7% project support costs when they receive funding directly. In the case of subgrant arrangements, UN CBPFs should promote fair distribution of project support costs proportional to the budget or activity they implement.
- ➔ Reserve a minimum number of seats for local actors in advisory boards, strategic review committees and strategic advisory groups
- ➔ Encourage local actors to design/co-design funding proposals around strategic humanitarian needs in a specific crisis rather than ad hoc funding proposals
- ➔ Take a long-term perspective and include exit strategies, in targeting and programming as and when appropriate

Managing and sharing risks

8

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.

9

Donors, international actors and local actors are encouraged to hold regular conversations at the country level about how fiduciary risks are being managed and shared with regard to humanitarian funding, without neglecting other risks such as security, compliance, quality assurance and reputational risks. Management risk in all of its dimensions should be embedded in the programme design, implementation and reporting.

10

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.

11

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).

GUIDANCE NOTE ON CAPACITY STRENGTHENING FOR LOCALISATION

This guidance note collates recommendations on capacity strengthening drawing from three regional workshops conducted by the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream in 2019, including representatives of local and national NGOs, international NGOs, government and regional donors, and UN agencies. It also draws on key findings from a research project carried out by the Humanitarian Policy Group of ODI between 2017 and 2019 that explored the issue of capacity and complementarity between local¹⁵ and international actors, including how capacity could be better understood and applied to support more collaborative responses¹⁶.

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Understanding capacity

- 1 The capacity needed to alleviate human suffering includes respect for humanitarian principles, the ability to prepare for, anticipate and deliver timely and cost-effective humanitarian services of appropriate quality, and to strengthen the resilience of affected population and transparent and accountable management of resources. Just as important, however, are understanding of the context, the ability to understand and relate effectively to affected persons and other stakeholders, and the ability to bridge humanitarian and development activities, among others. Moreover, capacity should be understood in relation to specific contexts and crises.
- 2 It is helpful for all relevant stakeholders to seek shared understandings of what capacity means in a particular context through an inclusive process that involves local actors through meaningful engagement.
- 3 Terminology matters. Capacity is usually defined as 'lacking' and needing to be 'built'. Instead, the terms 'capacity strengthening' or 'capacity exchange' or 'capacity sharing' acknowledge existing skills and assets that can be supported and shared.

Assessing capacity

- 4 The current process by which different organisations consider the respective contributions and value of others is largely limited to that of international organisations assessing local organisations for the purpose of funding and partnerships. A context-wide mapping of existing capacities could inform the extent to which humanitarian action can be local and how gaps in local capacity could be addressed.
- 5 Each organisation's 'capacity' is dynamic and evolving, and often dependent upon individuals and context. For example, an organisation that has capacity to respond to flooding, may not have the capacities needed to respond to an influx of refugees. It should also be recognised that every organisation requires investment to grow in a sustainable manner.

15. This guidance note uses the term "local actors" to refer both to local responders with a national or sub-national scope.

16. The project drew upon case study findings from the conflict in South Kivu and Kasai Central in the [Democratic Republic of the Congo](#) (DRC) and the Rohingya refugee crisis in Bangladesh, as well as a literature review.

Overall recommendations:

- 6 Capacity strengthening between international and local actors should be a two-way process, whereby international actors also take the opportunity to learn from local actors, including technical skills, operational considerations and a better understanding of the political, social and cultural context.
- 7 Local actors should set the priorities for and take full “ownership” of, any capacity-strengthening support they receive with an eye both to immediate delivery and long-term sustainability.
- 8 Moreover, actors involved in capacity strengthening initiatives and local actors should share information and explore a joint vision for context-wide capacity goals in order to promote synergies in their efforts.
- 9 Ideally, donors and international actors should opt for long-term approaches to capacity strengthening supported by multi-year, predictable and flexible funding. Context wide capacity support could target groups or networks or local actors or national entities. Strategically, such investments should also cover early warning systems, contingency plans, government institutional capacities or support to regional entities. All actors are encouraged to explore innovative and non-traditional capacity strengthening methodologies, such as shadowing and mentoring initiatives that allow a more organic process of peer- to-peer learning, and secondments including in donor institutions where possible that could allow more two-way learning as an alternative to emergency surge teams in times of crises.
- 10 As far as possible, capacity strengthening should be an activity conducted in advance rather than following a crisis.

Recommendations for key actors

- 11 **Donors and other international actors**
 - ➔ Donors should make strengthening local capacities – particularly long-term institutional capacities –, as needed, an express goal of their support to humanitarian contexts. Investments should build on existing good practices and funding arrangements be made as flexible and long-term as possible, in order to facilitate approaches that are appropriately tailored to each local actor.
 - ➔ International actors should critically interrogate their own ability to strengthen the capacity of local organisations and prioritise the use of domestically-available expertise and resources for imparting knowledge and skills .
 - ➔ Where donors and international actors require a risk or capacity gap assessment to be conducted in order to provide funding and work in partnership, investment should be secured to address any gaps identified. This assessment should ideally build upon any assessments that the local actor has already undertaken.
 - ➔ International actors should partner with local actors to document best practices and develop consensus models for capacity strengthening to build donor confidence to invest in scale-up.
- 12 **Local actors**
 - ➔ Prior to seeking partnerships, local actors should assess their own organisational capacity strengths and weaknesses. This will encourage ownership of their capacity gaps and how to address them.
 - ➔ Local actors should also use the power of networks and peer review exchange to share knowledge and increase their collective voice in advocating for more equitable partnerships and capacity strengthening¹⁷.

17. One example that uses this approach is Oxfam's *Empowering Local and National Humanitarian Actors* (ELNHA) programme which assesses capacities at the level of 'networks' of organisations in a given context and conducts joint discussions on capacity gaps and existing expertise available across these groups. Other examples of effective capacity strengthening approaches to further more localised humanitarian responses can be found in section 3.2 of the [Grand Bargain annual independent report 2019](#).

GUIDANCE NOTE ON PARTICIPATION OF LOCAL ACTORS IN HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION GROUPS

This note builds on work done by ALNAP in 2016 on improving humanitarian coordination and the Global Protection Cluster and Global Education Cluster's work on localisation. The note further draws on the regional workshops carried out by the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream in 2019, which included representatives from local and national NGOs, international NGOs, governments, donors and UN agencies. The guidance is predominantly focused on non-governmental actors, however much may also be relevant for engagement of national and local government authorities, depending on context.¹⁸

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Practicalities

Substantial engagement of local actors¹⁹ is critical for effective humanitarian coordination. Many of the barriers inhibiting local actors from more meaningfully and more frequently participating in coordination mechanisms are rooted in practical obstacles. Those facilitating coordination groups should take steps to understand the barriers for local actors' participation in coordination by proactively reaching out to key actors, such as local NGO forums and networks, development actors involved in response, academia, diaspora, women-led, private sector, and faith-based organisations, and taking appropriate steps to address the issues. A list of the most common barriers and the pragmatic solutions that can make a significant and positive impact include:

Membership: It is often not clear to local actors who is invited to coordination meetings and how membership of groups is determined. When reaching out to local actors and sharing information about the coordination groups and any membership criteria, guidance on the different ways in which organisations can engage, and the benefits of participation should be systematically provided.

Language: Coordination Leads should ensure that language does not constitute a barrier to participation in coordination. Translation and interpretation services should be considered as a routine operational cost. Use of jargon should be avoided. Ad hoc translation support from group members should be voluntary, rotational, and temporary. If the majority of members speak a common language, consider providing translation to the international members who may not speak the majority language.

Logistics: Coordination Leads should ask local actors the best way for them to access information and communicate; whatsapp, skype, facebook or zoom may be more suitable than slow or hard-to-navigate websites, for example. Sending critical information or meeting locations, dates, and times through several channels may mean the messages reach key actors who may not be on an email list yet. When deciding the location for meetings, coordinators should consider convenience, access (e.g. visa requirements), and safety of all actors. Consider rotating the location of meetings so that different groups can attend, and dial-in options, where suitable, for actors who cannot attend in person. As local actors have fewer staff available to cover simultaneous meetings, careful scheduling across sectors is key.

18. Other Localisation Workstream guidance notes on related topics are available [here](#).

19. This guidance note uses the term "local actors" to refer both to local responders with a national and sub-national scope.

Processes

Local actors are an integral part of the humanitarian response across all contexts. Their engagement in needs analysis, strategic prioritization and decision making is essential. The quality, accountability and coherence of a humanitarian response will be strengthened if local actors are involved in all stages of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle.

Needs Assessment and Analysis: Make certain that local actors are part of the development of Humanitarian Needs Overview, including inputting into Secondary Data Reviews, coordinated assessments and are part of any validation processes. Analysis is an area traditionally dominated by international actors; so extra efforts should be made to ensure local actors play a role in data analysis. Coordination Leads should consider the institutional and technical capacity needs of local actors and reflect collective priorities in the Humanitarian Needs Overview.

Strategic Response Planning: Facilitate local actors' preparation and participation in HRP planning workshops and ensure they are involved in the discussion of response priorities. This could include funding of travel from sub- national locations to a national-level workshop. Coordination Leads should ensure institutional and technical capacity building priorities are reflected in the HRP and in sector response plans.

Resource Mobilization: Coordination Leads are often responsible for advocating for and coordinating pooled funding allocation processes, and thus have a key role to play in supporting local actors accessing direct funding, including to cover the costs of taking on coordination leadership roles. Create opportunities for local actors to interact with in-country donors to increase visibility.

Implementation and Monitoring: Coordination Leads should ensure that 5Ws (or other response tracking databases) collect data that can be disaggregated to all levels of actors involved in the delivery of the response (donors, project owners, reporting agencies, implementing partners) as well as by types of organisation (UN agency, INGO, NNGO, etc). This data should be analysed to better understand the role of local actors, the locations in which they are working, and who is receiving funding.

Peer Review and Evaluation: In advance of annual planning processes gather available data and annually document the complementary roles of local and international actors in the response. Actively seek out good practice from local actors who might be supported to scale up in future response plans. A culture of [principled partnership](#) should be modelled and monitored by coordination leads.

Leadership and representation

Leadership groups in the formal humanitarian coordination system should include representation from national and local organisations. Local actors bring contextual understanding and expertise that complements international capacity and is essential for effective decision-making in crisis.

Humanitarian Country Teams: The [Standard Terms of Reference for Humanitarian Country Teams](#) (2017) state "Representation from national NGOs should be particularly encouraged and supported", and note that HCT's are governed by the [Principles of Partnership](#). International actors should advocate for representation of local actors on HCTs if this is not already the case.

Cluster Strategic Advisory Groups and Advisory Boards: Cluster Strategic Advisory Groups should be representative, with a membership that reflects the complementary role all actors play in the response. Local actors should be encouraged and supported to participate in these advisory bodies. All Advisory Boards and Review Committees of Pooled Funds have representation of national actors, keeping in mind a gender balance.

Coordination Leadership – Sub-National Level: Local actors participate in cluster leadership at the sub-national level. However, sub-national coordination (including sector-specific, area based etc) is often poorly resourced, with programme staff taking on coordination responsibilities. Advocate for capacity support and funding for dedicated staff time for coordination at the sub-national level. Sub-national coordination groups are vital for engagement of local actors and should therefore be well represented in national level planning and decision-making processes.

Coordination Leadership – National Level: The [IASC Reference Module for Cluster Coordination](#) promotes shared cluster leadership, and, particularly in protracted crisis, national NGOs have taken on leadership roles at the national level. This approach should be further encouraged.

GUIDANCE NOTE ON GENDER-RESPONSIVE LOCALISATION

This note builds on work done by ALNAP in 2016 on improving humanitarian coordination and the Global Protection Cluster and Global Education Cluster's work on localisation. The note further draws on the regional workshops carried out by the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream in 2019, which included representatives from local and national NGOs, international NGOs, governments, donors and UN agencies. The guidance is predominantly focused on non-governmental actors, however much may also be relevant for engagement of national and local government authorities, depending on context.¹⁸

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Access to financing

- 1** Ensure increased, specific, global and national allocation of funds - including unearmarked and core funding - to WROs and WLOs.
- 2** Determine a dedicated percentage of local funds in support of institutional strengthening of WROs and WLOs, networks and movements.
- 3** Increase access to humanitarian funding, ensure its sustainability and support the capacity for self-sustaining fundraising of local WROs and WLOs, prioritizing multi-year, flexible and sustainable funds.
- 4** Streamline funding application procedures and criteria for local organisations addressing specific challenges and capacity gaps faced by WLOs and WROs at country level.
- 5** Increase investments through funding mechanisms (for example, the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund) that target WLOs/WROs directly and address the needs of crisis affected women and girls in line with existing IASC commitments²¹.
- 6** Identify opportunities and modalities for further strengthening partnerships and increasing funding for local WROs through the Country-Based Pooled Funds.
- 7** Consider funding WLOs/WROs in order to address gender equality and women's rights in line with existing IASC commitments²², including through promoting WLOs/WROs in Advisory Board and Review Committees of Country-Based Pooled Funds.

20.

21. [IASC Policy on gender equality and empowerment of women and girls in humanitarian action \(2018\)](#), at page 6: "All IASC Members and Standing Invitees to make financial provision to fully resource GEEWG programming for both mainstreaming and targeted action, creating specific budget lines for the purpose. Include GEEWG requirements in all formats used by IASC-led coordination and pooled funding mechanisms to apply for, and report on, funding for humanitarian action."

22. See note 21.

Towards more equitable partnerships and institutional strengthening

- 8** / Adopt and invest in multi-year and sustainable approaches to institutional capacity strengthening for WROs and WLOs, focusing on their needs, priorities, value, and contribution as first and local responders in humanitarian settings.
- 9** / Establish long-term partnerships, allowing for growth, accountability and transparency, knowledge sharing and sustainable management, including in view of the necessary long-term engagement of WLOs and WROs on gender equality, empowerment of women and girls and addressing the needs of women and girls in humanitarian settings and more broadly along the humanitarian-peace-development nexus.
- 10** / Provide alternative means of partnership/collaboration by supporting coordination hubs, training, consortia and peer support, focusing on strengthening the capacities of WLOs and WROs.

Humanitarian coordination/humanitarian needs assessment and planning

- 11** / Engage with relevant IASC bodies in a discussion on the creation of an enabling environment for women's leadership and decision-making and develop standards and guidance on enhanced representation of WLOs/WROs in humanitarian coordination structures drawing on promising practices, data and analysis of challenges and opportunities emerging from the field.
- 12** / Ensure that WLOs and WROs are part of the development of the Humanitarian Needs Overview, including inputting into Secondary Data Reviews and humanitarian assessments and are part of any validation processes.
- 13** / 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, peace building and state building².
- 14** / Invest in alliance building to increase WLO and WRO 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
- 15** / Disseminate good examples on WRO and WLO engagement in humanitarian coordination mechanisms, ensure that relevant inter-cluster coordination and sub-groups integrate a gender perspective.
- 16** / Enhance coordination between UN, national and local governments, INGOs, and local WROs and WLOs in support of the gender transformative localisation agenda.

Women's leadership

- 17** Support humanitarian networks and consortia of WLOs and WROs to enable exchange of information, access to resources, and knowledge building.
- 18** Advocate for and support individual women leaders, as part of comprehensive leadership programs, to build support for women's leadership in communities and organisations and enhance women's self-organisation and dialogue between WROs and WLOs and humanitarian actors.
- 19** 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.
- 20** Expand localisation to include women's grassroots groups and self-organized groups of crisis affected women and girls.
- 21** Create an enabling environment in global spaces for the participation and engagement of local WLOs, WROs and networks.
- 22** Promote progressive social norms on women's leadership, inclusion and gender equality while addressing unpaid work and overlapping types of marginalisation through advocacy and programmatic interventions.

GUIDANCE NOTE ON ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN DONORS AND INTERMEDIARIES

This guidance note is intended to provide guidance as to how arrangements²³ between donors, and UN agencies, INGOs and other international humanitarian organisations (referred to here as “international intermediaries”), can further the Grand Bargain’s localisation goals in cases where direct arrangements between donors and local actors²⁴ are not practicable.

It arises from the awareness that, even upon success with the Grand Bargain’s goal to significantly increase direct funding to local actors, much of the international funding available to them in the medium term will still be channelled through at least one intermediary. It collates ideas and best practice that have arisen from the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream’s “demonstrator country missions” in 2018-19, regional conferences in Africa, the Middle East and Asia Pacific held in 2019, and recent localisation research projects.

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What is the role of local actors in the arrangement?

- 1 Have consortia proposals been considered?**
 - ➔ Where direct funding to local actors only (or to consortia entirely made up of local actors) is not practicable, donors should promote, and intermediary agencies should present, consortium proposals involving both international and local actors as full parties to a funding agreement.
- 2 Are the mutual expectations of the international intermediary’s role consistent with localisation goals?**
 - ➔ To the degree practicable, arrangements should be structured so that the international intermediary’s role is mutually understood to be one of supporting, nurturing and overseeing local partners, so the latter can deliver the most effective results.
 - ➔ The intermediary may also be asked to identify and report on learning it plans to gain from the local partner to encourage a “capacity sharing” approach.
- 3 Has communication between intermediaries’ local partners and donors been promoted?**
 - ➔ Even where local actors are not parties to an agreement between a donor and international intermediary, the intermediary should be asked to organise periodic opportunities for its local partners to communicate with its donors about project progress and challenges.
 - ➔ This might alternatively be accomplished through larger-group discussions involving networks of local actors, donors and intermediaries.

23. or purposes of this note, the term “arrangements”, refers to the entirety of the understandings between donors and intermediaries. These will include their contractual agreements but also the less formal engagements and expectations on both sides. It is acknowledged that, particularly for UN agencies and other multilateral intermediaries, some aspects of these arrangements may be determined, or strongly influenced, by formal oversight or advisory committees.

24. This guidance note uses the term “local actors” to refer both to local responders with a national or sub- national scope. The term “local partners” is used to refer to local actors that receive funding from an international intermediary.

Do the arrangements ensure effective and sufficient financing for local actors?

4

Does the arrangement promote coverage of the reasonable costs of local partners?

- Donors and international intermediaries should agree to cover reasonable costs (both direct and indirect) of the intermediary's local partners engaged in delivery of humanitarian services.
- Where indirect (or "overhead") coverage is provided in the arrangement by way of a percentage of direct costs, the rate passed on to local actors by the international intermediary should ideally be no less than the rate it receives for the same funds.

5

Are multi-year and flexible funding approaches passed on to local partners?

- Donors and international intermediaries should articulate and track how they can transfer the benefits of multi-year and flexible funding to local partners.

6

Is there adequate funding for the security needs of local partners?

- Specific budget line items should be included for local partners' security-related needs (with flexibility to consider needs as identified by the local partner).

7

Is adequate funding included for mutually-agreed capacity strengthening?

- Arrangements should provide for funding for strengthening the capacities of local actors, with the types of capacity to be strengthened, and the ways in which it is to be accomplished, to be mutually agreed between the intermediary and its local partner, within budgetary limits.

What is the impact of the arrangement on local actors?

8

Is an inclusive approach to partnering with local actors promoted?

- Arrangements should consider an inclusive approach to partnering with local actors, including partnerships with organisations which represent vulnerable groups, in particular women's rights organisations, women-led organisations, as well those related to disabled persons, displaced persons elderly and youth (with exceptions, as appropriate, for membership-based international networks whose local partners are pre-determined).

9

Are opportunities to reduce duplicative aspects of capacity assessment seized?

- Arrangements should allow for the international intermediary to accept relevant factual findings from capacity assessment processes of local actors carried out by other international actors, as agreed with the donor and with the consent of the local actor. This may be easiest to develop through a country-specific arrangement.

10

Is adequate visibility ensured for the work of local partners?

- Arrangements should include commitments to ensure the visibility for the work of local partners in project outcomes, both in reporting to the donor, in communications materials, and in discussions about the projects within the sector.

11

Is any potential harm to local actors from the arrangement mitigated?

- Arrangements should include an understanding that international intermediaries will take appropriate actions to mitigate harm to local civil society organisations and governmental bodies whose staff they recruit.
- They should also articulate expectations as to the international intermediary's role in promoting the security of the staff and volunteers for local partners.