

Subject : Subtract from SEG (Strategic Executive Group, formed by UN for Rohingya response) Meeting minutes of 8th July 2021

Localization (Co-Chairs)

Following on from the publication of the BRAC University Centre for Peace and Justice (CPJ) report on localization which was published in September 2020, the Co-Chairs had shared with SEG participants a note in follow up to the report. The note cannot be considered a foreword to the report as there were many elements of the report where consensus was not reached among the humanitarian community. The SEG Co-Chairs call on all SEG members to continue working on these issues identified in the report agreed to be implementable in the short term and continue working on issues which remain under discussion. Questions/comments from participants:

- IRC referred to a written contribution submitted to the Co-Chairs in response to the Co-Chairs note and noted there is space in the response for INGOs to learn from Bangladeshi NGOs; the report focuses heavily on the role of Bangladeshi NGOs and less so on the role of INGOs – this may be further developed.
- FCDO, on behalf of the donor group, enquired about next steps for the Co-Chairs note on localization. UNHCR explained that the CPJ report is a living document which contains recommendations which all actors involved in the response may take forward. Donors also believe that actions related to localization should not be only related to funding.
- Plan encouraged broader conversations on localization, including regional discussions related to commitments on the Grand Bargain, be included in discussions on efforts to localize the Rohingya response.
- COAST shared several thoughts on this issue:
 - Localization should be based on self-actualization of involved actors; localization efforts should be a bottom up approach and a road map is a tool or a baseline to support.
 - COAST (including their network CCNF) has consistently requested monitoring, technical assistance, and support to transfer knowledge from UN agencies and INGOs to national and local NGOs, so that these NGOs may lead operations at the field level.
 - COAST expressed thanks to the three SEG Co-Chairs, the leaders of Localization Task Force, UNDP and IFRC. COAST expressed special thanks to UNRC Mia Seppo for her inclusive and participatory approach to local and national NGO representatives. COAST noted that the SEG Co-Chairs note has not been developed as official guidance/endorsement; therefore, the SEG and ISCG may continue to lead multi-stakeholder dialogue regarding localization.
 - Involvement of local government is essential in the localization process; differentiation between national and local NGOs is important – they should not be conflated as ‘Bangladeshi’ NGOs; a whole of society approach to localization is required, including engaging civil society in the Rohingya refugee response; and, UN and INGOs involved in the Rohingya response should select partner NGOs based on a declared policy of localization including long term objectives, criteria based for sustainability and good governance, and must be in transparent and competitive in practice.