

Our Inspiration: International Commitments/principles on Localization & Partnership

Bangladesh CSO-NGO Coordination Process (BDCSO Coordination) is formed for strengthening public opinions to have some minimum common position among the local and national NGOs, CSO (Civil Society Organization) networks in Bangladesh. Apart from this, one of the major aims of the coordination process is to work for establishing the localization of aid that could ensure the effectiveness in development and humanitarian actions. In localization process, we believe that local actors will lead the implementation of development and humanitarian programs. We also believe that partnership between local actors and donors will be respectful. Localization and esteemed partnerships can play a vital role for ensuring the accountability and transparency in development and humanitarian aid sector. The demands that raise by BDCSO for localization or esteemed partnership are not a new issue at all rather those are raised by various NGOs and CSOs in different parts of the world at various meetings and conference held at local and global levels. After some long-running negotiations & discussions, leaders from some NGOs, major INGOs and various UN agencies have reached to a number of agreements, commitments and understandings of a number of issues. We have taken those commitments/agreements as the basis of our position and expectations. Some of the most important international documents, agreements or commitments are:

1. Principles of Partnership: The Global Humanitarian Platform (GHP) adopted the Principles of Partnership (PoP) in 2007. The GHP was originally set up in 2006 by leaders of 40 humanitarian organizations including NGOs, UN agencies, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the World Bank, and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The Principles of Partnership (Equality, Transparency, Results-Oriented Approach, Responsibility, and Complementarity) is an attempt to acknowledge some gaps within the humanitarian reform process, which included neglecting the role of local and national humanitarian response capacity. It is not that the PoP is only applicable to the UN agencies and intergovernmental organizations, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, and international NGOs (INGOs) but for all. The PoP provides a framework for all actors in the humanitarian space – including Governments,

We believe,
Local NGOs will be at the leadership role implementing the development and humanitarian programs.

academia, private sector, and affected populations – to engage in a more equal, constructive, and transparent setting. With an ever-increasing number and diversity of actors in the humanitarian sector, the PoP remains as a key point of reference for partnership inception, development, implementation, and review.

2. Charter for Change (C4C): The Charter for Change (C4C) is an initiative that aims to transform the way the humanitarian system operates to enable the local and national actors to play an increased and more prominent role in the humanitarian response. The Charter for Change (C4C) has been endorsed by more than 450 National and Local Organizations from 57 countries across the world, calling on their international partners to sign the 8 commitments in the charter. At the same time, 38 International NGOs have signed the Charter and committed their organizations to change the way they work by implementing the 8 commitments came from the Charter for Change. The 8-point of Charter for Change are: Increase direct funding to national and local NGOs for humanitarian action, reaffirm the Principles of Partnership, increase transparency around resource transfers to national and local NGOs, stop undermining local capacity, emphasize the importance of national actors, address subcontracting, robust organizational support and capacity strengthening, communication to the media and the public about partners.

3. Grand Bargain: The Grand Bargain, launched during the WHS in Istanbul in May 2016, is a unique agreement between some of the largest donors and humanitarian organizations who have committed to get more means into the hands of people in need and to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the

humanitarian action. Currently 63 Signatories (25 Member States, 22 NGOs, 12 UN agencies, two Red Cross movements, and two inter-governmental organizations) are working across ten work-streams to implement the commitments. The Grand Bargaining process is essential for donors and aid agencies to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the humanitarian action. It has added a series of changes to the current type of work of donors and aid agencies as they will allocate additional billions of dollars over the next five years, especially for the implementation of humanitarian aid actions. This change of approach will help and accelerate the allocation and speeding up of funding for local and national response agencies involved in meeting humanitarian needs, increasing opportunities for implementing cash-based activities and eliminating bureaucratic complexities, as well as developing a simple and innovative reporting strategy.

Donors and aid agencies signing the Grand Bargain pledged that by 2020, at least 25% of the global humanitarian allocation will go to the local and national humanitarian organizations. Apart from that, a long-term action plan has been made to ensure the continuity of humanitarian actions and to ensure flexible allocation of funds without any specific sector-based financing. Though all these initiatives, they further believe that everyone will reap the benefits of the Grand Bargain. This benefit is not just for the big organizations.

As part of the preparations for the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in 2016, the High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing sought solutions to close the humanitarian financing gap. Their report made recommendations to shrink the needs, deepen and broaden the resource base for humanitarian action, and to improve delivery. In relation to the latter recommendations, the report suggested “a Grand Bargain between the big donors and humanitarian organisations in humanitarian aid”.

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Partnership with local NGOs and development agencies should be respectful.

The implementation of humanitarian action will be more responsible and thus people will get more benefit from it. The Signatories are working across 10 work-streams to implement the commitments: 1. Greater Transparency, 2. More support and funding tools to local and national responders 3. Increase the use and coordination of cash-based programming, 4. Reduce Duplication and Management costs with periodic functional reviews, 5. Improve Joint and Impartial Needs Assessments 6. A Participation Revolution: include people receiving aid in making the decisions which affect their lives, 7. & 8. Enhanced quality funding, 9. Harmonize and simplify reporting requirements 10. Enhance engagement between humanitarian and development actors, has been closed as an independent work-stream and it has been mainstreamed as a cross-cutting commitment.

To make the implementation of the Grand Bargain commitments more effectively, a short document was formulated on February 1, 2021, known as Grand Bargain 2.0. The document is basically a guidance note how to implement the Grand Bargain. The original overarching objective of the Grand Bargain is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the humanitarian system. There is wide understanding that this can be achieved only by bringing the Grand Bargain closer and more centered around the people we are committed to serve. For this reason, the Grand Bargain 2.0 reframes the overall objective to achieving “Better humanitarian outcomes for affected populations through enhanced efficiency, effectiveness, and greater accountability, in the spirit of Quid pro Quo as relevant to all”. In order to achieve this impact and measure the success of the future Grand Bargain, two enabling priorities have been agreed to, (i) A critical mass of quality funding is reached that allows an effective and efficient response, ensuring visibility and accountability (ii) Greater support is provided for the leadership, delivery and capacity of local responders and the participation of affected communities in addressing humanitarian needs.

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