

## Concept note: "From words to action-Promoting gender equality and transformative action through the Grand Bargain."

### *Role of the Friends of Gender Group*

13th December 2019, Geneva, Switzerland

UN Women and the Grand Bargain Friends of Gender are organizing a global consultation with the title 'From words to action: Promoting a gender transformative humanitarian action agenda through the Grand Bargain commitments'. The event is taking place in Geneva on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2019. The Friends of Gender Group global consultation will enable a dialogue among the Facilitation Group, Workstream co-conveners, Grand Bargain signatories and representatives from local women-led and women rights' organisations on institutional practices, action points and partnerships that are key to advancing the operationalisation of commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (GEEWG) in humanitarian settings through the Grand Bargain. The focus of the discussions will be on the Workstreams on Localisation, Harmonized Needs Assessments, Participation Revolution and Cash. These Workstreams have been identified by the Friends of Gender Group members as key to the advancement of gender equality.

The outcome of the global consultation will be the development of a Roadmap outlining key actions and initiatives in relation to the acceleration of progress towards gender equality and empowerment of crisis affected women and girls in humanitarian contexts also drawing on the key outcomes and strategic direction highlighted by the new Eminent Person and the Facilitation Group during the 2019 Grand Bargain Annual Meeting. Furthermore, the discussions will be informed by Grand Bargain signatories' resources, research, promising institutional practices and guidance in this area, while drawing on the recommendations put forward by local women led and women rights' organisations (WLOs and WROs) during the Regional consultations in Addis Ababa, Amman and Jakarta organised by UN Women in partnership with Friends of Gender Group members in July-August 2019.

The event will also provide a space for critical reflection among Grand Bargain signatories and local partners on progress in relation to GEEWG reported in 2019 with focus on lessons learnt, promising practices and remaining challenges. The Grand Bargain Annual Independent Report and the Friends of Gender annual meeting highlighted a number of areas where progress was noticed, including: a greater emphasis on GEEWG in the priority workstreams; greater engagement and stronger partnerships with local actors and in particular, local women's organizations; as well as gender responsive cash programming. During the Grand Bargain Annual Meeting, gender equality was referred to as a potential area for transformative action and there was a strong recommendation that the focus shifts to the outcome level related interventions as opposed to mainstreaming and inclusion at the workstream level.

Through its Annual Statement and collective submission to the Grand Bargain Secretariat and Facilitation Group, the Friends of Gender Group highlighted the need to step up collective action and initiatives in relation to the following priorities: enhanced accountability and increased and quality funding for GEEWG; increased collaboration and dialogue across workstreams to step action for GEEWG; and strengthened GEEWG related programming along the Humanitarian-Peace-Development nexus. Against this background, the specific objectives of the meeting are to:

- Enable discussions among key actors on strategic opportunities and entry points for the advancement of commitments to advancing gender equality and the empowerment of crisis affected women and girls.
- Present the outcomes of the Friends of Gender Group Regional Consultations with WLOs and WROs; existing guidance on GEEWG and Grand Bargain; and promising examples aiming at enhancing Grand Bargain signatory institutional and collective commitments to GEEWG in humanitarian settings.
- Identify priority areas for joint advocacy and strategic engagement in global, regional and country level processes.
- Develop global advocacy messages and SMART strategies to secure commitments by key humanitarian actors and partners.
- Develop recommendations for pilot country-based initiatives, strategic partnerships and explore entry points, linkages and advocacy strategies with other coordination mechanisms to broaden commitments to GEEWG beyond the Grand Bargain.