

**STATEMENT OF THE GRAND BARGAIN FRIENDS OF GENDER GROUP  
ANNUAL MEETING - JUNE 2023**

We, members of the **Grand Bargain Friends of Gender Group (FoGG)**, welcome the continued attention of Grand Bargain signatories to Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls (GEEWG) and the inclusion of gender as a cross cutting issue in the proposal for the next phase of the Grand Bargain. We also appreciate the opportunity afforded to us to contribute to the next phase proposal development, including to drafting the outcome dedicated to GEEWG. However, we remain concerned that **treating gender equality solely as cross cutting will not generate the necessary transformation to deliver a higher quality and more efficient humanitarian response** that better meets the needs of all people, including of women and girls.

ODI's Annual Independent Report (AIR) of the Grand Bargain in 2022 finds that *"Gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) was perhaps less prominent in Grand Bargain processes and dialogues in the 2.0 framework than in past years, though it remained a priority agenda item for signatories at institutional level and across the humanitarian aid system. All signatories that submitted self-reports in 2022 responded to the question in the narrative report, with the information provided indicating that GEWE continued to be a priority across all constituency groups. There were also efforts to identify and empower local and national WROs/WLOs, and several mapping exercises were undertaken to identify and enable targeted support, with a focus on working to increase their access to funding and their participation in and influence over decision-making processes."*

The Annual Independent Report further highlights that we continue to *"collectively fail on the participation revolution"*. While this is true overall for all local and national actors, women and girls and their organisations face even greater barriers to meaningfully participate and influence the system due to systemic gender inequalities, discrimination and entrenched patriarchy. Women's leadership and participation are also hindered by the limited and poor quality funding to local and national women's rights and women led organisations (WROs / WLOs). Not only is funding to local and national WROs / WLOs abysmal but the AIR also notes that *"there remains a broader challenge relating to lack of data or efforts to track funding to WROs/WLOs"*.

***Given this and building on past efforts, we are recommending:***

- Building on the AIR's recommendation for *"strong leadership is necessary to provide a clear, coherent vision and direction for what is now a large, diverse group of aid actors"*, Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls **should fall under the leadership and responsibility of one of the three Ambassadors**. Without a central point of leadership and accountability for GEEWG in the Grand Bargain, the international humanitarian community is unlikely to achieve the desired and much needed progress in line with normative frameworks and commitments, including the IASC Gender Policy and Accountability Framework, the Global Compact on Refugees, and others while women and girls continue to be disproportionately affected by humanitarian crises;
- Increasing **the funding volume and quality to local and national WROs/WLOs** which are at the fore front of the humanitarian response and are well placed to meet the needs of entire crisis affected communities, including women and girls and other at-risk individuals. To bridge the above mentioned dearth of data reported in the AIR, Grand Bargain signatories should set and announce **agency specific targets for funding to WROs/WLOs and report publicly against this target annually** (through the annual GB self-reporting exercise or elsewhere). **Grand Bargain signatories whose systems do not currently support tracking funding to women's**

**organisations should commit to address this gap.** Grand Bargain signatories with feminist policies, gender specific mandates or that have already committed to funding WROs / WLOs (e.g. G7 donors' commitments in the Whistler Declaration<sup>1</sup>) should lead by example and share promising practices and examples.

- Actively supporting the meaningful participation and leadership of crisis affected women and girls and their organisations, at national and crisis level, through supporting **local and national WROs / WLOs to engage in National Reference Groups or equivalent and in Humanitarian Coordination mechanisms.** While funding to WROs / WLOs will contribute to enabling greater participation, additional deliberate efforts are necessary **to help lift other gender related barriers to inclusive meaningful participation of crises affected women and girls and their organisations and ultimately increase accountability to them and all affected populations** (e.g. recognizing gender gaps related to digital knowledge, to access to information, to technology for remote meetings, greater risks when traveling, etc). **Donor signatories should coordinate their support to NRGs or equivalent national locally led level dialogues** so that most large humanitarian crises record an increase in women's participation in the next phase.

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<sup>1</sup> [2018-05-31-whistler-gender\\_equality-egalite\\_genres-en.pdf\(international.gc.ca\)](https://www.international.gc.ca/2018-05-31-whistler-gender_equality-egalite_genres-en.pdf)