

STATEMENT OF THE GRAND BARGAIN FRIENDS OF GENDER GROUP ANNUAL MEETING - JUNE 2022

The Friends of Gender Group (FoGG) of the Grand Bargain welcomes the progress that has been made under the Grand Bargain since its inception to advance Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls (GEEWG) in Humanitarian Action. Over the past five years, great gains have been made on cash assistance, localization, joint needs analysis, including rapid gender analysis, and harmonized reporting. 68% of crisis contexts reported having consulted at least one local women's rights organization in the humanitarian planning process and over 80% of settings reported having active gender working groups in place reflecting two important areas of improvement¹.

The adoption of gender specific actions in the Grand Bargain 2.0 framework was also an important step towards the full realization of its potential as a transformative tool for GEEWG in humanitarian action. The FoGG is glad to have contributed to this progress, including having ensured that GEEWG is clearly integrated throughout the GB2.0 framework document endorsed by signatories at the 2021 annual meeting. However, implementation of these commitments remains challenging and much more needs to be done to elevate attention to gender inequality, women's agency, leadership, and voices at the centre of the humanitarian response².

The reality in other priority areas of localized and quality funding, participation and accountability is that results continue to fall short of commitments. Affected people continue to report that humanitarian response programs do not meet their needs. Women and girls are more than ever disproportionately affected by humanitarian crises, and they are frequently left out of key humanitarian response decision making and coordination spaces.^{3 4}

The ODI 2021 report reveals that the core Grand Bargain commitment of a 25% funding target to local and national actors has actually moved further from realization, with the percentage and volume of direct funding to local and national actors being cut in half compared to last year, and data on funding through intermediaries remaining inconclusive.⁵ ODI also reports that the optional indicator on funding to Women Rights Organisations/Women Led Organisations (WROs/WLOs) was only completed by five signatories. This lack of data and accountability on funding to WROs /WLOs make improvement in this critical area exponentially more challenging.

Furthermore, quality funding has not increased as a percentage of overall humanitarian funding, and multilateral organizations receive the vast majority that does exist. Also troubling is the area of participation, one of the original enabling priorities of the Grand Bargain, which has failed to experience the promised 'revolution'. Although progress has been made on the creation of feedback mechanisms for affected populations, it is not yet clear how or if the views of affected people, especially women and girls, are systematically being included in humanitarian program design. Aid recipients continue to report feeling that they are unable to influence decisions around the aid they receive.⁶ Given how prevailing gender inequality limits women and girls' mobility and voice, it is not surprising that they are among the first to fall through the cracks.

¹ [The IASC Gender Accountability Framework Report, 2020 - World | ReliefWeb](#)

² [Gender, power and principles in humanitarian action \(odi.org\)](#)

³ ["Don't Leave Them Behind: Global Food Policies Continue to Fail Women"](#) CARE International, December 2021

⁴ [Feminist Humanitarian Network, COVID-19 report](#)

⁵ ODI. The Grand Bargain in 2021: An Independent Review. 2022. p. 14.

⁶ ODI. The Grand Bargain in 2021: An Independent Review 2022. p. 67. (The surveyed populations were in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, in the Central African Republic, Chad, Haiti, Iraq, Nigeria and Somalia.)

Based on this situation, the FoGG urges the Eminent Person, the Facilitation Group, and individual signatories to **place GEEWG at the centre of the Grand Bargain’s political actions and commitments for 2022-2023 and beyond**. We are specifically calling for the implementation of the following commitments:

- a) Ensure GEEWG is a standard item in all Grand Bargain structures’ discussions and documents, **including in the Political Caucus discussions and outcome documents**.
- b) Increase **the funding volume and quality to WROs/WLOs**, which are on the front lines of humanitarian response and are best placed to meet the needs of entire communities, including crisis affected women and girls and other highly vulnerable and marginalized individuals. To measure progress, **Grand Bargain signatories should set and announce agency specific targets for funding to WROs/WLOs and report against this target through the annual self-reporting process. Organizations whose systems do not currently support tracking funding to local partners, including to women’s organisations, should commit to address this gap**. To address the imbalance of power inherent to the humanitarian system as it currently stands, **reporting on funding to WROs /WLOS should also be mandatory**. 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 Declaration⁷) should lead by example.
- c) Ensure **meaningful participation and leadership of affected people, particularly women and girls**, in all stages of the program cycle through collaboration with IASC structures to roll out the IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms;⁸ and to make better use of the Gender Accountability Framework annual data to **produce country /crisis specific accountability dashboards on participation, leadership and representation**. Grand Bargain signatories are also encouraged to publicly announce and report against specific targets/commitments to advancing women’s leadership and meaningful participation. **Supporting WROs/WLOs to actively engage in and play a leading role in National Reference Groups will be key in the next twelve months**.
- d) Additionally, building on and complementing existing and above-mentioned efforts, and in close collaboration with IASC structures, adopt a monitoring framework/ **accountability dashboard with specific gender indicators to track progress towards localisation commitments⁹ and targets at country / crisis level**. This may include tracking of commitments and new initiatives around volume and quality of funding to WLOs/ WROs not captured through Grand Bargain reporting requirements such as percentage of pooled humanitarian funds allocated to local and national actors and to WLOs / WROs specifically; level of influence and leadership of local actors, including women’s organizations and networks in local level humanitarian coordination mechanisms and planning processes; investments/initiatives in relation to strengthening capacities of local women’s organizations and networks; existence of formal mechanisms that provide quality information to women and girls in crisis affected communities.

⁷ [2018-05-31-whistler-gender_equality-egalite_genres-en.pdf \(international.gc.ca\)](#)

⁸ [IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms 2.pdf \(interagencystandingcommittee.org\)](#)

⁹ [Guidance note on gender responsive localisation May 2020.pdf \(interagencystandingcommittee.org\)](#)