



Charter4Change, NEAR, A4EP recommendations for the next phase of the Grand Bargain (2023-2026)

Charter4Change, NEAR & A4EP welcome the proposed priority given to providing greater funding and support for the leadership, delivery and capacity of local responders in the next phase of the Grand Bargain. Likewise, we believe that local actors also have essential contributions to make to the other priorities for the next phase; including on anticipatory action, working across the Nexus, innovative approaches to financing, gender and risk-sharing. To realize the potential of this effort, the collaborating organizations herein identify the following priority recommendations:

1. Strengthen accountability for localisation commitments: The added-value of the Grand Bargain process is that it brings donors to the table. Donors hold the purse strings, and can incentivise change amongst UN agencies, INGOs and other relevant actors. The next phase must build on current accountability measures and go beyond these. Options include:

a) *Convening more regular direct dialogue by donors with local actors; including both on their global policy and partnerships, and through embassies and donor coordination groups at the country level.* In some contexts, donors have started to meet on a regular basis with local civil society. In other contexts, a national localisation conference has been convened to provide a space for dialogue about challenges and opportunities. All contexts should benefit from these kinds of good practices to catalyse frank exchange on barriers and lift up good practices; leveraging the potential of donors to hold the other signatories accountable.

b) *Alignment in how donors hold UN agencies and INGOs accountable; especially those receiving multi-year, flexible funding.* Donors sit on the governance boards of UN agencies, and contribute in a coordinated fashion to their funding. Likewise numerous donors provide core funding and multi-year, flexible funding to INGOs. Looking forward, there should be a more coordinated and aligned approach by donors to leveraging those entry-points to hold these agencies accountable on localisation commitments and best practices.

c) *Baselining and reviewing progress on an annual basis for delivering on localisation related outcomes.* Until now, some (not all) signatories have published voluntary 'commitments' in relation to the localisation related Caucus outcomes. All signatories should do so, and report on an annual basis on delivery. An independent baseline study could be commissioned to systematically analyze where Grand Bargain signatories are at; with follow up studies on an annual basis to track progress and hold signatories accountable. Feedback from local actors on annual basis could be factored into this to provide a channel to share their insights not inhibited by donor intermediary -local partner power dynamics and the funding relationship



2. Translate global localisation commitments into action at the country-level: Looking forward, we would like to see:

- a) Continued effort to build on NRGs (National Reference Groups) and similar country-level dialogues to promote a context-specific approach to localisation efforts. Leadership of local/national actors and direct dialogue with them are key in these efforts.
- b) Each Grand Bargain signatory should liaise with national/local actors to help convene a localisation dialogue in at least one crisis-affected context; and coordinate this effort in support of the Ambassadors' leadership in convening global efforts.

3. Consult local actors on specific priorities for action on localisation to unblock progress. The Grand Bargain Ambassador for localisation obviously has an important role to play in consulting with all Grand Bargain signatories on the priorities for action on localisation which can secure their buy-in and action. However, it is equally obvious that consultation with local actors should be the decisive test for what gets prioritized. Based on consultation to date in Charter4Change, we highlight the following four priorities to unlock progress:

- a) Scaling up support for country-level funding mechanisms led by local actors and allocating funds that are accessible to 'locals only' (e.g., locally led pooled funds, group cash transfers to community led initiatives, etc.) to resource capacity-strengthening, preparedness, anticipatory action and response.
- b) Developing global Ethical Recruitment and HR Guidelines to address the worst practices of staff poaching and poor salaries and social security benefits to frontline workers that would be adhered to by humanitarian agencies (without compromising an individual's right to career progression or national employment legislation), and which donors hold them accountable for;
- c) Securing action by Grand Bargain signatories to ensure that funding reaches more diverse categories of national/local actors (ie not only those larger, capital city based national organizations that already have financial sustainability, and longer-standing partnerships with international agencies);
- d) Strengthening an aligned approach to localisation related data, reporting and transparency at global and country levels to track progress and promote accountability across the Grand Bargain signatory constituency groups for delivering on agreed localisation targets and best practices; building on the gains generated through wider efforts to promote a harmonised approach to reporting (the 8+3 template) and clarity on how quality funding is categorised and measured. All signatories should make marked improvement in timely disaggregated reporting of data; including through IATI and the FTS, and at country level. Work should be undertaken to enable tech solutions and automation of this to reduce the workload this would involve;



distracting staff from actual programmatic support to local partners. Donors, INGOS and UN should not count INGO and UN country offices as local/national actors; rather building on agreed definitions established over the past 7 years to ensure a common understanding. Establishing a practical compendium of definitions and approaches to tracking and reporting in multiple languages could support these efforts.

4. Centre the leadership of local actors in framing its agenda and facilitating the process, including through increased numbers of national/local actors having a seat at the table.

The next phase of the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream (or 'Community of Practice' if it is rebranded or evolved into this) should find ways to listen and include the work of NRGs and similar processes. Connecting with country-level networks and platforms of national/local actors will broaden participation, and reinforce the country-level efforts as proposed above.