Discussion: Partnerships and Localization

Expected duration: 20 mins

Objective: deepen participants' understanding of the importance and challenges of localization, and encourage reflections on own localization efforts

Invite participants to reflect on the following questions in plenary.

* What partners does UNHCR have in your operation working on GBV prevention?
* What is the value of partnering with IDP and refugee-led, women-led and/or LGBTIQ+-led organizations in GBV prevention programming?
* What are the challenges in partnering with these organizations and how can these be addressed?
* How can engagement with these organizations be improved in your own GBV prevention programming?

Key considerations:

* Remind participants of the GBV Policy core action outcome: through an expanded and diversified range of partners, timely and quality services are established and coordinated to prevent and respond to GBV. The GBV Policy recognizes the importance of partnerships with local civil society and community groups, IDP and refugee-led as well as local and national women-led and women-focused organizations, and/or LGBTIQ+ organizations.
* Localization: part of the commitments made by the international community during the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016 through the Grand Bargain (https://interagency standingcommittee.org/grand-bargain-hosted-iasc). This is not specific to GBV partnerships, but applies to all UNHCR’s programmatic areas. Localization, as used in the humanitarian sector, refers to the process of better engaging local and national actors in all phases of humanitarian action, including greater support for locally-led action.
* Women-led organization
* Women-led organizations (WLOs) are a wide range of women- and girl-led groups, organizations, networks and movements particularly those with strong links to communities of concern to UNHCR, operating at community, national, regional and/or global level.
* WLOs should have clear organizational values, principles/commitment on gender equality and accountability to women and girls.
* 2/3 of the leadership and management structure are people who identify as women and girls. The entire organization should have equal or higher representation of women across.
* Women-IDP/refugee-led organization
* An organization or group in which persons with direct lived experience of forced displacement play a primary leadership roleand whose stated objectives and activities are focused on responding to the needs of refugees and/or related communities.
* Some, but not all IDP/refugee-led organizations are officially registered.
* Engagement of LGBTIQ+ organizations: national LGBTIQ+ support, advocacy and umbrella organizations in asylum countries can be effective key partners. It is worthwhile advocating for them to integrate LGBTIQ+ displaced persons into their programmes. Nevertheless, it is important to note that some LGBTIQ+ organizations in the host country may not have the capacity, resources or interest to work with LGBTIQ+ displaced persons; some may also be penalized by their governments for working with persons perceived to be irregular migrants. It is best to bear this in mind when engaging local LGBTIQ+ support organizations. (Source: [UNHCR Need to Know Guidance: Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer Persons in Forced Displacement, 2021](https://www.refworld.org/docid/4e6073972.html))
* Value
* Directly promotes their empowerment.
* Women-led organizations play a key role in leading change and sustainable progress on GBV and gender equality – improved links with development.
* GBV prevention programming requires carefully gauging community acceptance before engaging in conversations on deep-rooted issues, engaging community-based organizations will improve access to communities, foster trust within the community/stronger community acceptance and allow a better Gender and Power Analysis.
* Promotes accountability to women and girls.
* Communities affected directly by a crisis have skills, competencies and coping mechanisms that can be extremely important to help restore women’s and girls’ dignity, and strengthen individual resilience.
* Patriarchal humanitarian systems that curtail local women’s opportunities to participate in and influence decision making can further undermine women’s rights and drive social norms that perpetuate GBV.
* Reduced costs.
* Possible challenges
* Limited access to funding (eg. pooled funds), due to eg. lack of registration, limited organizational structure, complicated application processes for funding/grants etc. 🡪 Please take note of the new UNHCR “Grant Agreement with Organizations led by displaced and stateless people” which seeks to ensure that displaced and host communities are treated as equal and active partners. It provides grant funding to organizations led by displaced and stateless persons in order to empower them to realize their own projects and build their capacity. It also allows UNHCR to work directly with the people it serves without having to use intermediaries. Each organization can receive up to USD 4,000 per grant/project and up to USD 12,000 in total funding per year.
* Need for capacity strengthening and amplifying their voices in coordination forums. 🡪 Please take note that a guidance on note meaningful participation of RLOs in coordination mechanisms is being developed as well as an external information repository will be created for organizations led by forcibly displaced and stateless people to access guidance, tools, good practices, and capacity-building materials.
* Patriarchy and hierarchy within the humanitarian system and at the country level, that is rigid and male-dominated, resulting in a lack of emphasis on gender transformative work, barriers to women's leadership and unequal salaries of local partners.
* Resources
* Briefing Note, UNHCR’s Task Team on Engagement and Partnership with Organisations led by Forcibly Displaced and Stateless People, 2022: <https://www.unhcr.org/publications/brochures/61b28b094/unhcrs-task-team-engagement-partnership-persons-concern-led-organizations.html?query=RLO>.
* Briefing Note, UNHCR Grant Agreements with Organizations led by displaced and stateless people, 2022: [: https://www.unhcr.org/publications/brochures/61b28c784/unhcr-grant-agreements-organizations-led-persons-concern-poc-briefing-note.html?query=grant%20agreements](NULL).
* UNHCR, Refugee-led Innovation Fund: https://www.unhcr.org/innovation/refugee-led-innovation-fund/ .
* UNHCR, Localization in UNHCR-led Coordination Structures, https://intranet.unhcr.org/content/dam/unhcr/intranet/staff%20support/partnership/documents/english/poc-orgs/Localization-in-UNHCR-led-coordination-structures.pdf.
* Information repository for Organizations led by forcibly displaced and stateless people: https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/repository-organisations-led-by-forcibly-displaced-and-stateless.
* Webinar recording and PPT on localization: <https://unhcr365.sharepoint.com/sites/GSCB-GBVLearning/SitePages/Webinar-3.aspx>.
* GBV AoR/CARE/ActionAid, GBV Localization: Humanitarian Transformation of Maintaining Status Quo? A Global Study on GBV Localization through Country-Level GBV Sub-Clusters (2019): <https://careevaluations.org/wp-content/uploads/GBV-Localization-Mapping-Study-Full-Report-FINAL.pdf>

