

Charter4Change statement on Grand Bargain localisation process, April 2024

In advance of a 'close out' meeting of the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream, the Charter4Change (C4C) coalition shares the following recommendations on ways forward for localisation in the Grand Bargain:

1. There is an **urgent need to establish a new Grand Bargain localisation space** where Grand Bargain signatories can convene to lift up good practices and build on those to reflect on how to overcome barriers and challenges to localisation. This should be called a Grand Bargain Localisation Community Of Practice (CoP), and we should avoid any further delays due to discussions over terminology.
2. In recognition of the limited bandwidth of all Grand Bargain signatories, especially to convene at decision-maker level, we believe this CoP should aim to **convene approximately four times per year**.
3. The purpose of the CoP should be to **encourage changes in policy and practice by Grand Bargain signatories; building on the Grand Bargain commitments, Workstream guidance notes and Caucus outcomes**. There are multiple webinars, conferences, and meetings convened by different actors and processes on localisation, and the CoP should not aspire to compete with or monopolise all of them. To be credible as a Grand Bargain CoP, it needs to function as a useful space where Grand Bargain signatories can exchange about good practices and barriers to changing their practices in support of locally-led humanitarian action.
4. **Active engagement by Grand Bargain signatories – donors, UN agencies and INGOs – is essential**. The reality is that some Grand Bargain signatories are committed and making changes on localisation, and others are less so. As such, the CoP should provide a space in which signatories that are making positive progress can share their good practices to inspire other signatories to learn from these and consider adapting them to their own organisation and work.

There are already many events organised by localisation advocacy networks that profile the work of national/local actors, and this expertise can be brought into the CoP. However, the buy-in and active engagement of Grand Bargain signatories is essential to **avoid the CoP becoming a space where local actors talk to local actors, and decision-makers from the donor, INGO, and/or UN agency signatories are absent or only passively, silently participating**. It is important that signatories who have been less actively engaged or visible in localisation efforts are invited to propose agendas or ways of framing and facilitating CoP meetings which could benefit and inspire them. However, if one or more signatories or signatory constituency groups (e.g. UN) decline to participate, this should not become a barrier to the CoP going forward.

5. The **contribution of national/local actors to the CoP is also essential** to its legitimacy and effectiveness. Networks that play leading roles in convening localisation advocacy at the global level, such as Charter4Change (but also NEAR and A4EP) could play roles in co-convening the CoP or specific meetings of the CoP. They can consult with their networks to ensure their representatives on the CoP have consulted on recommendations and examples of good practice.
6. The CoP meetings could be either **online, hybrid, or in-person with translation** into multiple languages offered. Most likely, most of the meetings would be online, but there could be scope to convene some meetings in the fringes of other key global gatherings on humanitarian policy (e.g. European Humanitarian Forum, ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment and the Grand Bargain Annual Review Meeting). Scheduling meetings with plenty of advance notice will be

important to enable networks to consult, prepare and facilitate participation by local actors in an inclusive and well-organised manner.

7. At least half of the CoP meetings should be kept small to enable genuine dialogue between Grand Bargain signatories and national/local actor representatives in the meeting. A roundtable-type format (even if online), rather than conference scale format, can enable this. For meetings in which a larger participation is planned, break-out sessions should be considered to **foster more frank and interactive discussion, instead of speechifying**. Planning and preparatory meetings before CoP meetings, and debrief meetings afterwards, can offer entry-points to consult more widely and to disseminate insights from them.
8. The CoP does not, however, need to become an expensive project that can only exist if one or other actor is funded to take on a secretariat role. **From within Charter4Change, for example, there is a will and energy from the Secretariat and members of the C4C Advocacy Working Group to help co-convene the CoP or specific meetings of the CoP**, if there is willingness from the Grand Bargain Ambassador, Secretariat, Facilitation Group and other stakeholders in the process to engage in a CoP. **Support from at least one donor to co-convene would also be essential to drive change** (linking into and encouraging participation by the wider donor stakeholder group). It is possible that one donor could co-convene the process overall, but individual CoP meetings are co-convened by other donors. As a general principle, we believe that resources should be allocated to national/local actors, and others, to contribute to policy and coordination efforts, but support for organising four CoP meetings per year can be drawn from existing resources and capacities.
9. **Potential themes** for the CoP (e.g. on the basis of four meetings per year, with the potential for building momentum across the remaining years of the Grand Bargain process on these themes) include:
 - a. Lifting up good practices on promoting **accountability for quality of partnerships** (i.e. follow-up to the Caucus on the Role of Intermediaries and other Grand Bargain commitments of relevance, e.g. on capacity-strengthening, and discussions in the sector on how to frame more empowering, locally-led approaches to NGO consortia)
 - b. Lifting up good practices on **Funding for Localisation** (i.e. catalysing follow-up to the Caucus on the Funding for Localisation and other relevant commitments)
 - c. Sharing learning on **Risk-Sharing** (e.g. sharing experience in roll-out of the Risk-Sharing Framework or efforts to address due diligence barriers to localisation)
 - d. **Connecting global to country level** change on localisation (i.e. convening meetings with a particular focus on one or more contexts, e.g. contexts in which NRGs are active, and encouraging joined-up participation by HQ and country mission staff). This could link to efforts to strengthen country-level localisation frameworks to track progress.
10. **Outcomes from the CoP meetings should be shared with relevant actors and processes**; including at the **Grand Bargain Annual Meeting**, and to the Ambassadors, Facilitation Group, and through the regular Grand Bargain updates to all signatories. Outcomes could also be channeled into other relevant processes (eg the Caucus on Anticipatory Action or the OCHA Flagship Initiative) to inform and catalyse their efforts on localisation. An annual summary of CoP meetings' outcomes, combined with outcomes from Grand Bargain country-level processes on localisation, can contribute to wider efforts to track progress on the themes prioritised by the CoP.