

Panel discussion Title:
UNFINISHED BUSINESS The Grand Bargain 2.0: Moving forward together with localisation and quality funding

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Main barriers for localization and how could they be addressed in Grand Bargain 2.0

Thank you very much to the organizers of this event especially VENRO and its team for having me as a panelist at this great event during this crucial time. Dear colleagues, partners and friends. I am so happy for having this opportunity to share my lived humanitarian experiences of the voices of local and national NGOs in the south.

The grand bargain is one of the most important initiatives of our times. It's a commitment and a vehicle for change. Despite the challenges to fulfill all the commitments in the past five years, a lot has been done that has shown it's possible to break the rigid and old-aged procedures of the humanitarian system today.

One of the areas where highly amplified since 2015 has been localization of aid. While recognizing the improvements achieved so far, it's one of the areas where the GB commitments have been less achieved in terms of aid directed through local actors. From the annual grand bargain report produced in June 2021, in relation to the grand bargain 2.0 summit that was held last week, one of the workstreams least achieved is "more support and funding to local and national responders" or **localization of aid**.

The promises to transfer 25% of their total humanitarian fund has been fully/over achieved only by 13 funding signatories of the total 53 funding signatories. However, 40 signatories (75.4%) of those signatory governments, international organizations and funding agencies could not achieve it in the past five years. According to the report itself, localization has unchanged over the period and falls far short of the original target of meeting 25% in 2020. In reality, in 2020, 4.7% of global humanitarian funding was allocated to local and national responders compared to 0.2% back in 2014 before the GB initiative. We appreciate that but the promise for "as direct as possible" has been achieved far less than what has been anticipated.

For me, and as for many local and national NGOs in the south and especially in Africa, the GB has been a great hope that introduced the importance of actively involving local actors as we are at the front line, less expensive, closer to the people in crisis to respond on time, less bureaucratic but, in fact, having limited resources to take action.

To be successful in localization of aid, I believe, the first thing the Grand Bargain 2.0 should do is to research for answering why localization of aid didn't work out as promised and as it should be? Why those 40 funding signatories could not make it? In this time where some are amplifying for advancing direct transfer of 50% of their humanitarian resources to local actors in the future, why is achieving 25% a challenge for most of them? Improvements could begin from there.

One of the main barriers to localization of aid is lack of political will. Especially, signatory governments should play the greatest role in fulfilling their commitments by making political decisions. There should be a match between policies and promises. International funding organizations should also believe that

local actors are capable and, timely and effective humanitarian response is possible if we get the opportunity for a better capacity and if get the access to direct and flexible funding as LNNGOs understand the local context, culture, tradition, habits, religion, gaps and livelihoods of affected communities which are vital for humanitarian response. We, LNNGOs should also stand in solidarity to influence the system, be optimistic, recognize our power, knowledge, skills and abilities and build more trust to our international partners. Let's also all involve local governments in this great initiative. Let's us avoid the barriers which make localization of aid and quality funding hard and move forward together with better efforts and actions.

Thank you

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