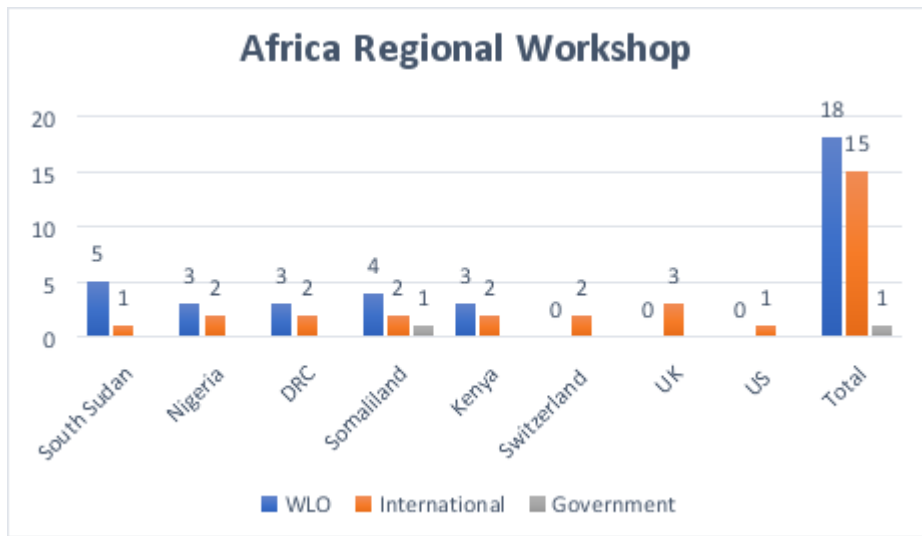


Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility (GBV AoR) Localization Task Team: Africa Regional Workshop, 3-5 September 2019 – Final Report



Executive summary:

On 3-5 September 2019, the Localisation Task Team of the Gender- Based Violence Area of Responsibility (GBV AoR) held an Africa regional workshop focused on the engagement of local actors – particularly women-led organisations-- in humanitarian GBV prevention, response, and coordination activities. Held in Nairobi, Kenya, it brought together 33 participants from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Kenya, Nigeria, South Sudan and Somalia, as well as global and regional actors. Eighteen women from Local and National Women Led organisations participated in the workshop. GBV sub-cluster coordinators, regional emergency GBV advisor (REGA) and global representatives from GBV AoR and Call to Action also took part in the discussions. One government official from Somaliland was also present. The diagram below shows the representation of participants by country and by national and international organisations.



Background

In order to meet the commitments made to localization¹ and to ensure local actor engagement in both field coordination mechanisms and global strategic decision-making, the Localization Task Team of the Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility (GBV AoR) was formed, and is currently co-led by CARE USA and ActionAid International.

Due to the “particular risks faced by women and girls [that] can be heightened when humanitarian overlook women’s strength and [when] they do not work with local women’s organizations and female leaders”² the task team is focused on the following primary objectives:

- Consolidating current research and lessons learned on localization in humanitarian GBV prevention and response in order to identify opportunities, challenges, and gaps to be addressed through joint action.
- Facilitating wider engagement by GBV AoR members as well as new partnerships with local organizations, ensuring coordination and alignment with wider efforts on localization within the Global Protection Cluster (GPC).
- Catalyzing shared analysis and joint initiatives through the GBV AoR’s Localization Task Team to promote effective approaches to localization with a particular focus on: the GBV AoR work plan for 2018–2020, the Call to Action: Road Map 2016–2020, and the localization work-stream of the Grand Bargain.

¹ WHS (2016), p. 22, Localization Q&A (2018)

This workshop sought to build upon previous activities of the GBV Localization Task Team, including a Global Mapping Study on GBV Localization, a Global workshop in New York in March 2019, and a Middle East and North Africa (MENA) workshop that took place in Jordan in June 2019 and Asia workshop that took place in Bangkok, Thailand, in August 2019. The mapping study and New York workshop sought to identify key challenges faced by local and women-led actors with regard to GBV localization in humanitarian contexts. The regional workshops sought to build on these issues by engaging in action-planning and identifying tangible ways forward to promote GBV localization at country and regional levels.

This third and final regional workshop, was designed taking into account the feedback from previous workshops. It provided maximum opportunity for sharing, discussions and cross-country and cross-regional learning. Responding to need the for WLO's request for direct engagement with donors, a panel session was organised so WLOs could directly communicated with donor representatives from the region. The workshop was coordinated and organized by ActionAid and jointly facilitated by ActionAid, CARE, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) and sub-cluster coordinators from each country.

The specific objectives of the workshop were:

- To share learning and good practices on how country-level GBV Sub-Clusters (or Sub-Sectors) meaningfully engage with and incorporate local GBV actors (especially women-led local orgs).
- To construct action plans at country level to strengthen meaningful 'localisation' within the GBV Sub-Clusters building on previously identified challenges to seek solutions and propositions going forward.
- To review the global landscape on GBV response and localisation, identifying relevant advocacy opportunities to improve and sustain an enabling environment for local level action.

While there is much progress that needs to be made, the tangible action items identified during the workshop are an important beginning with the potential to contribute to wider country, regional, and global conversations related to the enhancement of GBV localization within the GBV sub-clusters in country, globally and more widely in the sector. Additionally, the workshop also presented an opportunity to identify ways in which the GBV AoR's Localization Task Team could better promote GBV localization within the context of country-level coordination mechanisms, support members in localization efforts to strengthen coordination in GBV prevention and response; establish priorities for joint learning and advocacy; and enhance participation of local GBV actors. Group work, mapping exercises, action planning and other interactive methods were used including a panel discussion on the last day with donors and International agencies.

Bringing together participants from different regions of Africa presented its own language challenges. The solution was sought by providing simultaneous translation in French and Swahili. Daily feedback was sought from the participants to ensure that the workshop was meeting their needs and to take opportunity to clarify issues or adjust the agenda.

Overview of key sessions

Day one sessions focused on defining and mapping local actors working in GBV space and providing an overview of GBV AoR and coordination mechanisms, followed by session on coordination mapping which provided the space to map the kind of coordination mechanisms existing at regional, national, local levels, exploring the existing barriers and solutions and recommendations. The next sessions shared information on the ToR and activities of the GBV Localisation Task Team and progress so far, including an overview of preliminary findings from the Global Mapping Study on GBV localisation that was conducted by the Localization Task Team. The proceeding session provided an opportunity for participants to reflect upon the key findings of this research and make linkages experienced in their own country contexts. The first day concluded with a panel discussion on challenges and good practices with WLOs with one representative from each country sharing their experiences.

The second day continued with exploration of key themes that were prioritized per country, brainstorming the barrier and finding solutions. The next session provided an opportunity for participants from each country to engage in action-planning and set priorities for promoting GBV localization within the context of their respective country-based coordination mechanisms. Recognising the importance of advocacy, the next session explored the key steps required to bridge the divide between local and global advocacy and policy linkages for local actors. Example of alliance building was shared by WLO from Nigeria. This followed sharing information and updates on global level initiatives such as Call to Action, with presentation from WLOs from pilot countries.

The third day continued with presentation and update on the Grand Bargain, regional localisation workshops and UN Women Friends of Gender Group. The participants then prepared some key messages per country for the donor and wider advocacy. The workshop concluded with a panel discussion with donor representatives. It provided an opportunity for the local women leaders to articulate their requests and priorities and to pose questions directly to the donors. See Appendix 1 for detailed agenda.

Key Themes Identified

Although, the contexts are very different in the 5 countries, some key common themes emerged across countries participating in the workshop. Workshop participants worked in mixed and country groups which provided space for rich discussions and mapping of coordination mechanisms and

assisted in identifying gaps and opportunities for meaningful engagement. Discussions confirmed that every region has its unique challenges and opportunities for preventing and responding to GBV. These were identified through combination of presentations, small group work in country teams, plenary discussions, sharing experience through storytelling, panel discussions and action planning

A common theme expressed by participants from women-led organizations was that they serve a unique role due to the fact that they are from the community and so are trusted and able to establish solidarity with women in the community. Participants also emphasized that women-led organizations have necessary local knowledge and use approaches that are more holistic, multi-layered and long-term. Local actors also expressed that they are able to address GBV using a gender equality lens and can navigate local social norms.

Participants emphasised that GBV coordination structures varied across and within countries, depending whether it is capital level or field level coordination spaces, but they remain clearly dominated by INGOs and the UN agencies. The coordination structures are also male dominated. The capacity of civil society in different countries varies, however women-led organizations are working on GBV in their communities. WLOs shared that they often face a backlash from authorities or more conservative members of society. Some have also faced a backlash from national NGOs and INGOs for speaking up and advocating for more substantive localization.

WLO participants from all five countries emphasised that the biggest challenge remains funding and institutional capacity to prevent and respond to GBV in an appropriate and sustainable way. A stronger presence and influence in the coordination structures ultimately means little, if that is not addressed. Unequal power dynamics with international organisations in terms of participation and decision making and reported that this was one of the blockages to equitable partnerships.

Key issues and discussions from workshop sessions

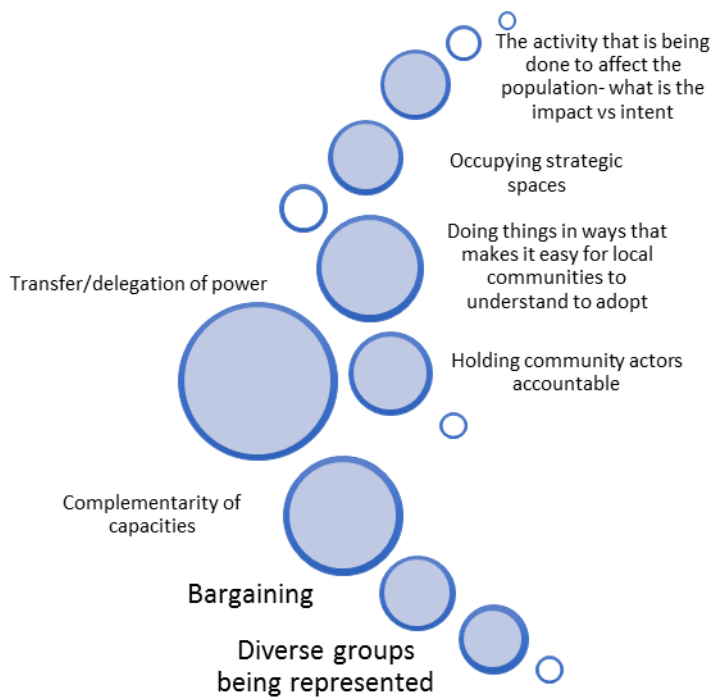
The participants were welcomed by Makena Mwobobia, Executive Director of ActionAid Kenya and Chairperson for International Federation Platform of AA-Humanitarian. She emphasised the opportunity for networking and peer support and sharing information and good practices. She stressed that local actors bring value to the GBV AoR in ways listed below.



The workshop commenced with a discussion on the definitions of localization, and the nature and identify of local actors. The purpose of this session was to enable WLOs participants to describe local actors in the GBV space, their views on these issues, and the ways in which their experience relates to global understandings. Based on the discussion that took place during the workshop, the following graphic was developed to depict the various definitions of localization used by women-led organization:



The WLOs discussed what localisation means in practice for them, describing types of actions they would expect to see on the ground. The graphic below captures the essence of their conversation.



Participants worked in mixed groups to discuss who they consider to be “local actor”. They listed various types of local actors that are present in the eco system in their countries. The graphic below shows the result of their discussion.



Women leaders also emphasised that sustainability is about reinforcing, not replacing, what already exists on the ground. They said that existing local capacities should be supported with resources and technical knowledge for longer term sustainability.

“In Kenya one of the things that needs to happen, according to the law, is that cases have to be reported through the judicial system yet we are limited on technical legal support for these cases. Despite this, we realise that unless we volunteer, unless women have the courage to follow through in stopping cases of GBV in the community, nothing will happen. We do it out of courage and conviction”.

WLO from Kenya

Following the presentation of findings from the Global Study, the participants worked in mixed country groups to identify challenges and solutions in the five priority areas that were identified by the scoping study on localization.

a) Governance and Decision-making:

The participants from WLOs mentioned that male domination creates fear among women to make decisions. Non or low participation of women in big meetings where there are key decision makers and due to language barrier at the grass-root levels. There is lack of communication and sharing of information for informed decision making. When women do their part their voices are not heard by international community or the same weight is not given to national and international actors. The technical language and jargon used locks out WLOs/local NGOs. Local actors are outnumbered by INGOs in terms of decision-making. There is limited accountability and transparency. There is dominance of 'strong women' without bringing others/upcoming leaders. There is handpicking by coordinators and humanitarian leaders so only the 'Blessed few take part'.

Women from Nigeria shared how they formed networks and alliances to work together on GBV. Some are attending the coordination meetings, however, meaningful participation of women led organizations in the coordination structures remains limited. There is a lack of understanding on the clear added value of local women led organisations. Root cause of gender base violence cases and protracted crisis and natural disaster are having a huge impact on progress on GBV, women led organisations are also impacted and sometimes overwhelmed by the level of violence. WLOs emphasised the need for cross section people's involvement through interventions for effective GBV prevention and response effort.

GBV Coordination

An overview was provided of the humanitarian coordination structure, GBV Area of Responsibility and country specific structures by UNFPA, which leads the GBV Coordination Cluster. Coordination is a crucial entry-point for localisation because it Improves analysis and coordination of local, national, Government and international actors; it helps to document and disseminate lesson learned; it encourages good practice to be taken to scale; Leads development of national humanitarian response strategies; helps Government, donors and pooled fund managers decide when and where to invest advocacy, funding and other resources.

It was emphasised that if projects at local level are to be scaled up, resource mobilisation is necessary and to find out how much resources are necessary; coordination mechanism can play a useful role in that. The right kind of structure is required to be in place, which is a helpful rather than hindering progress.

Taking part in the cluster system can help to ensure that national actors are better informed about practices and standards, it an opportunity to enhance partnerships between humanitarian actors, joining a forum for joint advocacy, coordinating and planning a more effective humanitarian response, opportunity for networking and peer support and sharing information and good practices.

Local actors noted that there were gaps in their knowledge on the cluster system and that part of the power imbalance is that the information is often not there to know how to coordinate and get involved. It was therefore appreciated that this information was conveyed.

Country-specific coordination mapping:

The participants from each country set together to map the coordination mechanism in their own country environment at local, regional and national level. It helped to understand the existing mechanisms, how they function and also how local networks coordinate with each other. It also helped to highlight the gaps in how actively local actors are engaging with these mechanisms and make the recommendations on how to improve meaning participation.



The Women leaders agreed that coordination was helpful in key Information sharing, fund raising, advocacy and pushing forward government to initiative and approve policies for expanding GBV working groups in other regions. Below, WLOs from Somaliland, South Sudan and DRC describe their experiences of coordination and working with international actors.

"We worked on FGM for four years, as well as women's environmental rights, working in a network makes it easier. Local organisations across Somaliland are responding to male and female GM, but we all do different work. Coordinating local organisations is very important. We are linked to the sub cluster (local GBV working group) since its establishment."

WLO from Somaliland

"We have protracted conflict, many sexual violence related cases. The perpetrators are the armed group. We understand what it means in relationship to the government and what it means to the outside community, we have to work with government-through the court, health, reporting, and criminal systems."

WLO from South Sudan

"DRC is faced with ten years protracted humanitarian crisis. There are always responses that come our way, but before they come, it's the local organisations that come first, and INGOs get to take the big decisions without consultation of local communities because of lack of capacity. What we need then is to be supported to be at decision making level. We need to be at the roundtable while identifying our problems and solutions that are context specific."

WLO from DRC

Recommendations:

LOCAL WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP: Plan steps to elevate and accelerate localisation within the GBV AoR structures with more active participation and involvement of Women Led CSOs taking leadership positions at all levels. Pay special attention to involving women leaders in decision-making and strategic planning processes. Ensure there is adequate funding for them to participate in regional and global meetings. Ensure there is adequate and timely information shared so they can participate meaningfully. Support and invest in already existing networks to build alliances across the region to share experiences and to advocate.

There should be clear roles and responsibilities and funding for taking on local leadership roles within coordination mechanism at all levels. Ensure meaningful participation of WLO by reducing language barriers and by providing translation of materials in appropriate languages.

INCREASED ADVOCACY AT GBV SUB-CLUSTER LEVEL: Establish more systematic information sharing about upcoming events and opportunities for capacity strengthening and engaging with donors. Advocate for GBV SC to use the platform to fundraise and share donor opportunities with women led organisations.

b. Participation and Influence:

Lack of participation was identified as one of the main challenges. There are many factors that hinder WLOs' participation. Due to lack of funds there is lack of consistent participation of WLOs at national and global levels events leading to lack of global exposure of their work. Local actors must partner with INGO and relay on them to get the opportunity to engage in global forums. Participation in coordination meetings is also difficult due to Infrastructural challenges- access, roads, internet, communication/logistical challenges. Often invitations come late and visa processes are very time consuming.

"Until you participate, that's when your issues can be heard directly. We can reflect the reality on the ground".

WLO from South Sudan

Patriarchy another reasons for exclusion of WLOs. The blessed few big national NGOs get more opportunity than CSOs who often don't get access to cluster meetings at national level. They shouldn't be represented by national agencies but should speak for themselves.

There is no consultative and transparent process to decide on selection criteria for taking part in global and regional meetings. There is a high turnover of staff in local and national NGOs because of lack of funding which leads to inconsistent participation in coordination meetings. Participation of youth (esp. female) is low. There are long bureaucratic delays to making decisions. There are also cultural barriers to women's participation and lack of information sharing systems across different actors.

"Cultural challenge is also blocking the participation of women in the coordination mechanism. Most coordination mechanism at local and regional levels are dominated by men. The government officials also do not understand GVB issues".

WLO from Nigeria

"Working in partnership with organisations – there is a journey ahead for INGOs. Don't cut off support, accompany us so they can go to the next level. Women face barriers created by government (acceptance and support for their work)..... There may be backlash against the women you train- continue to accompany them. We are risking our lives out of courage, embolden our work! If they you remain consistent, then we will backtrack. Momentum, we must build on momentum, because we can have this excellent group together, a great opportunity".

WLO from Kenya

Recommendations

FAIR REPRESENTATION: Establish clear criteria to ensure representation of diverse groups of local leaders which is inclusive of un/underrepresented groups (disabilities, LGBTQ etc). Ensure that local leaders who attend meetings share information back to their constituencies and other women's group in their network in their countries. WL networks should ensure that representation is not dominated by a few powerful women from national and local level. Move away from the "blessed few" approach where a small select number of local NGOs receive large and regular funding and opportunities to speak at global events

COMMUNICATION AND TRANSLATION: Pay special attention to language barriers to engaging with GBV AoR. Ensure that key materials produced in the GVB AoR are translated in appropriate languages. Ensure there is interpretation in the right languages/ or hold meetings in the language of

the area or make alternative arrangements so women leaders can engage meaningfully in Sub cluster meetings.

INFLUENCING NATIONAL LEVEL PLANNING: Facilitate effective engagement and participation of local CSO Women Led organisation in national-level co-ordination and decision making in Humanitarian Needs Overviews, Humanitarian Response Plans and Pooled Funds. Special actions need to be taken to reduce barriers to their participation and access.



c. Funding:

Funding remains one of the biggest challenges for local and national NGOs. Complex donor conditions/terms affect the local partners. Lack of capacity to prepare good proposals and concept notes to meet donor requirements and lack of funding to hire a consultant to help in proposal writing means they are not on level playing field as international actors. There is a lack of funding allocated to women’s groups and increased competition. Poor or absence of financial policies and procedures and skilled finance teams to prepare proper financial reports affects their chance of passing due diligence of the donors and accessing funds.

Recommendations

TARGETED AND DIRECT FUNDING: Donors in Call to Action and Grand Bargain and other localisation initiatives have a more cohesive and coordinated approach to localisation and identify specific steps to localise funding from a GBV and women’s empowerment lens. There should be allocation of funds for women’s organizations. Set a funding quota for WLOs and WROs; allowing funding to reach women and bridge gap of 1.25% that is currently being allocated to women-led and women’s rights organisations; have flexible and multi-year funding and ensuring there are core funds v. project funds also to be able to engage in key processes and respond to emerging needs and cutting transaction costs.

“We should not depend solely on the government or donors. Look inwards. We can leverage resources, fundraising, advocacy, solidarity. Exhibit the work of survivors- skill centres. Target rich people as individual donors, some donate generously – private partnerships. Where the activities of GBV are taking place, leverage this.”

WLO from Nigeria

FUNDING CRITERIA AND CONDITIONS: Donors make participation of women and women-led CSOs a criteria for funding to host governments, UN agencies and INGOs. Introduce tiered system of due diligence and funding to ensure that funding reaches the smallest organisations proportionate to their capacity to absorb funding. Ensure that country level pooled funding mechanisms have a quota for GBV programming and earmarked % for WLOs.

“Sustained funding will help us to take forward the cases and scale up the work. Even when we report the cases, the government will say we don’t have the funding to move forward, which defeats our progress. The success rate would be higher with more funding.”

WLO from Kenya

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND BUREAUCRACY: Harmonise and simplify the reporting requirements and reduce bureaucracy in GBV programme implementation so women-led organisations can focus their time on effective implementation. Invest in financial and reporting systems of local women led organisations so they can maintain high quality reporting expected by donors. Provide adequate funding for staff so they can employ and maintain qualified staff to ensure quality reporting expected by donors. Create a more level playing field between International and national organisations to make it easier for them to access funding.

d. Partnerships:

The participants highlighted some key challenges in partnerships. They confirmed that there was lack of transparency in information sharing and decision-making processes. There are capacity gaps on both sides. They talked of one-sided partnerships with lack of collaboration and inclusion.

There was agreement that the unstable funding environment and insecurity of longer-term job security leads to capacity drain through poaching of talent. Some organisations do not send their best people to coordination meetings because often they are head hunted afterwards by international actors. There is often a communication barrier both in terms of language and culture and lack of clarity around roles and responsibilities. There is limited access for all partners to security and politics. There is a tendency to label ‘local’ to mean less/lacking. A question was raised about whose priorities forms the basis of partnerships and there are prescribed indicators and templates so not much room for flexibility. There are complicated donor requirements/conditions that cannot be met by NNGOs.

“The feedback mechanism, we feel it’s key from the side of the donor-have they gotten the feedback of what they have done well, INGOs don’t give feedback! It keeps on going for a longer period, that has also been an issue, decisions to do with partnership, it’s like more of a one-sided partnership, no full information of what you are signing up to. Only the INGO and the donor communicate, what is in the paperwork, 20% to local partner, we need to hear from the donor directly”

WLO from South Sudan

Recommendations:

“Research shows that we have capacity, but we have limited resources. We have well trained individuals that then get poached, leading to even more limited resources.”

Women leader from local NGO Network

“Women organisations are not supported by the women leaders we have in this room. Intersectionality – if all the INGOs and UNFPA led by women in this room, if they could support us then we wouldn’t have a problem. Elevate them. The men won’t like WLOs because they know women are capable of doing something. For the relationship of political leaders, the experience of each country- as far as coordination is concerned, we have vertical relationship with the state and we are there to support the organisation of the state”.

WLO from DRC

The solutions suggested by the group was to have regular face-to-face interactions and to provide secure transport for field visits. Translating documents (SoPs, ToRs, guidelines, policies) into local languages devoid of jargon would assist local actors to engage more meaningfully.

“The INGOs should build our capacity -technical and otherwise as local actors are better placed to implement.

WLO from Somaliland

EQUITABLE PARTNERSHIPS: Reduce power imbalance between local and international actors in the coordination mechanisms by promoting two-way engagement on commitments/requirements and share relevant information on these commitments with local actors so global initiatives/actors and decision makers can be held to account (clarifying incentives for local actor engagement in Call to Action/open call for input to 2020-24 Roadmap). Ensure that all international actors are taking part in the coordination mechanism, follow clear equitable partnership principles establishing clear standards for participation and decision-making.

DESIGN OF GBV AOR PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES: Ensure participation of local women led organisation from the design to monitoring and evaluation of projects and programmes. Ensure integration of nexus as most of the context in Africa are affected by protracted crisis, natural hazards and climate change and women led organisation work on GBV in normal times as well. It will assist in setting up more robust support systems and coping mechanisms for GBV.

e. Capacity Building:

“Feminist international assistance policywe do understand that for capacities of all organisations to be built, we need some affirmative action to take place in order to build their capacity and build upon, the strong values, capacity, innovations, cultural specificities and all else that they bring to development projects. Can be scaled up not only by Canada but also by other donors also”

Donor Representative, Canada

The participants highlighted insufficient capacity to develop internal policies on PSEA, Gender, finance. Technical expertise is missing on proposal development and financial management. Lack of stability of human resources due to low salaries and short term funds and no overhead costs in budgets. Lack of rent for office space and operational costs. Lack of mentorship and accompaniment in system strengthening and mentorship models or other approaches to sharing knowledge – e.g. south to south learning. There is also lack of best practice examples for learning. Lack of capacity building plans.

There should be an allocation of funds for local actors, capacity needs and capacity building, often local actors are afraid to share their capacity gaps for fear of disqualification.

“Violence perpetuated by socio-cultural norms is not easy to conquer. Instead of always looking at enlightenment, we should look at impact, educating the girl-child and empowering her with life skills and livelihood to reduce her vulnerability. Even the humanitarian response, sometimes, reduces us to the level of beggars, depend so much on aid, instead of trying to restore our dignity through self alliance, we need them to empowered to fight any form of violence”.

WLO from Nigeria

Recommendations

AUTONOMY TO CHOOSE TYPE OF CAPACITY BUILDING - CONTENT AND MODALITY: Increased focus on institutional capacity building of local CSOs to accompany GBV projectised capacity building and recognition of local expertise/moving away from one-size fits all approach. Provide adequate un-earmarked overhead costs that can be used to invest in institutional development. Assist local women’s organisation to develop capacity for proposal development, fundraising and advocacy. Provide inputs and training on the humanitarian system and structure as well as global initiatives and commitments. Develop a mentorship programme for south to south learning and exchange.

PROTECT RETENTION OF STAFF FOR LOCAL AGENCIES: UN agencies and INGOs collaborating in the GBV coordination system should commit to adopting the INGO “Charter for Change” commitment on not undermining local agency staff capacity by hiring away the most experienced and qualified staff from local organisations. Provide adequate funding to local organisations to retain and maintain qualified staffing structure.

Action Plans

Participants from each country set together and Identified priorities to better engage with local GBV actors at country level. WLOs jointly with the Sub-Cluster Coordinators developed indicators, identified who is responsible for the action and timelines to help to monitor the actions.

WLO participants from Kenya worked with their partners to develop a one year plan and chose Institutional strengthening of WROs and networks, advocating for 'activation' of GBV sub-cluster at the national level and strengthening the county GBV working group as key priority for areas for action. They developed three indicators per priority area and allocated who would take the action.

WLO participants from Nigeria worked with the sub-cluster coordinator to develop action plans. They prioritised capacity as the top priority which included capacity mapping and assessment of WLO and targeted trainings (technical and non-technical) and mentoring/coaching. Their second priority was funding, lobbying for dedicated funding stream for WLO and lobbying Nigeria Humanitarian Fund and donors to include operational cost for sub-grantees and the third priority was participation of WLO in co-ordination roles at GBV SS (lobbying through NHF), lobbying for including representation from Yobe and Ada at SAG and to rotate meetings in the states. They also developed indicators and allocated responsibility at various levels and set time frame of one year.

WLO leaders from Somaliland worked with the sub-cluster coordinator to develop the action plan. Their top priority was funding especially Institutional capacity development on financial management and strategic development. The second priority area they chose was participation in coordination, expanding GBV coordination to ALL regions and for WLOs to join Somaliland NGO consortium in order to enhance mentorship of WLO. The third priority was partnership, the translation of the existing GBV Standard Operating Procedures into local language and to advocate for the implementation of the sexual offences law. They also developed indicators to track progress and identified partners who can assist in taking things forward within the next four months.

WLOs from South Sudan worked with the sub-cluster coordinator to identify priorities and develop an action plan. Funding was chosen as the first priority, Identifying of diverse/alternative sources and formation of consortiums for funding mobilisation (INGOs/NNGOs) as key areas of action. Participation is the second priority, there are many WLOs working on women rights so mapping of WLO location of implementation and sector of implementation can assist in identifying their participation at different levels. Capacity development was the third priority, starting with mapping of WLO capacity needs and capacity building strategies including finance, proposal policies, information sharing. Indicators were developed to track progress and identified who can assist in taking things forward within the next few months.

Participants from WLOs from DRC worked with the sub-cluster coordinator to identify the priorities and developed an action plan. Institutional Capacity was the top priority. Capacity to create Consortium of local WLOs for advocacy and exchange of experiences with local orgs from other countries, capacity to advocate for resource mobilisation and capacity building of WLOs to implement was identified as some of the activities. The second priority was participation, to set up a steering committee of WLOs at local level to monitor what is going on and to establish alliances between women so that they will have better representatives. Funding was the third priority area. Working together to get funding for Network of WLOs for various activities. Self-leadership and alliance building key aspect and how to link up with the cluster system. They developed indicators to track progress and timelines for some of the actions. Please see Appendix II for detailed action plans per country. The action plan included activities for cluster coordinators, INGO member of sub-cluster, local authorities and WLOs, with indicators and short and long-term timelines.

Recommendation

GBV AoR to support in ensuring action plans are rolled out internally. Mobilise resources to support the sub-cluster coordinators in country.

1. Advocacy and other global initiatives

Women-led organisations emphasised that at local level often not informed about about global GBV initiatives. Concerted effort was made to share information about global initiatives in this workshop and share experiences from the pilot programmes in country at local level. Below is the summary of the discussions.

a. Call to Action

The aim of this session was to learn from the pilot countries and to feed into the global process so it is relevant and attractive to local actors. A presentation was made about the background of Call to Action and that the decision on location was made by the global steering committee of the Call to Action who wanted to try and see what could work at the local level. Some of the consideration in selecting the countries were, GBV response needed to be picked up, there was a chance to work with the SC leader from the beginning, national action plan on WPS were in place or where there is nothing happening or where there is GBV momentum already there. There was need to include non-English speaking country and the DRC coordinator was very effective in lobbying.

The participants from two pilot countries shared their experience of being part of the pilot project with the rest of the participants. See below the experiences of WLOs from Nigeria and DRC.

“We need to be supported to be at the field for great impact. We have a network that participate in GBV clusters, that can be helpful in advocacy. We also need evaluation/mapping- we need to do frequent assessment so local organisations can be trusted to manage funds. If there is a way for CtA to create strong linkages, our work would be more effective. The bigger issue is that we don’t have equitable funds to carry out our activities. On the grand bargain/CtA we heard of GAC, but at the grassroots we are not aware of it, and we need it, help us take action on humanitarian action”.

WLO involved in CtA, DRC

“We joined so we could leverage the stakeholder presence within CtA to be able to positively affect or look at the way we do GBV response in Borno state. Who is on the initiative and how can we influence them. Secondly, it’s a platform for sharing information to share directly from the field to donors. This is a great advantage to us. The issue of capacity that is emphasised in a lot of situations- we saw this as an opportunity to hear from donors what relations/requirements/policies we need to put in place. This is an advantage of the network as a whole. For some of the organisations, in the issue of pursuing projects/proposals- some of these activities are within CtA and we can use it to advocate with donors, our projects are in line with the CtA commitments and this may help your proposal be accepted”.

WLO involved in CtA, Nigeria

It was highlighted that Canada as in-coming chair wanted to review the Road Map to include localisation. This was seen as an opportunity to look at what changes need to be made to ensure that CSOs can participate in CtA meaningfully. A toolkit is being developed based on the early learning from Nigeria and DRC contexts on how partners in other countries want to develop a

roadmap. Priority areas include better coordination through leadership and accountability, needs assessment, analysis, planning, resource mobilisation, institutional capacity building and high-quality care interventions. WLOs from other countries signalled their interest in taking part in CtA and asked for more information.



Recommendation

There was a great deal of interest from other participants on how to get involved in Call to Action. There was a request this opportunity should be offered to more countries. Increase the number of participating counties and membership of Call to Action.

b. Grand Bargain

This session provided the background to the Grand Bargain. Only few WLO participants indicated that they heard of the Grand Bargain, which includes the commitment to reinforcing and not replacing local actors in the spirit of partnership. It also includes commitment to 25% of funding going directly as possible to local actors. WLOs who had been part of the process criticised that GB processes are gender blind.

The WLOs who took part in Regional consultations in Africa and global and country level processes-in partnership with CARE, ActionAid, OXFAM and OCHA shared their experiences. WLO participant from South Sudan and Nigeria shared about their involvement with the Friends of Gender Group which produced an aide-memoire recommending the mainstreaming of gender and protection. It is engaging with the Work Stream on localization to advocate for quality of funding and partnerships with local women's organizations. It has a recommendation that gender indicators be included to track Grand Bargain commitments on localization. It formed partnership with WS co-conveners (IFRC and SDC) on regional events on localization to aid increased visibility of issues and commitments to gender responsive localization. There is recommendation to streamline funding application processes which will unblock funding. Participants who have been taking part in the GB regional

meetings commented that localisation work stream and other work streams are disconnected, and the other work stream does not have local actors engagement.

Recommendations

WLOs recommended that there should be more information sharing on these commitments and how they fit together, more participation of WLOs in the different GB work streams to influence the discussions and providing a local gender lens.

2. Advocacy to donors

Participants mapped the various opportunities that may be coming up for advocacy on GBV localisation at Global, Regional and National level with timelines so they can prepare the right messages and work together in collaboration with each other. This will be integrated into the action plans.

The participants also prepared key messages to deliver to the donor panel. The aim of the donor panel discussion was to create an opportunity for WLOs to speak directly to the donors, having constructed their key messages. Representatives from Swiss Development Corporation, Canadian Mission, OCHA, UNPFA and Concern were invited to the panel. ActionAid, Executive director moderated the panel discussion. Women Led Organisation from Nigeria was selected to also join the panel as their representative.

There were messages to donors around allocation of funding and a recommendation to earmark funding that priorities WLOs and a call for simplifying the funding process. WLO from Nigeria said that *“What we observed is there is no level playing ground for local actors to compete for funding with INGOs, the funding processes are rigid and very complex, and not easily understood by local actors. Our gratitude for the lifesaving activities of North Eastern Nigeria, and some support has translated into good practices, the national humanitarian fund earmarked 1 m dollars to dignity of women and girls. A good example of how women led organisations can be taking lead of projects. I would like to propose some solutions for your considerations. Processes should be simplified, flexible, but not at expense of transparency/accountability. Funding on requisites to focus on WLOs, budgeting but also monitoring and accountability.”*

The GBV Sub-Cluster Coordinator from Somaliland emphasized that *“Our number one priority is that affirmative action. Women-led organisations should get a chance to participate in the bargain process of grants and funding. We must advocate for an information sharing approach that is compared to male led organisations. We recommend a template for WLOs to have better information for requirements for getting funds”*.

WLO representative also suggested that the Somaliland development fund was too difficult to access. She emphasised that most WLOs have the capacity and track record to be legible for funding but the barriers and solutions are common.

OCHA representative from Somaliland confirmed that they will continue to advocate for donors to channel funds through Country Based Pooled Funds. He emphasised that *“We no longer presume that local partners should be ‘cheaper’- that is not the case anymore in Somalia. When you work based on these assumptions you base inequality in the market there- less salaries for people doing comparable work/equal work. These issues go beyond donors”*.

The Canadian representative shared that they have Canada fund for local initiatives, which has higher threshold of risk, these ones are really targeted at community based organisations. He said

“The ideal is working with government in place should be the option to build the capacities of the government to provide services for the community. Development best practice dictates that we should work with governments, so organisations that work well with government systems and priorities we are biased to working with them”.

Another key issue that was emphasised by WLOs was the need for investing in capacity strengthening. Data is normally collected by local organisations on the ground, and donors rely on this information to make funding decisions. WLO leader from DRC said *“I’m saying that you should also be in a position to directly consider the pyramid, that starts from down, upwards, we are the basis, without the foundation, the pyramid is going to collapse. Kenyan WLO confirmed that “ Our main activity is to respond to disaster immediately. For us to address capacity gaps, we need coordination mechanisms, support, especially feedback from women as beneficiaries to enhance accountability and transparency. On building capacity for partners, they need to invest in wlos/wros to know how to sustain activities and response on GBV. We commend ActionAid’s partnership as good practice and would recommend you emulate this”*

The Swiss representative from Kenya confirmed that they support pooled funds because they know that half of the grants reach local actors. They are aware that it is not enough and recognise that sustained capacity is very important and that multi-year grants help organisations grow. They recognise that capacity is a key advocacy point. She said we *“ ensure at HCT there is a seat for NGOs not just INGOs, we try from time to time to bring advocacy of NGOs to the table, support their position, in terms with link of SGBV, we support the REGAs in Nairobi, Dakar, Cairo, there is a link between localisation aid and GBV..... In Kenya we tried to have direct funding to the counties. Not too many donors have risked it for fear of diversion, but our audit was very positive.”*



3. Conclusions

The workshop provided an opportunity to have face to face discussions. The women leaders have demonstrated a real commitment to their work on GBV, and the work they do behind the scenes in

fighting GBV in their countries at national, local and grassroots levels. There was a real enthusiasm and engagement from participants, they felt free and spoke with honesty and shared their challenges and recommendations. It facilitated understanding of the challenges that local actors face and discussion on inter-agency approach between AoR members, local actors and other stakeholders to promote effective localisation. It assisted in identifying and prioritising key advocacy issues to leverage joint actions to influence wider process of relevance, such as Call to Action on Protection From GBV in Emergencies, Grand Bargain and Global Protection Cluster. The workshop proceeding will contribute to concrete actions on how to accelerate GBV localisation in each country context. It will inform the upcoming GBV AoR discussions and Call for Action and contribute to the global level policy and advocacy to donors.