

Proposed UNRR (United Nation Rohingya Response) Mechanism should consider participations of Locals with Consistency and Continuity of past experiences.

Inclusivity, Localization & International Commitments should be the primacy in Rohingya Response Management

- 1. Participation of local actors is needed in all new coordination structure as it was in SEG.**

May be we will have no source in future for commenting in Rohingya Response (RR) as in the UNRR papers there are very little about participation of local and national NGO representation through democratic process. [Please find IASC \(Inter Agency Standing Committee\) guidance on who is local, who is national and who is international are available in this paper](#), there are [also debate on some position who want to dilute those definition in favor international federation member INGOs](#). As national and local NGOs have voted Rezaul Karim Chowdhury and Abu Morshed Chowdhury as national and local NGO representatives in SEG (Strategic Executive Group), we used to get important paper for comments, we did it successfully, e.g., including in JRP (Joint Response Planning), we did those on time, with the principle of positive engagement and accepting the important role of UN agencies and INGOs in Rohingya response. We have also posted in our CCNF website (www.cxb-cso-ngo.org). Now SEG meeting has not been happening in last two months, I have given an email in this regard to three Co-Chairs. Mr. Johannes from UNHCR has responded, he said that, most of the members of SEG in leave, it is the reason, they are not inviting any SEG meeting now, it is not the fact that, they have drop us from the SEG. I have also meet with UNRC few days back, I have reiterated our concern (as mentioned in our memo to [her which has given on 26th June](#) and we have [also commented on Consultant Mr. Andy Barash report on 13th January](#). You can download from the link as given here.
- 2. Supporting the spirit of SEG Co-Chairs.** We respect the spirit of three co-chairs at least as we understand. They want to decentralize as much as possible authority in Coxsbazar level. We also agree with the spirit that UNRC has a lot of other job in national level, we should work in such a way that she will be able to manage quality time on other issues. But, our concern that (i) ISCG and HoSoG should have representation from local, national and international NGOs which have to be selected democratically by the group, it should not be only judged with coverage, (ii) there are a lot of issues in respect of policy, the decision of government of Bangladesh (GoB) happened in national level or in National Task Force, which needed the involvement of UNRC and two other Co-Chairs in Dhaka level. We feel frequency of SEG could be reduced, (iii) ISCG and NGOP leadership have to take more inclusive and open approach especially to accommodate local level civil society activists.
- 3. We / CCNF are independent, but we / local and national NGOs maintain part with NGOP. We welcome any common position with all local, national and international NGOs, NGOP should try for that.** We got the paper title “The Coordination System for the Rohingya Response in Bangladesh...” with two other papers (namely UNRR Meeting note 31st August and Notes on Sector Streamlining 12 September from a mail from NGO Platform (NGOP). We also believe that our representation should not be limited through channeling through NGOP, but it does not mean that, we are disassociating the NGOP. We believe that NGOP has unique opportunity to bring local, National and International NGOs in a level of common minimum positions, they should try for that. Simultaneously we also do like to reiterate that we can take our own position and we do like to keep direct communication. What we and CCNF doing it is for the best interest of locally affected population i.e., refugees and host communities. And we are looking for an environment, where local NGOs will grow with sovereignty, accountability and sustainability, which has rightly envisaged by Grand Bargain

2.0 (2022), Principle of Partnership (2007) and Charter for Change (2015) and New Way of working (2016).

4. **CCNF is home grown and independent network for knowledge based advocacy.** We do like to reiterate the fact that CCNF is a home grown and independent local civil society network which is active since September 2017. Its contribution recognized by SEG and several UN bodies in past. It has proved that, it is an independent network do advocacy based on knowledge. It has played a very constructive and positive engagement for government and UN bodies, in view of the IASC (Inter Agency Standing Committee) policy and guidelines, Grand Bargain 2.0, New Way of Working, and Charter 4 Charges. These has been recognized by several UN documents, [including terms of reference of the localization task force](#), please find those in this link. We do like to draw attention in this regard, we are afraid that there are hardly consistency and continuity in the present UNRR paper on coordination, we do not need to “re-inventing the wheel”. UNRR should consult with previous UN reports and also study the IASC policies, [especially on IASC policy guidelines on localization and promoting local CSOs](#), please find those in this link.
5. **Our findings in UNRR paper on proposed mechanism.** What we found in the paper as UNRR proposed.
 - a. New committee namely COST and UNRR, it has not mentioned how these committee will replace ISCG and SEG or how all these four types of committee will proceed. Nothing has mentioned that how Local and National NGO will be participated in those committees.
 - b. Representation of the NGOs will be based on higher level of coverage, and which have to be come through NGOP. It means there will be very little space for local and national NGOs.
 - c. Like previous several papers in recent past, it has not mentioned Local and National NGOs, in view of the UN and IASC policies. They mentioned it as “Bangladeshi NGO”, indeed which disguise the basic premise of localization in RR.
 - d. There are nothing about how the coordination will be happened with RRRC (Refugee Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner) who is the highest government representation and has the power to say final. They have also not mentioned the involvement of DC (Deputy Commissioner), legally who is responsible for NGO operaiton in the camps and in the districts.
6. **Coordination / Management by Objectives.** In fact, any coordination mechanism should have some objectives, we hardly find such objectives in this regard. e.g., we strongly feel that, the proposed coordination mechanism should be.
 - (i) To cope with the reduce level of aid, so that the refugee and host community will receive best and quality services, without any duplication and without losing quality of services,
 - (ii) To keep tranquility, social cohesion, peaceful co-existence in the locality. We believe that, we all have a great concern in this regard as there are increase level of anti-refugee narratives in Coxsbazar, but there are dearth of human right based local leaders in Coxsabazar, we should take them in our side with the leadership of government.

- (iii) To promote as much as best possible approach of inclusivity, especially to the local actors (i.e., local government and local NGOs), to promote “whole of society approach”.
- (iv) To ensure best possible technology and know-how transfer to local government institutions and local NGOs so that they will take over the operational responsibilities.

7. CCNF do like to propose following in this regard, most of these have been shared with UN and ISCG officials several time, we are reiterating those again.

- (i) There should be representation of local, national and international NGO should be decided by those NGO groups democratically, it should not be by coverage or through NGOP. UNRR should follow the IASC policy and guidelines to identify the local and national NGOs, there should not be a smoke screen in using so called terminology “Bangladeshi.”
- (ii) In the name of rationalization local NGOs should not be dropped to participate in response in camps, as they are collecting fund from country and abroad with their hard effort, JRP and any other documents should be considered as live documents in this regard. There should be a local NGO representation in the rationalization group.
- (iii) We have been always proposing single line response management with RRRC and DC in the leadership, as the head of the response management. ISCG and sector management should be reviewed in this regard. It should be a “counterpart approach” rather than a “parallel approach” with RRRC office and ISCG. In each sector, district level government agencies should be included. There should be a representation in ISCG and different committees, for elected local leaders of Unions and Upazila, where refugee camps are situated.
- (iv) There are several long pending issues lying which is needed especial attention of UN and donor agencies, (i) there are 14 host community family house in camps, they should be assisted to leave the place. (ii) Camps situated in social afforestation schemes, those scheme holder should receive appropriate compensation, (iii) there are long term pending proposal that, that the salt and dry fish should be purchased from local entrepreneurs, (iv) especial livelihood project should be initiated for the fisherman who lost their income as fishing is being ban in Naf river, and (iv) UNRR should declare plan on environmental restoration, especially banning plastic use and limiting ground water extractions.
- (v) It is the SEG who have formed committee on localization task force, who have had worked for 24 months, leded by UNDP and IFRC, participated by UNHCR, FCDO/UKAid, Oxfam and SCI. They have had engaged CPJ (Centre for Peace and Justice) of BRAC University for field study and to propose a localization road map in RR. The report has published during first quarter of 2021. UNRR should examine road map recommendations, consider to follow the road map. In future, all the field operation should be leded by local and national NGOs, UN and INGOs should be limited in fund raising, monitoring and technical assistance. They should follow their commitment in Grand Bargain 2.0, especially minimum 25 % direct funding to local organization, participation revolution and transparency. They should also follow the commitment to New Way of Working and Charter 4 Change. We are so astonished that there are not a single word or sentence on these international commitments in the UNRR coordination paper.

- (vi) [It is the CCNF have proposed to the then ERC Mark Loo Cock in October 2017, have proposed for representation in HoSoG, but we found it has been twisted now.](#) We feel whatever there are revised or new structure, HoSoG will be remained as a powerful body. We reiterate our position, that there should be a representation from Local NGOs, in HoSoG.
- (vii) [Grand Bargain field demonstration mission in September 2018](#) has proposed to consider to use Bangla language in Coxsbazar level, we feel this will enhance participation of local NGO and local government leadership.
- (viii) There are several EoI invitation have been circulated by INGOs and UN agencies for Coxsbazar, but after selection process, there are no regret letter to applying organizations. A regret letter should be given mentioning that why they have not been selected. There should be a policy and transparent practice in respect of partner or grantee selection, so that there will be competition among NGOs for good governance and effectivity. Local NGO s EoI should not only for showing that it was a competitive process. We observe there are some smell of cronyism in this regard.

CCNF (www.cxb-cso-ngo.org), dated 26th September 2022.

The End