

Terms of Reference
NGO Forum “Razem” Localization Study
Working title: Grand Bargain Commitments (Poland Case Study)

Project: NGO Forum “Razem” Localization Study on Polish L/NNGOs and CSOs experience with the Grand Bargain Localization Commitments inside the Ukraine Refugee Response in Poland.

Project period: June-December 2023

Partners: CARE, NRC, Oxfam, Plan International, Save the Children, PAH/NGO Forum

First draft: 12/05/2023

Current version: 13/07/2023

Background

Over the last year Poland has become the site of international humanitarian response to the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The encounter of the international systems, contextual nuance and local practice has provoked discussions on how the localization commitments of the humanitarian sector are being carried out in Poland and if they are meeting the expectations of the L/NNGOs and CSOs as well as donors, UN agencies and INGOs. These discussions play into a bigger conversation around localization of humanitarian aid. Since the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, localization has become a vital part of the mainstream humanitarian reform agenda. Recognizing, respecting, and strengthening the independence of the local/national actors is a course of action agreed on by humanitarian actors through a series of commitments, with the goal being to better address the needs of the affected populations and ensure their participation in the decision-making processes. Localization remains at heart of the humanitarian reform discussion, together with “quality funding” being named the enabling priorities of the Grand Bargain 2.0 Framework. While progress has been noted, the significant barriers identified were identified as well, together with the necessity of better tracking mechanisms and higher participatory involvement of the local actors needed.

Objective:

The NGO Forum “Razem” Localization Study - working title “Grand Bargain Commitments (Poland Case Study)” - aims to analyze and inform how the international humanitarian support in Poland is being implemented with L/NNGOs and CSOs, in relation to the Grand Bargain Localization Commitments, in particular Core Commitments 2.1: **multi-year investments in the institutional capacities of local and national responders** and 2.4: **funding for local actors as directly as possible**, and Commitment 2.3:

local/national actors in coordination structures. This understanding will inform the local and regional strategies and allow evidence-based decision-making for the progress of the localization agenda in the European context, as well as input lessons coming from the Polish experience into the global conversation by identification of current gaps and challenges in the implementation of the Grand Bargain Localisation Commitments and the development of concrete and viable solutions to improve the localized and sustainable responses.

Initiative Partners and Background:

The study will be conducted thanks to support of the Financing Partners: CARE, NRC, Oxfam and Contributing Partners: Plan International, Save the Children, as well as the commitment of the Study's Operator: PAH. This joint effort was initiated inside the Polish NGO Forum "Razem", and should be understood as an output of its Partnership Working Group.

Outputs:

The expected output is a comprehensive study, between 40 and 50 pages long (annexes excluded), typed size 12, single spacing, designed with infographics and following NGO Forum "Razem" visual identification; using Key Informant Interviews as the key approach for data collection, and including:

0. Acknowledgements, Foreword (written by the Steering Committee)
1. Executive summary (3 pages maximum)
2. List of acronyms
3. Project context (description of how the project came to be and its development, including constraints)
4. Methodology and limitations
5. **Situation analysis:** Polish L/NNGOs and CSOs characteristic before the 24th of February 2022 (characteristics, dynamics, capacities, and networks) and their engagement in the emergency phase. International actors' arrival or expansion in Poland due to the Ukraine Response, profiles of organizations and ways of engagement.

Suggested Research Questions:

- *How were different organizations defining success and their objectives for the Ukraine Refugee Response in Poland?*
- *What were the L/NNGOs and CSOs expectations of the international actors? What were their first impressions?*

- *How were the international actors envisioning the implementation of the localization agenda in Poland? What surprised them?*

Local actors:

- *What were the main challenges of the Third Sector in Poland prior to the Ukraine response?*
- *What was the experience of Polish L/NNGOs in accessing international funding prior to the Ukraine Refugee Response? What was the differentiated experience of local Women's Rights Organizations (WROs), LGBTQ+, Roma-led, persons with disabilities, minority and youth-led organizations in accessing international funding?*
- *What was the context of the L/NNGOs and CSOs specialized in minority rights prior to the 24th of February 2022?*
- *Can we differentiate groups/profiles of the Polish L/NNGOs and CSOs that later got engaged in the humanitarian response?*
- *What was the mandate/profile of Polish L/NNGOs that were among the first responders? How did they adapt to be able to provide humanitarian assistance? Were L/NNGOs and CSOs specialized in minority rights included in the humanitarian response?*
- *What was the context of the Ukraine diasporal organizations in Poland prior to the 24th of February 2022? What was the role of the Ukrainian diaspora organization in the humanitarian response in Poland?*

International actors:

- *What UN agencies entered or expanded their operations in Poland due to the Ukraine Refugee Response and how did they do it?*
- *How was the coordination role of UNHCR defined? When and how was the Refugee Coordination Model introduced?*
- *Can we differentiate groups/profiles of the INGOs that entered or expanded their operations in Poland? What were their strategies of engagement?*
- *How many of the Grand Bargain Signatories were active in the Ukraine Refugee Response in Poland?*

6. Comparative analysis between the targets of the **Grand Bargain Localization Commitments** (especially Core Commitments 2.1: **multi-year investments in the institutional capacities of local and national responders** and 2.4: **funding for local actors as directly as possible**, and Commitments 2.2 **addressing barriers for local-international partnerships**, 2.3: **local/national actors in coordination structures**), expected result vs. reality for L/NNGOs and CSOs.

Suggested Research Questions:

Core Commitment 2.1: Increase and support multi-year investments in the institutional capacities of local and national responders, including preparedness, response and coordination.

- *How fulfillment of this commitment is linked to the funding visibility for the international organizations from their upstream donors?*
- *What is the funding visibility of L/NNGOs in Poland?*
- *What is the average duration of the program?*
- *How the programs funded by INGOs / UN include the elements of exit strategy?*
- *To what extent (in terms of budget) international actors invested in building fundraising and operational capacity and sustainability of local partners?*
- *What are the main challenges faced by local and national responders in accessing and utilizing multi-year investments for capacity building ?*
- *To what extent has the back donor regulations been modified/changed at requests of national actors to align with this commitment? Are there any collective actions that have been undertaken by national actors and/or INGOs to lobby for changes in back donor funding regulations to align with this commitment?*
- *How did the Ukraine refugee response affect funding and program implementation capacity of Polish L/NNGOs and CSOs?*

Commitment 2.2. Understand better and work to remove or reduce the barriers that prevent organizations and donors from partnering with local and national responders in order to lessen their administrative burden.

- *How were the contractual partnerships set-up and how was it changing over time?*
- *What were the modalities of the contractual partnerships offered to L/NNGOs and CSOs by INGOs and UN agencies, that took into account the differences in their capacity?*
- *Who might have been excluded in the process from forming the partnerships? For what reasons?*
- *How were international actors sharing the risk of fulfilling the donor requirements with the local partners?*
- *What are the main barriers that international actors and donors face when partnering with L/NNGOs and CSOs, and what are the specific administrative challenges faced by these local actors?*
- *What strategies or initiatives have been implemented to address and overcome these barriers in order to reduce the administrative burden on local and national responders? And how effective was that in scaling up partnership based programming?*
- *How do funding mechanisms and requirements impact the administrative burden on L/NNGOs and CSOs? Have we seen any initiatives in terms of reducing administrative burden and streamlining processes?*
- *How can capacity-building efforts be tailored to support L/NNGOs and CSOs effectively navigating administrative requirements and fostering sustainable partnerships?*
- *How are the challenges the international actors face in partnering with the L/NNGOs and CSOs in Poland connected to their global modus operandi?*

Commitment 2.3. Support and complement national coordination mechanisms where they exist and include national and local responders in international coordination mechanisms as appropriate and in-keeping with humanitarian principles.

- *Make use of: [Document - Localization in UNHCR-led coordination structures](#) and provide a breakdown of the L/NNGOs involvement with the Refugee Coordination Forum. What Sectors and Working Groups were/are co-led by the L/NNGOs? What is the level of L/NNGOs participation in the Sectors and Working Group?*
- *What is the local co-chairs experience? What is the international co-chairs experience?*
- *How do INGOs translate the term as "appropriate" in "include national and local responders in international coordination mechanisms as appropriate"?*
- *What is the engagement of the Refugee Coordination Forum with the NGO-led local coordination networks at municipal or voivodeship level?*
- *How effectively do international actors support and complement national coordination mechanisms? Have any mechanisms been adapted for better inclusion?*
- *Main barriers for integrating L/NNGOs and CSOs in international coordination mechanisms (language, agendas, locations, Rs&Rs, power dynamics, cultural considerations, etc). What strategies have been successful in promoting their meaningful participation and inclusion?*
- *What is the added value of L/NNGOs and CSOs participation?*
- *What is the added value for L/NNGOs and CSOs?*
- *What mechanisms or processes are in place to ensure effective communication, information sharing, and decision-making between international, national, and local responders within coordination mechanisms?*
- *What are the key lessons learned and best practices identified in the efforts to support and include L/NNGOs and CSOs in the international coordination mechanisms? What processes are in place to ensure effective communication, information sharing, and inclusive decision-making?*
- *What was the differentiated experience of local WROs, LGBTQ+, minority, Roma-led, persons with disabilities organizations, and youth-led organizations participating in the coordination mechanisms?*
- *How does the [IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms](#) relate to the experience of the L/NNGOs and CSOs inside the Refugee Coordination Forum in Poland?*
- *The role of NGO Forum "Razem" in coordination. How did it support connections between L/NNGOs and CSOs among themselves and with the international actors? What was its impact on decisions made by international actors?*
- *How do L/NNGOs and CSOs assess the state of dialogue between all actors? What are the coordination fora they consider most important for their organizations?*
- *How do INGOs assess the state of dialogue between all actors? What are the coordination fora they consider most important for their organizations?*

Core Commitment 2.4: Achieve by 2020, a global aggregated target of at least 25% of humanitarian funding to local and national responders as directly as possible to improve outcomes for affected people and reduce transaction costs.

- *Was the 25% indicator met for the Ukraine Refugee Response in Poland in Poland?*
- *What was the percentage of the budgets of the international actors active in the Ukraine Refugee Response in Poland that went directly to the L/NNGOs? How does it relate to their global percentage?*
- *How has the amount of funding support towards direct implementation by local and national responders changing over time from the beginning of the humanitarian response? What have been the key factors explaining these trends?*
- *What are the future plans of INGOs in terms of ratio of direct service and work through partners? What is the reasoning behind these strategies?*

Commitment 2.6. Make greater use of funding tools which increase and improve assistance delivered by local and national responders, such as the UN-led country-based pooled funds (CBPF), IFRC Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) and NGO-led and other pooled funds.

- *How are the international actors linking local partners to donors? How do they work with donors for a better understanding of the local context and a greater openness to support L/NNGOs and CSOs?*
- *How does the humanitarian response happening inside the European Union influence the availability of the funding tools? Impact of the long-term funding for the civil society vs. short-term emergency budgets of the international actors.*

7. **Quality of the contractual partnerships.** An anonymous overview of contractual setups and approaches between international organizations (INGOs and UN) and Polish L/NNGOs and CSOs, in terms of good and bad practice, making use of *The Voluntary Guidelines on the Nature of Contractual Partnerships* (NGO Forum “Razem” Partnership Working Group Document) and guidance notes from the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream.

8. **Evolution of the relationships over the 18 months.**

Suggested Research Questions:

- *What was the impact of the [Letter to the International Donors](#) from October 2022 and what measures were taken in place after its publication? Inside the individual agencies and collectively?*

- *What contractual relationships between the international actors and the L/NNGOs and CSOs continued out of the emergency phase and are now long-standing? What contributed to those decisions?*
 - *Taking into account that the majority of the refugees coming to Poland were women and children, did international actors work together with L/NNGOs and CSOs to include women and girls specific issues in the humanitarian response?*
 - *Was joint or complementary advocacy possible? In what cases? Who was leading the process?*
 - *How do INGOs, L/NNGOs and CSOs perceive the role of the NGO Forum “Razem” in terms of being the space of encounter of international and local actors? How do UN agencies, acting in the Forum as Observers?*
 - *How do international actors assess their future presence in Poland? Are INGOs engaged in preparation of local partners to take-over and own withdrawal in the long-term? How do the international actors see the future raising funding available on national and European level in synergy/competition with local actors?*
 - *After 18 months, how do the L/NNGOs and CSOs define a good partnership with the international actors and vice versa? What are examples of good practice in building equitable partnerships and overcoming challenges in relationships? How does it relate to the Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream Guide Note on Partnership ([Guidance on Localisation \(ifrc.org\)](https://www.ifrc.org/publications/guide-note-on-partnership))?*
 - *How would the L/NNGOs and CSOs define localization in Poland now? How would international actors?*
 - *The localization of international actors. What are the trends we are observing and how to look at the blurring lines between local and international in connection with the [IASC “localization marker”](#).*
9. Analysis of **impact of the Ukraine Refugee Response** on the Third Sector in Poland (labor market, internal policies, growth, new initiatives).

Suggested Research Questions:

- *Does localization minimize the “brain drain” effect? With INGOs not recruiting heavily from the local civil society to set up their own programming? Or was it something that did affect the Polish Third Sector?*
- *Who benefitted from the localization agenda - the main local actors and diaspora actors in the big cities? What about the smaller ones in smaller cities?*
- *How do L/NNGOs and CSOs assess their future in terms of stability of service?*
- *What is the self-perceived quality of the network around the L/NNGO or CSO?*
- *How do L/NNGOs and CSOs perceive their internal capacity, did it grow? Do they value and plan to continue with the internal policies they implemented to establish contractual partnerships with international actors? Are there new positions in the organizations introduced that they plan to keep in the future?*

- *How did the Ukraine refugee response affect funding and program implementation capacity of Polish L/NNGOs and CSOs?*
- *How do the above mentioned organizations envision their place in the humanitarian system in a few years? Are the ones that were not specializing in migration planning to continue their work, or did their programming become more multicultural?*

10. Breakdown of **barriers and enablers** for localization agenda to be realized in Poland.

11. **Recommendations.**

12. (Annex) **Framework for measuring progress** of localization in the Polish context based on a comprehensive analysis of L/NNGOs and CSOs expectations in terms of localization and their own definition of it.

This report will be shared with the stakeholders involved in the humanitarian response in Poland, including: L/NNGOs, CSOs, INGOs, UN agencies, authorities, donors, as well as broadly disseminated among the global humanitarian community. The outreach will be conducted through online publications, mailing, use of NGO Forum “Razem” network and support of the Localization Study Steering Committee. The **Polish** (physical roundtable) **and international** (online, unless additional funding secured) **report launch** will be organized.

Roles and Responsibilities:

For the NGO Forum “Razem” Localization Study success it is vital to approach it as a joint effort of L/NNGOs, CSOs and INGOs operating in the humanitarian response in Poland and united in the Forum. This applies not only to the specific roles described below but also to the communication with the stakeholders the Research Team will be approaching and the individuals to be invited for the Key Informant Interviews.

Financing and Contributing Partners (CARE, NRC, Oxfam, Plan International, Save the Children) commit to sponsor the Localization Study at the levels agreed upon in the Localization Study MoU, through bilateral contracts with the study’s Operator. They commit to provide technical assistance and expertise to support the selection of the service providers. To continue their meaningful engagement throughout the process they will form an INGO Sub-committee/Reference Group and select its representatives for the Localization Study Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee ensures the plurality of voices and perspectives to be respected in the Localization Study. It is the entity responsible for approving the methodology of the Research Team and

accepting the final version of Localization Study for its open publication. The detailed responsibilities of the Steering Committee Members can be found in the attached Steering Committee Terms of Reference.

Study participants support the Localization Study by promoting active engagement and providing easy access to data by INGOs and other international organizations operating in Poland. The humanitarian community and Polish L/NGOs active in the Ukraine response can be consulted and engaged via the **Partnership Working Group** inside the NGO Forum “Razem”.

Operator (PAH) is responsible for the Localization Study project execution, including selection of the service providers to form the Research Team and their oversight. Selection process needs to be done in consultation with the Steering Committee for alignment with financing organizations procurement policies and to enhance accountability. Detailed responsibilities of the Operator can be found in the Localization Study MoU. As the Operator acts as the Hosting Agency for the NGO Forum “Razem” Secretariat, the **NGO Forum “Razem”Coordinator** will act as the project lead, taking responsibility of the program oversight.

Research Team is responsible for conducting the research and writing the Localization Study, relying on support of the Operator and the Steering Committee.

Research Team Composition and Selection Criteria:

To ensure meeting the Localization Study objective it is imperative to combine expertise on humanitarian localization commitment and the Polish context. For that reason, the successful consultant bid will have the required experience and contextual understanding for the above TOR.

Selection Criteria:

Consultant bids will be reviewed against the following criteria for selecting the final consultancy team:

Minimum requirements:

- Research Team composition includes the required experience and contextual understanding for the Localization Study ToR.
- Research Team is expected to conduct interviews and consult literature in Polish and English.
- Research Team has necessary tools and capacity to conduct the research on a given timeline.
- Research Team demonstrates a clear understanding of the Third Sector dynamics in Poland.
- Research Team demonstrates an awareness of the tools and frameworks for measuring performance against Grand Bargain Commitments and is up to date with the GB evolution, including directions of Grand Bargain 3.0.
- Research Team demonstrates an awareness of the dynamics surrounding the localization debate and is aware different approaches to localization.

Additional criteria:

- Research Team has undertaken research on the Ukraine Refugee Response, especially on the topic of localization.
- Research Team has undertaken research on migration phenomena in Poland.
- Research Team has conducted similar research for L/NGOs in other contexts.
- Research Team demonstrates clear familiarity and/or experience using frameworks for measuring progress against Grand Bargain Commitments, such as:
 - https://humanitarianadvisorygroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Measuring-Localisation-Framework-and-Tools-Final_2019.pdf
 - https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5fc4fd249698b02c7f3acfe9/t/6011621dba655709b8342a4c/1611751983166/LMPF+Final_2019.pdf
- Research Team has undertaken similar research projects previously, for example, scopes of work similar to:
 - <https://gblocalisation.ifrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Iraq-Mission-Report.pdf>
 - <https://www.icvanetwork.org/uploads/2023/02/Measuring-Humanitarian-Localisation-in-Yemen-Study.pdf>

Consultancy bid proposes detailed methodology to best address the research objectives, including:

- First deliverable: Inception report presenting detailed research tools and process to be reviewed and agreed by Steering Committee
- Second deliverable: Preliminary findings workshop with Steering Committee
- Third deliverable: Draft report for review by Steering Committee
- Fourth deliverable: Second draft for review by Steering Committee
- Fifth deliverable: Final report for review by Steering Committee with clear and actionable recommendations for all organizations, designed with infographics and using the NGO Forum “Razem” visual identification
- Sixth deliverable: Final report translated into Polish
- Seventh deliverable: Presentation to HoA and NGO Forum “Razem”, including submitting the PPT file

Consultant bid should represent good value for money, it is the Steering Committee recommendation to the Operator and the Financing Parties, to make available information about the budget range available for the Study.

Methodology:

Key Informant Interviews will be used as the key approach for data collection, complemented by the secondary data analysis, including an anonymous overview of contractual setups and approaches between INGOs and L/NGOs, in terms of good and bad practice. The self-assessment survey can be

proposed. The Research Team is expected to conduct around 100 KIIs, with Steering Committee support in their scheduling.

To develop a methodology appropriate for delivering the expected outcomes, the selected Research Team will make use of the Suggested Research Questions included in this ToR and refer to them in the Inception Report, justifying to what extent the proposed research will answer them. The Research Team should treat the questions as the explanation of the Steering Committee interest in the Localization Study, but combine them with its expertise and come up with a coherent and manageable research. The consultancy submitting the bid can budget separately for parts that could, but would not need to be included in the study. The methodology should include ethical considerations.

To identify indicators to measure localization against it will make use of the vast literature on the subject, including but not limited to *Localisation in Practice: Emerging Indicators & Practical Recommendation*, ACF, START Network, UK Aid, CDAC, 2018, *IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms*, IASC, 2021 and *Localisation in UNHCR-led coordination structures*, UNHCR, 2023, as well as the lessons learned from the L/NGOs that have set their measuring frameworks for their specific contexts. The list of the literature to consult will be presented to the selected Research Team by the Steering Committee.

Preliminary Timeframe and Division of Responsibilities:

	When	Derivable	Responsible
1.	End of August	Research Team selected, contract signed	Operator: PAH (to establish a Tender Commission), Steering Committee
2.	Mid September	Inception report presenting detailed research tools and process to be reviewed and agreed by Steering Committee, Partnership Working Group to be invited for the review process	Research Team, Steering Committee, Partnership Working Group
3.	September	Preliminary findings workshop with Steering Committee	Research Team, Steering Committee

4.	September	Dissemination plan for 2024	Steering Committee, Partnership Working Group
5.	First week of November	Draft Report & Review (10 working days, Steering Committee to consult with Partnership Working Group)	Research Team, Steering Committee, Partnership Working Group
6.	Mid November	Second Draft Report & Review (5 days)	Research Team, Steering Committee
7.	End of November	Final Report (with initial design and infographics) & Review (5 days)	Research Team, Steering Committee
8.	December	Final Report	Research Team
9.	December	Final Report Translated into Polish	Research Team
10.	December	Presentation to Heads of Agencies and NGO Forum "Razem"	Research Team in person
11.	December	Confirmation of the dissemination action plan for 2024	Steering Committee, Partnership Working Group
12.	September - December	Weekly checks, 30 min	Research Team, Operator, Steering Committee non obligatory attendance