



We, the undersigned organisations, welcome the increasing recognition that action on locally-led crisis response has been inadequate and transformative reform is needed. Now is the time for humanitarian actors to deliver meaningful change.

In the case of international NGO signatories:

- We commit our organisations to implement the 8-point Charter for Change by 2026 ensuring it is communicated effectively to staff, country offices, partners, donors and other stakeholders.
- We also commit to reporting annually on progress.

In the case of national and local NGOs working in partnership with international NGOs:

- We endorse and support this Charter for Change. We will engage with our international NGO partners who are signatories of the Charter to strengthen accountability for these commitments.
- We will actively seek those who are not signatories to this Charter to sign up.
- We will endorse the Charter for Accountability¹ to strengthen our engagement and accountability to the crisis affected population.

The 8-point Charter for Change

Point 1. Increase direct quality funding inclusive of Indirect Cost Recovery to national and local NGOs for humanitarian action: As of 2022, only 1.2% of humanitarian aid was channelled directly to national and local actors (including national governments, NGOs and CSOs) for humanitarian work.² We commit through advocacy and policy influence on Global North donors (including institutional donors, foundations and private sector) to increase the year on year percentage of their humanitarian funding going to national and local NGOs. We commit that by 2026 at least 25% and more of our humanitarian funding will be passed to national and local NGOs.

Point 2. Affirm and endorse the outcomes of the Grand Bargain Caucus on the Role of Intermediaries and the IASC risk sharing framework: We recognise that agencies must endorse and go beyond the UN/NGO Principles of Partnership (Equality, Transparency, Results-Oriented Approach, Responsibility and Complementarity) by establishing clear systems and processes to action these in our agencies and with our local partners. We will also advocate to donors and innovate our partnerships to strengthen mutual accountability and systematic

¹<https://charter4change.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/charter-of-accountability-of-endorsers-2024.pdf>

²

<https://devpolicy.org/state-of-the-humanitarian-system-growing-threats-missing-links-20221129/>



approaches to partnership health/quality, including risk sharing, with national and local partners.

Point 3. Increase transparency around resource transfers to national and local NGOs: A significant change in approaches towards transparency is needed in order to build trust, accountability and efficiency of investments channelled to national actors via international intermediaries. We commit to document the types of organisation we cooperate with in humanitarian response using the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) definition and to publish these figures (or percentages) in our public accounts using for instance the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standard.

Point 4. Stop undermining local capacity: We commit to implement fair recruitment policies to discourage the poaching of staff from national and local NGOs (as this severely undermines their capacity to operate, particularly in the height of emergency response). We will explore alternatives with our partners such as secondments, mentoring or supporting national surge initiatives. Linked to this, we will explore options to promote the "Why Not Local?" principle by configuring our agency, country presence and partnerships to reinforce local actors to lead. We will also explore ways to address salary disparity at the country level to improve staff retention in local actors.

Point 5. Emphasise the importance of national actors: We will advocate to donors to make working through local and national actors part of their criteria for assessing framework partners and calls for project proposals. We commit to introduce our local/national NGO partners to our own direct donors with the aim of them accessing direct financing and we will lobby donors to commit a percentage of their funding to local/national organisations.

Point 6. Address subcontracting: We will ensure that our local and national partners are co-owners who have a leading role in the design of the programmes and decision-making processes from the outset throughout the programme cycle and the partnership agreement.

Point 7. Robust organisational support and capacity strengthening: We will support local actors to become robust organisations that continuously improve their role and share in the overall global humanitarian response. We will coordinate to avoid duplication of capacity assessment and support. We undertake to pay adequate administrative support and publish the percentages of our humanitarian budget that go directly to partners for institutional strengthening and capacity sharing by 2026. A test of our seriousness in capacity strengthening is that by 2026 we will have allocated resources to support our partners in this. We acknowledge that communities, local and national partners dispose of a rich spectrum of knowledge, skills and capacities and therefore we will encourage and support methodologies of mutual learning and exchange.



Point 8. Communication to the media and the public about partners, crisis-affected communities and the contexts in which we operate: In any communications to the international and national media and to the public, we will promote the role of local and national actors and acknowledge the work that they carry out and include them as spokespersons. In addition, we will ensure that our communications reinforce the dignity of the people that we and our partners serve; countering racist and colonialist narratives about people and countries affected by crises. To promote inclusivity and representation, we will prioritise diverse voices from crisis-affected communities. Collaborative storytelling and using visual and written narratives that reflect cultural diversity can help amplify marginalised voices and counter harmful narratives.

Signed by: (INGOs)

Endorsed by: (Local and National NGOs)

To sign or endorse this Charter for Change please email admin@charter4change.org with the full name of your organisation.

Original text: July 2015
Revised version February 2019

Current Revised Version March 2024