**Advocacy Strategy for Localization in Turkey Prepared by the Localization Advocacy Group (LAG) Time Period: October 2020 – December 2021**

# Background

A group of Turkey based NGOs have come together to explore how they can conduct joint advocacy on localization. There was an identified need for these organisations to fill a gap and engage in collective advocacy towards key humanitarian actors and decision makers in order to improve the humanitarian response and approach of international players and the Turkish government regarding localization.

The reference for the Localization Advocacy Group (LAG)\* is the localization commitments in the Grand Bargain that was signed at the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul in May 2016.

In terms of creating locally-led alternatives, the NEAR network and its advocacy products on localization has been an inspiration.

# Problem Statement

Local and national NGOs (LNNGOs) are often marginalised from the humanitarian system and do not have sufficient funding, space or power. LNNGOs are often hesitant to engage in individual advocacy with international humanitarian actors, donors or their government for fear of being put on the side lines, not considered for future funding or even repercussions.

Despite being the first responders, they often have little to no influence on how and where they operate in crisis situations. This means they have little influence on funding channelled to LNNGOs, the quality of partnerships, investment in capacity and management structures, their place and role in coordination fora, and their visibility and influence in relation to the work they get done on the ground. These are all areas that are problematic and need to be tackled from the perspective of Turkey based NGOs.

# Vision

Improvements are made in the quality and quantity of humanitarian funding channelled to LNNGOs in Turkey, and more genuine and equitable partnerships are created which provide LNNGOs the appropriate conditions to better respond to the needs of affected communities.

Working both within and outside the humanitarian system, locally-led alternative coordination and funding mechanisms can become a reality in Turkey.

* These are 26 LNNGOs that currently receive humanitarian funding in Turkey, including 4 refugee-led organizations.

# SMART Objectives

* 1. Every international humanitarian actor channelling funds to Turkey has increased their % of total funding to LNNGOs compared to the year before.
  2. Every international humanitarian actor channelling funds to Turkey provides lumpsum funding to cover overheads/indirect costs/management related expenses of the partner (i.e. non-project funding).
  3. All humanitarian donors present in Turkey agree to the accrual of severance obligations in designated bank accounts of the LNNGO, which are interest-bearing.
  4. All humanitarian donors present in Turkey agree that any premium incentives and discounts received from the Social Security agency (SGK) will remain with the LNNGO in order to accumulate a ‘risk fund’ to cover government liabilities and risks related to humanitarian operations.
  5. Every international humanitarian actor channelling funds to Turkey agrees to designate budget lines specific to capacity investment (separate from direct project budget lines).
  6. Every international humanitarian actor channelling funds to Turkey agrees to resource leadership and participation of LNNGOs in cluster coordination, HCT and in related strategic advisory groups of the formal humanitarian structures in country.
  7. The Government of Turkey signs up as a new signatory to the next iteration of the Grand Bargain.

Apart from improvements in the humanitarian system as it currently functions, the LAG will push for national coordination fora as well as the creation of alternative funding mechanisms that are locally- owned and locally-managed.

**Tactics**

Initially bilateral advocacy will be the primary tactic. Given the political climate and its potentially low impact, public focused tactics (such as media campaigns) will not be appropriate at this stage.

The LAG will develop evidence-based messaging to deliver to specific targets/target groups (donors, INGOs, UN agencies, Turkish government) and other stakeholders.

# Ways of Working

The group meets periodically every 2 weeks. Refugee-led organizations have a Turkish speaking representative who takes part in the meeting discussions. In addition to joint work during the biweekly meetings, preparatory work and drafts are being developed by member orgs as needed. Key documents are available in both Turkish and English.

For the time being, Support to Life (STL) is hosting the meetings, however, there is need to start looking for ways of resourcing a secretariat for the LAG. In the long run, the ideal situation is for each LAG member to have their own Localization Officer in order to become more actively engaged and contribute to the localization agenda in a meaningful and impactful way.

LAG members will follow any upcoming opportunities/key dates at the national/regional/global level that this group can leverage.

The group agrees to share information on one another’s activity e.g., meetings with allies and key targets, in order to coordinate advocacy efforts and localization outcomes.