

IMPLEMENT THE AGENDA

Advance Localisation at Country levels

BDCSO COAST 2025 Survey Report Findings on the Grand Bargain 3.0 Implementation

Key highlights of the survey

- ◆ In terms of **Quality Funding**, 14.8% of respondents reported receiving no multi-year funding, while only 11.1% received more than 50% of their total funding as multi-year support
- ◆ Similarly, 14.8% reported no flexible funding, whereas 7.4% received over 50% of their funding as flexible grants, indicating limited scope for innovation and rapid response.
- ◆ Regarding **Localization**, 40.7% of respondents received no direct funding from non-state actors.
- ◆ Similarly, 48.1% reported no direct funding from state actors, showing fragmented and inconsistent local support.
- ◆ **Equitable partnership** funding was received fully by 22.2% of respondents, partially by 37%, and 40.7% reported no such funding, reflecting the rarity of fair and collaborative agreements.
- ◆ For **Indirect Cost Recovery (ICR)**, 26% of respondents received full coverage, 37% partial, and 37% none, creating sustainability challenges for local NGOs.
- ◆ **Participation** of LNAs in coordination mechanisms was very limited, with only 7.4% respondents describing their involvement as supported by donors/intermediaries/INGOs very well.
- ◆ Similarly, 29.6% of respondents said their donors and intermediaries do not have policies for systematically engaging communities.
- ◆ Systematic **Community Feedback Mechanisms** were in place for 59.3% of respondents NGOs, yet 40% said their affected populations remained unreachable by that system.
- ◆ **In terms of Gender**, Women-led organizations received minimal direct funding, with only 18.5% of respondents benefiting, covering 3.7–14.8% of their total humanitarian funding, often insufficient for meaningful project outcomes.
- ◆ **Risk-sharing** was largely absent, with 33.3% of respondents experiencing none, 51.9% said about some progress, and only 3.7% said significant progress, leaving local actors to bear operational, security, and legal risks.
- ◆ The donors/intermediaries are scaling up **Anticipatory Action** efforts, reported by 40.7% of respondents, with 40.7% said no, highlighting the need for expansion

Background

COAST Foundation is hosting the BDCSO Process (<https://bd-cso-ngo.net>) secretariat, a network of Local/National NGOs in Bangladesh that became a signatory of the Grand Bargain in March 2025 with an aim to advance the Grand Bargain localization agenda in the country and abroad. As part of the 2025 yearly reporting process to track the progress of localisation in the country, the network launched a survey for its local and national NGOs and networks to capture the real-time status of the Grand Bargain Agenda.

Objective

The primary objective was to capture the real-time collective feedback on localisation, participation and funding to get the ground reality and donor reporting in order to address any gaps that hinder the localization process in Bangladesh.

Methodology

BDCSO COAST developed an online survey questionnaire aligned with the Grand Bargain Reporting Template to capture real-time progress on funding and other issues in Bangladesh. The survey link was shared with network members of local and

national humanitarian actors in Bangladesh and remained open for 18 days (16 June to 3 July 2025). After the survey closed, BDCSO COAST compiled, analyzed the responses, and prepared the report.

Limitation

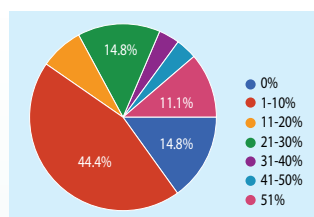
The survey faced some limitations in both reporting and data calculation. Since it was based on the Grand Bargain Reporting Template, it was not fully tailored to local and national actors. Some respondents struggled to provide detailed funding information, including amounts and percentages of direct funding from donors, government, and philanthropic sources, indirect funding, and flexible funding categories. Additionally, respondents did not receive prior orientation on the survey, making it challenging to answer accurately.

Detailed survey findings:

The survey collected data for reporting from the period of 1 January to 31 December 2024. A total of 27 local and national humanitarian actors and networks in Bangladesh responded to the survey. Among them, 55.6% were local NGOs and 44.4% were national NGOs and networks. The survey reveals significant gaps in funding, localization, participation, gender responsiveness, risk-sharing, and anticipatory action. The details are-

1. Quality funding

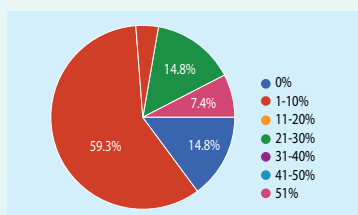
1.1. Of the total humanitarian funding received in 2024 by your local/national organization, how much % was multi-year (with a duration of 24 months or more) funding?



14.8% of LNNGO and network members/ responders said they received no multi-year funding. 44.4% of LNNGO responders said they received 1-10% multi-year of their total funding. 7.4% of responders said they received 11-20% multi-year of their total funding. 14.8% of responders said they received 21-30% multi-year of their total funding. 3.7% of responders said they received 31-40% multi-year of their total funding. 3.7% of responders said they received 41-50% multi-year of their total funding. 11.1% of responders said they received 51+ % multi-year of their total funding.

In response to the question, if you did not receive any support, why? A few respondents explained that one of the major gaps is the lack of networking and coordination. They noted that the local organization's limited visibility and participation in national humanitarian platforms or clusters have made its activities less attractive to the funders.

1.2. Of the total humanitarian funding received in 2024, how much % was flexible funding (unearmarked, softly earmarked, earmarked, and tightly earmarked, e.g. Budget flexibility of at least 10%; Pre-financing or simplified release of funds; Simplified procedures for no-cost extensions and carryover, easy reporting, etc.)?



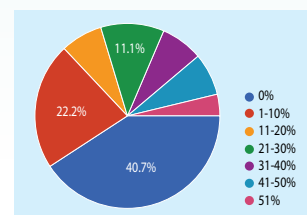
14.8% of LNNGO and network members/ responders said they received no unearmarked, softly earmarked, earmarked, and tightly earmarked funding. 59.3% of responders said they received 1-10% of their total funding as softly earmarked, earmarked, and tightly earmarked funding. 7.4% of responders said they received 11-20% of their total funding as softly earmarked, earmarked, and tightly earmarked funding. 14.8% of responders said they received 21-30% of the total such funding. 3.7% of responders said they received 31-40% of their total such funding. 3.7% of responders said they received 41-50% of their total such funding. 3.7% of responders said they received 51+ % of their total such funding.

14.8% of network members/LNNGO responders said they received no unearmarked, softly earmarked, earmarked, and tightly earmarked funding, or are not aware of that category of funding. 59.3% of responders said they received 1-10% of their total funding as softly earmarked, earmarked, and tightly earmarked funding. 7.4% of responders said they received 11-20% of their total funding as softly earmarked, earmarked, and tightly earmarked funding. 14.8% of responders said they received 21-30% of the total such funding. 7.4% of responders said they received 31-40% of their total such funding. 3.7% of responders said they received 41-50% of their total such funding. 3.7% of responders said they received 51+ % of their total such funding.

On quality funding, respondents noted that despite scope for innovation, local NGOs rarely received flexible funding due to limited negotiation capacity. The small share of flexible funding in 2024 was mostly tied to project-specific, pre-defined activities, restricting NGOs' ability to adapt to emerging needs.

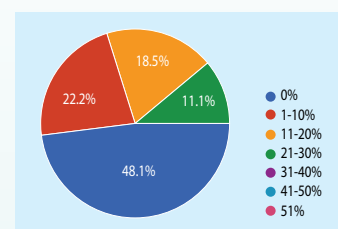
2. Localization

2.1.1 How much % of the humanitarian funding did your local/national NGO receive directly in 2024 from Local or national non-state actors (e.g. UN, INGO, RCRC, etc.)?



A total of 40.7 % of the respondents said they did not receive any such direct funding from local or national non-state actors. 22.2% of respondents said they received only 1-10% direct funding of their total funding. 8% of respondents said they received only 11-20%, 11.1% of the respondents said they received 21-30%, 8% of respondents said they received only 31-40%, also 8% of respondents said they received 41-50% and 3% of respondents said they received 51+ direct funding of their total humanitarian funding from the non-state actors.

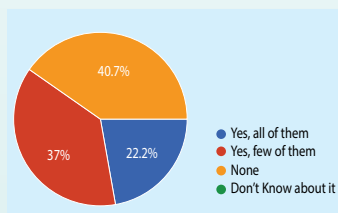
2.1.2 How much % of the humanitarian funding did your local/national NGO receive directly in 2024 from Local or national state actors (e.g., Government, Local philanthropic donors, etc.)?



A total of 48.1 % of the respondents said they did not receive any direct humanitarian funding from local and national state actors. 22.2% of respondents said they received only 1-10% direct funding of their total funding. 18.5% of respondents said they received only 11-20% and 11.1% of the respondents said they received 21-30% direct funding of their total humanitarian funding from the state actors.

Some respondents suggested that stronger government engagement with grassroots actors could increase funding flows.

2.2 Did your organization receive any humanitarian funding in 2024 that you qualify to be following an equitable partnership agreement?

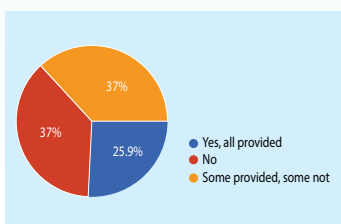


Answering this question, 22.2% of the respondents said they received such humanitarian funding that qualifies as an equitable partnership model. 37% of the respondents said yes, some of their funding was kind of following an equitable partnership model, and 40.7% of the respondents said their funding did not qualify to be following an equitable partnership agreement. Therefore, the survey found a major gap in funding that is to be considered received under an equitable partnership agreement.

Some respondents urged that funding calls should adopt equitable partnership models accessible to local actors, noting that such agreements are rare in practice. Local agencies are often treated as “implementing partners,” with limited say in planning, budgeting, or decision-making. To ensure fairness, partnerships should involve collaborative planning, genuine power-sharing, and transparent financial structures. START Fund Bangladesh was highlighted as a positive example to follow.

2.3 Did your organization receive ICR/overhead costs from your partnership?

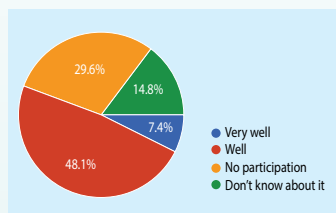
A total of 26% of respondents said yes, all of their partners provided ICR in partnership. 37% respondents said no, and also 37% respondents said some of their partners provided ICR (Indirect Cost Recovery), some did not. This experience has been identified as an obstacle to quality partnership and a barrier to the local organizations’ sustainability.



Some respondents stressed that ICR should be uniformly applied at a 10% flat rate. They noted that competition over lower ICR rates often disadvantages local NGOs, undermines sustainability, and creates an uneven playing field.

2.4 How are your donors/Intermediaries/INGOs supporting and incentivising the participation and leadership of your Local/ National NGOs, including local WROs/WLOs, in coordination mechanisms (e.g., HCTT, ICCGs, SEG, CBPF Advisory Boards, etc.)?

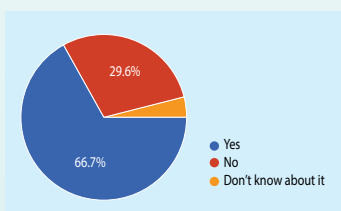
Supporting, very well said, only 7.4% of the respondents. Well, said, 48.1%. No participation in these structures, said 29.6%, and don't know it, said 14.8% of the respondents.



Some respondents said “capacity blaming” is a major issue, as local actors’ abilities are often undervalued. Instead of blaming, donors and intermediaries should invest in strengthening local NGOs’ capacity. They also noted that local participation is often tokenistic, leaving local knowledge and needs poorly reflected in policy discussions.

3. Participation

3.1 Do your donors/INGOs/Intermediaries systematically apply policies for engaging communities and people affected by

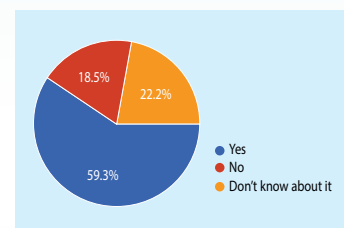


crisis, paying attention to their diversity in terms of gender, age and disability, to reflect their priorities and risks in all stages of your work?

Yes, systematically applied it, said 66.7% of the respondents. Not systematically said, 29.6%, and don't know about it said 3.7% of the respondents.

A few respondents noted that donors often fail to conduct feasibility studies or consult communities in designing work plans. While some emphasize gender, age, and disability diversity, respondents observed that risk-sharing in implementation is largely absent. They highlighted from their experience that in 2024, donors, INGOs, and intermediaries lacked systematic policies to ensure meaningful participation of crisis-affected people. Needs of women, adolescents, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and marginalized groups were not adequately reflected. Without participatory policies, feedback systems, or grievance mechanisms, community voices and risks were ignored, undermining project effectiveness, targeting, and sustainability.

3.2 Does any of your donors/INGOs/UN have a system in place to systematically collect and act upon feedback from communities and people affected by crisis on their level of satisfaction, paying particular attention to the gender, age and diversity of those giving feedback?



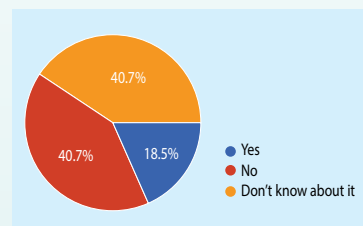
Yes, system in place, said 59.3% of the respondents. No system said 18.5%, and don't know about it said 22.2% of the respondents.

Some respondents noted that most donor agencies have mechanisms to collect feedback through focus groups, questionnaires, hotlines, etc., often considering women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. However, around 40% of respondents said their programs are excluded from these processes, reflecting a serious accountability gap and undermining the Grand Bargain's participation agenda.

4. Gender

4.1 If you are a women-led/women's rights organization, did you receive any direct humanitarian funding from donors/UN agencies/INGOs in 2024?

Among the women-led organizations of respondents, only 18.5% of respondents said yes, they received direct funding from donors and intermediaries. No said 40.7%. But when we asked them the % of it of their total funding, they said it was only from 3.71 to 14.8% of their total humanitarian funding.



A few respondents commented that funding for women's rights and empowerment is often short-term and insufficient, leaving projects incomplete and limiting meaningful, sustainable progress in women's empowerment.

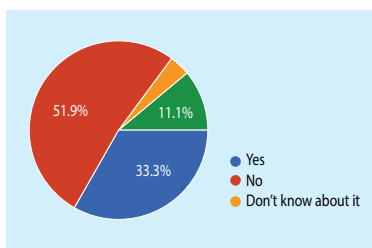
5. Risk Sharing

5.1 Being a local/national organization, did you experience your donors collectively promoting risk-sharing in your partnerships (e.g., by

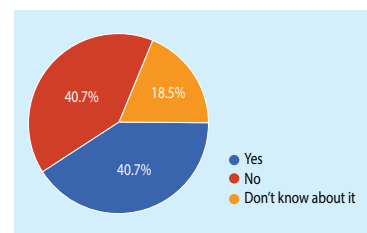
adopting internal policies or guidance on this, or by piloting the Risk Sharing Framework in operationalizing partnerships in specific contexts)?

33.3% of respondents reported no experience with risk-sharing in their partnerships. 51.9% respondents experienced some progress and discussion in risk-sharing mechanisms. Significant progress was experienced by only 3.7% respondents and don't know about it, said 11.1% of the respondents.

A few respondents highlighted that donors and partners are often unwilling to share risks, leaving local NGOs to bear them alone. These risks are primarily related to safety and security, as well as operational, fiduciary, and legal responsibilities.



Yes, my donors/intermediaries are scaling up anticipatory action (AA), said 40.7% of the respondents. No, said 40.7%, and don't know about it, said 18.5% of the respondents. There is plenty of scope in scaling up anticipatory action in countries like Bangladesh.



Some respondents noted that Anticipatory Action (AA) is being scaled up in Bangladesh through readiness activities and forecast-based financing. Start Fund Bangladesh is championing AA in the country, gradually expanding its implementation.

Recommendations

The survey underscores the urgent need for sustained, flexible, and multi-year funding, broader direct funding from state and non-state actors, adoption of equitable partnership models, consistent ICR practices, meaningful participation and community feedback mechanisms, enhanced support for women-led initiatives, effective risk-sharing frameworks, and scaled-up anticipatory action, to improve accountability, sustainability, and effectiveness of the humanitarian response in Bangladesh.

6. Anticipatory Action

6.1 Do your donors initiate scaling up Anticipatory Action in Humanitarian Response?

Humanitarian actors demanded localization of aid

Dhaka, 19 August 2025: Humanitarian actors have called for effective implementation of the Grand Bargain commitments in Bangladesh, emphasizing localization of aid, quality funding for local/national actors, and accountability to affected populations. They stressed that achieving this requires a coordinated plan among the UN, INGOs, and local actors, while questioning the practice of some INGO branches registering as local NGOs, contradicting the spirit of the localization agenda. The call was made at an international seminar ahead of the World Humanitarian Day titled “Accelerating Grand Bargain 3.0 for Advancing Humanitarian Action in Bangladesh,” organized by COAST Foundation, BDCSO Process, and Cox’s Bazar CSO-NGO Forum. The event brought together representatives from donor countries, the Grand Bargain Secretariat and signatories, humanitarian experts, and practitioners from national and international organizations.

Key demands included: ensuring at least 25% direct funding to local actors, providing multi-year and flexible funding, fostering equitable partnerships instead of subcontracting, applying accountability and transparency equally to donors and implementers, channeling resources to local leadership, and clearly defining the roles of UN, INGOs, and local partners to enable truly locally-led implementation.



For queries about this write-up: iqbal@coastbd.net

COAST Foundation, Metro Melody, House: 13, Road: 2, Shyamoli, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh.

Phone: +88 02- 4102 5889, 5890, 5891; Email: info@coastbd.net, Web: <https://bd-cso-ngo.net>, www.coastbd.net