

# "SHE LEADS THE WAY": UNICEF'S WORK WITH LOCAL WOMEN- AND GIRL-LED ORGANISATIONS

Local women- and girl-led organisations hold a deep understanding of their communities' needs. Because of their established presence and relationships, they have earned the trust of other community members. As a result, when humanitarian emergencies hit, they are uniquely placed to inform the strategic priorities of the response. Unfortunately, these organisations still face significant challenges getting their voices heard within humanitarian decision-making fora and accessing the funding needed to implement their critical work. The COVID-19 pandemic has only intensified these challenges.

While the international community continues to advance on the localisation agenda, tangible and meaningful action to make the humanitarian system more accountable to local women- and girl-led organisations have been less common thus far. In order to help fill this gap, UNICEF has made a number of institutional commitments to strengthening its partnerships with local women- and girl-led organisations, a few of which are summarized here.

## "SHE LEADS THE WAY" PARTNERSHIP

"She Leads the Way" is an innovative partnership between UNICEF and [VOICE](#) to help create more space for women and girls in humanitarian decision-making structures. This includes mobilising the voices of women and girls themselves to transform humanitarian responses and build innovative solutions, specific to the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. Some highlights of the UNICEF/VOICE partnership are:

- **VOICE Resource Navigators and Information Hub** – an online platform to allow local women's organisations to share resources, learn from each other's experiences, and identify opportunities for advocacy around common challenges.
- **"We Must Do Better"** – a [research series](#) that captures the experiences of women- and girl-led organisations within the COVID-19 pandemic and synthesizes recommendations for making the humanitarian system more accountable to women and girls.
- **Partnership Assessment Tool** – a resource developed in partnership with local women's organisations to help donors better understand and address the barriers and challenges women- and girl-led organisations face in accessing funding.
- **Tailored communications and advocacy support** – UNICEF is leveraging its extensive online presence to help local women- and girl-led organisations increase the visibility of their work. UNICEF and VOICE are also working together to provide in-kind social media coaching, advocacy support and multimedia content development based on the organisations' priorities and preferences.

## RE-IMAGINING CAPACITY BUILDING WITH LOCAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

Rather than the traditional top-down approach, UNICEF recognizes the unique expertise local women's organizations bring to the table, particularly their experience as first responders in humanitarian crises and access to vulnerable members of their communities.

Since 2017, UNICEF has spearheaded an interagency GBV case management capacity building initiative (based on the [GBV Case management Guidelines](#)). Unprecedented in scale, the initiative has reached over **3,150** service providers in **10** countries with trainings delivered by a global Pool of Trainers composed of over **170** individuals. In total, **38%** of those who participated in the trainings work for local women's organizations. Going forward, UNICEF is committed to increasing this proportion, as well as highlighting local women's organisations' case management work and adapting tools and standards to better reflect how they deliver GBV response services on the ground.

