

Child Protection Sub-Sector, Nigeria

Strategy Note: Building and sustaining local capacities for child protection response

1. Introduction

The commitment of promoting localisation in humanitarian aid through specific commitments of aid organisations and donors was cemented in 2016 with the Grand Bargain agreement of the World Humanitarian Summit¹. A scoping mission by the Child Protection Area of Responsibility conducted in north-east Nigeria in 2018 found that whilst a number of national NGOs (NNGOs)² were providing child protection services in the humanitarian response, funding for NNGOs was mostly project based, short term and through sub-contracting. There was recognition that in order to enhance the localisation agenda and promote sustainable capacity, there was need for more collaborative partnerships, institutional capacity building, increased access to pooled funding and mentoring/coaching opportunities. This strategy note seeks to highlight the gains that have been made towards achievement of the localisation agenda, to identify continuing challenges and to propose approaches for advancing the localisation agenda within the Child Protection Sub-Sector in north-east Nigeria. Importantly, it will also highlight how progress on localization will be measured and evaluated.

2. Objectives of localization within the Child Protection Sub-Sector

- Increased national technical expertise in child protection service delivery, coordination and advocacy;
- Increased access to unearmarked funds for NNGOs;
- Increased capacity to deliver child protection interventions and messaging in languages relevant to the affected population; and
- Increased institutional capacities that reflect accountability, efficiency and effectiveness.

3. Taking Stock

Conversations on localization must start with the acknowledgement of the leadership and the involvement of the Federal and State level line ministries in the child protection in emergencies planning, coordination and response. However, the presence and involvement at local government levels is limited.

Prior to the commencement of the child protection response by UN agencies and international NGOs in north-east Nigeria, the Child Protection Network formed by national professionals and human rights activities engaged in addressing child protection issues including handling cases of vulnerable children and advocating for rights of the children in conflict with the law. Whilst this network subsequently remained inactive between 2016 and 2018, the number of NNGOs providing child protection services in the humanitarian response has increased since the formation of the Child Protection Sub-Sector (CPSS) in 2016. Two (2) NNGOs were members of the north-east Nigeria CPSS Strategic Advisory Group in 2018 and two NNGOs hold membership of the SAG in 2019. One (1) NNGO member of the north-east Nigeria CPSS represents NNGOs in the Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility Strategic Advisory Group.

Whilst overall funding available for child protection has been accessed by UN agencies and INGOs, two (2) NNGOs have directly accessed NHF pooled funding for child protection interventions as of

¹ See <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain-hosted-iasc>.

² 'National organizations' is used in this paper to refer to organizations that have been formed at the national, state, local government or community level.

May 2019; this can be compared to two (2) INGOs that accessed NHF funding for child protection in 2018 and 2019. In addition, there has been a notable increase in the number of NNGOs implementing child protection interventions through sub-contracts with INGOs; whilst sub-contracting may have its limits, it has directly contributed to the strengthening of technical and institutional capacities of NNGOs.



Challenges in implementing the localization strategy within the child protection sub-sector include:

- Lack of a clear framework defining localization approaches and parameters within which and to what extent localization can be said to have been achieved;
- Increased number of NNGOs seeking to implement child protection interventions whereas opportunities for resources are limited;
- Limited institutional capacities within some NNGOs and limited opportunities to strengthen institutional capacities;
- Limited access to funding opportunities.

Given the challenges outlined above, this strategy note proposes several approaches to enhance the localization agenda for the Child Protection Sub-Sector in north-east Nigeria and outlines the framework under which these challenges can be addressed. In implementing the localization strategy, due consideration should be given to the varied technical and organizational capacities of NNGOs.

4. Approaches for localization for child protection NNGOs

The implementation of localization strategy for NNGOs in north-east Nigeria will complement the critical role of the government in leadership, coordination and response. To advance the localization strategy within the Child Protection Sub-Sector in north-east Nigeria, the following approaches are recommended for actors implementing child protection interventions³:

4.1 Approaches for Technical Capacity Enhancement

- Coaching and mentoring of NNGO staff on child protection thematic areas** by NNGOs and INGOs with the expertise in the given technical area e.g. case management, life skills education, etc and tailored to the varying levels of capacity. This can be provided through embedded child protection professionals on individual consultancies seconded through principled partnerships.
- Training on Minimum Standards on Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (CPMS)** and on core thematic areas such as case management and psychosocial support services; this will

³ These actors must be members of the CPSS, must be implementing child protection interventions within the response either directly or in partnership with other CPSS members and must be regularly submitting 5Ws reports to the Sub-Sector.

be done within the broader framework of the capacity development plan for the Sub-Sector based on the capacity needs and gaps survey that was conducted in March 2019.

- c) **Training of NGO staff on child protection systems approach** to build understanding on changes in child protection programming within the humanitarian and development contexts. This can be organized through the leadership of the CPSS.

4.2 Approaches for Institutional and Leadership Capacity Enhancement

- a) **Embedded expert on institutional capacity building** to work with NGO operations staff to establish and/or strengthening internal systems in the areas of finance, human resources, administration, project management, supply and procurement and logistics. Priorities to be decided based on previous capacity assessments/audits and directly linked with recommendations from these assessments. This can be done through the direct partnership, individuals consultants or a private sector firm.
- b) **Coaching and mentoring on institutional leadership and management:** provide tailored coaching and mentoring programme for leaders and managers of NGOs;
- c) **Governance roles within the Child Protection Sub-Sector Working Group:**
 - o Identification, coaching and mentoring of an NGO to transition into a co-leadership role of the CPSS through a principled partnership with an INGO;
 - o NGOs will continue to hold membership in the CPSS SAG and leadership/membership in the technical working groups within the Sub-Sector.

4.3 Approaches to Resource Mobilization

- a) Increasing access to pooled funding such as the NHF for NGOs; this would require specific support for some organizations on proposal development and monitoring and evaluation.
- b) Advocating for earmarked resources for technical and institutional capacity enhancement using the approaches outlined above.
- c) Advocating with donors for earmarking allocation of funding targeting NGOs to implement child protection interventions.

Resource mobilization will be strongly complemented by development of strong systems for organizational management over time which in some cases would necessitate principled partnerships with INGOs and UN agencies in addition to the institutional mentoring opportunities.

4.4 Opportunities

- Dissemination of the localization strategy note for the Child Protection Sub-Sector and implementation of outlined actions.
- Increased prioritization and visibility of localization for child protection in the 2020 Humanitarian Response Strategy.
- Secondment of child protection and organizational development specialists to deliver a tailored mentoring programme for NGOs, including preliminary assessment, dedicated ongoing coaching and effectiveness assessment. This includes exploring the feasibility of support by the Micro Mentor remote mentoring programme run by Mercy Corps globally.
- Training of child protection partners on thematic areas to enhance knowledge and skills of NGO staff.
- Interpretation and translation services by Translators Without Borders to improve language accessibility of child protection information.

Looking forward

The implementation of the localization strategy by the Child Protection Sub-Sector will significantly contribute to strengthening the network of civil society organizations including the Child Protection Network. This strategy note may be reviewed periodically to reflect the evolving context, taking into consideration achievements and challenges to implementation of the localization strategy.

| Action Plan | | | |
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| What | Who | When | Indicators |
| 1. Increased advocacy for earmarked and targeted resources for child protection NGOs | CPSS Coordinator; CPSS Strategic Advisory Group | June 2019 – December 2020 ⁴ | % of NGOs that have accessed funding directly or through principled partnerships Baseline (Dec 2018) ⁵ : 40% |
| 2. Embedding organizational development specialist(s) to directly work with NGOs to strengthen operational capacity and develop a sector strategy on organizational development for NGOs | CPSS Coordinator; CP AoR; UNICEF | July 2019 – June 2020 | # of NGOs directly supported on organization development Sector strategy on organizational development in place |
| 3. Embedding child protection specialist(s) to directly work with NGOs to strengthen technical capacity on key child protection thematic areas | CPSS Coordinator; CP AoR; UNICEF | July 2019 – June 2020 | # of NGOs directly supported through coaching and mentoring on key child protection thematic areas |
| 4. Training, coaching and mentoring of NGOs on child protection thematic areas and the CPMS | CPSS Coordinator; CPSS Strategic Advisory Group | June 2019 – December 2020 | % of NGOs trained on child protection thematic areas and the CPMS Baseline (Dec 2018): 50% |
| 5. Training of NGOs on the child protection systems approach | CPSS Coordinator; UNICEF | January 2020 – April 2020 | # of NGOs trained on child protection systems approach |
| 6. Continued meaningful inclusion of NGOs in governance and technical roles within the Sub-Sector | CPSS Coordinator; CPSS Strategic Advisory Group | June 2019 – December 2020 | % of NGOs that have taken up governance and technical roles in the CPSS Baseline (Dec 2018): 17% |
| 7. Increased prioritization and visibility of localization for child protection in the 2020 Humanitarian Response Strategy | CPSS Coordinator; CPSS Strategic Advisory Group | August 2019 – January 2020 | Specific reference to localization including approaches such as coaching, local engagement and language inclusivity |
| 8. Interpretation, translation and dissemination of child protection information in relevant local languages | CPSS Coordinator; Translators Without Borders | June 2019 – December 2020 | # of languages in which child protection information is available for dissemination to affected population |

⁴ December 2020 is given as an indicative timeline within which review of this strategy note must take place if not earlier.

⁵ The number of NGO CPSS has increased since December 2018 and this is likely to affect the overall measurement of progress; the denominator will be NGOs actively implementing child protection interventions.