



**‘WHO HOLDS THE MICROPHONE?’  
CRISIS-AFFECTED WOMEN’S VOICES  
ON GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE  
CHANGES IN HUMANITARIAN SETTINGS:  
EXPERIENCES FROM BANGLADESH,  
COLOMBIA, JORDAN AND UGANDA**

© 2020 UN Women.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the views of UN Women, the United Nations or any of its affiliated organizations.

Research commissioned and produced by the Peace, Security and Humanitarian Action section of UN Women as part of the project “Addressing gender-based violence and enhancing gender equality and the empowerment of refugee, displaced or other crisis-affected women and girls through the Grand Bargain.”

Citation: Dietrich Ortega, L.M., Skakun, Z., Cabezas Pino, A., and Novelo Duarte, M.F., 2020. ‘Who holds the microphone?’ Crisis-affected women’s voices on gender-transformative changes in humanitarian settings: Experiences from Bangladesh, Colombia, Jordan and Uganda, New York: UN Women

Cover Photo: A South Sudanese refugee woman holding a microphone.

Photo Credit: UN Women/Fernanda Baumhardt-Grojean.

Financial support: This research was generously supported by funding provided by the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration of the United States Department of State and by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.



# RESEARCH PAPER

## ‘WHO HOLDS THE MICROPHONE?’ CRISIS-AFFECTED WOMEN’S VOICES ON GENDER- TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGES IN HUMANITARIAN SETTINGS:

Experiences from Bangladesh, Colombia,  
Jordan and Uganda



**PEACE, SECURITY AND  
HUMANITARIAN ACTION SECTION  
UN WOMEN**  
New York, August 2020



# FOREWORD

“Who holds the microphone?” is an apt metaphor – and title – for this study. Crisis-affected women taking hold of the microphone in refugee and displacement settings represents a necessary disruption in the multiple power inequalities embedded in the humanitarian sector. In the context of exploring localization, participation and gender-transformative change processes, the same question of who holds the microphone can be extended and posed to humanitarian actors beyond these specific contexts to identify who speaks, in what formats, on what topics and with whose priorities.

The question “Who holds the microphone?” challenges humanitarian actions that only view women as victims and beneficiaries rather than as decision makers, with voice and agency to identify those with the greatest needs and lead humanitarian planning, action and accountability mechanisms. This research explores women’s leadership from eight diverse groups of crisis-affected women in large-scale refugee and displacement crises in Bangladesh, Colombia, Jordan and Uganda, and used participatory video processes, among other data-collection methods. By collaboratively creating this space and

video content over a period of several days, women took over the microphone to speak about different aspects of their lived experiences. Their responses to this question included reflections on and ideas about peer-to-peer engagement, and what it means to truly listen, engage and respond. They also captured an understanding of the microphone as a symbol of power.

This research aims to capture the voices, lived experiences and testimonies of communities affected by refugee and displacement crises regarding gender-transformative change processes, meaningful participation and effective localization. The central contention of this report is simple and a fundamental in UN Women humanitarian support, that the voices of crisis-affected women, often not heard as a result of gender and social norms, should resonate loudly and clearly in spaces where decisions about their lives are made.

Paivi Kannisto  
Chief,  
Peace, Security and Humanitarian Action



*Rohingya refugee women handling video equipment. Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.*  
Photo Credit: UN Women/Dr. Angélica Cabezas Pino

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## About the research team

This report was written by the research team comprised of: Dr. Luisa Dietrich, Research Coordinator; Zorica Skakun, Gender Lead; Dr. Angélica Cabezas Pino, Documentary Filmmaker; and Maria Fernanda Novelo Duarte, Research Consultant

Project Managers: Theresia Thylin and David Coffey, UN Women.

Substantive Editor: Dr. Tara Patricia Cookson

Copy Editor: Deirdre O'Shea

Production Coordination: María Fernanda Novelo Duarte

Design: The Visual Agency S.r.l.

## With special thanks to:

### Colombia

**UN Women Country Office:** Patricia Pacheco (Deputy Country Representative); Carolina Tejada (Programme Analyst – Humanitarian Area); Javier Blanco (UNW Quibdó); Jenyffer Mosquera (UNW Quibdó); Manuela Rubianogroot (Gender and Humanitarian Action National Specialist); Israel Aguado (UNW Quibdó); Fernanda Baumhardt-Grojean, Participatory Video Expert

### Uganda

**UN Women Country Office:** Claire Hawkins (Women Peace Security and Humanitarian Action Programme Specialist); Alice Kuczkiwicz, (Programme Analyst); Yusrah Nagujja (Programme Management Specialist); Fernanda Baumhardt-Grojean, Participatory Video Expert

**Partners:** Office of the Prime Minister; Betty Auma (CARE); Moses Acole and Sandra Oyam (Refugee Law Project); UNHCR Yumbe Sub-office; Yumbe District Local Government; Embassy of Norway in Uganda

**Translators:** Gloria Achieng, Clementina Binia, Filda Adiru, Sauda Ijobiru

**Special acknowledgement to:** Faridah Charity, Office of the District Speaker

### Bangladesh

Nafeesa Shamsuddin, National Field Research Coordinator.

**UN Women Country Office:** Shoko Ishikawa (Country Representative); Flora Macula, (Head of Sub-office Cox's Bazar); Marie Sophie Pettersson (Gender and Humanitarian Action Programme Specialist); Zefroon Afsary (Monitoring and Reporting Officer, Humanitarian Response); Moutushi Chowdhury (Human Resources and Management Associate)

**Partners:** Pavel Haq Shamsuddine, Camp in Charge (CiC) at the Office of the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner; Yusuf Nur and Arif Joy (CiC volunteers); ACTED staff working at Women's Friendly Center at Camp #18

**Translators:** Nabila Zaman, Aziza, Ishrat, Nafeesa Shamsuddin, Zahida Begum, Isfat Jahan Monalisa, Sidratul Muntaha Luchi, AK Rahim

**Special acknowledgement to:** Professor Dr. Meghna Guhathakurta, Razia Sultana and Eva Buzo

### Jordan

Uliana Izzat, Field Support and Translation

**UN Women Country Office:** Ana Lukatela (Deputy Country Representative); Rebeca Acin Rivera (Gender and Humanitarian Action Advisor); Raya Ishtaiwi (Senior Camp Assistant); Rawan Al-Majali (Field Officer); Nidal Al-Hajjaj (Programme Analyst); Bushra Abu Shahout (Women's Leadership Specialist)

**Translators:** Reema Al Hamad, Zaad Alkhair, Uliana Izzat, Shadan Jayyousi, Nour Halassa, Mais Shtiwa, Marwan Al-Maayteh, Halla Akhdar

**Special acknowledgement to:** Aseel Bandora, Dr. Abeer Dababneh and Amneh Zoubi

**Additional thanks to:** Constanza Tabbush, Dina Deligiorgis, Nicolas Burniat, Pablo Castillo, Rachel Dore-Weeks, Foteini Papagiotti, Paul Bell, Marie Manrique, Katarina Lucas, Christina Holland, James David, Mirjam Kuschnitzki, Natasha Mulji, Georg Rotomer, Daisy Ireton, Anne Killefer, Coree Steadman, David DiGiovanna, Henri Myrntinen, Julia Knittel, Marcy Hersh, Megan Daigle

#### Financial support:

This research was generously supported by funding provided by the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration of the United States Department of State and by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

#### Suggested Citation:

Dietrich Ortega, L.M., Skakun, Z; Cabezas Pino, A., and Novelo Duarte, M.F., 2020. 'Who holds the microphone?' Crisis-affected women's voices on gender-transformative changes in humanitarian settings: Experiences from Bangladesh, Colombia, Jordan and Uganda, New York: UN Women

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>FOREWORD</b>	<b>3</b>		
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>4</b>		
<b>ABOUT THIS STUDY</b>	<b>8</b>		
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>9</b>		
<b>Participatory research in four crisis-affected communities</b>	9		
<b>Gender-transformative humanitarian action at the heart of meaningful participation and effective localization</b>			
Meaningful participation	10		
Effective localization	11		
<b>Recommendations</b>	11		
<b>1 Moving towards gender-transformative humanitarian action</b>	<b>15</b>		
<b>Key messages</b>	16		
<b>1.1 Introduction</b>	17		
<b>1.2 Gender equality and the Grand Bargain</b>	18		
<b>1.3 Participatory research in four crisis-affected contexts</b>	19		
<b>1.4 Research contexts</b>	23		
1.4.1 Bangladesh: Cox’s Bazar, Rohingya refugee response	23	1.4.4 Uganda: Bidibidi Refugee Settlement, South Sudan refugee response	25
1.4.2 Colombia: Chocó Department, protracted crisis and internal displacement	24		
1.4.3 Jordan: Amman and Za’atari Camp, Syrian refugee response	25		
		<b>1.5 Experiences of gender-transformative change in emergency contexts: conceptual basis</b>	<b>27</b>
		<b>1.6 What does a gender-transformative approach to humanitarian action entail?</b>	<b>30</b>
		<b>1.7 Passing the microphone and moving forward</b>	<b>33</b>
		<b>2 Gender-transformative change at the heart of meaningful participation</b>	<b>35</b>
		<b>Key messages</b>	36
		<b>2.1 Introduction</b>	37
		<b>2.2 Pathways for participation</b>	39
		2.2.1 Data collection and information gathering	39
		2.2.2 Consultations and community dialogues	40
		2.2.3 Feedback and complaint mechanisms	41
		2.2.4 Social mobilization	42
		2.2.5 Self-led organizations	42
		<b>2.3 Meaningful participation requires resourcing of local women’s groups</b>	44
		<b>2.4 Resistance and backlash to women’s participation</b>	46
		2.4.1 Resistance	46
		2.4.2 Backlash	50
		<b>2.5 Conclusion and recommendations for women’s meaningful participation</b>	53
		<b>Story of gender-transformative change 1: Capacity-building initiatives enable woman to exercise voice</b>	54
		<b>Story of gender-transformative change 2: Peer-support networks can be a gateway to public visibility</b>	57

---

<b>3</b>	<b>Gender-transformative change at the heart of effective localization</b>	<b>59</b>
	Key messages	60
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>3.2</b>	<b>A gender perspective on “local”</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>3.3</b>	<b>Localization from the perspective of crisis-affected women</b>	<b>64</b>
	3.3.1 Partnerships	64
	3.3.2 Funding	67
	3.3.3 Coordination	69
<b>3.4</b>	<b>Entry points for localization efforts that include women</b>	<b>72</b>
	3.4.1 Connectors	72
	3.4.2 Community-based women’s organizations	73
	3.4.3 Young female volunteers	76

---

<b>3.5</b>	<b>Conclusion and recommendations for gender-transformative localization</b>	<b>78</b>
	Story of gender-transformative change 3: Women find power in collective action	79
	Story of gender-transformative change 4: Community attitudes shift as women earn an income	82
	<b>Conclusion. Towards a gender-transformative humanitarian response</b>	<b>85</b>
	<b>Annex I. Extended list of video materials</b>	<b>87</b>
	<b>Annex II. Bibliography</b>	<b>91</b>

预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

[https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/云报告?reportId=5\\_21841](https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/云报告?reportId=5_21841)

