



Analytical Report

CAPACITY STRENGTHENING OPPORTUNITIES AND THE ROLE OF COUNTRY-BASED POOLED FUNDS (CBPFs)

MAY 2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Executive summary

Despite the recognition of their central role in humanitarian responses, national and local actors' access to funding is still restricted. Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs) are currently an increasing source of direct funding to national and local humanitarian responders, and their current reach could be leveraged to expand funding access to other local actors and improve the assistance delivered by local and national responders. This is particularly so considering the expected increase in the overall CBPFs funding base. In the 'Agenda for Humanity', the UN Secretary-General has called for an increase in the overall proportion of humanitarian appeal funding channelled through CBPFs, to 15 per cent by 2018. Based on the experience of CBPFs, strengthening the humanitarian capacities of national and local responders, where necessary - including their organisational capacities and financial accountability - can be key to ensuring that they are able to expand their access to funding.

A mapping exercise was carried out with the aim of providing an overview of existing resources for national and local actors, and to help clarify the role CBPFs can play in supporting national and local actors to better access CBPFs' funding. Taking the offer of self-identified opportunities for capacity development as a point of departure, the exercise has focused mostly at the global level. It is understood, for example, that there could be different south-to-south and 'home-grown' opportunities, but these remain more obscure and would require specifically dedicated studies. The exercise has nonetheless revealed a wealth of opportunities meant to strengthen

humanitarian capacities. Though only focusing at the global level, it is already possible to acknowledge that certain of these opportunities are targeting national and local actors specifically. As many can still be categorised as training initiatives targeting functional skills, other approaches, which combine coaching and mentoring techniques, are also visible. Capacity development of national and local actors is moving away from simply training opportunities to initiatives that include a broader assessment of the humanitarian capacities needed in each response, including better evidence of what these may be. The level of accessibility, however, varies from a few free online resources and platforms to member-based support and commercial/fee-based opportunities.

Feedback from CBPFs in Afghanistan, Somalia, South Sudan, and Turkey has highlighted capacity gaps of national and local partners in financial management and governance-related issues but also a lack of familiarity with the workings of the international humanitarian system and its architecture. CBPFs can better capitalise on opportunities and initiatives already happening at the global and country levels, including through some of the mechanisms put in place by the international humanitarian system through the clusters. In this sense, better and consistent clarity across the different CBPFs as to the limits of their support to partners would be beneficial. At the same time, OCHA should not underestimate the indirect learning benefits CBPF partners may reap by being able to interact directly with the different structures and mechanisms composing the international humanitarian system.