

# Roadmap for Feminist Local Humanitarian Leadership

**OXFAM IN ASIA**



**OXFAM**

## Why this roadmap?

Gender and power inequalities continue to shape humanitarian action across Asia. These inequalities exist within crisis-affected communities and are also embedded in humanitarian systems themselves. They are historically rooted, intersectional and layered, affecting people differently based on gender, identity, ability, class, ethnicity and location.

As an international humanitarian actor, Oxfam holds significant power. That power can either reinforce existing inequalities or be intentionally used to transform them.

This roadmap sets out Oxfam in Asia's commitment to a feminist, locally led humanitarian system—one that centres crisis-affected people and recognizes gender and inclusion-focused civil society organizations (CSOs), especially feminist women's rights organizations (WROs), as leaders rather than implementers.

Developed together with feminist and diverse partners across Asia, the roadmap provides a shared vision and practical direction for change from 2025 to 2030.



# What is Feminist Local Humanitarian Leadership (FLHL)?

FLHL brings together three interlinked and reinforcing elements:

## 1. Intersectional and locally led

Crisis-affected people are not passive beneficiaries but active agents in their own recovery. Local CSOs—often made up of people directly affected by crises—are best placed to understand and respond to context-specific inequalities. FLHL challenges top-down humanitarian approaches and prioritizes local leadership and decision-making.

## 2. Gender-transformative and socially inclusive

Humanitarian responses often focus on material assistance while overlooking the power dynamics that shape access, control and outcomes. FLHL embeds gender equality and social inclusion across all sectors, moving beyond surface-level targeting to address root causes. Feminist WROs play a critical leadership role in this work.

## 3. Feminist localization

Localization is not neutral. A feminist approach to localization intentionally shifts power and resources to feminist WROs and gender-focused CSOs, recognizing their leadership, expertise and risk. This requires partnerships that are flexible, equitable and centred on safety and sustainability.

## Who are the FLHL actors?



# The Roadmap: Three Pillars of Change

The Roadmap focuses on three connected pillars that shift how power, resources and leadership are practised in humanitarian action.

## **Pillar 1** **Valued as responders, leaders and equal partners**

Local CSOs, feminist WROs and crisis-affected people are too often excluded from decision-making or engaged only symbolically. Gender and inclusion expertise remains undervalued.

This pillar calls for international humanitarian actors to reform policies and practices so that local and feminist actors lead in designing and delivering gender-transformative and socially inclusive responses.

### **Key shifts**

- Meaningful participation in decision-making spaces
- Co-created and equitable partnerships
- Recognition of local and feminist expertise

### **Success looks like**

Feminist and local actors shaping programmes, strategies and outcomes

## **Pillar 2** **Enabled and resourced to respond**

Despite their essential role, feminist and gender-focused actors receive limited, short-term and highly restricted funding. Administrative barriers and lack of tracking systems further constrain access.

This pillar focuses on increasing direct, flexible and long-term funding for feminist WROs and local CSOs, while strengthening institutional resilience, leadership and wellbeing.

### **Key shifts**

- Increased core and flexible funding
- Reduced compliance and access barriers
- Investment in staff wellbeing and organizational sustainability

### **Success looks like**

Feminist WROs sustaining and leading transformative humanitarian responses

## **Pillar 3** **Collectively lead for change**

Feminist and local actors often face exclusion from advocacy spaces, alongside political and security risks. Yet collective advocacy is central to transforming humanitarian systems.

This pillar strengthens alliances, networks and platforms that enable local and feminist actors to safely influence humanitarian policy and practice, with international actors aligning behind locally defined agendas.

### **Key shifts**

- Strong feminist and local alliances
- Safe and inclusive advocacy spaces
- International actors supporting locally led agendas

### **Success looks like**

Local feminist leadership shaping humanitarian norms and systems

