

Facilitation Group Sherpa meeting with Ambassadors

5 December 2024, 14.00-15.30 CET (Virtual)

Summary Note

The Grand Bargain Ambassadors, represented by Ambassador Manuel Bessler, met with the members of the Grand Bargain Facilitation Group (FG) cycle 2024-2025 - Germany, UNICEF, ECHO, IFRC, A4EP, InterAction, and OCHA – for the first time on 5 December 2024. The Ambassador welcomed Ahmed Hassin (A4EP Sherpa) as a new FG member, representing local and national actors, taking over from NEAR for this FG cycle. The meeting was facilitated by the Ambassador and the Grand Bargain Secretariat and had three objectives:

1. Agreeing on the strategic focus on accountability and corresponding ambitions and timelines for the next two years, including the launch of the process for the comprehensive independent report covering the period 2016 to 2026.
2. Defining the individual roles and responsibilities among the Ambassadors, the FG and the Secretariat for the year ahead.
3. Addressing requests to join the FG and finalising meeting dates for 2025.

Key Takeaways:

- **Greater focus on accountability in the next 24 months:** It was agreed that the Ambassadors, the Facilitation Group and the GB Secretariat will focus on increasing 'accountability' for the implementation of the GB commitments, including the Implementation Agenda 2026. This includes approaching the self-reporting cycle 2025 and Annual Meetings through a stronger accountability lens.
- **The comprehensive independent report 2026:** The Secretariat will draft the ToRs for the report to be published in 2026, including timeline, scope, and specific objectives and share it with the FG members for comments. The aim is to finalise the ToRs in February 2025.
- **Defined roles and responsibilities:** To advance the strategic focus on accountability in the next 12-24 months, the Ambassadors, Facilitation Group Sherpas and Secretariat agreed to work together, each with a distinct focus and engagement (specified below).
- **FG Membership:** It was agreed to strengthen the voice of local actors in the FG and to welcome leads of National Reference Groups (NRGs) in focus contexts as well as LOCAL as a network of local and national actors on an ad-hoc basis to FG discussions.
- **Dialogue between Ambassadors Signatories:** These will take place on 12 February 2025 and 12 June 2025, with invitations to be sent soonest.
- **2025 Annual Meeting:** It was agreed that in 2025, the Annual Meeting will take place on 8 and 9 October 2025.

1. A strategic view: a greater focus on accountability in 2025 and 2026

In the first session, Ambassador Bessler emphasised the need for a greater focus on accountability for the implementation of GB commitments, including Caucus outcomes, in line with the Implementation Agenda. He highlighted the importance of approaching the 2025 self-reporting cycle and the Annual Meeting through this accountability lens. The FG members welcomed this proposal. The following ideas were subsequently discussed:

- **Analysis of 2025 self-reports:** It should show trends over time and more explicitly highlight good performers and best practices. The online self-reporting portal will be opened for Signatories in early April 2025. The deadline for Signatories to enter their data will be July 2025. The analysis will be published in September 2025 ahead of the Annual Meeting.
- **Annual Meeting in 2025:** Constituency-based sessions could be envisaged; and a light peer-review of progress and challenges could be explored.
- **Constituency-based engagement:** More frequent check-ins per constituency should be carried out to assess progress, address challenges and support Signatories who struggle to meet their commitments.
- **Caucus outcomes:** There should be a greater focus on the follow-up of caucus outcomes by using the expertise of caucus champions, and by having more constituency wide conversations on caucus outcomes.
- **Community of Practice (CoPs):** CoPs are envisaged to be light and agile. But co-chairs of CoPs can agree their own working methods; some might choose to have targets for the CoP to better measure success.
- **Engagement with NRGs:** There should be links with prioritised National Reference Groups to seek their views on how the Grand Bargain is impacting different contexts.
- **Follow-up with Principals:** Active and continued engagement with Principals to build on their discussions during the Annual Meeting and to encourage organisational change.

Comprehensive Independent Report 2026

During the session, the GB Secretariat presented the timeline and preparation of the Independent Grand Bargain Report in 2026. The Ambassador and the Facilitation Group shared expectations regarding the report. The report is expected to cover the period from 2016 to 2025 highlighting what had been achieved and what not; include an analysis of the GB as a platform; build on previous reports and on the analysis of the 2024 and 2025 self-reporting data; include perceptions from LNAs, including through interviews with NRGs. The report would also need to capture in how far the humanitarian context between 2016 and 2025 had changed. The Secretariat will explore with the FG how the report could inform the conversation about a future of the Grand Bargain. It was agreed that the Secretariat would draft ToRs for feedback from FG members.

2. Making it concrete: expectations, activities, and roles for the next 12 months

In the second session, Ambassador Manuel Bessler, the Facilitation Group and Secretariat discussed their engagement in taking the focus on accountability forward. The following overview captures the highlights of the different roles and responsibilities:

Grand Bargain Ambassadors: The Ambassadors will focus on continued engagement with the GB Principals, including in small groups, to support further progress on specific commitments as per the Implementation Agenda. The Ambassadors will also continue to engage with the

Facilitation Group, Signatories, and National Reference Groups throughout the year. They will also support implementation of commitments, assess opportunities for multi-stakeholder engagement as suggested by the GB Principals, and continue to actively participate in key events and initiatives to share the key messages of the Grand Bargain.

Facilitation Group: The FG sherpas will champion former Caucuses, cross-cutting issues and priorities to incentivize greater progress towards agreed objectives: IFRC (Localisation and Intermediaries); DG ECHO (TBC); Germany (TBC); OCHA (Cash Coordination); InterAction (Risk-Sharing); UNICEF (Gender); A4EP (NRGs). Champions for the Caucuses on Quality Funding and on Anticipatory Action are to be confirmed. Updates on the Caucus outcomes and cross-cutting issues (Gender and risk sharing) will be provided at the FG quarterly meetings. FG Sherpas will make the appropriate links between the Grand Bargain and other fora, especially the IASC and the GHD. The Sherpas will also drive progress on their commitments within their organisations; ensure that their country representatives are connected with the NRGs, particularly in priority contexts; have plans for the next 2 years; facilitate meetings between the Ambassadors and their principals; and engage their respective constituencies at least twice before the next Annual Meeting to discuss progress against the Implementation Agenda and Caucus outcomes.

Secretariat: The Secretariat will work with the Ambassadors, the Facilitation Group and the Signatories to maintain the focus on accountability in the next two years, organising and overseeing the Annual Meeting, Self-reporting cycle 2025, and the comprehensive independent report 2026. The Secretariat will ensure coordination between the Ambassadors and the FG and organise the quarterly meetings. The Secretariat will lead consultations with Signatories and preparations for the Ambassador’s initiatives. The Secretariat will also engage with the National Reference Groups, the Communities of Practice and with other fora to maintain a focus on the implementation of the GB commitments.

3. Requests for FG membership and AOBs

In the final session of the meeting, the FG members and Ambassador discussed LOCAL’s request for FG membership. It was agreed to continue the regular representation of local and national actors in the FG in line with the GB2.0 Framework through international networks that represent LNAs in different contexts globally. Yet, there was a recognition of the value to strengthen the voices of local and national actors in the FG on specific subjects. Together with selected leads of NRGs, LOCAL would be welcomed to participate in FG meetings on an ad-hoc basis to discuss specific subjects.

Finally, the FG discussed meeting dates in 2025. For the Annual Meeting 2025, 8 and 9 October was agreed upon by all the FG members. A save-the-date will be sent to all signatories. For the other meetings, the following schedule was agreed upon by all the members:

Signatories Meeting with Ambassadors and FG	Wed. 12 February 2025, 14:30-16:00 CET, Online
1st Quarterly FG and Ambassadors Meeting	Wed. 5 March 2025, 14:00-15:30 CET, Online
2nd Quarterly FG and Ambassadors Meeting	Mon-Tue 19-20 May 2025, In-person, in the margins of the EHF, Brussels
Signatories Meeting with Ambassadors and FG	Thu. 12 June 2025, 14:30-16:00 CEST, Online
3rd Quarterly FG and Ambassadors Retreat	Thu. 28 August 2025, All-day, In person, TBC
4th Quarterly FG and Ambassadors Meeting	Wed. 3 Dec. 2025, 14:30 – 18:00 CEST, Online