

**Teleconference on the Grand Bargain Work Stream on Collaborative Humanitarian Multi-year
Planning and Funding
27 February 2017**

Summary: Alexandra MacKenzie, Director, Humanitarian Organizations and Food Assistance, Global Affairs Canada, and Olav Kjørven, Director, Public Partnerships Division, UNICEF, co-chaired the first call of the Grand Bargain Work Stream on Collaborative Humanitarian Multi-year Planning and Funding on 27 February 2017. The purpose of the call was to provide an update on a number of important pieces of work being undertaken in this area. Overall, the presenters highlighted that while progress is being made to move toward multi-year planning and funding, there are number of ongoing challenges and considerations. Participants expressed interest in convening another call in advance of the Grand Bargain Annual Meeting in June.

Report:

1. Canada and UNICEF opened the call by underscoring that the purpose of the teleconference was to provide an update on a number of important pieces of work being undertaken on multi-year planning and funding. To provide the framework for the discussion, they also reiterated the objectives of the workstream: 1) to build the evidence base for and promote mutual learning on humanitarian multi-year planning and funding, and its impact on program efficiency, effectiveness and overall outcomes; and, 2) to improve the quality and impact of humanitarian action through increased collaborative humanitarian multi-year planning and funding.

2. Courtenay Cabot Venton, Humanitarian Aid Consultant, provided an overview of the preliminary findings of the **DfID Multi-year Planning and Financing Evaluation**. The study is taking place over 3.5 years in four countries, Ethiopia, DRC, Sudan and Pakistan. The study poses three main questions on whether multi-year (MY) approaches help build resilience, helps early action (especially if combined with contingency) and increases value-for-money (VFM). Preliminary findings indicate that MY enables agencies to do things differently, but it's not a silver bullet. There are a number of impediments. Passing on the gains of MY from larger (primarily UN) agencies is still a major challenge, as are tranche-funding arrangements. To date, resilience funding doesn't appear to be at a scale to make a discernible difference. While MY shows some promise, there needs to be other things alongside it: more tools, longer term planning, guidance, and case studies. Donors should also insist on action research components for these types of complex programmes. The main report will be released in 2018, with some smaller studies already available.

3. Tijana Bojanic, Strategic Planning, Evaluation and Guidance Section, OCHA, provided an overview of **OCHA's Evaluation of Multi-year Planning**, noting that the (much-delayed) report should be released in the near future. The report looked at multi-year planning (MYP) over the 2011-2016 period. General findings were that despite the benefits of MYP, it can be a significant challenge to design and implement a multi-year plan successfully. Strong and consistent leadership was flagged as key. Regrettably, it appears that collective strategies have tended to act more as aggregators of multiple actors' individual plans, as opposed to acting as the drivers of these plans. Despite this, joint planning exercises linked to HRP (either annual or multi-annual) are still seen as having inherent value in building consensus, getting everyone on the same page and building and/or enhancing Government ownership. Some of the recommendations include: a multi-year high-level strategic plan that sets out a vision for moving beyond the crisis should be developed in all protracted humanitarian contexts; donors should explore new funding modalities which bring together development and humanitarian funding streams in a more coherent way; coordination and cluster system may need to be revised; changes in leadership should be planned well in advance; HC/RC

offices should be adequately staffed; OCHA may need to adjust internal tools (FTS and OPS) compatibility; and OCHA should provide guidance on needs assessments, risk management and M&E.

4. Andrew Wyllie, Chief, Programme Support Branch, OCHA, provided an overview on **multi-year humanitarian response plans (HRPs)**. He noted that there are currently seven multi-year HRPs (down from 15 in previous years, reflecting an effort to do MY planning differently and more effectively). He highlighted that plans will look different from one another in each context, and that the most important piece is the joint analysis. A joint analysis will help decide whether the context is right of a MYP in the first place, and also be the key to linking to wider development planning and programming. He also noted that improved monitoring is necessary. Part of this links to efforts to improve FTS to be able to better track multi-year funding and the flow of money to implementing partners.

5. Sandra Aviles, Senior Advisor, Programme Development & Humanitarian Affairs, FAO provided an update on the **Humanitarian Financing Task Team Study on Multi-Year Funding for Humanitarian Response Plans**, noting that Lydia Pool had now been contracted to take on this work. She highlighted that the purpose of the study will be twofold: 1) to determine to what extent MYF is being provided to meet needs, and 2) to identifying challenges and opportunities. The study should be ready in time for the ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment.

6. During the **discussion**, participants provided an overview of their engagement in multi-year planning and funding. Some donor highlighted that while they had made some moves in this direction (Australia, Norway, Canada), it was still relatively new and not wide-scale across contexts. Participants raised questions around how this work can be linked to other workstreams (noting that it should be), and overall expressed their interest in continuing these discussions.

7. UNICEF summarized the discussion to state that there are a number of linkages to other workstreams (i.e needs assessments, humanitarian-development nexus, reporting etc.) and a multi-layered process needs to take place to fulfil this commitment. Evidence has emerged that demonstrates the value of MYP-MYF but it is not a silver bullet and many other things need to happen. The OCHA evaluation and the recommendations it makes are key to the planning process. A change of mindset is also required. We need to address immediate needs with long term outcomes in mind. UNICEF also shared that internally they are working on a multi- year funding model to enable donors to fund accordingly.

8. Canada and UNICEF concluded the discussion noting that they could hold another MYP+F call in advance of the Annual Meeting in June.

7 March 2017