

Grand Bargain annual self-reporting exercise:

BELGIUM

Contents

Work stream 1 - Transparency	3
1. Baseline (only in year 1)	3
2. Progress to date	3
3. Planned next steps	3
4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)	3
5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)	3
Work stream 2 - Localization	4
1. Baseline (only in year 1)	4
2. Progress to date	4
3. Planned next steps	4
4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)	4
5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)	4
Work stream 3 - Cash	5
1. Baseline (only in year 1)	5
2. Progress to date	5
3. Planned next steps	5
4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)	5
5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)	5
Work stream 4 – Management costs	6
1. Baseline (only in year 1)	
2. Progress to date	
3. Planned next steps	
4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)	
5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)	
Work stream 5 – Needs Assessment	6
1. Baseline (only in year 1)	
2. Progress to date	
3. Planned next steps	
4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)	
5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)	
Work stream 6 – Participation Revolution	6
1. Baseline (only in year 1)	
2. Progress to date	
3. Planned next steps	
4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)	
5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)	
Work stream 7 - Multi-year planning and funding	7
1. Baseline (only in year 1)	7
2. Progress to date	7
3. Planned next steps	7
4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)	7
5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)	7
Work stream 8 - Earmarking/flexibility	8

1. Baseline (only in year 1)	8
2. Progress to date	8
3. Planned next steps	8
4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)	8
5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)	8
Work stream 9 – Reporting requirements	9
1. Baseline (only in year 1)	9
2. Progress to date	9
3. Planned next steps	9
4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)	9
5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)	9
Work stream 10 – Humanitarian – Development engagement	10
1. Baseline (only in year 1)	10
2. Progress to date	10
3. Planned next steps	10
4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)	10
5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)	10

Work stream 1 - Transparency

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

Where did your organisation stand on the work stream and its commitments when the Grand Bargain was signed?

At the time of signing the Grand Bargain a new internal database was being developed, with the aim of:

- stepping up the comprehensiveness, accuracy and the level of detail of our data;
- better monitoring the results achieved ;
- automatically generating IATI activity-files, which would in turn allow us to publish up to date data at any frequency requested for.

2. Progress to date

Which concrete actions have you taken (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream?

Currently:

- a new internal database has been implemented, overall comprehensiveness and level of detail will now gradually increase over time, as new projects and programs are set up;
- a module to create automatically IATI-data-sets is almost ready to be implemented;
- the development of a comprehensive data portal has started, which will allow to browse through projects/programs details and documents

3. Planned next steps

What are the specific next steps which you plan to undertake to implement the commitments (with a focus on the next 2 years)?

Following undertakings are planned as next steps:

- publish our data more frequently, especially regarding humanitarian financing;
- step up our data-quality and scope.

4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)

Please indicate, qualitatively, efficiency gains associated with implementation of GB commitments and how they have benefitted your organisation and beneficiaries.

5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)

Which concrete action(s) have had the most success (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream? And why?

Work stream 2 - Localization

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

Where did your organisation stand on the work stream and its commitments when the Grand Bargain was signed?

Direct financing of local organisations under the current legal framework (i.e. the Law on Development Cooperation of 2013 and the Royal Decree on Humanitarian Aid of 2014) is not possible. However Belgium has recognised the need of shortening the distance between donor and ultimate beneficiary, while safeguarding accountability measures and requirements. It has therefore gradually increased its budget for flexible funds (global funds and country based pooled funds) and changed within this budget the distribution between global funds and country based pooled funds in favour of the last. In 2016, 35% of total funding was allocated to flexible funds, of which 55% was attributed to CBPF. Furthermore 10% of total funding was allocated to Belgian NGO's which engage local actors for service delivery. All local funding combined shows a figure of 8% of our humanitarian funding going to local organisations.

2. Progress to date

Which concrete actions have you taken (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream?

In his policy brief for 2017, the Minister for Development Cooperation announced a target of 25% for local funding to be reached by 2020. The target agreed upon in the Grand Bargain has therefore been reconfirmed by the Minister in his outlook for 2017 and beyond.

Furthermore a modification to the Royal Decree for Humanitarian Aid is currently proposed to allow for contributions to flexible funds managed by international NGO's. Under our current legal framework, only international humanitarian organisations which are members of IASC are eligible for funding from our flexible funds budget line.

3. Planned next steps

What are the specific next steps which you plan to undertake to implement the commitments (with a focus on the next 2 years)?

As soon as the Royal Decree on Humanitarian Aid is modified, Belgium will consider a contribution in 2017 to the humanitarian fund managed by the Start Network. Belgium is particularly interested in a contribution to the newly created local window of this initiative managed by and to the benefit of local organisations.

4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)

Please indicate, qualitatively, efficiency gains associated with implementation of GB commitments and how they have benefitted your organisation and beneficiaries.

5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)

Which concrete action(s) have had the most success (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream? And why?

Work stream 3 - Cash

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

Where did your organisation stand on the work stream and its commitments when the Grand Bargain was signed?

Cash distributions were already possible for Belgium before the signing of the Grand Bargain. However they were conditional and tied to livelihoods items.

2. Progress to date

Which concrete actions have you taken (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream?

There is currently a modification proposed to the Royal Decree on Humanitarian Aid to cancel the cash conditionality. The donors and international organisations could not agree upon a target for cash based assistance during the Grand Bargain negotiations. However, the Minister of Development Cooperation announced in his policy brief for 2017 that 30% of all project and programme support on the Belgian humanitarian budget should be cash based by the year 2020. In 2016, already 15% of all humanitarian project and programme support was cash based. The Minister has invited all Belgian humanitarian NGO's at the end of 2016 to explain how the Belgian government intends to follow-up to the WHS and the Grand Bargain, including to the cash commitment.

3. Planned next steps

What are the specific next steps which you plan to undertake to implement the commitments (with a focus on the next 2 years)?

Drafting of an internal guidance note on Cash Transfer Programming in order to increase in-house understanding and support of cash-based assistance at all levels.

4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)

Please indicate, qualitatively, efficiency gains associated with implementation of GB commitments and how they have benefitted your organisation and beneficiaries.

5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)

Which concrete action(s) have had the most success (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream? And why?

Work stream 4 – Management costs

Work stream 5 – Needs Assessment

Work stream 6 – Participation Revolution

Belgium has not made any particular progress on work streams 4, 5 and 6. Belgium choose to focus first on the other work streams since:

- progress on these work streams is doable and within reach of our capabilities;
- and progress on 4, 5 and 6 is more depending on the implementation of the commitments by the international aid organisations and less on the implementation by the donors.

However, Belgium has always put the Grand Bargain and the implementation of the 10 commitments on the agenda of its bilateral discussions with the international aid organisations in 2016, with the mutual understanding that each party should focus on what it can do best and can realistically achieve.

Belgium held bilateral meetings with UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP, UNRWA, WFP, FAO and ICRC in 2016. The Grand Bargain was on the table of all these meetings. Belgium strongly believes that implementation of the 10 commitments is partly depending on the repetition of commitments by all whenever and wherever possible.

Work stream 7 - Multi-year planning and funding

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

Where did your organisation stand on the work stream and its commitments when the Grand Bargain was signed?

Belgium had at the time of the signing of the Grand Bargain four budgetary instruments available for humanitarian financing:

- Projects (with annual agreements)
- Programmes (with multi-annual agreements covering up to 2 ½ years)
- Core funding (with multi-annual agreements covering 3 years)
- Flexible funding (with multi-annual agreements covering 2 years)

Thus, multi-year financing was already embedded in the Belgian humanitarian mode of operation before the start of the World Humanitarian Summit.

2. Progress to date

Which concrete actions have you taken (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream?

In order to better respond to the humanitarian/development nexus, Belgium has decided to extend the implementation period for programmes up to 5 years. Therefore it has amended its law on development cooperation on the 16th of June.

Also, Belgium confirmed its decision on the World Humanitarian Summit to launch the first Humanitarian Impact Bond with ICRC on the construction of 3 to 5 physical rehabilitation centres in different settings confronted with protracted crises. This is the first innovative programme on the humanitarian budget covering a five year period. Additional advantages of this new financing method are the possibility of adding non-traditional donors to the humanitarian community, the “payment by results” orientation of the scheme and the built-in risk transfer element from the public to the private sector.

3. Planned next steps

What are the specific next steps which you plan to undertake to implement the commitments (with a focus on the next 2 years)?

Belgium aims at concluding the Humanitarian Impact Bond (HIB) by the beginning of April 2017.

4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)

Please indicate, qualitatively, efficiency gains associated with implementation of GB commitments and how they have benefitted your organisation and beneficiaries.

5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)

Which concrete action(s) have had the most success (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream? And why?

We consider our legal framework for humanitarian aid to be a good practice. For this commitment it clearly defines the instruments we have at our disposal and the modalities attached to it.

Work stream 8 - Earmarking/flexibility

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

Where did your organisation stand on the work stream and its commitments when the Grand Bargain was signed?

Budget execution in 2016 was as follows:

Payments budget	Budget 2016	Execution 2016	Execution rate
Programmes	46.800.000	46.579.494	99,53%
Core funding	20.000.000	20.000.000	100,00%
Flexible funds	61.500.000	61.500.000	100,00%
Projects	49.099.000	49.060.637	99,92%
Total	177.399.000	177.140.131	99,85%

Belgium considers “core funding” and “funding for flexible funds” to be non-earmarked or very loosely earmarked. The rate for this kind of spending stands in 2016 at 46% of total spending. Therefore, Belgium already today exceeds the target of 30% to be reached by 2020, set during the Grand Bargain.

2. Progress to date

Which concrete actions have you taken (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream?

In his policy statement for 2017 the Minister for Development Cooperation has set a target of 60% of the total budget to be spent non-earmarked or softly earmarked by 2020. Thus, Belgium has doubled the initial target set during the Grand Bargain.

3. Planned next steps

What are the specific next steps which you plan to undertake to implement the commitments (with a focus on the next 2 years)?

The expected target for 2017 currently stand at 56%.

4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)

Please indicate, qualitatively, efficiency gains associated with implementation of GB commitments and how they have benefitted your organisation and beneficiaries.

5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)

Which concrete action(s) have had the most success (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream? And why?

Work stream 9 – Reporting requirements

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

Where did your organisation stand on the work stream and its commitments when the Grand Bargain was signed?

At the start of the World Humanitarian Summit Belgium had two different sets of reporting requirements:

- the reporting requirement for International Humanitarian Organisations were already fully aligned to the requirements agreed upon in the boards of the respective organisations;
- the reporting requirements for NGO's were partly aligned to the requirements imposed by DG ECHO upon their recognised actors (i.e. the "single form" which is a standardised template to be used for the proposal, the midterm and the final reporting). However, Belgium also required a separate administrative file to be attached to each financing proposal. This administrative file consisted of 1) the most recent strategy of the NGO, 2) the most recent work plan, 3) proof of being a signatory to the Red Cross/Red Crescent Code of Conduct, 4) proof of ECHO recognition or HAP accreditation, 5) proof of a similar past project or programme in the same region with 6) a positive evaluation).

2. Progress to date

Which concrete actions have you taken (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream?

There is currently a modification proposed to the Royal Decree on Humanitarian Aid to simplify the reporting requirements for the NGO's. This modification is to be enacted anytime soon. The aim is to lighten the administrative burden for the NGO's. The administrative file is now required once a year and can now be uploaded electronically to the extranet of the Ministry.

3. Planned next steps

What are the specific next steps which you plan to undertake to implement the commitments (with a focus on the next 2 years)?

There are no further steps envisaged at this time to simplify the reporting requirements.

4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)

Please indicate, qualitatively, efficiency gains associated with implementation of GB commitments and how they have benefitted your organisation and beneficiaries.

5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)

Which concrete action(s) have had the most success (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream? And why?

Work stream 10 – Humanitarian – Development engagement

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

Where did your organisation stand on the work stream and its commitments when the Grand Bargain was signed?

At the time of signing of the Grand Bargain, Belgium already had an instrument on its humanitarian budget to bridge the gap between humanitarian and development efforts. On its programme budget line, Belgium can finance humanitarian programs with a timespan running up to 5 years.

2. Progress to date

Which concrete actions have you taken (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream?

In 2016, Belgium already launched an appeal to the Belgian NGO's for proposals addressing the lack of preparedness in disaster-prone areas. Typically these kind of interventions requires a longer term engagement which goes beyond the timeframe of more classical emergency activities.

Besides, at the beginning of 2017, a new directorate was announced within DGD. The new directorate will comprise of two different units: one focusing on humanitarian aid and one focusing on transitioning towards development and good governance. Both units will have their own objectives, but will nevertheless look at mutual reinforcing complementarities without compromising the underlying principles.

Furthermore, within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs there are regularly inter-ministerial meetings focusing on a selected number of crises (Sahel , Great lakes, Syria and Iraq). The two newly created units are fully embedded in these discussions to bring their specific views to the table.

3. Planned next steps

What are the specific next steps which you plan to undertake to implement the commitments (with a focus on the next 2 years)?

Belgium will launch a second appeal on disaster preparedness in 2017. It will also launch a broader appeal on the humanitarian-development nexus. However, this will need some further reflection as we want to keep humanitarian funding focused on its objective (saving lives, reducing human suffering, keeping human dignity) and abiding to the humanitarian principles (needs based, impartial, neutral and independent).

A major challenge in 2017 will be fine-tuning the operations of the two newly created units within the new directorate.

4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)

Please indicate, qualitatively, efficiency gains associated with implementation of GB commitments and how they have benefitted your organisation and beneficiaries.

5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)

Which concrete action(s) have had the most success (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream? And why?