

Grand Bargain annual self-reporting exercise:

The Netherlands

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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?

- In 2016, all organisations that received ODA funds from the central Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague, had to report to IATI (replacing bilateral reporting). Since 2016 is the first year, some organisations were given extra time to implement the necessary changes to become IATI compatible, including most UN and humanitarian organisations. Discussions are ongoing, also with other like-minded donors, when and how these organisations can become IATI compatible. The Netherlands also assists implementing organisations with IATI via a help desk.
- As co-convenor The Netherlands pushed for the transparency language and commitments in 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?

- After the GB was signed, The Netherlands, together with the Worldbank, remained active as co-convenor of the transparency workstream.
- Development Initiatives has been contracted to assist in pursuing the transparency commitments. The project on “Monitoring the Grand Bargain commitment on transparency” has been launched at the beginning of 2017. The project, which runs until June 2018, aims to increase the availability of timely, transparent, harmonised and open high-quality data on humanitarian funding to enable better decision-making and greater accountability and learning.
- Discussions are ongoing with the Netherlands Red Cross and IFRC about implementation of the open data system IATI in IFRC and its member organisations.
- Discussion are ongoing with ICVA to look for options to assist ICVA and its members with the implementation of the transparency commitments.
- Technical discussions are ongoing with implementing partners and UN in particular to get to IATI compliance of all Dutch partners that receive ODA funds.

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)?

- From 2017 onwards, in principle all organisations that receive funds either from the Ministry or one of the embassies, have to report to IATI.
- DI will be working with Grand Bargain signatories to raise awareness of the IATI Standard, improve technical capacity to publish and use humanitarian aid data and to continue to

ensure that the Standard meets the needs of the humanitarian community. At the same time, the project will support Grand Bargain signatories and the wider humanitarian community to monitor progress against the transparency commitment.

The first phase the project will focus on:

- Raising awareness of IATI and how to publish to the Standard. Two webinars are planned in February and March aimed at policy-oriented and technical audiences. The webinars were successful.
- Identifying the incentives and barriers to the publication of quality data on humanitarian activities by conducting an on-line survey and telephone interviews (February-March)
- Carrying out consultation workshops and bilateral meetings (March – April) to develop recommendations on how to address challenges and incentivise publication, review the humanitarian elements of the IATI Standard and develop an online dashboard to support the monitoring process.

This phase will culminate in the publication of a baseline assessment in May 2017 with recommendations on proposed improvements to the IATI Standard for humanitarian activities and a road map for the way forward.

- Finalise discussions with IFRC and ICVA and aim to support them and their member organisations with implementing the commitments.

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.

Too early to assess. The first reports in IATI will be assessed in March.

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?

Too early to assess.

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?

The NL made 4 specific commitments:

- 1) NL is committed to build humanitarian capacity of local/national responders:
Base line: in 2016 the Netherlands invested EUR 1.7 million in capacity building of national organisations to be better prepared to respond to future crises.
- 2) Unearmarked support can be provided to foreign NGOs.
Base line: There are no legal impediments to channel money to national responders
- 3) The NL is supporter of using Country Based Pooled Funds as a channel for funding national responders. The NL will continue to increase its contributions as a proportion of humanitarian assistance.
Base line: in 2016 the NL contributed EUR 60 million or 14% of its humanitarian spending to CBPFs.
- 4) The NL will reduce reporting requirements of national responders by accepting reporting via IATI and by harmonization of donor requirements
Base line: in 2016 NL humanitarian partners were informed that from 2017 onwards reporting must happen via IATI open data standard.

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?

Ad 1): Humanitarian capacity building:

- *for 2017 EUR 2.15 million is reserved for humanitarian capacity building; NL invests, through its collaboration with the Netherlands Redd Cross, in building capacity for “forecast based financing”;*

Ad 2): Regulations:

- *No legal blockages for transfer of (un)earmarked funding to non-Dutch organizations.*

Ad 3): CBFPs as channel for funding local responders:

- *In 2017 the NL will support CBPFs with EUR around 20 million, or 6% of the humanitarian budget. This is a decrease (both in absolute and relative figures) due to a decrease in budget and ongoing multi-year core contributions to a number of organizations, which has led to a decrease of available funding for allocations to CBPF's.*
- *No additional funds have been allocated to local and national responders*

Ad 4): Reporting via IATI:

- *NL has communicated to all partners that reporting needs to happen via IATI;*
- *The NL is co-leading the transparency work stream of the Grand Bargain, see transparency work stream.*

- *Reducing reporting requirement through harmonization is one of the long term goals of both the transparency and the reporting work streams.*

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)?

- *Ad 1): The NL will discuss with partners how to expand or include capacity building/preparedness activities of national responders in response activities; The NL is active member of the local capacity work stream of the GB and interested to share experiences.*
- *Ad 2) No further activities: base line is the end stage*
- *Ad 3) CBPF channel: in 2017 multi-year core contribution commitments with a number of partners come to end. Depending on funds, choices will be made how much is given unearmarked, multiannual and via CBPF's.*
- *Ad 4) The NL will continue to work to improve the humanitarian reporting standard in IATI and support other organisations in making the change to IATI reporting. The NL will support the OCHA Centre for Humanitarian Data in The Hague, which will play a role in IATI awareness and use.*

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.

Too early to assess.

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?

Too early to assess.

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?

Most of the Dutch humanitarian contributions are given as either core or unearmarked contributions to organisations or crises (e.g. pooled fund). The receiving organisation can decide how to use these funds best. If cash is the preferred option, then the organisation is free to use it as such and the Netherlands in fact strongly encourages the use of (multi-purpose) cash whenever suitable in its dialogue with humanitarian organisations. The NL sees CASH-interventions as a way of working that will both contribute to empowerment of affected people and to innovation and change of the system.

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?

No actions taken, The Netherlands is already in favour of the use of cash and encourages receiving organisations the option to use Dutch funds for that purpose.

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)?

No planned next steps. If needed and applicable, The Netherlands will urge for more use of cash with its partner organisations or other donors. The Netherlands is a strong advocate for innovative solutions of which cash is an important part.

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.

N.a.

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?

N.a.

Work stream 4 – Management costs

1. Baseline (only in year 1): Where did your organisation stand on the work stream and its commitments when the Grand Bargain was signed?

- Use of innovation: The Netherlands invests in innovation as a means of increasing efficiency and humanitarian impact. The Netherlands specifically supports the scale-up of promising innovations and encourages the responsible use of data. The Netherlands e.g. supports WFP in scaling up its use of mobile technology and data to carry out vulnerability assessments and thereby decrease costs.
- Harmonising partnership agreements: The Netherlands works with its own partnership agreements. Whenever possible, as with the 'Education Cannot Wait' funds, we are committed to harmonized agreements. In those cases, we are one of the most flexible donors.
- Functional reviews: The Netherlands currently relies to a large extent on coordinating bodies as the pooled fund working group, ODSG etc. for oversight and coordination. If applicable The NL prefers to join joint assessments/evaluations etc., but we also still have our own monitoring system in place that we will use if needed.

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?

None.

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 Netherlands will support OCHA's Centre for Humanitarian Data (to be established in The Hague by mid-2017) which will boost the impact of data on humanitarian assistance.
- Whenever feasible and efficient opt for harmonised partner agreements.
- The same applies to the joint monitoring etc.

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.

Too early to assess.

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?

Too early to assess.

Work stream 5 – Needs Assessment

1. Baseline (only in year 1): Where did your organisation stand on the work stream and its commitments when the Grand Bargain was signed?

The NL does not carry out its own assessments, and has no intention to do so in the future. We do advocate for joint context and risk analysis, prioritized assessments and planning of humanitarian and development partners in preparation for and after a crisis occurs.

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?

Ongoing activity.

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 Netherlands will support OCHA's Centre for Humanitarian Data, which will help OCHA scale-up its work on data and information management (which may well also include work on needs assessments), and which will promote collaboration around data challenges between humanitarian organisations, academia and the private sector.

We are willing to consider evaluating a needs assessment, as mentioned in the Grand Bargain, but no discussions have taken place with other signatories on criteria to commission e.g. independent reviews and evaluations.

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.

n.a.

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?

n.a.

Work stream 6 – Participation Revolution

1. Baseline (only in year 1): Where did your organisation stand on the work stream and its commitments when the Grand Bargain was signed?

The NL made the following commitments:

- 1) Through support for open data, affected people will be informed about aid streams affecting them, which will help them influence aid delivery where they live.

Base line:

- *NL is requesting all partner to use the IATI open standard for reporting.*
- *The NL committed at the WHS to support the development of an OCHA Data Centre.*

- 2) The NL actively promotes the application of accountability principles and standards:

Base line: NL expects that implementing partners put the IASC accountability standards (UN organisations) or accountability standards as specified in the CHS into practise and report on this (via IATI)

The Netherlands doesn't implement programs and does not collect feedback information from affected populations directly, but it expects that implementing partners will demonstrate more clearly how affected populations are consulted and how the consultations and feedback is used in program management and activities. The whole process of accountability needs to be reflected in HRP's and the joint Monitoring & Evaluations reports, which are part of the Humanitarian Program Cycle. The NL will monitor this process critically and in the future might use a lack of application of accountability principles in funding decisions.

- 3) The NL will advocate for inclusion of local partners including local private sector in responses
Base line: NL advocates for this in all relevant meetings with partners
- 4) The NL will support the development of a Generosity Tracker (GT) to map the local and national support of communities to disaster affected people.
Base line: basic concept for a GT developed and launched.
- 5) NL funds programmes and commits to advocate for inclusion of the voices of the most marginalised groups, especially women and girls.

Base line: NL expects from all partners to assess the needs of the different groups (by age and gender) of crisis affected people and develop programmes that meet the needs of the most vulnerable, especially women and girls.

The NL is a strong supporter of multi-year, unearmarked funding to core partners, which allows partners flexibility in programming according to needs.

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?

Ad 1):

- *ongoing. Discussions with partners and support to partners to adapt their systems for IATI reporting and support to IATI secretariat to further develop the IATI humanitarian reporting standard is taking place.*

- *The NL has approved (January 2017) a contribution of EUR 5 million for period of 3 years to the OCHA data centre that will open in the Summer 2017.*

Ad 2) Ongoing activity.

Ad 3) Ongoing activity.

Ad 4) The basic concept of the GT is further developed. In collaboration with ODI, Civicus and Development Initiatives a 3 year project is developed to do research on local humanitarian funding and development of a tracker. The NL will contribute EUR 0,4 million to the project, managed by ODI in London.

Ad 5) Ongoing activity.

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)?

Ad 1)

- *continuation of efforts to spread the use of IATI*
- *In 2017 support the OCHA data centre with office space, working permits and status as UN-mission (approval by parliament). The NL will continue to support OCHA and call upon humanitarian agencies and donors to provide data and make use of data*

Ad 2) Ongoing, no specific activity planned

Ad 3) Ongoing

Ad 4) By the end of 2017, a workshop will be organized with and for interested actors, to discuss the results of the inception studies in 3 pilot countries and design next phases of the project

Ad 5) Ongoing activity.

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.

Too early to assess.

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?

Too early to assess.

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?**

The Netherlands has given over 60% of its 2016 humanitarian aid budget via multi annual commitments.

- 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?**

No further actions taken.

- 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 Netherlands continues to give a large portion of its humanitarian funds via multi annual commitments, contingent upon the availability of quality multiyear plans, preferably joint. In 2017 most of these commitments come to an end, offering new options for specific multi annual planning and funding from 2018 and beyond.

- 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.**

Multi annual commitments do not only help the receiving organisation, but are also easier to administer and monitor.

- 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?**

Too early to assess.

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?

- Most of the Dutch humanitarian budget is spent either complete unearmarked or softly earmarked e.g. via CBPF or to a specific crisis. The Netherlands deliberately allows for flexibility and relies to a large extent on the competence of the receiving organisation.
- The Netherlands does receive information on how unearmarked funds are used and spent. This information is however often too general, too late and does not fully support the arguments for the use of unearmarked funding.

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?

Ad 1: No actions taken, The Netherlands does already comply with the target of unearmarked funding.

Ad 2: The Netherlands has asked their receiving organisations to report on unearmarked funding in a more concrete and timely manner. In order to inform Parliament and the public, it is key to have information on how overall programming budget (to which unearmarked funding contributes) is used and spent. What results were achieved? Was it cost efficient? We continue to have this dialogue with our partners. We urge partners to show the importance of unearmarked funding and to recognize donors who do give unearmarked funding in such a way, that it is made more attractive to become a member of this group.

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)?

Ongoing activity.

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.

By giving unearmarked and flexible funding organisations are enable to react timely and adequately, creating efficiency gains in comparison to earmarked funding. But this coincides with the necessity to provide transparency on the results of unearmarked flexible funding to allow for continuous support. The transparency remains a challenge, and is related to the transparency workstream.

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?

Our recent evaluation indicates the need for more information on results of unearmarked funding, to ensure continuous support and to allow steering.

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?**

The Netherlands has made reporting to IATI compulsory as of 2016/2017. Harmonization of reporting requirements is an important objective related to the introduction of the open data reporting model. Intention is to apply the 'report once, use often' principle.

- 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?**

We agreed, as co-lead of the transparency workstream, to work closely together with the co-conveners of this workstream, and our implementing partner Development Initiatives will frequently liaise with ICVA and Germany, to ensure our actions are compatible. The Netherlands does not participate in the reporting pilot, but we follow developments in the reporting workstream to ensure synergy with the transparency workstream activities.

- 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)?**

Ongoing activity.

- 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.**

Too early to assess, IATI will have to prove itself in 2017 within our own Ministry and beyond.

- 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?**

Too early to assess.

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?

- The Netherlands humanitarian budget increased in 2014 with the establishment of the Relief Fund of 570 mln euro to be spent in 2014-2017.
- In this fund a budget for reception of refugees in the region and preparedness was reserved.
- In 2015 the humanitarian budget for relief and resilience in the Syria region increased with an additional 110 mln euro.

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?

- The budget for reception of refugees in the region was further increased in 2016 with an additional 260 mln euro. With this funds we invest in strengthening national and local systems and coping mechanisms in order to build resilience in fragile contexts. And we invest in new partnerships.

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)?

Ongoing activity and focus on reception of refugees in the region.

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.

Too early to assess.

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?

Too early to assess.