

Grand Bargain Self-Reporting Explanatory Guidance

1. All signatories to the Grand Bargain are expected to complete the self-report annually.
2. Self-reports must be returned to the Grand Bargain Secretariat [gbsecretariat@un.org] no later than **Thursday 15 March, 2018**. Any submissions after this date may not be considered by the 2018 Independent Grand Bargain Report.
3. Reporting should reflect activities and progress that has taken place between January 2017 and December 2017.
4. The self-report requests information by work stream, however, in order to best track progress, signatories are asked to provide as much specific and relevant detail on progress made against each of the 51 individual commitments as possible. A full list of commitments for each work stream is included in the self-report template for reference.
5. The questions contained in this self-report are the same as in 2017, however some work streams include additional question for signatories, at the request of the work stream co-conveners. If you are unable to provide this information, please note the reasons for this.
6. Signatories who have not previously completed a self-report are asked to answer question one for each work stream, to provide a baseline of where your organisation stood when it became a Grand Bargain signatory. Existing signatories can complete questions two to five for each work stream, as your 2017 self-report will have already provided the baseline information sought by question one.
7. Please type your answers immediately below each question asked.
8. Signatories are encouraged to report both on progress made, and where they may have experienced obstacles or challenges to realising their commitments.
9. Signatories are encouraged, where possible and relevant, to reflect on their contributions to the Grand Bargain both as recipients of humanitarian funds and donors of humanitarian funds. This will allow us to capture the transfer of benefits accrued at higher ends of the value chain down to the frontline.
10. Signatories are asked to limit their responses to a maximum of 500 words per work stream.
11. Self-reports are public documents, and will be published as submitted on the IASC-hosted Grand Bargain [website](#) from 3rd June, 2018.

12. Self-reports will be used to inform the 2018 Independent Annual Grand Bargain Report, which will provide a collective analysis of the progress for each work stream, and for the Grand Bargain as a whole. The Independent Annual Grand Bargain report will be published prior to the 2018 Annual Grand Bargain Meeting on 18 June 2018, in New York.
13. The 2018 Independent Annual Grand Bargain Report is being prepared by [ODI/HPG](#). Signatories may be contacted by ODI/HPG as part of their research and preparation of the Independent Report.
14. If you require support or advice to complete your self-report, you may direct enquiries to the Grand Bargain Secretariat [gbsecretariat@un.org].

Gender Inclusion

Signatories are encouraged address to the gender dimensions of their Grand Bargain commitments. For reporting on each work stream, consideration should be given to the guidance provided by the [Aide-Memoire on Gender Mainstreaming in the Grand Bargain](#) that addresses the gender dimensions of resources, capacity, evidence and data, participation, leadership, accountability and communication within the Grand Bargain. Signatories are also welcome to provide additional detail on how they consider they have, at a macro level, ensured their Grand Bargain follow-up is gender-responsive, and to include any examples of good practice that they wish to share. This data will assist in the preparation of the 2018 Independent Grand Bargain report, which will assess the extent to which gender has been considered by Grand Bargain work streams.



2018 Grand Bargain Annual Self-Reporting – European Commission/ DG ECHO

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Work stream 1 - Transparency

Aid organisations and donors commit to:

1. *Publish timely, transparent, harmonised and open high-quality data on humanitarian funding within two years of the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul. We consider IATI to provide a basis for the purpose of a common standard.*
2. *Make use of appropriate data analysis, explaining the distinctiveness of activities, organisations, environments and circumstances (for example, protection, conflict-zones).*
3. *Improve the digital platform and engage with the open-data standard community to help ensure:*
 - *accountability of donors and responders with open data for retrieval and analysis;*
 - *improvements in decision-making, based upon the best possible information;*
 - *a reduced workload over time as a result of donors accepting common standard data for some reporting purposes; and*
 - *traceability of donors' funding throughout the transaction chain as far as the final responders and, where feasible, affected people.*
4. *Support the capacity of all partners to access and publish data.*

Transparency work stream co-conveners reporting request: How will you use the data from IATI within your organization including, for example, for monitoring, reporting and vis-à-vis other Grand Bargain commitments?

Baseline (only in year 1)

- **ECHO publishes quality and timely data to IATI (IATI index published in 2016 – GOOD and ranked around the 15th place), usually on a weekly basis and at least once a month.**
- **ECHO was one of the first adopters of the humanitarian flag (IATI standard version 2.02) and has been publishing data to IATI since 2011/2012.**
- **IATI is publishing statistics about Timeliness, Forward looking, Comprehensiveness, Coverage and Global Partnership Transparency Indicator Proposal.**
 - **ECHO is currently 5th for comprehensiveness with 90% score.**
 - **For the GPEDC indicator proposal, ECHO cannot score high on forward looking as it is not ECHO's current practice to plan activities three years in advance.**
- **All data is communicated daily to OCHA FTS (This is in place since 2004).**

Progress to date

According to the IATI Comprehensiveness indicator, ECHO is now publishing:

- 100% of the core field,
- 100% of the Financials indicators
- 69% of the value added indicators

During the period the quality of the publication has been enhanced and the Comprehensiveness weighted average is now reaching 92%.

During the current period, ECHO has introduced an additional specific humanitarian tag to its IATI publication, namely by using the clusters vocabulary to describe the sectors of activity in addition to the DAC 5 sector vocabulary.

Planned next steps

- The development of a fully-fledged DG ECHO Results Framework is a long-term project and will need to be finalized before publishing of results data can be done
- The introduction of the Appeal or Emergency details
- The introduction of geographical coordinates based on available tools to convert textual information into coordinates

Efficiency gains

Increased transparency and information sharing do not yield efficiency gains that are readily tangible. The gains are related to enhanced mutual accountability, facilitated coordination and correct information flows.

Good practices and lessons learned

The work stream has allowed us to discuss with concerned partners on the validity of indicators and the capacity to easily use operational indicators for reporting requirements.

Work stream 2 – Localization

Aid organisations and donors commit to:

1. *Increase and support multi-year investment in the institutional capacities of local and national responders, including preparedness, response and coordination capacities, especially in fragile contexts and where communities are vulnerable to armed conflicts, disasters, recurrent outbreaks and the effects of climate change. We should achieve this through collaboration with development partners and incorporate capacity strengthening in partnership agreements.*
2. *Understand better and work to remove or reduce barriers that prevent organisations and donors from partnering with local and national responders in order to lessen their administrative burden.*
3. *Support and complement national coordination mechanisms where they exist and include local and national responders in international coordination mechanisms as appropriate and in keeping with humanitarian principles.*
4. *Achieve by 2020 a global, aggregated target of at least 25 per cent of humanitarian funding to local and national responders as directly as possible to improve outcomes for affected people and reduce transactional costs.*
5. *Develop, with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), and apply a 'localisation' marker to measure direct and indirect funding to local and national responders.*
6. *Make greater use of funding tools which increase and improve assistance delivered by local and national responders, such as UN-led country-based pooled funds (CBPF), IFRC Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) and NGO-led and other pooled funds.*

Localisation work stream co-conveners reporting request: What percentage of your humanitarian funding in 2017 was provided to local and national responders (a) directly (b) through pooled funds, or (c) through a single intermediary?¹

Due to constraints linked to its current humanitarian legal framework, the EU/ECHO is not able to provide direct support to local and national responders. Therefore, humanitarian assistance is funded through UN partners, other international organisations and international NGOs which then sub-contract implementing partners which are either their national chapters or local organisations. As it stands, it is not possible to determine the level of the EU funding flowing to local and national actors, possibly with the exception of the funding for the ESSN in Turkey which is nearly entirely implemented by the Turkish Red Crescent, although with one intermediary.

¹ The "Identified Categories for Tracking Aid Flows" document agreed through silence procedure ([available here](#)) provides relevant definitions. The detailed data collection form ([available here](#)) may also assist you in responding to this question. Returning this form with your self report is optional, but encouraged.

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 EU played an important role at the World Humanitarian Summit held in May 2016 and during the negotiations which led to development of the Grand Bargain (GB) and the commitment for signatories to improving aid efficiency and effectiveness. In terms of concrete action, DG ECHO undertook the following actions prior to the signing of the Grand Bargain and in the second half of 2016:

- Local capacity-building implemented through the DG ECHO Disaster Preparedness (DIPECHO) programmes;
- EU Aid Volunteers programme supports local capacity building through support of local organization capacity grants;
- DG ECHO Enhanced Response Capacity (ERC) funding to build up Network for Empowered Aid Response (NEAR) network of southern/local NGO's and (pending) funding for ICVA to connect southern NGO's to Geneva-based coordination and policy-making;
- For DG ECHO, direct funding of national or local partners would require amending Humanitarian Aid Regulation (currently only possible to fund NGOs established in the EU);

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?

2017 is considered to have been a "build and create" period. The EU's investment in the localisation agenda has been strategic in that it has supported system-transforming initiatives which are driving the localisation process. In 2017, two flagship projects led by IFRC and Christian Aid were funded with the aim of shaping the agenda and pushing for more reform within the system. Previously, the NEAR Network and DRC's DEMAC initiative on diaspora funding were launched in 2015-16 with the support of DG ECHO. While DEMAC is now becoming a service-oriented platform for Diaspora organisations engaged in humanitarian response and local organisations, the NEAR initiative has amplified the voice of the Global South and accumulated experience for addressing barriers to localisation, particularly in terms of strategic capacity development and multiplying funding tools to channel more resources to local and national actors.

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)?

Moving beyond the project-based approach which is not sufficient for the EU to achieve its localisation objectives, the EU is considering how to constructively engage with Civil Society in a dialogue supported by appropriate funding mechanisms.

The upcoming revision of the Framework Partnership Agreement with EU/ECHO's partner organisations (NGOs and Red Cross) will present an occasion to address the issue of overheads for local implementing partners.

Efficiency gains

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

Localisation is seen as one way of increasing aid effectiveness and aid efficiency by supporting those who are the first to responders. The commitment to increase support to local and national actors reflects the aspiration of these actors to strengthen their capacity and leadership in the management of crises and to be less dependent on international intervention. Funding depletion, the increasing number of crises and their protracted nature call for more cost-efficient approaches and innovative partnerships between local and national actors in order to bring more assistance on the ground and to cover crises that cannot make it to mainstream media.

Good practices and lessons learned

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?

DG ECHO approach in Turkey is probably the most concrete and replicable model. In 2018, it is foreseen that while remaining independent and needs-based, all DG ECHO actions in Turkey will be implemented in coordination with relevant civil society organizations and the Government of Turkey with a clear intention to integrate DG ECHO-supported services for refugees into relevant national and local structures over time.

This ambition supports both the Nexus and the transition perspective that would need to be present in country-based responses in order to pave the way for more locally-led responses.

Simultaneously, we can expect a large variety of organisational and management capacity in the wide number of partner (local) organisations. Obtaining an EU grant will imply that these organisations will be expected to apply the same level of accountability and due diligence.

Work stream 3 – Cash

Aid organisations and donors commit to:

1. *Increase the routine use of cash alongside other tools, including in-kind assistance, service delivery (such as health and nutrition) and vouchers. Employ markers to measure increase and outcomes.*
2. *Invest in new delivery models which can be increased in scale while identifying best practice and mitigating risks in each context. Employ markers to track their evolution.*
3. *Build an evidence base to assess the costs, benefits, impacts, and risks of cash (including on protection) relative to in-kind assistance, service delivery interventions and vouchers, and combinations thereof.*
4. *Collaborate, share information and develop standards and guidelines for cash programming in order to better understand its risks and benefits.*
5. *Ensure that coordination, delivery, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are put in place for cash transfers.*
6. *Aim to increase use of cash programming beyond current low levels, where appropriate. Some organisations and donors may wish to set targets.*

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

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

Baseline information on cash was partial when the Grand Bargain was signed. It mainly covered the food assistance and nutrition sectors according to a methodology which did not differentiate modalities of assistance. On the basis of this information, it was estimated that approximately 35% of DG ECHO's assistance was being delivered in the form of cash.

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?

DG ECHO's policy Guidance Note for partners on the delivery of large-scale cash transfers published in January 2017 was updated in November 2017 in the light of first experiences and following extensive consultation with all partners. By separating both the pure delivery cash component and the Monitoring & Evaluation component from all other fundamental elements of a cash transfer programme cycle, the Guidance aims to enhance transparency and accountability and improve effectiveness and cost efficiency.

Following the first step of gathering data according to each delivery modality in 2016 (which includes a split between cash transfer and vouchers), DG ECHO's new data collection system has become effective in 2017. Approximately 35% of DG ECHO's assistance was being delivered in the form of cash transfer in 2017.

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)?

A key outcome of the revision work of DG ECHO's Guidance note is the announcement of a Preliminary Market Consultation (PMC).

The objective of the PMC is to explore feasibility and practicability on how to implement the delivery of cash transfer component through a separate contract with a variety of humanitarian and non-humanitarian actors. It will be carried out in the first half of 2018.

In addition DG ECHO will take a co-lead role with CaLP on the measuring cash action point under the Grand Bargain in 2018.

DG ECHO participated in a donor mission to Jordan and Lebanon early 2018. The main objective was to bring key donors together in the field to focus on advancing joint Grand Bargain commitments on cash transfers.

Last but not least, DG ECHO is strengthening its ability to engage with partners, CSOs and industry experts on digitalization issues such as digital identities, data protection, biometrics and financial technologies.

4. Efficiency gains

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

DG ECHO already benefits from gains in efficiencies in the delivery of large-scale cash transfers – efficiencies which free up funds to do more humanitarian assistance and reach more affected populations. DG ECHO has been urging its partners to lower their Indirect Costs in the case of large-scale cash transfers. Some have begun to take some steps in this direction in 2017.

In addition, DG ECHO has continuously encouraged a coordinated approach among its partners to ensure qualitative gains towards affected populations as well as with donors, national and local authorities.

5. Good practices and lessons learned

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?

Through DG ECHO's policy work in the field and in HQ, its partners increasingly work in a coordinated way.

Internally, DG ECHO has created a Community of Practice (CoP) on three interrelated policies: cash transfer, social protection and basic needs approach. A basic needs approach is helpful to encourage well-coordinated responses in the best interests of affected populations. This approach is aligned with the EU commitment on operationalising the humanitarian-development nexus. Breaking silos in cash transfer programmes encourages alignment in terms of value and delivery systems to existing or nascent social protection systems and to support shock-responsive elements laying the basis for more durable solutions.

Work stream 4 – Management costs

Aid organisations and donors commit to:

1. *Reduce the costs and measure the gained efficiencies of delivering assistance with technology (including green) and innovation. Aid organisations will provide the detailed steps to be taken by the end of 2017.*

Examples where use of technology can be expanded:

- *Mobile technology for needs assessments/post-distribution monitoring;*
 - *Digital platforms and mobile devices for financial transactions;*
 - *Communication with affected people via call centres and other feedback mechanisms such as SMS text messaging;*
 - *Biometrics; and*
 - *Sustainable energy.*
2. *Harmonise partnership agreements and share partner assessment information as well as data about affected people, after data protection safeguards have been met by the end of 2017, in order to save time and avoid duplication in operations.*

Aid organisations commit to:

3. *Provide transparent and comparable cost structures by the end of 2017. We acknowledge that operational management of the Grand Bargain signatories - the United Nations, International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the NGO sector may require different approaches.*
4. *Reduce duplication of management and other costs through maximising efficiencies in procurement and logistics for commonly required goods and services. Shared procurement should leverage the comparative advantage of the aid organisations and promote innovation.*

Suggested areas for initial focus:

- *Transportation/Travel;*
- *Vehicles and fleet management;*
- *Insurance;*
- *Shipment tracking systems;*
- *Inter-agency/common procurement pipelines (non-food items, shelter, WASH, food);*
- *IT services and equipment;*
- *Commercial consultancies; and*
- *Common support services.*

Donors commit to:

5. *Make joint regular functional monitoring and performance reviews and reduce individual donor assessments, evaluations, verifications, risk management and oversight processes.*
-

Management costs work stream co-conveners reporting request: What steps have you taken to reduce the number of individual donor assessments (if a donor) or partner assessments (if an agency) you conduct on humanitarian partners?

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

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

DG ECHO uses its own partner assessment under the Framework Partnership Agreement

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?

ECHO has commissioned a study on criteria for assessing partner capacity by five other donors. The final report is due for end March 2018. Any possible synergies with screening schemes of other major donors and any relevant self-regulatory schemes (such as the Core Humanitarian Standards initiative) will be fully explored in line with commitments made under the Grand Bargain. This could allow streamlining ECHO own NGO partners assessment process by, for example, exempting applicants from parts of the selection process if another donor has already screened the NGO on equivalent criteria.

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)?

Any possible synergies with screening schemes of other major donors and any relevant self-regulatory schemes (such as the Core Humanitarian Standards initiative) will be fully explored in line with commitments made under the Grand Bargain. This could allow streamlining ECHO own NGO partner assessment process by, for example, exempting applicants from parts of the selection process if another donor has already screened the NGO on equivalent criteria.

Efficiency gains

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

To be determined in following years – see also references in cash work stream.

Good practices and lessons learned

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?

To be determined in following years – see also references in cash work stream.

Work stream 5 – Needs Assessment

Aid organisations and donors commit to:

1. *Provide a single, comprehensive, cross-sectoral, methodologically sound and impartial overall assessment of needs for each crisis to inform strategic decisions on how to respond and fund thereby reducing the number of assessments and appeals produced by individual organisations.*
2. *Coordinate and streamline data collection to ensure compatibility, quality and comparability and minimising intrusion into the lives of affected people. Conduct the overall assessment in a transparent, collaborative process led by the Humanitarian Coordinator/Resident Coordinator with full involvement of the Humanitarian Country Team and the clusters/sectors and in the case of sudden onset disasters, where possible, by the government. Ensure sector-specific assessments for operational planning are undertaken under the umbrella of a coordinated plan of assessments at inter-cluster/sector level.*
3. *Share needs assessment data in a timely manner, with the appropriate mitigation of protection and privacy risks. Jointly decide on assumptions and analytical methods used for projections and estimates.*
4. *Dedicate resources and involve independent specialists within the clusters to strengthen data collection and analysis in a fully transparent, collaborative process, which includes a brief summary of the methodological and analytical limitations of the assessment.*
5. *Prioritise humanitarian response across sectors based on evidence established by the analysis. As part of the IASC Humanitarian Response Plan process on the ground, it is the responsibility of the empowered Humanitarian Coordinator/Resident Coordinator to ensure the development of the prioritised, evidence-based response plans.*
6. *Commission independent reviews and evaluations of the quality of needs assessment findings and their use in prioritisation to strengthen the confidence of all stakeholders in the needs assessment.*
7. *Conduct risk and vulnerability analysis with development partners and local authorities, in adherence to humanitarian principles, to ensure the alignment of humanitarian and development programming.*

Needs assessment work stream co-conveners reporting request: What hurdles, if any, might be addressed to allow for more effective implementation of the GB commitment?

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

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

Thanks to its strong field network, ECHO tends to have a quite strong knowledge of crisis situations. This understanding feeds into the allocation of funding (i.e. level 1 of assessments according to above concept) the formulation of the HIPs (level 2) and is used to assess project proposals (level 3).

That being said, ECHO is strictly speaking not conducting needs assessments. Rather, ECHO experts review existing assessments and data from various sources including own observation to develop a good understanding of the situation.

ECHO's main tool summarizing its understanding of needs in a given crisis is the annual Integrated Analysis Framework (IAF). This internal tool is mainly used to develop country strategies (which are spelled out subsequently in the HIPs) and are a basis for the definition of funding allocations per country/crisis.

The Single Form guidelines state that "ECHO will check whether the proposed Action is coherent with DG ECHO's own evaluation of needs". The partners' needs assessment (be it a joint/coordinated assessment or an agency specific assessment) is contrasted against ECHO's own assessment.

ECHO doesn't provide explicit guidance to its staff and its partners on what is expected in terms of needs assessment regarding coordination, methodology, timeliness or evidence base. For instance, it does not specify if partners are expected to participate in and use coordinated needs assessments (multi-sector or sector specific). ECHO staff isn't instructed to get involved (or not) in coordinated needs assessments and there is not any defined policy on when and under which circumstances ECHO should fund needs assessments conducted by its partners (OCHA, clusters, other coordination bodies).

The involvement of ECHO field staff in coordination and needs assessment varies across countries and crises. Generally, a proactive, vocal involvement is seen as beneficial both for ECHO and for the assessments. ECHO is able to obtain information and better understand the dynamics which influence the assessment process. The presence of an important and knowledgeable donor strengthens the needs assessment both in terms of authority and of impartiality and objectivity.

In some cases, namely in the context of ECHO funded Emergency Response Mechanisms (ERM), assessment methodologies, tools and working arrangements have been developed which over time have been adopted by the wider humanitarian community. These examples demonstrate that collective practice and expectations are as, if not more, important than normative frameworks, mandates and predefined tools.

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?

Several studies and pilot projects have been undertaken to reinforce the theoretical understanding of joint needs assessments and develop the tools necessary to perform assessments that bring added value and inform properly decision making processes. These include (not exhaustive list) efforts to develop a crisis severity index, allowing comparison between different crises as a tool contributing to decision-making processes; support to performing multi cluster needs assessments; the development of a methodology to perform

quality reviews of needs assessments so that donors and implementing agencies can assess the validity of proposed (joint) needs assessments.

Besides these technical efforts, the main achievement is probably the increased expectation between actors that joint needs assessments are a priority having impact on the complete subsequent project and programme cycle. This increases debates and analyses of potential cooperation, and leads towards enhanced cooperation. The first progress remains nevertheless the definition (ongoing) of common concepts and understandings so as to facilitate discussions.

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)?

Improved needs assessments will be the result of demand from the donors and proactive coordination between the humanitarian actors on the field, stemming from sufficient upstream investments in training and developing common methodologies.

In order to obtain results, partners are currently reinforcing the technical tools (with targeted EU/ECHO funding funding). This will confirm the availability of common understanding and common tools.

Joint Needs Assessments are not prescriptive exercises and each should be tailored according to the needs and the situation. The absence of a *one fits all solution* implies the need for a participative assessment of the best manner to respond to the needs in each and every situation.

The availability of specialised, independent, reliable technical services is required to perform needs assessments and provide analytical services, and both availability and understanding of the advantages of such services contribute to stronger evidence based analysis.

Partners need to invest in training of their staff to be able to perform appropriate joint needs assessments and (for donors) assess whether evidence has been properly used in preparing strategies and actions.

The role of local partners cannot be underestimated and should be supported whenever feasible.

DG ECHO, with other actors, will encourage the establishment of joint needs assessments by interacting with partners during the assessment process and incentivising progress also through funding decisions

Efficiency gains

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

Efficiency gains can exist at different levels. Enhanced trust between partners (and donors), more rapid reactions, avoidance of duplication, improved evidence based decisions processes are just examples. Nevertheless, rendering efficiency gains in a tangible manner is difficult and will probably require several years of datasets.

Good practices and lessons learned

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

The main lesson probably concerns the difficulty to develop a common understanding, common definitions, and agreed goals. Without this common ground, partner might want to avoid contributing to a common exercise that can bear important (unknown) consequences.

The technical work implementing over the past years provide reliable tools to perform joint needs assessments, which will always require improvement, but there is now a need to focus on the institutional dimension, developing leadership in managing JNA and gathering support and participation around it.

Work stream 6 – Participation Revolution

Aid organisations and donors commit to:

- 1. Improve leadership and governance mechanisms at the level of the humanitarian country team and cluster/sector mechanisms to ensure engagement with and accountability to people and communities affected by crises.*
- 2. Develop common standards and a coordinated approach for community engagement and participation, with the emphasis on inclusion of the most vulnerable, supported by a common platform for sharing and analysing data to strengthen decision-making, transparency, accountability and limit duplication.*
- 3. Strengthen local dialogue and harness technologies to support more agile, transparent but appropriately secure feedback.*
- 4. Build systematic links between feedback and corrective action to adjust programming.*

Donors commit to:

- 5. Fund flexibly to facilitate programme adaptation in response to community feedback.*
- 6. Invest time and resources to fund these activities.*

Aid organisations commit to:

- 7. Ensure that, by the end of 2017, all humanitarian response plans – and strategic monitoring of them - demonstrate analysis and consideration of inputs from affected communities.*

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

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

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?

When the GB was signed, the EU involvement in the Participation Revolution work-stream has been gradual because the EU accountability frameworks in the humanitarian sector are strongly embedded in our operations. However, debates within the work-stream have highlighted gaps at the implementation level across the sector. These gaps were confirmed by some of EU/ECHO-funded projects, namely the Listen Learn Act implemented by DanChurchAid.

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)?

DG ECHO is beginning the process of reviewing the Framework Partnership Agreement and Single Form. Issues related to participation and accountability frameworks will be part of this process with a view to considering how affected populations can be better and more systematically involved and consulted throughout the programme cycle, and how to better assess how humanitarian organisations meet their needs. This being said, as a global donor, the Commission recognises the importance of accountability to affected population, but it also has responsibility for an adequate and sound use of tax payer money. Beneficiary participation commitments need to be linked to integrity of aid frameworks.

Efficiency gains

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

Donor commitment (number 5 in the above-mentioned list of commitments) to allow flexibility in fund allocation to facilitate programme adaptation in response to community feedback is something that DG ECHO has always supported and facilitated in order to ensure quality of aid delivery.

With the review of its operational procedures and tools, DG ECHO intends to incentivise better participation and better accountability, making use of feedback mechanisms and course correction measures even more systematic in its programming.

Good practices and lessons learned

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 7 - Multi-year planning and funding

Aid organisations and donors commit to:

1. *Increase multi-year, collaborative and flexible planning and multi-year funding instruments and document the impacts on programme efficiency and effectiveness, ensuring that recipients apply the same funding arrangements with their implementing partners.*
2. *Support in at least five countries by the end of 2017 multi-year collaborative planning and response plans through multi-year funding and monitor and evaluate the outcomes of these responses.*
3. *Strengthen existing coordination efforts to share analysis of needs and risks between the humanitarian and development sectors and to better align humanitarian and development planning tools and interventions while respecting the principles of both.*

Multi-year planning and funding work stream co-conveners reporting request: Please report the percentage and total value of multi-year agreements² you have provided (as a donor) or received and provided to humanitarian partners (as an agency) in 2017, and any earmarking conditions.³ When reporting on efficiency gains, please try to provide quantitative examples.

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 majority of DG ECHO's projects are operated on an annual basis, however due to different types of extensions they typically run for more than one year. Projects with a duration of longer than one year have been implemented under the Disaster Preparedness budget lines, for resilience building projects, under the Enhanced Response Capacity and the Children of Peace.

De facto, in some contexts funding is recurrent; year after year the same or very similar activities are funded with the same partner(s). Only in a few cases, mainly through external assigned revenues from DFID (for the Sahel) and AFD (for Ivory Coast), actions are explicitly guided by a strategy that covers two or three years, although funding is provided on an annual basis.

From a legal point of view, projects of up to 24 months are already possible under World Wide Decision (WWD). The 2017 WWD extends this maximum duration to 48 months.

DG ECHO's HIPs cover only one calendar year. However, DG ECHO and partners usually have a longer term vision which isn't reflected explicitly in the project documentation.

² Multiyear funding is funding provided for two or more years based on a firm commitment at the outset

³ For the Grand Bargain definitions of earmarking, please see Annex I. Earmarking modalities, as contained with the final agreement, available [here](#).

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?

Following the preparatory steps performed in the past reporting period, negotiations are ongoing for a first multi-annual regional contract. The preparation of the contract implied adapting tools (in terms of encoding in the accounting software, in terms of publications, etc.). The ongoing negotiations, focusing also on reporting requirements (and the definition of indicators), and subsequent implementation will allow for further improvement in the management tools. In the process of negotiations, earmarking has been minimalised and flexibility provided to adapt the action.

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 fact that a first action is being prepared has opened the door to multi-annual funding and several more projects are being prepared for multi-year funding. The objective of allocating 15 to 20% of DG ECHO's 2018 budget to multi-annual funding will be achieved, with an estimation of reaching 17.5% using initial 2018 budget amounts (this will change as emergency funds are mobilised throughout the year).

In the coming years, the efficiency gains will be assessed. This includes the down-streaming of the perceived gains of multi-annuality to the local partners, verifying that this has occurred and how this impacts implementing partners. Adjustment and control of the budget use (and flexibility to address changes in the situation) will also be followed in order to develop lessons learnt.

Efficiency gains

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

Efficiency gains still need to be assessed, and this is part of the ongoing negotiations. Reduced fund raising and reporting requirements, as well as enhanced predictability should be reflected in the administrative/operational ratio of the action. The exercise to assess this gain and report it in a tangible manner is ongoing and needs the input of implementing partners.

Good practice and lessons learned

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?

Communication between the different services to prepare the multi-annual assignment, and with the concerned partner, is a key dimension of success. It is necessary to clearly define what is expected from both contracting partners, and determine how the administrative simplification stemming from the predictability of funding is transferred to efficiency gains.

Work stream 8 - Earmarking/flexibility

Aid organisations and donors commit to:

- 1. Jointly determine, on an annual basis, the most effective and efficient way of reporting on unearmarked and softly earmarked funding and to initiate this reporting by the end of 2017.*
- 2. Reduce the degree of earmarking of funds contributed by governments and regional groups who currently provide low levels of flexible finance. Aid organisations in turn commit to do the same with their funding when channelling it through partners.*

Aid organisations commit to:

- 3. Be transparent and regularly share information with donors outlining the criteria for how core and unearmarked funding is allocated (for example, urgent needs, emergency preparedness, forgotten contexts, improved management)*
- 4. Increase the visibility of unearmarked and softly earmarked funding, thereby recognising the contribution made by donors.*

Donors commit to:

- 5. Progressively reduce the earmarking of their humanitarian contributions. The aim is to aspire to achieve a global target of 30 per cent of humanitarian contributions that is non earmarked or softly earmarked by 2020⁴.*

Earmarking/flexibility work stream co-conveners reporting request: Please specify if possible the percentages of 2017 vs 2016 of:

- Unearmarked contributions (given/received)
- Softly earmarked contributions (given/received)
- Country earmarked contributions (given/received)
- Tightly earmarked contributions (given/received)

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

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

According to the Grand Bargain work stream on flexible funding table, ECHO's level of funding is currently considered as tightly earmarked (category I - financial contribution directed to a specific project in a specific country). ECHO funds projects which are defined both in terms of objective, sectors and results as well as geographic scope (corresponding most of the time to a country).

⁴ For the Grand Bargain definitions of earmarking, please see Annex I. Earmarking modalities, as contained with the final agreement, available [here](#).

However, ECHO earmarks regarding results (outputs and outcomes), but not regarding budget and activities.

Despite its tight earmarking, ECHO's project arrangements are quite flexible. Partners can adjust activities and the use of funds without ECHO's agreement being required. The procedures for changes to the results (outputs and outcomes) are quite simple and thanks to the Single Form potentially quick. Yet, because of the overall complexity of the Single Form as well as lack of knowledge of ECHO FPA rules and procedures despite training opportunities, partners do not make use of this flexibility enough.

Examples of ECHO less tightly earmarked funding:

- **DREF: IFRC managed pooled fund supporting national Red Cross societies.**
- **Emergency Response Mechanisms (ERM) in different countries: A consortium of partners uses funds to cover urgent needs identified through a pre-defined set of criteria and standardised response options.**
- **START Network Anticipation Window: Through ERC funding, ECHO supports the capacity for the START network to respond in anticipation to crises (based on risk assessment) in order to avoid suffering of affected people. Funds for specific preparedness and response actions are released when certain risk indicators reach a critical level and upon quick 'no regrets' decision by the network.**

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?

DG ECHO does have a relatively tight earmarking policy, but maintains flexible reallocation mechanisms, with activities that can be adjusted by partners without DG ECHO's agreement. The procedures for changes to the results (outputs and outcomes) are quite simple and thanks to the Single Form potentially quick. A revision of the Framework Partnership Agreement will nevertheless be the opportunity to assess, with partners, elements that can be further simplified or modified.

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 ongoing preparation of a major multi-annual contract (see above) is also used to seek means to reduce earmarking or simplify contract management. In particular, the simplification of country re-allocation within the regional programme are being considered, as well as means to reallocate within the budget according to the needs. Experience gained from this initiative will serve as an input into the discussions concerning the revision of the Framework Partnership Agreement.

Efficiency gains

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

To be determined in the coming years.

Good practices and lessons learned

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?

To be determined in the coming years.

Work stream 9 – Reporting requirements

Aid organisations and donors commit to:

- 1. Simplify and harmonise reporting requirements by the end of 2018 by reducing its volume, jointly deciding on common terminology, identifying core requirements and developing a common report structure.*
- 2. Invest in technology and reporting systems to enable better access to information.*
- 3. Enhance the quality of reporting to better capture results, enable learning and increase the efficiency of reporting.*

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

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

DG ECHO's reporting template, the Single Form, is one of the most complex reporting formats. Most partners have adjusted to the format and appreciate its structure overall, especially compared to UN reporting formats. Some donors (e.g. Belgium) have adopted the Single Form for their own reporting purposes.

Unlike most other donors, DG ECHO uses the same template for proposal submission and reporting – the Single Form. Intermediary and final reports are simply updates of the initial proposal which simplifies the work of DG ECHO partners drastically and is highly appreciated (as recognized by the recent GPPi study).

The downside of this approach is the fact that the Single Form structure is quite complex and the reports quite lengthy (often exceeding 50 pages plus annexes). The SF consists of both narrative sections (e.g. needs assessment, response analysis) and highly structured and detailed sections (e.g. beneficiaries, visibility). The Single Form (SF) revision in 2014 represented an important step in simplifying manual entries and long narratives.

The structure of the SF at the current stage is the result of an evolutionary process with different elements modified or added on the initiative of different stakeholders within DG ECHO since the 2014 revision. In its current form, the SF covers most of the information needs of DG ECHO field staff, desks and policy officers albeit not fully and in some cases not in the best way.

The SF's structured data fields allow for automatic data extraction and analysis. Work is ongoing to make full use of these possibilities.

The complexity of the Single Form seems to have removed technical project staff from the drafting and reporting process. Consequently, according to several DG ECHO field colleagues, the information available in the SF itself is not the most interesting. Relevant technical information, put together by technical staff, is often rather found in annexes.

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 initiative regarding the introduction of multi-annual funding goes hand in hand with further attempts to simplify reporting requirements, notably through the definition of indicators that correctly encapsulate the impacts of the work performed.

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 revision of the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA), which is starting, will draw upon the feedback from consultations with partners and will assess the opportunities to simplify reporting requirements. The discussion is accompanied by reflections regarding the use of the KRI and KOI, where consolidation is considered and simplification of transfer of the data to IATI.

Efficiency gains

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

To be determined in following years

Good practices and lessons learned

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?

The difficulty when addressing reporting simplification lies in the perceived loss of control, and the quid pro quo dimension". It is important that simplification is not perceived as less responsibility or less supervision, thus creating an enhanced risk exposure of the donor. In this context, reporting simplification implies enhanced responsibilities for the implementing partners. Fine-tuning expectations of the different stakeholders (including in terms of transparency – namely the responsibility to correctly inform the oversight authorities, both in Europe and in the concerned countries, and the Budgetary Authority) and balancing simplification towards management remain a key challenge.

On an international level DG ECHO continues to follow the DE/ICVA-led pilot on narrative reporting with interest, and will consider the extent to which its result can inform the upcoming revision of its contractual framework.

Work stream 10 – Humanitarian – Development engagement

Aid organisations and donors commit to:

1. *Use existing resources and capabilities better to shrink humanitarian needs over the long term with the view of contributing to the outcomes of the Sustainable Development Goals. Significantly increase prevention, mitigation and preparedness for early action to anticipate and secure resources for recovery. This will need to be the focus not only of aid organisations and donors but also of national governments at all levels, civil society, and the private sector.*
2. *Invest in durable solutions for refugees, internally displaced people and sustainable support to migrants, returnees and host/receiving communities, as well as for other situations of recurring vulnerabilities.*
3. *Increase social protection programmes and strengthen national and local systems and coping mechanisms in order to build resilience in fragile contexts.*
4. *Perform joint multi-hazard risk and vulnerability analysis, and multi-year planning where feasible and relevant, with national, regional and local coordination in order to achieve a shared vision for outcomes. Such a shared vision for outcomes will be developed on the basis of shared risk analysis between humanitarian, development, stabilisation and peacebuilding communities.*
5. *Galvanise new partnerships that bring additional capabilities and resources to crisis affected states through Multilateral Development Banks within their mandate and foster innovative partnerships with the private sector.*

Humanitarian-Development engagement work stream co-conveners reporting request:

What has your organisation done to operationalise the humanitarian-development nexus at country level?"

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

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

An EC priority for WHS was enhanced HUM-DEV cooperation. Nexus approaches to promote such synergies are (were) not new for the EC. They are encapsulated in the ECs resilience approach (2012 Resilience communication, 2013 Resilience Action plan) and prior commitments to LRRD. ECHO is systematically collaborating for better aid and humanitarian effectiveness, reducing underlying vulnerability and managing risk.

Over the past few years, coordination and cooperation between DG ECHO and DG DEVCO have been stepped up, for example through the AGIR (Alliance Globale Initiative Resilience) and SHARE initiatives, but also in Bangladesh, Haiti, Mali, Nepal, Zimbabwe, and Jordan. DEVCO, ECHO, EEAS and NEAR are working closely together for the implementation of the Bekou TF (CAR), the Africa TF and the Syria TF.

Such collaboration is at the centre of the EU 2016 Communication on protracted and forced displacement "Communication COM (2016) 234 "Lives in Dignity: from Aid-Dependence to Self-Reliance" calling for joint responsibility of political, developmental and humanitarian actors.

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 May 2017, the Council of the European Union approved Council Conclusions on operationalising the humanitarian development nexus. The central element of these conclusions is a clear encouragement from the Council to the Commission and EU Member States to make the nexus concrete and work together towards durable solutions to protracted crises in selected pilot countries. Although the testing of the approach is only at its preliminary stage in six pilot countries (Sudan, Uganda, Nigeria, Chad, Iraq and Myanmar), the EU and its Member States have already organised joint analysis workshops where common objectives towards the resolution of crises are agreed and nexus action plans are drafted to enhance complementarity of actions. As an example, in Sudan, a nexus action plan will be shared with EU Member States by mid-March with the aim to share responsibility of actions on the basis of agreed joint objectives on the two protracted crises of Sudan, namely forced displacement and under-nutrition.

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)?

By mid-2018 preliminary lessons will be drawn from the six pilot countries and a report assessing the nexus approach between EU and its Member States will be presented to EU Foreign Affairs/Development Council of ministers. It is expected that more testing of the approach towards 2019 will be necessary before it can be applied systematically in other countries and planning, financing and programming cycles can be adapted.

Efficiency gains

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

The humanitarian development nexus is a way to enhance coordination towards collective objectives. Operational coordination means that humanitarian, development and political actors (MS) jointly work at a better prevention, anticipation, and management of crises. Protracted and recurrent crises need political solutions that cannot be addressed by humanitarian and development actors alone. As the process only started recently and no indicators for measuring the impact have been set up, it is very difficult to assess efficiency gains at this stage.

Good practices and lessons learned

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?

In the various pilot countries, we see the importance and the need to do more to incorporate conflict sensitivity into our analysis of risks and programming at all levels, to avoid contributing to instability, to understand how we can best work, and with whom, in challenging

environments. A conflict sensitivity analysis revealed very useful in the context of Nigeria in order to building and sharing understanding of local dynamics including criteria for working with different partners. In Uganda, such process will involve civil society organisations.

The EU does not want to build parallel nexus structures. Wherever possible, EU and Member States Nexus strategic frameworks will be aligned and contribute to existing processes, e.g. the CRRF in Uganda, the EU Iraq reconstruction strategy and UN frameworks (e.g. UNDAFs and HRPs).

Another key lesson is that more work is required on synchronising different planning, funding and programming cycles of humanitarian, development or peace building actors. This includes funding cycles with World Bank. Such barriers will need to be broken down as we work towards implementing the nexus. Moreover, innovative financial instruments should be promoted whenever possible given the scarcity of public funds and the need to incentivize private funds.