

# Grand Bargain

## Facilitation Group and Eminent Person Meeting

March 7th, 14:00-16:30pm, Palais des Nations, Geneva

### Context and welcoming remarks

Participants welcomed the re-engagement of Kristalina Georgieva as the Grand Bargain (GB) Eminent Person (EP), appreciating her offer to help to address blockages hindering progress, and to inject a level of political energy into the initiative by reaching out to relevant political enablers and counterparts. Simultaneously, participants asked the EP to hold the GB community itself to account for better deliver of the commitments.

Discussions took note of the ongoing self-analysis and reflection within the humanitarian ecosystem and beyond, including development actors, about ethical standards and integrity on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA). The GB can therefore be used for re-affirming the highest ethical standards within the humanitarian system. There was also a recognition that the GB is making progress, for example around transparency, localization, cash and multi-year funding modalities. However, a lack of visibility about the progress remains, which can be rectified with the cultivation of inspiring and simplified narratives that reach wider audiences. The 'quid pro quo' spirit of reciprocity is also unequally applied, while field impact has yet to be comprehensively demonstrated, although GB practices can be evidenced in some aspects of the current humanitarian responses in Yemen and Somalia.

The EP observed that as a multi-stakeholder platform, the GB is unique and important. The GB will be delivered if we maintain our ability to evolve, recalibrate and restructure if needed. The EP also said that benchmarking and indicators must be identified to help evaluate what has been achieved, and to determine to what extent work can be considered complete.

### Session I. Progress to Date, Opportunities and Obstacles

**Objective:** *Facilitation Group (FG) to update EP on progress of the GB. Identify key messages and opportunities to maintain engagement and ambition for the GB*

#### Highlights:

- Participants recognized that the GB co-convenors have made a considerable progress, namely in identifying key commitments within their respective work-streams (WSs), and in making some progress in agreeing upon collective actions and appropriate sequencing of WS activities.
- In line with this, it was mentioned that the FG had, de facto, increased its "grip" on the process. The EP encouraged this FG –and future ones- not to be shy about "steering the boat".
- Communication from the FG to the co-convenors and signatories in general had also been enhanced. This was also due to the welcomed reinforcement of the Secretariat, as

per one of the recommendations from the first Annual Meeting in June 2017 as well as to a number of measures implemented by the FG.

- However, although progress within the GB process is apparent, several main challenges exist, including:
  - ✓ **Synergies between WSs** still need to be carefully steered / encouraged by the FG. Whilst some coordination has started to emerge, this needs to be further identified. Also, this and future FG need to be adamant to avoid silo-ing in the process, for example with efficiency WS working too separately from effectiveness WS. It was reiterated that the GB remains a package. Nonetheless, substantial advancements have been achieved through the last two co-convenors meetings.
  - ✓ Progress is increasingly difficult to measure without **tangible baselines and indicators**. The process needs to advance in that direction, through the steering of the co-convenors in each WS. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge the sui generis nature of each of the WS and the importance to avoid creating another bureaucratic reporting stream for signatories.
  - ✓ Within the GB structure there is a void between the Principal and implementation level, requiring strategic thought and discussion on how to **better leverage the Sherpa level**, especially in “content” discussions stemming from WSs.
  - ✓ Participants also observed that conversations within the humanitarian system around ethics and integrity given recent various media coverage on PSEA, warrants that the GB signatories consider stating their commitment in adhering to the highest ethical standard and that the GB is founded on this ethical standard.
  - ✓ **Transfer of risk**: Despite a lot of interesting initiatives from donors as well as agencies, the process as a whole is getting to a point where we all need to address the issue of **risk sharing** if we want the benefits of the GB to a) grow at scale and b) reach the first responders / affected communities.
  - ✓ If the funds are to be transferred more quickly and closer to the affected communities in order to do more and do it better, then maybe we need to accept that the requirements on transparency, accountability, due diligence, need to adapt as well.

### Main outcomes:

#### 1. Simplification of the GB structure and its impact

- There is a broad consensus that effectiveness and efficiency<sup>1</sup> provides a useful strategic framing for the GB, both internally and externally, and also helps to visualize the work being done by the GB co-convenors. The Secretariat will develop a one-pager core

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<sup>1</sup> Work-streams focusing on efficiency are: WS1 Transparency, WS4 Reduce duplication and management costs, WS7 Increase multi-year planning funding, WS8 Reduce earmarking, WS9 Harmonizing and simplifying donor requirements. Work-streams focusing on effectiveness are: WS2 Localization, WS3 Cash, WS5 Needs assessment, WS6 Participation revolution

communication product around efficiency and effectiveness to share in advance of the Annual Meeting.

## 2. Risk transfer

- Participants recognized that **risk transfer** amongst donors, UN agencies, international NGOs and national NGOs (conditionalities passed on through the chain as a form of “risk management”) is a cross-cutting issue., The uneven ‘burden- sharing’ is currently hindering progress in the advancement of some GB commitments.

## 3. Integrity

- GB signatories will be invited to share information about good ethical practices and standards within their organizations and institutions, and agree on principles and norms that we can apply amongst ourselves, whilst not duplicating the efforts of others.
- Data received from the GB signatories will be used to draft a statement outlining common ethical ground amongst the GB community. This draft statement will be reviewed, and optimally, endorsed at the Annual Meeting in June.

## Session II. The Way Forward

**Objective:** seek EP views on broad vision for how the GB can continue to evolve and support transformation within the humanitarian system.

### Highlights:

- Participants agreed that criteria for identifying when a GB WS is deemed to have successfully delivered its commitments, is fundamental to both the integrity and credibility of the GB process. An evaluation that WS activities are completed should connect with perceptions of the frontline implementers. There is an agreement that in year 3 WSs will require strong performance metrics to track progress beyond activity reporting.
- The EP highlighted that the GB is a unique multi-stakeholder platform and should be adaptive to future needs and opportunities for collective action. While WSs may complete their work, there was recognition that the GB platform might be used to address emerging issues such as the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus.
- There is a recognition that the increasing number of GB signatories, with diverse mandates and priorities doesn’t lend itself to particularly efficient and effective working. However, participants also acknowledged the limitations with various other options to address an ever-expanding GB membership (e.g. Closing the GB to new signatories; adopting a more rigorous process for accepting new signatories; or continuing with the current self-declaratory model).
- UNDP and Denmark, as co-conveners of the Humanitarian-Development Nexus WS, have requested to address the HDN thru cross-cutting and integrated approach into the other nine WSs. This proposition is the result of a long and articulated discussion between the

WS10 co-convenors and the FG. The proposition was endorsed by the EP at the GB FG Sherpas meeting.

- In order to ensure the GB continues to be responsive to changing demands and needs of signatories and WS co-convenors, the FG will present draft protocols at the Annual Meeting in June for endorsement by signatories. These will set out the process by which WSs may be merged or closed, and WS co-convenors can be appointed or changed.

#### Main outcomes:

- The FG and Secretariat will inform GB signatories that with many fora and processes engaging on the humanitarian-development nexus, the co-convenors of WS10 no longer see the need for a separate WS10 (action taken – e-mail by the Secretariat on 21 March 2018).
- GB WSs will be requested to identify what success looks like in the interest of advancing a common monitoring framework, with the full understanding that this is a difficult task given the various and diverse constituencies that comprise the GB membership. It was suggested that this objective could be a key stream of work in year 3 of the process.
- The GB must maintain an open and inclusive process while also recognizing the limitations of an expanding membership. It was agreed that a declaratory process will be maintained and the Secretariat will circulate current declaratory protocol to signatories for awareness.
- Endorsement of the prerequisites of GB membership - advancing commitments and undertaking reporting requirements, will be sought at the Annual Meeting. This will help sustain the legitimacy of the GB process.
- A core group at the centre of the process, consisting possibly of co-convenors and FG members, is instrumental to maintaining political momentum, collectively making progress, and asking for political support to push issues beyond the technical level within the GB.

### **Session III. Annual Meeting**

**Objective:** seek EP views on Annual Meeting and role to be played by the EP, establish a shared vision for a successful event

#### Highlights:

- The format of the up-coming June 18 Annual Meeting will mirror that of last year's Annual Meeting. Thus, aspects of the agenda will again be structured around the presentation and recommendations of the independent self-report, which this year is being produced by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI).
- Participants suggested that a high-level working dinner event for FG and co-convenors principals could provide an opportunity to solidify the collective commitments and address the way forward for the GB. Various options for date, time and location are explored, in order to ensure appropriate participation.

- It is suggested also to have a Sherpa plus working-level meeting between current FG and incoming one, in order to start the sharing of information and kick in the hand over process after the Annual Meeting.
- Issues that require addressing in the Annual Meeting are around the development of a monitoring framework for GB WSs, protocols around the 'sun-setting' of WSs and agreement on the declaratory membership model and membership commitments.

#### Main Outcomes:

- The FG will share the draft agenda and expectations for the Annual Meeting with the EP's Office.
- Opportunities for possible GB engagement at the up-coming World Bank Spring Meetings in DC (16-22 April) will be identified. The EP will incorporate GB messaging into conversations and discussions where appropriate.
- The GB Secretariat will identify opportunities for external engagement at the ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment events in NY (19-22 June) for sharing GB achievements and annual report findings.