

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 for 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 to address 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 – Norwegian Refugee Council

Contents

Grand Bargain Self-Reporting Explanatory Guidance.....	1
Work stream 1 - Transparency	6
1. Baseline (only in year 1)	6
2. Progress to date	6
3. Planned next steps	7
4. Efficiency gains.....	7
5. Good practices and lessons learned.....	7
Work stream 2 – Localization	8
1. Baseline (only in year 1)	8
2. Progress to date	9
3. Planned next steps	9
4. Efficiency gains.....	9
5. Good practices and lessons learned.....	10
Work stream 3 – Cash.....	11
1. Baseline (only in year 1)	11
2. Progress to date	11
3. Planned next steps	12
4. Efficiency gains.....	12
5. Good practices and lessons learned.....	13
Work stream 4 – Management costs.....	14
1. Baseline (only in year 1)	15
2. Progress to date	15
3. Planned next steps	15
4. Efficiency gains.....	16
5. Good practices and lessons learned.....	16
Work stream 5 – Needs Assessment	17
1. Baseline (only in year 1)	17
2. Progress to date	18
3. Planned next steps	18

4. Efficiency gains.....	18
5. Good practices and lessons learned.....	18
Work stream 6 – Participation Revolution.....	18
1. Baseline (only in year 1)	19
2. Progress to date	19
3. Planned next steps	19
4. Efficiency gains.....	20
5. Good practices and lessons learned.....	20
Work stream 7 - Multi-year planning and funding	21
1. Baseline (only in year 1)	22
2. Progress to date	22
3. Planned next steps	22
4. Efficiency gains.....	23
5. Good practice and lessons learned	23
Work stream 8 - Earmarking/flexibility.....	24
1. Baseline (only in year 1)	24
2. Progress to date	25
3. Planned next steps	25
4. Efficiency gains.....	25
5. Good practices and lessons learned.....	26
Work stream 9 – Reporting requirements	27
1. Baseline (only in year 1)	27
2. Progress to date	27
3. Planned next steps	28
4. Efficiency gains.....	28
5. Good practices and lessons learned.....	28
Work stream 10 – Humanitarian – Development engagement.....	30
1. Baseline (only in year 1)	30
2. Progress to date	30
3. Planned next steps	31
4. Efficiency gains.....	31
5. Good practices and lessons learned.....	31

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?

NRC is not using data from IATI systematically and at its full potential as reporting on IATI is limited compared to the total volume of the funding NRC receives from all its donors. This is likely to change with expanded NRC reporting on IATI.

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

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

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?

NRC currently complies with the requirements of two institutional donors, UK/DFID and the Netherlands, and reports manually on IATI every quarter. In late 2017, NRC stepped up its engagement on transparency through the implementation of a new Project Management Information System (PMIS), partly funded by SIDA. With this project, NRC aims at increasing reporting on IATI to other donors and having more descriptive updates and information. This will also allow NRC to publish timely, transparent, harmonized and open high quality data on humanitarian funding.

The commitments under this work stream will be taken into consideration when developing the new system. Synergies are also being created with the NRC initiative "Money Where it Counts: simplify, harmonise and save costs" for a common cost classification and financial reporting (more details under workstream 9 on reporting requirements and workstream 4 on management costs).

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)?

Since late 2017, NRC is building a digital PMIS to support staff in managing the information related to grants and projects across the organisation. Once operational, PMIS will become a "one-stop shop" for NRC staff for all project-related information, increasing internal transparency, knowledge sharing and enabling self-service. PMIS will draw data from other existing and future NRC information systems such as finance, accounting and monitoring and evaluation. As adoption increases and a full picture of NRC's projects and grants emerges, NRC intends to use PMIS as the future platform from which to report into IATI. Ultimately, once data quality is established and consistent across the organization, NRC will enable PMIS to report automatically to IATI on a regular basis.

4. Efficiency gains

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

IATI has great potential to increase efficiency gains by providing a common platform to report on project financial data.

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?

Too early to indicate this from an NRC perspective.

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

N/A

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

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

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.

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?

Throughout 2017, NRC worked with a range of local partners in different contexts linked to NRC's core competencies. Partnership with local actors has formed part of an access strategy for hard to reach, insecure and volatile areas. As part of the fit-for-purpose key trends, NRC is including the localization agenda in its internal structure and policy strategy. Committed to identifying needs and ways in which to support building capacity of local organizations, implementing partnerships, and effective programme delivery, NRC developed an extensive Local Partnership Toolkit for internal management.

In late 2017, NRC rolled out an innovative solution for local organisations working in hard to reach areas, developing training material in Arabic to support frontline partner staff with knowledge and best practice relating to humanitarian principles, safety and security, resilience and wellbeing. The Frontline Humanitarian Toolbox has been made available to the wider humanitarian community through an offline app and the online platform of the Humanitarian Leadership Academy – Kaya.

In 2017, NORCAP deployed six experts to the project "Government Capacity Development Somalia". They were placed in senior strategic positions within the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management. Capacity development efforts entailed setting up procedures and systems related to policies and bureaucratic architecture and initiating skill and knowledge training for government colleagues. NORCAP also provides experts to the project "Civil Society Capacity Development, Lake Chad Basin". The aim of the project is to strengthen the capacity of selected civil society entities affiliated with the Regional Civil Society Network in Chad and Niger, to improve civil society's ability to respond to and support affected populations. Both projects are designed to have sustainable and lasting impact in line with the Grand Bargain commitments on localisation.

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)?

In 2018, we will continue to refine the Local Partnership Toolkit, which for now will remain for internal use. NRC is looking at collaborating with actors engaged in the localization workstream to create synergies with some planned studies. NRC is also exploring the possibility to establish a 'partnership fund' through which cooperation with local actors will be enhanced.

NORCAP will continue to contribute to the localization agenda with a focus on strengthening national actors' ability to take a more prominent position in crisis management and to meet their international obligations in terms of human rights and good governance.

4. Efficiency gains

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

In terms of efficiency gains, partnerships with local actors enable NRC to complement its global technical expertise with specific contextual knowledge, and to build on existing networks with local

authorities and other key stakeholders. As stated above, partnership with local actors is allowing NRC to have increased access, especially in hard to reach areas.

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?

The capacity building approach with local actors, especially with government, has proven to be instrumental to move forward the localisation agenda. Challenges in implementing the “Civil Society Capacity Development” by NORCAP relate to internal bureaucracies of recipient organisations, to difficulties finding candidates, and to the additional support needed from the Civil Society Network in preparing for the project. Particular attention has been given to ensuring non-discrimination, participation and accountability principles are followed. Despite the delays, local actors express continued interest in receiving training and coaching to enable them to achieve organizational goals and humanitarian accreditation. The project is expected to proceed according to plan in 2018.

Working with local partners in hard to reach areas often implies remote monitoring. To ensure quality, NRC is adapting and innovating its standard procedures for M&E. There is a need for improved information on programs to understand the full picture of events and cross check conclusions. This requires additional support and training for partner staff alongside additional sourcing of information by both NRC teams and in some locations third party monitors. Effective investment in everyone understanding such processes and the purpose of collecting data for programme quality right from the start of the project has been a key learning for NRC.

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?

2. Progress to date

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

In 2017, NRC increased the use of cash alongside other tools across its programmes by 50% (provisional figures) over the previous years. NRC also increased the use of cash programming beyond current low levels, where appropriate, and continued to develop its capacity to deliver cash-based assistance through its core activities in high-risk areas, where access is a challenge and remote approaches might be necessary.

In terms of investing in new delivery models, NRC has recently concluded a global tender process for e-cash and e-voucher service provision, and intends to sign framework agreements with three companies. This should help NRC country teams get to scale faster and cheaper, as prices will have been established and the tender process already complete. The capacity for routine market monitoring (for Cash Based Interventions and non-cash projects alike) is improving and will be further invested over the coming year.

NRC collaborated, shared information and developed standards and guidelines for cash programming to better understand its risks and benefits. NRC continues to invest in bilateral and

sectoral relationships and coordination fora, including the Collaborative Cash Delivery Platform (CCD Platform). In 2016 and 2017 the guidance materials, tools and trainings of the ECHO funded Remote Cash Project were completed and shared – “Cash Transfers in Remote Emergency Programming”.

In 2017, NRC finalized its position paper on cash based intervention “Cash alone is not enough: a smarter use of cash”.

Furthermore, NORCAP and the CashCap project have been a key contributor of cash based interventions expertise and coordination capacity at the global and community level during 2017. Approximately 108 deployments have been delivered, 68 of which funded by the NMFA. In total, capacity support on Cash was provided to 14 partners, spread over 22 countries and included major emergencies in Mali, Nigeria, Yemen, Syria, and Bangladesh.

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)?

NRC will continue its countrywide programming through cash assistance, especially in remote emergency programming contexts. As more single service provider agreements are used by donors, it will be valuable to debate the degree to which value of cash disbursed is useful as a sole measure of outcomes. Tracking services provided associated with cash disbursement may be equally useful. This will be a priority development area for NRC in 2018.

NRC is also investing in the use of technology for the delivery of cash transfers. For NRC, innovation is important and digital cash is an example of how we are testing and improving solutions.

In 2018, NRC will carry out a major evaluation of its cash-based work, with funding from NMFA and SIDA. It is expected that this will show how technical programming best supports impact from cash disbursements, and suggest new programming models alongside multi-purpose cash.

NORCAP, through CashCap, will continue to seek the competitive advantage in providing capacity that allows cash projects to develop further.

4. Efficiency gains

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

By increasing the use of cash, NRC maximized its impact when reaching communities on the ground. With cash, NRC reached 18% more people at no extra cost in 2016². Cash enables crisis-affected people to make choices and prioritise their own needs. NRC has seen that cash is more efficient, dignified, and transparent and it supports local economies. NRC, however, believes that the increase in using cash based programmes needs to be done in a ‘smart way’.

² Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) Annual report 2016. Available at: https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/annual-reports/2017/nrc_annualreport2016_230616.pdf.

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?

NRC encounters challenges in increasing the routine use of cash in a balanced way. The growth in using cash programming was uneven across countries, indicating work remains to be done to ensure *routine* consideration of cash.

Result example from the CashCap initiative: Cash Programming for Mosul - designing and implementing a response. The deployment of a cash expert to UN Women in Erbil in the third quarter of 2017 strengthened the existing cash for work system and the exploration of new ways of delivering cash and livelihoods interventions. The development of Standard Operating Procedures for Cash Transfer Programming for UN Women's future projects allowed for the sustainability of the initiative.

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?

N/A

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

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

When the Grand Bargain was signed, NRC had already started its analysis of donor conditions. In June 2016, the main challenges in terms of duplications in management costs were highlighted by the study conducted together with the Boston Consulting Group.

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?

One of NRC's priorities within the Grand Bargain has been to provide a transparent and comparable cost structure. In June 2017, NRC and the Boston Consulting Group launched phase II of the Donor Conditionality Project with the initiative "Money Where it Counts: simplify, harmonize and save costs" to develop concrete suggestions for a harmonised system for cost classification and financial reporting. Throughout the second half of the year, NRC presented the findings and suggested solutions in multiple venues to NGOs and donors, receiving positive feedback. This initiative is in line with the commitments of WS9 on harmonization of reporting and ties closely with WS1 on transparency.

NRC is also independently piloting a new methodology to allocate so called shared costs to ensure a streamlined and transparent way of attributing such costs within a country-based operation. The methodology and principles on which it is based were agreed upon by donors in the pilot countries (Lebanon, Iran), and presented for wider discussion to an NGO audience.

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)?

Concerning the implementation of the "Money where it counts" recommendations on harmonized cost classification and financial reporting, NRC is liaising across workstreams, donors, NGOs and UN Agencies to agree on a standard set of pilotable tools. NRC created an NGO working group to further refine the tools and is proactively engaging interested stakeholders on the possibility of launching a pilot in 2018. In line with WS9, NRC hopes to build on the positive outcome of the harmonization of narrative reporting pilot to create momentum for introducing the harmonized financial reporting.

4. Efficiency gains

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

Evidence has proven that a harmonized cost classification system provides a more transparent and comparable cost structure and maximizes efficiency for commonly required goods and services. This has the potential for great efficiency gains for NRC and its reached beneficiaries.

The “Money Where it Counts” study estimates a potential saving of approximately 2.3M hours if solutions are implemented across the sector.

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?

NRC has received positive feedback from key stakeholders – UN Agencies, INGOs and Government Donors. However, trying to reach a critical mass of consensus for the piloting of an initiative has posed challenges due to the perceived complexity of the proposed solution that made some stakeholders reluctant to engage despite this being prioritized across workstreams.

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?

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?

NRC is dedicated to increasing engagement in joint response analysis through integrated programming.

NRC is fully supporting the work of ACAPS. This is a project led by a consortium of NRC and Save the Children. ACAPS is engaged in coordinating and streamlining joint needs assessments, which is essential for programme planning, monitoring and evaluation and accountability. There are more details on this in the individual ACAPS self-report.

NRC has joined the “Coordination of Assessments for Environment in Humanitarian Action Initiative”, an initiative that aims to improve coordination between environmental and humanitarian actors both before and after crises, with a focus on updating key environmental assessment tools. Through better dissemination of tools, resources and environmental data, it will also support efficient consideration of environment and climate knowledge in humanitarian assistance. The project is a collaborative effort between the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the UN Environment/Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Joint Environment Unit (JEU) and the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) as well as other member states and civil society organizations.

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)?

NRC has no specific policy paper nor guidance published on needs assessment but is planning to increase capacity in this area. NRC will continue supporting the work of ACAPS.

Through the Joint Environmental Assessment Initiative, NRC’s Environmental Assessment Tool ([NEAT](#)) is being updated and made available to all humanitarian organisations piloting by September 2018.

4. Efficiency gains

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

Through handing over the NEAT to the interagency initiative and making it available (as an online app), NRC avoids duplication of efforts in developing such assessment tools by various organizations.

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?

The UN and NGOs working together to agree on a single joint environmental assessment tool for the humanitarian sector improves the quality of the tool and the support that can be given to non-environmental specialists in the humanitarian sector.

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?

2. Progress to date

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

In 2017, NRC carried out the Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS) self-assessment and remains committed to implementing the Accountability to Affected Population Framework. In particular, NRC has been engaging with communities through digital programming.

NRC has also engaged through NORCAP's role within the Communication with Communities project, especially the Communication with Disaster Affected Communities Network (CDAC-N).

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)?

In 2018, following the CHS assessment, NRC committed to put in place an accountability framework based on the standard. NRC has also committed to begin the CHS certification process in 2019.

Recognizing the strong impact of community engagement on protection, security and perceptions of the affected populations, and based on the findings and recommendations of the external review conducted in February 2018, NORCAP will investigate opportunities to re-engage and position itself among those driving this important agenda.

4. Efficiency gains

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

Promoting community engagement allows NRC to design and implement programmes that take into consideration the needs of the affected population and, therefore, are more closely responding to needs, increasing their efficiency,

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?

Nothing to report so far.

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 agreements³ you have provided (as a donor) or received and provided to humanitarian partners (as an agency) in 2017, and any earmarking conditions.⁴ When reporting on efficiency gains, please try to provide quantitative examples.

In 2017, NRC received fifteen multi-year funding grants, mainly for the Middle East region, from twelve donors.

With reference to commitment 1, in 2017, NMFA opened the possibility of providing multi-year funding for selected countries. NRC was unable to follow up on this opportunity due to it being at the end of its global strategy cycle but explored increasing the possibility of receiving MYF through other funding channels from Norway. NRC secured MYF for Mali (2017 – 2020) and Colombia (2017 – 2019).

Concerning SIDA, NRC applied and received MYF for 2018-2019 for three country programmes. One of the criteria from SIDA for the MYF was that it should be for “humanitarian assistance in protracted crises, in line with Multi-Year Humanitarian Response Plan”. The three NRC country offices have been involved in the development and shaping of the relevant multi-year HRPs.

In line with their GB commitment, Global Affairs Canada (GAC) opened the possibility for their NGO partners to seek MYF under the GAC annual funding round for complex emergencies for some countries. NRC is hopeful to benefit from this change in duration of humanitarian grants, and has submitted multi-year funding proposals for four countries. The proposals are still pending and decisions are expected before April 2018.

³ Multiyear funding is funding provided for two or more years based on a firm commitment at the outset

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

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

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

2. Progress to date

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

In 2017, NRC co-commissioned a report together with FAO and OCHA to highlight the impact and potential for MYF: [“Living up to the promise of Multi-Year Humanitarian Finance”](#). The research highlights lessons and recommendations identified to address some key emerging gaps and challenges humanitarian actors are facing when allocating and receiving MYF. In September 2017, NRC supported Canada and UNICEF, the co-convenors of this workstream, to organize a workshop to consolidate learning on good practices and challenges in MYF, to refine benchmarks for multi-year response plans and to define focus elements for the 2018 workplan.

The study was launched at the OCHA HNPW in February 2018 in a panel discussion organised with Canada, FAO and OCHA.

In the framework of this workplan, NRC is leading the development of a study to better understand the challenges and possible solutions to identify supporting factors, as well as barriers to passing the benefits of multi-year funding to implementing partners. It will suggest examples of organisational change efforts to address those bottlenecks.

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)?

In the framework of the IASC Humanitarian Financing Task Team, NRC continues to engage in the 2018 Work Plan priorities to ensure a joint interagency approach to MYF. Following suggestions made at the presentation of the report “Living up to the Promise of Multi-Year Funding”, NRC is exploring opportunities to conduct a field research in Lebanon and in another country to look at how multi-year funding is implemented, current benefits and challenges and potential positive impact from a field perspective.

In 2018, NRC continues to engage bilaterally with key stakeholders and to take part in studies and workshops to advocate, based on evidence, for the MYF impact on programme efficiency and effectiveness. Together with UNICEF, OCHA and Canada, NRC is leading a study to identify bottlenecks and potential solutions to increase MYF from bilateral donors to partners on the ground. Moreover, NRC is supporting Canada and OCHA in the preparation of a workshop to be held jointly with workstream 8 on Earmarking in May 2018.

NRC is exploring the possibility of applying for NMFA/NORAD MYF opportunities announced for 2019-2020 and for other funding opportunities announced by other donors.

4. Efficiency gains

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

Multi-year financing has allowed NRC to have more flexibility and predictability, to enable longer-term approaches and collective outcomes. Through MYF, NRC reaches affected populations with efficiency and effectiveness. However, MYF tracking is not yet fully in place, so it is difficult to identify trends or report in quantitative terms.

5. 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?

The participatory approach adopted by the co-conveners of this workstream allows for a very constructive collaboration for the implementation of its commitments. Interaction created with other workstreams such as number 8 on reduced earmarking has the potential to facilitate further achievements.

Below are some anecdotal challenges in the implementation of MYF that could be useful in terms of lessons learnt.

NRC was unable to follow up with some opportunities to receive MYF. The main challenge has been to align the strategy cycles from NRC and its donors. For instance, NRC strategy was finishing in 2017 and a new one was designed for the period 2018-2020, while the partnership agreement with this given donor was running from 2016-2018, meaning that NRC would as a maximum be able to utilize a multi-year opportunity for the period of 2017-2018. As a result, NRC is exploring the possibility of aligning the two cycles.

The lack of a common MYF definition creates challenges and misunderstandings. Often, MYF transactions are done in the beginning of each agreed year and with different grant values.

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 2020⁵.*

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

NRC has no comprehensive quantitative data to share but it welcomed a shift in some of its major donors such as Norway and Sweden from tightly earmarked funds to country-earmarked funds.

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?

⁵ 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?

Pooled funds are seen by many as the tool to reduce earmarking. In 2017, NRC launched the study "[Understanding Humanitarian Funds – Going Beyond Country-Based Pooled funds](#)" that mapped out all main pooled funds and identified best practices to improve cross learning. Throughout the year, NRC presented the findings and recommendations to donors and international organizations, such as OCHA-NGO Platform on CBPF, stimulating discussions to further collaborate and implement on the ground.

NRC has advocated towards NMFA/NORAD and SIDA to implement a new flexible financing approach. In 2017, both donors agreed to pilot what is called a Programme Based Approach (PBA), a funding agreement whereby NMFA and SIDA provide NRC with contributions earmarked only at the country level and no longer at the project level. There is full flexibility at country level as long as funds are used on programme activities in line with the submitted country strategy. NRC reports regularly to both donors with specific information on how their contributions are spent.

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)?

Building on the findings from the study conducted in 2017, NRC plans to investigate further the efficiency of existing pooled funds to ensure they allow the flexibility needed. Further collaborations between the multi-year funding, localization and the reduced earmarking workstreams are scheduled in 2018, to ensure the right balance between flexibility and multi-year funding and that flexibility is ensured all along the transaction chain. NRC is supporting the preparation of a joint workshop on reduced earmarking and MYF in May 2018 and will expand on its pooled funds study together with other signatories by looking at the role NGOs can play to ensure greater efficiency of pooled funds - especially CBPF and CERF – and at how effective pooled funds are in reducing earmarking.

NRC is planning to undertake an internal review of the PBA to better understand how NRC country programmes utilize the flexibility, what the obstacles are and how to overcome those. The findings from the internal review will also be used externally to increase the visibility of the PBA and to advocate toward other donors to implement similar funding arrangements with their partners.

4. Efficiency gains

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

For NRC, unearmarked contributions have efficient and effective impact on the ground due to their flexibility. The PBA, for instance, has allowed NRC to utilize funding flexibly between projects and programmes during the year without prior approval from the donors, reducing transaction costs. With this approach, the funding can be allocated as the contexts evolve, so that both the donor and the organization save management costs in agreeing on the new allocation, and beneficiaries' needs are met in a timely manner. The planned internal review will provide NRC with more information about the qualitative and efficiency gains of the PBA.

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?

A main challenge has been to report and to collect data, especially when an unearmarked funding is channelled through a pooled fund.

The PBA is currently the most flexible funding NRC has with its institutional donors. Notwithstanding progress on bilateral agreements with donors, some limitations affect the flexibility and the efficiency gains of the PBA commitment. Firstly, NMFA and SIDA still apply some earmarking on specific sectors or countries. This is usually to fulfil their own pledges. Secondly, despite the agreement, the terms and conditions have not been fully adjusted to reflect the PBA.

There have been further challenges associated with the operationalization of the PBA with SIDA. The issue is linked to the fact that the grant agreement with SIDA is not aligned with the PBA in terms of narrative and financial reporting and audits on a programmatic level. That is, SIDA's proposal and reporting guidelines for partners are developed for a traditional project approach. This has resulted in some deliberation and questions, which could have been avoided if NRC and SIDA had agreed at the outset on a set of rules and common understanding to guide the pilot.

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?

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?

NRC has contributed to the study commissioned by Germany to GPPI on harmonization of reporting. A summary of the donor conditionality study conducted by NRC and BCG is annexed to the GPPI report. Harmonized reporting has been NRC's priority commitment from the beginning due to the potential of this workstream to bring about tangible results that could create momentum around the Grand Bargain initiative and the impact harmonized reporting has directly on field operations. The commitments of this workstream were informed by NRC and the Boston Consulting Group study on Donor Conditions conducted in 2016. Influencing donor conditions is a key part of NRC's 2018-2020 Global Strategy as increased pressure on governments to justify foreign aid spending has over the last years led to a trend towards more earmarking, reporting and transparency-related requirements.

NRC engaged in the work related to the harmonization of narrative reporting contributing in 2017 to the design of the template and identification of pilot countries. NRC is an active participant of the pilot to test the 8+3 template in the selected countries (Iraq, Myanmar, Somalia) and has over 40 projects utilizing the harmonized report with the support of over 10 donors. NRC is monitoring its adherence to the pilot and provides feedback to both the co-conveners (Germany and ICVA), GPPI, as well as directly to donors it works with.

In June 2017, NRC and the BCG released the "[Money where it counts](#)" study to highlight the need for the harmonization of cost classification and financial reporting. NRC has presented the findings in multiple venues to NGOs and donors in the second half of 2017. This initiative is being developed in parallel with the commitments of workstream 4 on management cost.

NRC is also committed to investing in technology and reporting systems to enable better access to information. In 2017 NRC continued its work to revamp its internal information system and adopt a comprehensive Programme Management Information System that is structured as a multi-layered

repository that will be partially accessible from outside the organization. This will improve access to information tailored for the intended audience (e.g. general public, donors, etc).

The adoption of harmonized reporting enables the organization to spend less time ‘translating’ the needs of different donors and instead put more emphasis on the quality of information collected and reported. NRC is a strong advocate for the expansion of the pilot on narrative reporting. This initiative has shown to enhance quality of reporting to better capture results, enable learning and increase the efficiency of reporting.

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)?

NRC will continue to engage in the piloting of harmonized narrative reporting and feed into the GPPi interim report with lessons learnt and suggestions. Moreover, NRC continues to be a strong advocate for the expansion of the pilot to other countries, donors, and NGOs. NRC will join a teleconference for an update briefing on the Harmonized Narrative Reporting Pilot scheduled for March.

With regards to the implementation of the “Money where it counts” initiative on harmonized cost classification and financial reporting, NRC is liaising across workstreams, donors, and NGOs to agree on a standard set of pilotable tools. NRC created an NGO working group to further define the tools and is proactively engaging interested stakeholders on the possibility to launch a pilot in 2018. NRC hopes to build on the positive outcome of the harmonization of narrative reporting pilot to create momentum for the introduction of the harmonized financial reporting.

With the pilot on harmonized narrative reporting coming to the first milestone with the submission of final reports from many actors, NRC will have the opportunity to reflect on the lessons learnt as part of the wider group participating in the pilot. Feedback from donors will also provide an opportunity to gain insight on the level of quality achieved through the template, and inform necessary adjustments to the template or methodology used to collect information.

4. Efficiency gains

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

Preliminary findings from NRC’s adoption of a single template indicate that this has contributed to greater efficiency in collecting, validating, and organizing data for reports. Consequently, fewer resources need to be dedicated to certain phases of reporting resulting in higher quality of data, and potential savings being redirected to the intended beneficiaries. While these are preliminary and mostly anecdotal findings, the evaluation of the first year of the pilot in 2018 will provide more concrete information with regards to efficiency gains.

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?

In terms of adopting a common template for reporting, the leadership of the work-stream played a crucial role in bringing together various stakeholders and agreeing on the way forward. Occasionally,

better communication amongst the pilot project participants could have further enhanced the success of this initiative.

While it was necessary to ensure buy-in at high level for the implementation of the pilot, communication between headquarters and field operations was occasionally patchy, resulting in delays or misunderstandings over the use of the agreed template. Reinforcing this aspect will be particularly important for the future of the pilot as well as other similar initiatives. NRC is waiting for the interim evaluation report to have a full picture of the lessons learnt, which will also inform the proposal to pilot the harmonization of financial reporting.

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 organization done to operationalize the humanitarian-development nexus at country level?"

NRC's strategy for the period 2018-2020 is to lead in the identification of durable solutions for people affected by displacement. The global strategy is reflected in the country strategies where NRC works. Discussions on durable solutions in given contexts are already taking place with some 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?

2. Progress to date

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

In the framework of the fit-for-purpose, nexus is one of the key trends NRC is eager to include in its organizational structure. NRC is already implementing the nexus through integrated programming in some countries. Moreover, NRC is committed to investing in durable solutions for refugees and internally displaced people, and to sustainable support to migrants, returnees and host/receiving communities. NRC has already provided tangible examples from country programmes at the

Humanitarian and Development Nexus Task Team of the IASC, contributing concrete programmatic evidence.

NRC was among the few NGOs invited to The New Way of Working, High-Level Workshop held in Copenhagen in March 2017. As a result, NRC also contributed to the workshop on the "humanitarian-development-peace nexus" held in Seoul.

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)?

For the next two years, NRC is planning to step up its engagement on the nexus. For NRC, it is essential to balance long-term goals and short-term emergency response to shrink the needs. NRC is looking for further synergies with workstream 7 on multi-year planning and financing to ensure coherent funding for long-term activities. NRC is also looking for opportunities to expand the benefits of a harmonized reporting template to development actors.

NORCAP will in 2018 seek to use existing resources and capabilities to shrink humanitarian needs over the long term with a view to contribute to the outcomes of the Sustainable Development Goals. NORCAP, together with the various thematic rosters such as NORDEM and NOROBS, could in particular play a role in integrating the conflict prevention/peace building component into the nexus through their work on human rights. For instance, specific targets for so-called "nexus deployments" are defined in a new partnership framework with UNDP.

4. Efficiency gains

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

In terms of efficiency gains for NRC and its reached beneficiaries, investing energy and resources to overcoming the divide has the potential to reduce the humanitarian needs by investing in long-term prevention, mitigation and preparedness measures. Bridging both sectors has the potential to build more resilient communities, which in the long-term will develop sustainable coping mechanisms during and after emergencies.

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?

NRC is promoting transitional solutions in response to the Syria crisis through the creation of new and innovative programming and financing solutions that will be released in 2018.