

GRAND BARGAIN SECOND ANNUAL MEETING

CHAIR'S SUMMARY

Introduction

The Grand Bargain Signatories convened in New York for the Second Grand Bargain Annual Meeting on 18 June 2018. Considerable progress is being achieved within the Grand Bargain process, despite protracted and increasingly complex humanitarian crises. For example, there is evidence of improved humanitarian financing and tracking as well as better and more dignified humanitarian assistance to people in need, for example through cash interventions. Additionally, the Grand Bargain process is demonstrating advancements at country level and some increased focus on gender. Besides being recognized as a catalyst for change, the Grand Bargain offers a unique forum for humanitarian constituencies to meet on an equal footing. Nonetheless, progress is uneven and there is room for improvement, such as the need for synergies with other global processes and mainstreaming of the humanitarian-development nexus.

Political engagement

The need for high-level political involvement to address systemic and institutional barriers to delivering on Grand Bargain commitments is considered a priority among the Signatories, because political and legal challenges require as much attention as technical constraints. In fact, as the Grand Bargain is increasingly seen as an 'over-structured and under-governed' process, political engagement at the highest level, under the leadership of the Eminent Person and the Facilitation Group, is necessary to help focus on priorities, promote ambitious objectives and to unblock bottlenecks.

Recommendations:

- Signatories commit to engaging at the appropriate political level to set directions, define strategies and engage with the wider global humanitarian aid system
- A focus group of high-level decision makers, under the leadership of the Eminent Person, should meet to discuss a few pre-identified high-level issues that require political engagement to drive them forward
- The Facilitation Group should revise the format of the Annual Meeting to allow for focused discussions and robust decision making as well as identifying clear action points

Reinforcement of the Grand Bargain governance

The expansion of the Grand Bargain membership is a positive development. However, this must be accompanied with a correspondingly effective decision-making structure and a predictable

and suitable level of funding. The current Facilitation Group, building upon the work of the previous one, has already achieved concrete outcomes through a detailed work-plan. This includes improved transparency and accountability, reinforced synergies, better information flow amongst all GB entities and strengthened engagement with the Eminent Person.

Recommendations:

- The Facilitation Group is empowered to set directions coordinate and guide the decision-making process through the adoption of the updated ToRs and is tasked to work closely with the work-stream Co-convenors to advance their commitments
- Appropriate, multi-year and predictable funding is made available to the Grand Bargain process, including to resource the Grand Bargain Secretariat and deliver the Annual Meeting and Independent Report

Rationalization of the GB structure

The Grand Bargain stakeholders at political and technical level should focus on delivering agreed core and prioritized commitments, which could also entail the streamlining of work-streams as with Work-stream 10 on the humanitarian-development nexus.

Recommendations:

- Co-convenors should endorse ODI recommendation on rationalization of the Grand Bargain structure by prioritizing and sequencing urgent and potentially transformative commitments and streamlining work-streams, for example:
 - a) Reducing the number of Grand Bargain work-streams from 10 to 5, particularly: 'merging' work-streams 7 (Multi-year planning and funding) and 8 (Reduced earmarked funding); improving closer coordination and better sequencing of commitments for the work-streams 1 (Transparency), 4 (Management costs) and 9 (Reporting requirements), while safeguarding focus on both the need for reduced earmarking and multi-year support
 - b) Prioritizing commitments that are more urgent and potentially transformative
 - c) Unblocking work-stream 5 (Needs Assessment) by offering the World Bank expertise in developing solutions

Collectively define what success looks like, identification of indicators and baselines

The consensus amongst Signatories is that the Grand Bargain should concentrate on impact in reducing administrative costs and directing more resources to reduce the needs of affected populations, and demonstrate efficiency and effectiveness gains in the humanitarian systems. Therefore, the direct involvement of the highest ranking political decision makers is necessary as the Grand Bargain aims at achieving ambitious collective objectives, not only easily-achievable

ones (i.e. the 'low-hanging fruit'). In addition, work-streams should clearly identify what success looks like, and be able to measure the progress towards this goal.

Recommendations:

- Co-convenors, in consultation with the Facilitation Group, establish clear and simple work-stream baselines and indicators in line with prioritized key commitments to measure overall performance and demonstrate efficiency and effectiveness progress by 2020.

Better communication of successes

Grand Bargain progress should be made more visible, evident and measurable to continue improving internal communication and ensure better outreach to external processes, including through creative story-telling and the use of innovative technology. Better information can help measure progress, support effective communication and demonstrate that the Grand Bargain remains relevant in a changing political and humanitarian environment.

Recommendations:

- Signatories commit to providing quality data and information, particularly through the self-reporting exercise
- The Facilitation Group should continue to work with the Grand Bargain Secretariat, Workstream co-convenors and other relevant actors to develop new communication products that demonstrate the quantitative and qualitative impact on the humanitarian system's efficiency and effectiveness of the Grand Bargain.

Prioritization/mainstreaming of gender

Despite some progress, the Independent Report highlights uneven attention to gender across and within work-streams. Proper attention should be given to gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, as it is central to effectiveness and efficiency as well as being an important moral imperative. Similarly, attention should be dedicated to PSEA. For example, Signatories should include gender consideration in their localization efforts and cash assistance, because women's organizations on the ground offer invaluable local knowledge while gender-responsive cash-based interventions can enhance protection and resilience.

Recommendations:

- Signatories should report more extensively on gender and find ways to increase attention to gender and women's empowerment in their work, including through support to and engagement with the Friends of Gender Group.

Fiduciary and operational risk burden sharing and field impact

Engagement at the political level plays a fundamental role in providing the parameters of impartial humanitarian action, which needs to be contextualized and adapted at field level through the

involvement of local actors. Additionally, political level engagement provides the framework for the positive collaboration of humanitarian actors, including an understanding and sharing of fiduciary and operational risk.

Recommendations:

- Grand Bargain Signatories should place greater emphasis on field priorities including on exploring the humanitarian and development nexus, the need for flexible funding in order to be principled, effective and efficient and on risk sharing, with an emphasis on cooperation with local actors.

Institutional set-up

The current Facilitation Group commits to supporting the smooth transition in September 2018 of the incoming Facilitation Group, which will consist of: IFRC, InterAction, OCHA, Sweden, UNICEF and USA.

This configuration not only provides a good representation of all constituencies of the Grand Bargain, but also continuity through the re-confirmation of two members.

The Eminent Person, Ms. Kristalina Georgieva, also reaffirmed her commitment to the Grand Bargain for the next year.

Conclusion

Echoing the recommendations of the Eminent Person, the Grand Bargain should further contribute to strengthening the humanitarian system to become more anticipatory, effective and efficient when a crisis occurs. The Annual Meeting showed broad agreement on this vision, by identifying concrete recommendations and key action points for the coming year.