

Grand Bargain Facilitation Group Handover Meeting Conclusion Notes

Washington October 11th, 2018

Facilitation Group composition

	Member States	UN Agencies	NGOs	Red Cross Movement
Facilitation Group 2017/2018 (<u>outgoing</u>)	Germany United Kingdom	UNHCR OCHA	InterAction	ICRC
Facilitation Group 2018/2019 (<u>incoming</u>)	United States Sweden	UNICEF OCHA	InterAction	IFRC

Objectives of the Grand Bargain Facilitation Group Handover Meeting

The Grand Bargain (GB) is a platform to advance dialogue and action toward achieving greater effectiveness and impact with humanitarian resources. Some success has already been achieved through the first two years of the Grand Bargain, but much remains to be done and a more compelling, results-based story must be told to sustain the political will to deliver on commitments. Accordingly, the overarching objectives of the 2018/2019 Facilitation Group (FG) will be to ensure:

1. Progress is measurable, allowing for a clear picture of achievements (i.e. results) and a focus on accountability for meeting commitments
2. Benefits are transferred through the humanitarian value chain and that frontline actors experience a more enabling environment as a result
3. Political momentum is maintained to continue meeting commitments and delivering on the “quid pro quo” nature of the Grand Bargain agreement

The FG Handover Meeting aimed to develop clear objectives and an actionable workplan to meet them over the next year. The objectives were shaped by the conclusions of the 2018 Independent Annual Report, 2018 Annual Meeting, September 14 Co-convenors Workshop on “Core Commitments” and the September 23 High Level Meeting.

The Grand Bargain state-of-play: political consensus points and lessons learned

The 2018 GB Annual Meeting triggered policy and procedural discussions over the course of the last few months, which resulted in the following:

1. 11 “core-commitments” have been identified, along with the clustering of workstreams 7 and 8 and heightened dialogue between workstreams 1/4/9;

2. Emphasis has been placed on measurement and accountability, at work-stream/core commitment level;
3. A clear signal was sent from the political level that 'highly illustrative' indicators should be developed to understand the impact of the Grand Bargain as a whole;
4. Communication has been identified as a priority, as there is a solid recognition that a more compelling story must be told about the Grand Bargain;
5. Increased focus has been placed on how to ensure that the gains of the Grand Bargain are reaching frontline responders and that field concerns are taken into consideration.

Besides agreeing on these consensus points and using them as the basis of the 2018/2019 workplan, the FG also discussed a series of lessons learned. The FG is a manifestation of the GB inclusivity and discussions within the FG produce negotiated decisions which take into consideration the perspectives of all constituencies. However, as the number of GB Signatories is increasing, the trade-off between lean and efficient decision-making and inclusivity is increasingly a challenge. Effective decision making has been achieved through the establishment of specific groups that promote the advancement of the GB (e.g. Co-convenors driving progress on core commitments.). The FG will continue and deepen efforts beyond this to engage all signatories and channel perspectives from their individual constituency blocks in discussions of the Facilitation Group. This requires removing institutional 'hats' and representing constituency-wide perspectives (to the extent possible) in FG discussions.

The FG Secretariat plays a key role in supporting the FG throughout its discussions as well as a bridge among the different components of the GB. The FG will endeavor to increase communication with Signatories across the board and engage them in decision processes wherever possible. [Ref. activities 3.3, 7.1, 7.2].

Strengthening collective accountability

Illustrative and core-commitment indicators

The objective of identifying illustrative-indicators is to tell a story about the overall impact of the Grand Bargain. Illustrative-indicators must look at systemic, qualitative improvements (efficiency gains), rather than focusing on savings, by better capturing the degree to which humanitarian funding is disbursed and programmed more quickly and more flexibly to more people in need. This qualitative analysis could be complemented with existing and complementary secondary data sources such as Development Initiatives' Global Humanitarian Assistance Report and Ground Truth Solutions' Perception Surveys [Ref. activities 2.1, 2.2], with methodologies to be agreed upon based on data and evidence

Co-convenors have agreed to developing core-commitment indicators at their workshop on September 14, 2018. The FG will provide guidance to the Co-convenors on the parameters for developing consolidated indicators, which are expected to be finalized by early December 2018. The objective is to include the core-commitment indicators in the annual reporting process to ensure a higher quality report that tells a much clearer and less subjective story about progress made. [Ref. activities 1.1, 1.2, 1.3]. To develop the indicators, the FG observes the following:

1. The development of a results-based framework including indicators for core-commitments should be built upon existing targets where possible (e.g. 2.4: 'at least 25% of humanitarian funding to local and national responders'; 8.5: 'achieve a global target of 30% of humanitarian contributions that is non-earmarked or softly earmarked') and should define, to the extent possible, benchmarks to measure progress;
2. Ideally, each core-commitment should include a result that can be measured through one indicator, however in some circumstances the indicators must be tailored to the different constituencies, given they play different roles in meeting those commitments;
3. Core-commitment results and indicators should allow a quantitative measurement of progress, but also allow outcome and impact level analysis, contributing to the illustrative indicators (macro-level);
4. Indicators should aim to be gender-sensitive where possible, building upon guidance from the 'Friends of Gender Group';
5. The core-commitment results and indicators provide a collective framework, and Signatories are encouraged to internalize them and/or develop new ones to ensure they are measuring their own component contributions to advancing system-wide commitments.

The FG will lead the process and support the Co-convenors in developing the core-commitment indicators by providing guidelines and technical support and, in collaboration with the Eminent Person (EP), will aim to ensure their alignment with potential illustrative indicators.

[Annual reporting process](#)

The annual reporting process (self-reports and independent report) ensures accountability to the GB commitments and paves the way for the quality engagement of Signatories at the annual event. Reporting must remain relatively light. Reporting must also be meaningful and high-quality to ensure the agreement is being advanced and to understand where political engagement is necessary to further progress. In addition, it is important to have longitudinal coherence among different reports to ensure comparability. Accordingly, the FG will work to achieve the following [Ref. activities 3.1, 3.2]:

1. The self-report template should be simplified, and include both qualitative and quantitative information;
2. The focus should be placed on the results and outcomes (implementation of the commitments) rather than on the work-streams, to identify what is working and barriers to success;
3. It is important to focus on institutional challenges that are impeding progress, also to better shape the political conversation and better involve the Sherpas;
4. The selected consultant that drafts the independent report will need to confirm the self-reports through interviews and look at other mechanisms to assess the progress of GB, including qualitative information and secondary data sources;
5. The timing for the reporting process and the annual event should be carefully calibrated: it is recognized that ECOSOC (29-31 May 2019) is the best moment for organizing the event. However, ECOSOC is being held significantly earlier than normal. This presents a challenge in

terms of an already compressed timeline to develop the annual report: quality cannot be undermined by this fact. Accordingly, it is important to develop a clear timeline, discuss options with the consultant on either hastened production or a phased approach to publishing and presenting findings. This will require signatories to simultaneously increase the quality of self-reports but and adapt to a slightly accelerated and less flexible timeline for self-report submissions. The FG recognized that communications with Signatories is critical in this effort.

Taking the Grand Bargain from policy to practice

Moving Grand Bargain commitments beyond the first transaction level

Benefits generated as GB commitments are met must move beyond the first transaction to frontline responders. To date, GB processes and decision-making have been focused in HQs and capitals. Continued focus and action are required at this level to maintain momentum and ensure progress. As we look to cascade benefits beyond the first transaction, there is a need for improved visibility along the humanitarian delivery chain and analysis on which commitments can be “cascaded” and how.

Improved understanding, clear objectives and prioritization, as well as shared political will, must be developed and maintained to enhance such a complex network of transactions at different levels and to ensure that the gains reach frontline actors. To facilitate the progressive “trickledown” of one transaction to the next, the FG outlined three different potential forms of “cascading” efforts:

1. Internal cascading of commitments between Signatory HQ and regional/field offices (particularly relevant for Signatories with devolved decision-making structures);
2. Cascading commitments and their gains from funder to partner and considerations for the internal and external enablers and barriers to such efforts;
3. Cascading GB policy discussions and potential actions from capitals/HQs to field-level IASC coordination structures/Humanitarian Country Teams

It is also important to identify which are the most important workstreams and commitments that require cascading to reach front line responders. The FG discussed that these were likely WS4 (Reduce duplication and management costs), WS7 (Increase collaborative humanitarian multi-year planning and funding), WS8 (Reduce the earmarking of donor contributions), WS9 (Harmonize and simplify donor requirements). Additionally, WS1 (Greater transparency) plays a particularly important role. Without clear data provided by donors and partners across the delivery chain, it will be impossible to piece together an accurate picture of how and in what way resources are flowing through different transaction levels. [Ref. activity 4.1].

Operationalizing GB Commitments

Operationalizing the commitments at the signatory level and activities occurring within work-streams are also considerations for cascading the GB changes beyond the first transaction level. Some work-streams have already made progress on developing guidance for specific commitments. The FG discussed the

prospect of a “diagnostic tool” focused on what considerations each constituent types (donor, UN, NGOs) might undertake in carrying forward commitments within an individual signatory organization. This diagnostic tool may provide a positive framing for discussion on how various constituency groups interpret commitments and how they go about implementing changes. The conceptual framework for such a tool might consider barriers to change, requirements to overcome barriers, factors that may enable or incentivize change, and feasibility of a prioritized set of actions for individual institutions to make progress toward achieving their commitments. The FG agreed that additional time and discussion is needed to more concretely define the objective, parameters, and means to develop such a tool. Any process should be light, thoughtful and well-timed. The FG agreed to additional discussion on the issue in 2019, as the FG’s immediate focus must be directed to the results-based performance framework development and initiating the annual reporting process. [Ref. activity 4.2].

Maintaining political momentum

The FG discussed relevant areas for engagement with the EP and Sherpas. There was recognition that the processes would benefit from greater alignment and coherence between the FG and the Eminent Person. To that end, the FG elected that the U.S. government act as FG focal point with the Eminent Person in Washington DC. [Ref. activity 6.1].

While the EP plays a strong role in brokering political agreement and consensus, the FG noted that in the near term her engagement would be helpful in championing collective accountability and a strengthened self-report. This should include calling on Signatories to improve the quality of the information they submit in the forthcoming self-reporting process.

Additionally, Sherpas remain the most underutilized resource among GB stakeholders and should be re-engaged as they are instrumental in brokering agreements and advancing progress within their own institutions. The FG will engage their respective Sherpas and will identify strategies to mobilize them as a cohort throughout the year.

Enhancing the Grand Bargain structures, including through improved dialogue with the Eminent Person

The FG commits to ensuring leadership and coordination of the GB process through the identification of FG rotational chairs and by maintaining continuity in the FG Secretariat [Ref. activity 9.1]. The FG invited a representative from the Eminent Person’s Washington office to attend the last session of the workshop for a discussion on the outcomes of the day. The FG and World Bank representative exchanged ideas around the importance of synergies, alignment, and two-way information-sharing between the FG and EP. It was also communicated that the FG had nominate the U.S. government to serve as the FG’s focal point and liaison with the EP. There was also recognition that greater coordination with the EP’s communication team to ensure external messaging and communications are complementary. [Ref. activities 6.2, 8.1].