



World Food Programme
Programme Alimentaire Mondial
Programa Mundial de Alimentos
برنامج الأغذية العالمي

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GRAND BARGAIN ANNUAL MEETING - JUNE 2020 WFP STATEMENT

The World Food Programme presents its compliments to the Grand Bargain Eminent Person, Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Sigrid Kaag, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Mark Lowcock, as well as to Member States representatives, sister UN agencies, Red Cross Red Crescent movement and NGO consortia.

Although the world has changed since 2016 – and continues changing, particularly as a result of the current pandemic – the Grand Bargain remains the reference for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the humanitarian action and the donor support that facilitates this endeavour. It has a wider impact in terms of fostering a more cohesive and collaborative approach.

WFP is committed to its constructive role in the implementation of the Grand Bargain, in particular by being a member of the Facilitation group for 2019-2020 and by co-convening the cash workstream with DfID. This is aimed at ensuring coherence, efficiency, effectiveness and value for money as well as convening joint donor efforts and local partnerships around cash assistance.

WFP welcomes the acknowledgement of the tangible progress made in several areas by the 2020 Annual Independent Report. Overall cash assistance was scaled up significantly. In 2019, WFP transferred USD 2.1 billion to around 28 million people in 64 countries (through cash, value vouchers and commodity vouchers). This is a 23 percent increase from 2018, when WFP transferred USD 1.7 billion. Unrestricted cash accounted for 60 percent of the overall cash-based transfer (CBT) value in 2019. The overall funding to local actors was slowly increased and targeted investments to strengthen capacities of local partners brought measurable results, as WFP has proven with the capacity strengthening initiative with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) that was developed and implemented between 2017 and 2019. The quality of joint needs assessments, analysis and related planning improved; and greater strategic direction and focus was placed on addressing the barriers to quality funding and instituting more coherent and consistent approaches to participation. Additionally, WFP continued joining efforts with sister UN agencies on harmonising and simplifying partnership processes. The UN Partner Portal has proven an effective platform for identifying new partners more quickly and giving local actors equal access to tendering processes and harmonised due diligence procedures.

However, WFP recognises that key challenges continued to inhibit the potential of the Grand Bargain to bring system wide change. Among others, the limited level of ownership and accountability, and failure to scale good practices. Additionally, in the past few years the gap between funding requirements and contributions has not changed, leaving needs uncovered and illustrating the demand for donors and organizations to readjust expectations.



WFP's perspective is to consider the issue of funding more holistically with a view to ensuring that the objectives of "leaving no one behind", addressing root causes and prioritizing life-saving needs remain at the forefront of our efforts. As committed at last year's Grand Bargain Annual Meeting, WFP worked on a [Reflection Paper](#) on Enhancing Quality Funding, indicating a pathway that agencies could consider. This recognised that the current impasse between donor and agency Grand Bargain Signatories requires a more nuanced understanding of the realities, barriers and opportunities to improve the funding of the humanitarian system.

As the Grand Bargain approaches the five-year mark, WFP regards this Annual Meeting as the opportunity to reflect on the areas where transformative change could be achieved within the next 12-18 months. There are at least four areas where there is potential to create tangible results: cash assistance, multi-year funding, increasing access to international humanitarian funding for local partners and harmonized reporting. This can only become successful with a substantial commitment of all signatories as well as a major step-up in collective financial and political investments.

Additionally, the Annual Meeting will represent a good starting point to initiate a dialogue on the post-2021 Grand Bargain, in the context of the High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing.

In the current COVID-19 pandemic response, the Grand Bargain is more relevant than ever and can be an important catalyst for change and to guide humanitarian actors through this period of adjustments. While all humanitarian actors need to adapt their way of working, there are a number of "good practices of tomorrow" that can be identified in the Grand Bargain objectives from 2016 and merit continued attention, such as transparency, localisation, cash assistance, harmonised reporting, flexibility of funding or reduced management costs.

Wish you all a fruitful and productive Annual Meeting.