

Terms of Reference – Study

Assessing progress to reduce the Humanitarian Financing Gap

Background

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 has led to an increase of humanitarian needs. While donors have rushed to increase their financial contributions to the global humanitarian response, a gap between humanitarian needs and available humanitarian resources persist.

Up to 2015, the gap between global humanitarian needs and available humanitarian financing also kept increasing, prompting the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to establish a High Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing to work out recommendations on how best to address the humanitarian financing gap. In 2016, the High Level Panel presented its report «Too Important To Fail – Addressing the Humanitarian Financing Gap». The Panel recommended actions in three broad areas: 1) shrinking the needs: a shared responsibility, 2) deepen and broaden the resource base for humanitarian action, and 3) improve delivery: a Grand Bargain on efficiency.

While the global context and domestic political contexts have changed in the last five years, the recommendations of the High Level Panel might still continue to be equally relevant and might provide important insights to determine a way forward to address the humanitarian financing gap.

Since 2016, donors and humanitarian organisations are working side-by-side in the Grand Bargain and its agreed process of implementation, with progress being monitored through annual independent reports. Even though there has not been structured follow-up on the Panel's recommendations of pillars 1 and 2, several organisations and initiatives might have worked since 2016 in the spirit of these recommendations, contributing to shrinking the needs and broadening the resource base. In 2018, the World Bank and NRC invited to discuss progress across three pillars. (<https://www.nrc.no/news/2018/february/invitation-beyond-the-grand-bargain-7-march/>)

At the Grand Bargain Annual Meeting in 2021, an Annual Independent Report will be presented again to discuss and assess progress of implementation towards greater efficiencies. A better understanding of progress and challenges towards shrinking the needs and broadening the resource base, and the links between these initiatives and the Grand Bargain, would enable participants of the discussion to better contextualize the progress achieved through the Grand Bargain and enable a more informed discussion about how to move forward in addressing the humanitarian financing gap.

Focus

The focus of the study is to identify, assess and analyze different ongoing initiatives that are being taken in the spirit of the Panel's recommendations of the pillars 1) shrinking the needs and 2) broadening the resource base and identify possible links with progress on the Grand Bargain of pillar 3. The study will build on the analysis done in 2018 in preparation of the World Bank/NRC event. The study will complement/feed into the process to develop the Grand Bargain Annual Independent Report in 2021 and look at the broader trends to address the humanitarian financing gap.

Expected Output:

1. Final Report, which consists of the following:
 - o Based on the 2018 mapping, presentation of the major results achieved since 2016 that serve the spirit of the pillar 1 and 2 recommendations of the High Level Panel report to reduce the humanitarian financing gap.
 - o Analysis of the common challenges encountered by different actors during their initiatives, summary of the lessons learned and potential links with the Grand Bargain.
 - o Recommendations to address the humanitarian financing gap in 2021 and way forward.
2. Executive summary of the main recommendations to move forward in addressing the humanitarian financing gap.
3. Mapping of different initiatives to help reduce the humanitarian financing gap along the lines of the recommendations of the High Level Panel Report.
4. Presentation of the findings to key fora.

Key questions for the consultancy

It is proposed that the consultants will further refine these questions during the inception phase, following desk research and interviews with key stakeholders.

- Are the recommendations of the High Level Panel still valid to address today's humanitarian financing gap or has the debate 'moved on'?
- Was there any structured or unstructured, explicit or implicit follow-up on the pillars 1 and 2 recommendations of the High Level Panel Report on Humanitarian Financing? (Mapping)
- If so, what have been major trends and initiatives, and what have been some specific results?
- Who were the major actors to drive this change and achieve these results?
- What were some of the challenges they faced and how were they able to overcome them?
- What are some of the links with the Grand Bargain?
- How has the COVID-19 pandemic influenced some ways of working?
- What lessons can be drawn from these initiatives when addressing the financing gap in 2021 and beyond?

Methodology

Desk Research: review of reports from key stakeholders to assess if there was a follow-up on the pillars 1 and 2 of the High Level Panel Report. The Research should identify these key reports and help answer the research questions.

Structured interviews: interviews with key stakeholders to assess their progress/changes since 2016 that led to greater involvement in fragile contexts and relate to addressing the humanitarian financing gap. Interviews should be conducted with a range of stakeholders in the humanitarian and development sector, the private sector and foundations.

After an initial phase of desk research and structured interviews, the consultants could adjust the methodology as appropriate to address the more refined research questions.

Timeline (to be discussed with the consultants)

Inception phase until end November 2020.

First recommendations identified by 31 December 2020 with full report provided at the end of January 2021.

List of interviewees: Interviews should be conducted on the basis of value to answer the research questions. At a minimum, the humanitarian and development branches of major donor governments, humanitarian organization (UN, RC/RC, and NGOs), IFIs, the OECD, World Bank, and private sector companies should be consulted.

Budget

30.000 EUR

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