



## **Statement on behalf of the Netherlands at the Grand Bargain Annual Meeting of 15 – 17 June 2021**

*delivered in writing*

Five years after the Grand Bargain was negotiated and adopted by the Netherlands, we remain committed to its core mission: to enhance the humanitarian response at all levels through greater effectiveness and efficiency. The Netherlands is pleased to see and to support the evolution of the 2016 commitments into a more integrated and prioritised framework in the Grand Bargain 2.0. to continue advancing our joint objectives.

Since its first negotiation in Amsterdam in 2016, the Grand Bargain has become a remarkable forum to strengthen humanitarian response, prompting greater mutual policy understanding and priority setting between all actors in the humanitarian sector. The COVID-19 crisis and all humanitarian situations in which people suffer highlight the urgency to work together as donors and humanitarian organisations: our collective response to rapidly evolving needs demands a higher level of effectiveness and efficiency. This is precisely what the Grand Bargain commitments were set out to realise.

The Grand Bargain has provided the ground for a stronger and better humanitarian response as illustrated by the Annual Independent Report. At its 5-year mark, we should acknowledge the progress made: the greater focus on locally-led humanitarian responses, that more affected people can cover their own needs through an increase in cash-transfer programming, that there is greater joint analysis, and more harmonised reporting.

The Netherlands, together with the World Bank, were the co-conveners of the Grand Bargain's work on data driven transparency. We have seen a significant increase in understanding of the importance of high quality, comparable, timely open data as a mechanism to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of humanitarian decision-making. We see that data publication in the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) has increased among signatories and that there is a much greater understanding on the role IATI could play in the overall efforts towards more transparency.

We would like to thank the World Bank for working together as co-conveners and all workstream members for their engagement, including Development Initiatives, for their support throughout. As a system, we have not yet realised the full potential of data driven transparency. We therefore urge all signatories to continue working towards publication of high quality humanitarian data, including in IATI, to seek complementarity with IATI, and to realise greater data efficiency in data publication, as well as making data meaningful for local responders.

Furthermore, the Netherlands has strongly engaged in the increase of multi-year, predictable and flexible planning of its humanitarian budget over the course of the past years and remains

committed to flexible financing. On the basis of the Bargain, the Netherlands expects high-quality reporting, transparency and accountability for the use of flexible financing. To this end, we engaged in the Grand Bargain work, aiming to showcase how reporting on flexible financing could take place. Recognising the importance of partnerships with local organisations in providing humanitarian assistance, we urge our partners to extend flexible financing to their partners. In addition to our efforts to provide quality funding, we recognise the importance of quality partnerships with local actors and will continue to look into the best ways to further these structures.

Providing humanitarian assistance in fragile contexts implies taking risks. In consultation with various stakeholders, the Netherlands and ICRC have been advancing the conversation on better risk-sharing. We are now pleased to present together with the ICRC a Statement on Risk-Sharing. We believe that a conversation on how to better share risks between partners has the potential to lead to a better humanitarian response and greater progress in the Grand Bargain implementation, specifically if we want to advance our quality funding, localisation and accountability efforts. Furthermore we call on signatories to support the statement and to work towards actual sharing of risks, and will advance our own efforts to integrate this into our partnerships. We thank the ICRC for this excellent partnership throughout this process.

In our implementation efforts we need to continue thinking global and acting local: global policy changes need to translate to tangible improvements for affected people in humanitarian crises. We welcome the renewed focus to make the Grand Bargain more centred around the people we are committed to serve. United in the common purpose of ensuring that funds are spent most efficiently and effectively, we must collectively demonstrate greater accountability to affected people, and those providing financing alike. Identifying and sharing lessons learned about the field relevance of the Grand Bargain is important. We are committed to contribute to greater learning of 'what works' in order to scale this up, increase field relevance and invest in further mechanisms for improved accountability.

Looking forward, a lot more work remains to be done to realize the ambition of the Grand Bargain. Again, the Annual Independent Reports has identified specific areas. The GB 2.0 Framework offers an excellent opportunity for more prioritized and bold action, and we will sustain our efforts to realize these commitments in our partnerships. For the Netherlands, all the Grand Bargain 2.0 commitments continue to be equally relevant, and we expect partners to do their utmost to advance those.

The Netherlands also supports a greater structured push to advance on shrinking the needs and broadening the resource base to close the humanitarian financing gap. To this end, the Netherlands invited interested participants to a side event to assess how existing initiatives can be scaled up and new synergies can be realised.

Finally, the Netherlands wishes to express its utmost gratitude to the former and current Facilitation Groups, Grand Bargain Secretariat, Overseas Development Institute and the Eminent Person for your collective leadership, strategic guidance, and vital contribution in advancing our collective objective. We are looking forward to working with the incoming Eminent Person, Jan Egeland, to help advance our collective commitments. Our next steps should be focused, bold and ambitious, building on the achievements until now. The Netherlands remains committed to our collective effort in the spirit of the Bargain.