

Grand Bargain in 2021:

Annual Self Report – Narrative Summary

Name of Institution: Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

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Grand Bargain in 2021

Question 1: Reflecting on the information you have provided in the Excel spreadsheet, please highlight the 2 or 3 key outcomes or results relating to the Grand Bargain that your institution achieved in 2021?

The continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic and other humanitarian pressures have cemented Australia's commitments to localisation and flexible, predictable funding.

Example 1: Myanmar and Bangladesh Humanitarian Package

In 2021, Australia's multi-year Myanmar and Bangladesh Humanitarian Package continued to deliver emergency assistance alongside efforts to increase resilience and self-reliance. Flexibility in the design of the package has been critical in pivoting to COVID-19 and related needs, and in adapting programming in Myanmar after the February 2021 coup. The package intentionally prioritises the implementation and tracking of reform objectives and inclusive practice that lead to improved humanitarian action. This includes empowering local actors and mainstreaming gender and disability inclusion throughout the humanitarian program cycle.

Example 2: COVID-19 Pacific and Timor-Leste Preparedness and Recovery NGO Partnership

The Australian Humanitarian Partnership (AHP) – a consortium of Australian NGOs – has invested in stronger local networks and relationships in the Pacific and Timor-Leste through the multi-year program Disaster READY. Disaster READY is supporting localised response and recovery to COVID-19 and other disasters. For example, Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees in Fiji, supported by Disaster READY, set up community screening centres under the lead of community health workers, and disaster response tools were used to coordinate COVID-19 screening and keep the community informed. Going forward, the AHP through Disaster READY will continue to progress localisation by moving to a country-led planning process, strengthening the role of country committees and adopting country-specific localisation strategies.

Question 2: Briefly explain how the outcomes contribute to achieving the Grand Bargain 2.0 enabling priority 1 (quality funding).

The design and implementation of the Myanmar and Bangladesh Package, which includes multi-year funding, has provided stability and continuity to Australia's humanitarian and development partners across the two locations,

allowing us to better engage strategically with them to prioritise reform. Multi-year investments have helped partners to plan better, provide more predictable funding to sub-contractors and in turn more stable programming to affected populations. Funding also remains predominantly unearmarked to ensure that partners can quickly adapt programming according to needs and flexibly work with affected populations – for example, to respond to a major fire in Cox’s Bazar in March 2021.

Question 3: Briefly explain how the outcomes contribute to achieving the Grand Bargain 2.0 enabling priority 2 (localisation and participation).

Through the Australian Humanitarian Partnership (AHP), COVID-19 response activities have most effectively met community needs where local partners have been genuinely involved in planning and ongoing implementation. For example, in response to the April 2021 floods in Timor-Leste, AHP partners provided technical support to the government, particularly on inclusion and gender. National disabled people’s organisation, Ra’es Hadomi Timor-Oan (RHTO), was engaged in a response for the first time, providing specific support to persons with disabilities affected by the flood. RHTO supervised the rebuilding of homes of people with disabilities, ensuring accessibility and security.

Grand Bargain and cross-cutting issues

Question 4: How has your institution contributed to the advancement of gender equality and women’s empowerment¹ in humanitarian settings through its implementation of the Grand Bargain? What results/outcomes have been achieved in this regard? (Please outline specific initiatives or changes in practice and their outcomes/results).

Australia places a high priority on integrating gender equality and diverse needs into humanitarian action, which saves lives; supports effective, efficient and equitable humanitarian action; and protects human rights. We integrate this approach into all aspects of our policy and programming; such as in our support for women’s rights organisations and women’s leadership initiatives. For example, in 2021, Australia launched the Women’s Resilience to Disasters Programme with UN Women, working with Pacific partners and stakeholders to strengthen women’s resilience to disasters, including climate challenges and COVID-19, in three pilot countries – Kiribati, Vanuatu and Fiji. The Programme recognises that although women and girls are more likely to be impacted by disasters, they are more often absent from decision-making processes, despite

¹ Refer to the IASC definitions of gender equality and women empowerment, available [here](#).

bringing essential knowledge, skills, resources and experiences. The Programme will support women to lead more inclusive decision-making in prevention, mitigation, preparedness, and recovery.

Question 5: How has the humanitarian-development nexus been strategically mainstreamed in your institutional implementation of the Grand Bargain commitments?

Australia's responses to protracted crises recognise the need to build long-term resilience and self-reliance among crisis-affected communities. In Iraq, for example, our approach has been to simultaneously deliver humanitarian, stabilisation and social cohesion outcomes to meet the recovery needs of conflict-affected populations, and to prevent further displacement and violence. Australian partners are working with communities and local authorities to address the challenges of population return and reintegration. Activities address historical grievances and current stressors, such as stigmatisation and lack of civil documentation, and promote psychosocial wellbeing. Community cohesion and peace are built through measures such as the drafting of community agreements and the formation of local committees to address basic needs such as WASH.

Question 6: Has your institution taken any steps towards improving risk sharing with its partners? If so, please describe how.

Improving risk-sharing with humanitarian partners is an area Australia is interested in exploring further, particularly given the opportunities it provides for enhancing localisation. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has a strong risk management framework consisting of legislative and policy requirements, in order to enhance accountability and reduce harm. Requirements include those on fraud, child protection, preventing sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, and counter terrorist financing.

We are considering ways to better share risks with partners and develop more mutual partnerships with local actors, to ensure that risk management supports rather than inhibits progressive localisation.

We are also funding the Humanitarian Advisory Group to undertake a program of research to support the shift to a more equitable humanitarian system, examining what factors distort or support this. Risk sharing will be part of these considerations.