

Grand Bargain in 2021:

Annual Self Report – Narrative Summary

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of the Republic of Bulgaria**

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(NB. Please limit your answer to no more than **4 pages in total** – anything over this word limit will not be considered. Please respond to all of the questions below.)

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?

Based on our experience and action in 2021, we could highlight the following main outcomes, achieved in 2021:

- **Enhanced quality funding**, resulting of depth analysis on humanitarian needs in different volatile areas; relevant and more flexible funding in emergency situations; improvement of the ways and means by channelling humanitarian assistance and gradual increase of the humanitarian aid taking into account the financial resources available for each calendar year;
- **Humanitarian-development nexus**: sustainable development and long-term solutions to problems like migration, forced displacement, hunger and access to natural resources for the benefits of local communities, etc. are impossible without sustainable peace and development. This requires consistent implementation of the concept of interlinkages between humanitarian, development and peace actions, which has been emphasized and implemented within the framework of the Bulgarian policy on ODA/Humanitarian Aid.
- **Promotion of Disaster Risk Reduction and Preventive Policy** to avoid loss of human lives and humanitarian catastrophes in partner countries as well as at regional level, a program that has been conducted successfully during the last years in cooperation with the countries of the Western Balkans.

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

Enabling priority 1: A critical mass of quality funding is reached that allows an effective and efficient response, ensuring visibility and accountability.

(For ease of reference, see Senior Officials Meeting recommendations [here](#).)

In January 2021, the Council of Ministers adopted a new *Mid-term Programme for Development Assistance and Humanitarian Aid of the Republic of Bulgaria* for the period 2020-2024. The Programme has an early funding of Euro 3 Million, and as per our indicative plans 17% of which is, being used in a flexible manner for humanitarian aid and additional 5% are backup funds for emergencies. New

priority countries from Sub-Saharan Africa and crosscutting issues have been added. The Programme acknowledges the need to prioritise activities relating to the effects of the COVID 19 pandemic. The new Programme also includes targeted cross cutting priorities: gender equality and empowerment of women and girls; environmental protection and actions to fight climate change; protection and promotion of the rights of the child. The new Mid-term Programme acknowledges the need for Bulgarian development assistance and humanitarian aid to prioritise activities related to mitigating health, economic and social consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. In this regard in the midst of the crisis, Bulgaria promptly redirected financial resources to urgent humanitarian aid provided to the countries of the Western Balkans and the Eastern Partnership. Further efforts are made to respond as adequately as possible to partners' needs for protection of health workers at the frontline, children and vulnerable groups, ensuring that no one is left behind.

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

Enabling priority 2: Greater support is provided for the leadership, delivery and capacity of local responders and the participation of affected communities in addressing humanitarian needs.

The COVID-19 response confirmed the need to deliver aid to the most vulnerable countries and participation of affected communities in addressing humanitarian needs. At the same time, it showed the solidarity of Bulgaria with the affected countries and helped the leadership and the relevant institutions to cope with this extremely serious pandemic disaster.

Bulgaria provided EUR 20,000 to Namibia to deal with the severe epidemic situation in the country caused by the third wave of COVID-19. Bulgaria provided EUR 50,000 for Iraq through the IOM for the implementation of the Strategy for the inclusion of people with disabilities in the period 2019-2021. Bulgaria provided EUR 50,000 for UNRWA. Humanitarian aid for Afghanistan in the amount of EUR 99,747 and humanitarian aid for Ukraine in the amount of EUR 69,823 were also provided.

Bulgaria participates in the EU Mechanism for Syrian Refugees in Turkey and pursuant to Decree № 254/2021 the Council of Ministers has provided two contributions to the mechanism for 2021 in the total amount of BGN 1,089,777 million (EUR 555,786).

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

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

have been achieved in this regard? (Please outline specific initiatives or changes in practice and their outcomes/results).

Please refer to the Guidelines for definitions of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, which are included in this self-report template package.

Bulgaria remains strongly committed to the universal respect for human rights as an important prerequisite for the sustainable and democratic development of the partner countries.

We continue our systematic support for the *UN Women, Peace and Security Agenda*. Our first National Action Plan (adopted in March 2020) is to be implemented for the period 2020-2025. It allows for optimization of funding and reporting of activities related to gender equality in conflict-affected countries, prioritization of the protection of women and girls in unstable and volatile areas, prevention and fight against all violations of women's rights. It provides for further strengthening the commitments to prevent sexual exploitation and sexual and gender-based violence in emergencies, increased funding for the education of women and girls, giving priority to education in emergencies and sustained crises, etc.

Furthermore, in our *Mid-term Programme for Development Assistance and Humanitarian aid (2020-2024)* gender equality is a horizontal priority. We aim at encouraging the participation of women in leadership and professional settings in the technology industry, at emphasizing the growing role of women in the socio-economic development worldwide and at creating opportunities for performance of the new generation of female entrepreneurs in the digitally based economy. When delivering humanitarian aid Bulgaria is also attempting to enhance the local capacity building on resilience, on eliminating gender stereotypes and on full and effective participation of women and girls.

Gender equality is considered a priority within the relevant human rights fora in this area. Bulgaria will continue to stand against violence towards women/girls and advance gender equality, including through its work within international organizations. We reaffirmed the commitments under the *Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies* by extending the deadline for their implementation until the end of 2025.

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

Please explain how your institution has linked commitments 10.1 - 10.5 with other commitments from other workstreams.

In our *Mid-term Programme*, capacity building in support of security and development, including through support for good governance and civil society building, remains a key priority. In this regard, we strongly believe that provision of humanitarian aid alone could not bring the desired results for sustainable

development and therefore we support the efforts to effectively bridge the gap between humanitarian aid and development assistance, alongside with the peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations with a view to eliminating the risks of a crisis that has unfolded. In our policy in this field, Bulgaria is guided by the OECD Development Assistance Committee Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus.

In 2021, Bulgarian humanitarian aid continued to be targeted, as a priority, at destabilised countries and regions, paying particular attention to the crises that generate migrant flows. In this sense, our priority commitments covered countries of the Middle East and North Africa, West Asia and Afghanistan.

In 2021, the triple nexus was implemented following the horizontal priorities in our Program of respect for international humanitarian law and protection of the most vulnerable groups of the civilian population, with a special emphasis on women, children and people with disabilities.

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

(For ease of reference, please see a set of actions to enhance risk sharing as suggested in the Netherlands and the ICRC [Statement on risk sharing](#).)²

Bulgaria agrees that a dialogue on risk is key to unlock a critical mass of quality funding and enhance support for local responders, and that the Grand Bargain platform with its different stakeholders is a useful forum to connect the different risk conversations. Bulgaria is open to further discuss these issues and find common solutions. Currently we have extremely limited presence (both at NGO and at institutional level) in countries of high risk, and due to that, our humanitarian aid is being channelled mainly through the humanitarian networks of the UN and other International Organization, operating on the ground. While we continue to stick to this well-established practice, we would examine additional options to increase involvement of local and national respondents in our humanitarian operations, by giving due consideration of existing financial, security and other related risks.

² During the 2021 Annual meeting and in consultation leading up to this Signatories have expressed a strong interest in advancing the risk-sharing agenda. As communicated, the Netherlands, ICRC and InterAction are in the process of setting up a Risk Sharing Platform. This work will benefit greatly from an inventory of Signatories' risk-sharing practices.