

Grand Bargain in 2021:

Annual Self Report – Narrative Summary

Name of Institution: DG ECHO

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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 EU remains committed to the Grand Bargain, as demonstrated by the confirmation of our attachment to its objectives. The continued support is marked by funding made available, the support to people-centred needs assessments, and also our efforts to lead by example. This is translated into reforms such as the continued use of Programmatic Partnerships, of Country Based Pooled Funds, the possibility of funding actions for 24 months in HIPs, etc. *(as further detailed below).*

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](#).)

Contributions to Country Based Pooled Funds and Programmatic Partnerships provide less earmarked and more predictable funding (among other characteristics). Projects in Education in Emergencies, or in disaster preparedness, are also increasingly multi-year funding. The general recognition of the need to increase quality funding needs to be matched by tangible results related to increased efficiency and effectiveness, and/or improved delivery for affected populations.

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.

In its 2021 Communication on the EU's humanitarian action, the Commission committed itself to providing stronger support to local responders, in line with the Grand Bargain. To this end, one of the key actions is to 'develop guidance on the promotion of equal partnerships with local responders'. Another key action in the Communication is to 'increase EU support to local responders, including by expanded use of country-based pooled funds and other funding mechanisms that prioritise local actors.'

To achieve this, the Commission is in the process of identifying areas where it could further contribute to effective localisation. A consultation process with

partners, stakeholders and local responders will be organised, in order to capture issues that the guidance could usefully address.

In parallel, a detailed lessons learnt exercise in 2021 on the Commission's support for CBPFs confirmed that CBPFs can indeed be a useful tool to support localisation, and the Commission will continue contributing to CBPFs in line with its priorities and interests, including localisation, cost effectiveness, enhanced donor coordination, accountability, visibility, flexibility and adaptability of the response.

The Commission remains also fully engaged in the Localisation Workstream, which are helping signatories in the operationalisation of their Grand Bargain's commitments on localisation. This is particularly important to ensure policy coherence between the global direction of travel of the agenda and the focus of the Commission's orientations in a way that they can both foster progress towards a people-centred system grounded in a stronger local leadership.

On Participation, the Commission is supporting efforts by the Participation Revolution workstream and other leading coordination bodies to reinforce the accountability of the humanitarian system towards affected communities with a particular emphasis on humanitarian leaders' responsibilities.

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

Since 2013 and the adoption of the policy "*Gender – Different Needs, Adapted Assistance*", DG ECHO reinforced gender mainstreaming, targeted actions and capacity building². Since 2014, a humanitarian Gender-Age Marker has been used as quality and accountability tool to measure the extent to which EU-funded humanitarian actions integrate gender and age considerations. In June 2020, the EU published its second assessment report³ on its Gender-Age Marker, showcasing that for projects starting in 2016 and 2017, 89% of all EU

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

² https://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/gender-sensitive-aid_en

³ <https://ec.europa.eu/echo/sites/echo-site/files/gender-age-marker-report-online.pdf>

humanitarian aid integrated gender and age considerations 'strongly' or 'to a certain extent'. DG ECHO has in place an e-learning on its Gender-Age Marker, aimed at further build capacity on gender and age mainstreaming and the application of the Marker for its staff and partners.

In 2021, estimates show that the EU allocated approximately EUR 33.1 million in humanitarian aid to prevent and respond to gender-based violence under its protection and health programming. Furthermore, in 2021, it is estimated that the EU allocated approximately EUR 29.7 million to reproductive health from its humanitarian health programming.

In 2021, DG ECHO continued to be an active member of the global initiative "Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies". This global initiative brings together almost 100 partners comprising of governments and donors, international organisations and non-governmental organisations.

DG ECHO sent its commitment to the new Call to Action roadmap 2021-2025⁴.

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.

The EU's agenda for progressing the nexus builds on the experience of and lessons learned from its nexus pilot countries, i.e. Chad, Iraq, Myanmar, Nigeria, Sudan and Uganda. The nexus approach has also deepened internal coordination at HQs and joint analysis is taking place, e.g., in the preparation of Humanitarian Implementation Plans, as well as in the programming of the "Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation" financing instrument for 2021-2027, supporting the EU's international cooperation.

The Communication for Humanitarian Action (March 2021) affirms the need for continued implementation and operationalisation of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach, by moving beyond short-term interventions, promoting durable solutions that address the root causes of

⁴ - Implementation of relevant policies (i.e. humanitarian policies on Gender, Protection, Gender-Age Marker, as well as EU policies such as the third EU Gender Action Plan (GAP III) and the Strategic Approach on Women, Peace and Security) - Capacity building of staff and partners (for instance through the e-learning on the DG ECHO Gender-Age Marker); - Advocacy on GBV in emergencies and the Call to Action; - Support to survivors of gender-based violence (i.e. humanitarian GBV projects from protection and health programming); - Annual tracking and reporting on funding to GBV; - Integration of GBV risk mitigation in all aspects of humanitarian assistance (i.e. through the DG ECHO Gender-Age Marker, and work on protection mainstreaming); - Promotion of participation of gender and age groups in all aspects of humanitarian assistance (i.e. through the DG ECHO Gender-Age Marker, and work on protection mainstreaming); - Strengthen the nexus approach in preventing and responding to GBV.

conflicts and protracted crises. The nexus approach is also prominent in the EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change, with the objective of integrating the response to the negative impacts of climate change and environmental degradation into the design and delivery of humanitarian aid, as well as the commitment to support humanitarian partners' efforts to reduce their environmental footprint.

In keeping with commitments made as part of the Grand Bargain, the nexus approach has been strategically mainstreamed in the Cash workstream. DG ECHO participates in the subgroup Linking Humanitarian Cash with Social Protection. The nexus, especially the humanitarian-development interlinkages, continues to generate strategic discussions under the safety net umbrella at country level. A mapping of cash based interventions has been carried out by DG ECHO in 2021, with the aim to identify future EU-actions to scale up cash-based shock responsive social safety nets.

In addition to social protection, priority areas for the nexus are education, health, food security, disaster preparedness and climate resilience. These are also highlighted in the Council Conclusions on Humanitarian Action (2021), presenting significant opportunities for the EU and its Member States to put the nexus into practice.

Finally, coordinated needs assessment is also designed in a way to reinforce nexus considerations in the analysis of the needs and their underlying causes.

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](#).)*⁵

Addressing fiduciary risks in a context where humanitarian aid is ever increasing and reaching record amounts of donor/taxpayers generosity implies adopting risk assessment and control mechanisms that require a sufficient supervision of the intermediaries delivering aid. The Commission is regularly reviewing its control mechanisms in light of the findings reported and the perception of the risk environment and characteristics of individual operations. For instance, the Commission revised its certification mechanism for NGOs to become humanitarian aid partners.

⁵ 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.