

**Grand Bargain in 2021:**  
**Annual Self Report – Narrative Summary**

**Name of Institution:** International Rescue Committee (IRC)

**Point of Contact (please provide a name, title and email to enable the consultants to contact you for an interview):**

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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?**

In 2021 IRC strengthened capacity to support partners by publishing IATI data on all projects funded by FCDO and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, thanks to the use of data analysis tools and engagement through collaborative platforms. Tracking and transparency around the flow of funds from several of IRC's major European donors, including FCDO, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sida, Irish Aid and Danida, also vastly improved. To ensure standardization of reporting across the humanitarian system, IRC continues to use the 8+3 template, as provided by donors, and IRC partners have deployed it in contexts where we work. Several IRC donors used the 8+3 template, which include: FCDO, German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO), which co-led the development of the template (with ICVA and GPPI), UNHCR, WFP, OCHA, Irish Aid, Global Affairs Canada, and Sida. IRC also publishes data on a voluntary basis for awards funded by other EU donors (i.e., Irish Aid, Danida, Sida).

Toward our localization commitment, we [renewed our public commitment](#) to Grand Bargain commitments to share 25% of global funding with local partners by 2024, commencing with a targeted 50% increase in the funding we provide to local actors in FY21 (compared with FY20).

Toward our quality funding commitment, IRC continued advocacy efforts toward multiyear and flexible funding to frontline implementers, and succeeded in elevating this discussion to high-level political dialogue with Grand Bargain stakeholders. Our thought leadership, bilateral and multilateral engagement with donors and UN agencies, and growing evidence base on the effectiveness of multiyear funding from programmatic experience culminated in IRC's leadership of the quality funding caucus. We've continued to engage key humanitarian donors in discussions on more multiyear, flexible funding. In 2021, IRC was asked to set up a political dialogue or 'caucus' on quality funding to bring together the most influential donors (ECHO, Germany, the US) and UN agencies (UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, OCHA) to secure higher level of multiyear funding for frontline implementers. Moreover, after a 3 year-pilot phase, IRC has expanded the number of Sida-funded programs benefitting from the

Program-Based Approach, a soft-earmarked and highly flexible funding modality, from 6 to 16 programs.

**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](#).)*

IRC continued advocacy for multiyear, flexible funding with the production and wide dissemination of our [report](#), "Focus on the Frontlines: How the Grand Bargain can deliver on its promise to improve humanitarian aid," where we outline our vision for the Grand Bargain, our own renewed commitments, and recommendations for other stakeholders for greater accountability.

IRC used the Dioptra cost analysis tool to assess the cost-efficiency of several IRC programs for learning and improvement on Value for Money. Some analysis results were published in ReliefWeb and <https://www.dioptatool.org>, transparently showing how and why cost-per-result for an intervention will differ for different organisations in different contexts. When analysing a multi-year project, we found that time and money invested upfront in establishing the program (e.g. stakeholder engagement, team setup, training) do not lead to high levels of results in the first year. This suggests that better value for money can be achieved if upfront costs are leveraged for continuous programming over several years.

IRC's Programme-Based Approach (PBA) allows grant funding to be softly earmarked, while also granting budget and programmatic flexibility to make our interventions more responsive to changing contexts and needs. PBA – and thus multi-year, flexible financing – has enabled IRC to respond to overlapping, protracted crises in Central African Republic (CAR) and Cameroon in a way that short-term, strictly earmarked funding would have disallowed, as further elaborated in our [Win-Win report](#) on multi-year funding.

**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 Strategy100 partnership ambition is a key component of the IRC's commitment to localization, which the IRC understands as 'maximizing power for people and organizations affected by crisis to influence, participate in and lead programs, organizations and systems that achieve better outcomes for their communities.' We contribute to greater impact and scale, and more sustainable outcomes, when we partner with local actors. IRC's commitment to being a feminist and anti-racist organization that promotes diversity, equality and inclusion requires that we champion and resource leadership and action that comes from the communities in which we work. The IRC undertook the third in-depth review of the PEER System, as a component of its global partnership ambition. The review aimed to strengthen the extent to which PEERS promotes our organizational and partnership principle of equality in practice. The review was led by DA Global, and the outcomes of the review will shape the next version of PEERS, to be released (and made available to all as open source) in 2022. IRC is partnering with NEAR to explore collaborative design, with a focus on collaboration between INGOs like the IRC, and civil society, government and private sector actors in the countries we work in. The collaboration produced an in-depth guidance note currently being piloted.

### **Grand Bargain and cross-cutting issues**

**Question 4: How has your institution contributed to the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment<sup>1</sup> 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.

The Violence Prevention and Response Unit (VPRU) has been supporting local civil society organizations to take leadership roles at national and international levels. VPRU continues to prioritize [feminist movement building](#) in the humanitarian space, which includes collaboration with a range of local and national organizations. Through a forthcoming FCDO commercial contract, IRC will lead a consortium to co-design and co-implement Violence Against Women and Girls prevention programming through the 'What Works to Prevent Violence – Impact at Scale' program. These projects work to secure the role of local women's rights organizations as key agents working to address violence against women and girls with a goal of shifting power and resources to those organizations. IRC is a founding member and one of a small number of INGOs

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

in the [Feminist Humanitarian Network \(FHN\)](#) and has contributed to FHN's research and advocacy efforts.

**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.

IRC's technical approach to mainstreaming the nexus follows particular principles. First, IRC's new strategy commits to a "partner first" approach thus shifting the organization's focus to strengthening local systems. IRC has conducted annual stakeholder analysis at the country level and collaborated with local partners to enable better response to community needs. Second, IRC programming takes an increasing cross-sectoral approach, addressing and responding to several sources of conflict and fragility. Third, IRC strives to take anticipatory action, with a focus on livelihoods, before the onset of a crisis, be it famine, climate, or conflict-related, through resilience programming.

**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](#).)*<sup>2</sup>

The IRC revised its policy towards risk management in the context of partnerships to emphasize on a collaborative approach across all forms of material risk, with a primary focus on risks to communities impacted by crises and to the partner, as well as to the IRC. Due diligence and risk management approaches also aim to identify assets and strengths, and to ensure these are maximized in the partnership and collaborative program delivery. The application of this approach to risk management in practice was a key component of the review of PEERS described in question 3.

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<sup>2</sup> 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.