

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

Name of Institution: Norwegian Refugee Council

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

Clarissa Crippa, System reform and GB Adviser, clarissa.crippa@nrc.no

Date of Submission: 16 February 2022

(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?

Quality funding and harmonisation

NRC continued to be a fierce advocate of quality funding, both through its role as co-convenor of WS 7&8, but also independently and as a member of several other humanitarian financing fora (IASC RG5, ICVA etc.). In this capacity, NRC further promoted and facilitated the discussion across constituencies both bilaterally and through existing networks and participated in specific initiatives led by the IASC on standardising the flexibility measures introduced for the Covid 19 response.

In 2021, NRC continued to co-chair the CBPF-NGO Dialogue Platform, allowing to achieve progress on several concrete recommendations made in a joint NRC-OCHA study around increased flexibility, MYF and better governance of CBPF. As a result of this advocacy, the flexible guidelines introduced by OCHA for the Covid-19 response have been largely standardized and included in the global guidelines, which also make concrete progress on the provision of multi-year funding.

Participation revolution

Triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, NRC accelerated the development of an omnichannel communication platform for remote community engagement and remote service delivery, the Digital Community Hub (DCH). The DCH is operational in 21 countries where NRC has engaged with hundreds of thousands of individuals providing them with life-saving information, engaging them from the design phase of the humanitarian responses being delivered and acting as a gateway to critical services. NORCAP's Lake Chad Project enables local and national actors to participate in coordination, decision making and the Humanitarian Programme Cycle through encouragement and support in relevant mechanisms at local, national and regional levels. NORCAP's CashCap programme collaborates with the British Red Cross Cash School and ensures mentoring and shadowing opportunities are available for cash school trainees from various national societies. As part of its 2022 – 2025 Global Strategy, NRC has adopted a strategic objective to enhance collaboration with local actors.

Hosting

NRC expert roster NORCAP continues to support to the Grand Bargain through the provision of two experts to the Secretariat.

Eminent Person

In June 2021, NRC SG was selected as the new Eminent Person of the GB.

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

As a co-convenor of WS 7&8, NRC facilitated the organisation of a closed-door senior-level meeting of key signatories to discuss the advancement of the quality funding agenda. To prepare for the meeting NRC commissioned to ODI an independent analysis of a survey on quality funding. Drawing on ODI's independent analysis of the survey results and the discussion among key senior-level officials, the outcome document stemming from the meeting provided a framework for the operationalization of quality funding as one of the two enabling priorities in Grand Bargain 2.0, by proposing a set of key recommendations for all Grand Bargain signatories – both as individual institutions and collectively as a community – to take forward in order to further advance quality funding in the next iteration of the Grand Bargain. NRC also played a key role in ensuring that quality funding was integrated within the GB 2.0 identified priorities, highlighting the link between quality funding and other humanitarian policy issues, including localization, transparency, risk-sharing, and financing the triple nexus. NRC continued to play a key role in OCHA NGO – CBPF Dialogue Platform and in the PFWG, advocating for the implementation of multiple Grand Bargain commitments including localisation, simplification, and flexibility of funding. Finally, NRC continued to promote the Money Where It Counts (MWiC) initiative, which was identified as one of the 2021 priorities by the IASC RG5, and to gather evidence and learning on the impact of the programme based approach (PBA).

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

The Digital Community Hub (DCH), now spreading throughout NRC's 30+ country operations, provides the foundation for future avenues for participation and input from the people we serve into the design of the aid approaches that will affect them. Through the DCH, NRC has engaged with hundreds of thousands of individuals providing them with life-saving information, engaging them from the design phase of the humanitarian responses being delivered and acting as a gateway to critical services.

NORCAP Lake Chad project uses structured capacity strengthening of CSOs, combined with facilitation of access to the humanitarian architecture, to enable better inclusion of local actors in response planning and delivery. Through capacity strengthening training, national CSO partners are equipped in terms of their leadership and governance to better understand, participate and contribute to the wider humanitarian architecture.

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).

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

NRC's Programme Policy states that we integrate a gender perspective into all our activities, by ensuring equitable, safe and meaningful access to our services, and supporting the inclusion of women, men, boys, girls and groups most at risk in relevant decision-making processes. In 2021, NRC launched the field-testing version of Safe and Inclusive Programming, which goes beyond concepts of 'do no harm' to incorporate a full range of protection mainstreaming elements, gender sensitivity, and inclusivity practices. Safe & Inclusive Programming is the responsibility of all NRC staff, to be mainstreamed in their daily activities, across all programmes, programme support, and support functions. It consists of a Minimum Standards Toolkit, which will be formally endorsed and established as the NRC approach to Safe and Inclusive Programming in 2022, reflecting lessons learnt from country office implementation of the field-testing version.

In line with the goal of the IASC GEWEE Policy to prioritize investing in systemic changes that place gender at the core of humanitarian action, NORCAP deployed Senior Gender Advisers through the GenCap Project to 19 humanitarian operations and three global positions, whose mission is to strengthen inter-agency capacity and support humanitarian leadership to deliver on commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment in humanitarian action. In 2021 NORCAP has consolidated a project that aims at strengthening national and local capacity to deliver climate services, including in humanitarian and crisis contexts and with a specific focus on gender by ensuring equal access to information and participation of end-users in vulnerable communities with climate information that is critical to prevent and mitigate the negative impacts of climate change, as well as integrating them equally in co-production of climate services. Approximately 80% of women in the targeted communities have better access to climate information and are better prepared to make informed decisions.

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

In NRC's new 2022 – 2025 Global Strategy the organisation confirmed its commitment to supporting self-reliance and durable solutions for people in protracted displacement. Through its engagement with the Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (ReDSS), Syria Durable Solutions Platform (DSP) and the Asia Displacement Solutions Platform (ADSP), NRC has supported discussions on safeguarding humanitarian assistance while maintaining development assistance and peacebuilding/conflict prevention efforts. For example, in Afghanistan ahead of and after the Taliban take-over, advocating with EU institutions and member states for increased humanitarian support as well as payment of salaries for health and education personnel. Likewise, it has supported ADSP in Myanmar on discussing options with the EU and its member states to reallocate development funding previously destined for government institutions to partners, like ADSP members, working on nexus activities. With DSP, NRC has continued to work on durable solutions for Syrians displaced in Syria and in the region, advocating with the EU and its member states to increasingly support resilience activities, respect for international protection and increased access to safe legal pathways.

To stimulate reflections at policy level, [NRC worked on a research with DI and FAO](#) exploring how to operationalise the 'triple nexus' of humanitarian-development-peace action across five key areas: 1) partnerships and strategy, 2) coordination and joined-up planning, 3) programming, 4) financing and 5) organisational issues, and looking at case

studies from Bangladesh, Cameroon and Somalia. NRC is currently exploring further opportunities to connect policy and programmatic discussions around the nexus in view to develop clearer internal positions and mobilize new alternative funding modalities to meet needs on the ground.

In 2021, NORCAP finalised a comprehensive reorganisation process to improve the way of working across its many new projects and programmes. The sections working on crisis response, peace and democracy, or thematic areas such as climate and energy operating more in the development realm, are capacitated to explore synergies and influence the humanitarian community. Linking to Workstream 2, NORCAP provides nexus experts to HCTs, with the intent to strengthen national authorities and local NGOs who serve the population irrespective of designated phases of response.

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

NRC undertook a research project looking at risk sharing in Hard-to-Reach areas to promote increased awareness of the risks inherent in humanitarian action. As described in the risk-sharing statement from the Netherlands and ICRC, it will be key to leverage existing platforms to engage further with development actors and the private sector on how to better share and reduce risks in humanitarian action, including the risk of inaction. The engagement could lead to a more systematic approach to some risks in the humanitarian sector, to new ways of working and complementary new ways of financing. The research undertaken by NRC will feed into research initiatives led by others which offer opportunities to move the debate on risk sharing forward with donors and NGOs on a more equitable footing. In linking with other priorities of the Grand Bargain, research on risk sharing has shown that the quality and delivery of humanitarian assistance in hard-to-reach operational areas is heavily impacted by risks of bureaucratic impediments. Understanding these key findings, NRC will continue to engage on this topic, e.g. within the GB 2.0 caucuses on quality funding.