

Grand Bargain in 2021:

Annual Self Report – Narrative Summary

Name of Institution: UNRWA

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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, UNRWA continued to build on the progresses made in 2020 in relation to work stream 1 – Transparency, in particular in relation to publishing in IATI. Despite the lack of dedicated resources, UNRWA continued to publish in IATI on a quarterly basis, providing information on the different Agency's funding streams (programme budget, emergency appeals and projects).

In 2021, cash-based programming remained a priority for UNRWA, with 750,000 beneficiaries reached through cash-based interventions across its five fields of operation. These achievements were made possible through a combination of the Agency's regular programme budget funds as well as through additional emergency/humanitarian funds pledged against UNRWA emergency appeals for the oPt and the Syria regional crisis, and UNRWA Humanitarian and Early Recovery Appeal in response to the May 2021 hostilities in Gaza and increased tensions in the West Bank. In response to the additional hardship caused by COVID-19, UNRWA provided a top up cash assistance to some 18,700 Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) in Jordan; in Lebanon a total of 160,000 Palestine refugees (including PRS, Palestine refugees enrolled in the Agency's Social Safety Net programme and other vulnerable categories) also received emergency cash assistance to mitigate the increased vulnerability caused by the socio-economic collapse of the country and COVID-19. In Gaza, 10,193 families (56,380 individuals) impacted by the May 2021 hostilities (including displaced and cash-strapped families) received a one-off multi-sectoral cash assistance to alleviate the additional emergency needs caused by the hostilities.

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](#).)

The funding shortfall that UNRWA continued to face in 2021, in particular under its programme budget, put at risk the continuity of essential services, and limited the Agency's ability of conducting the necessary investments towards some of the objective and reforms stated in its Medium Term Strategy. In 2021, the UNRWA emergency appeal (EA) for the oPt was 72.4 per cent funded, while the Syria regional crisis EA, covering Syria, Lebanon and Jordan, was 49 per cent funded. In Syria, limited funding resulted in the amount of cash assistance per person being reduced from the planned US\$ 27 to US\$ 13 for the most vulnerable and from US\$ 16 to US\$ 9 for remaining vulnerable refugees. This limited the Agency's ability to provide a meaningful amount of assistance adjusted to the rising inflation experienced by the country.

Predictable, sustainable and multi-year funding also remains a challenge, with many donors still pledging their contribution on yearly basis. In 2021, 28 per cent of humanitarian funds received by UNRWA were multi-year. Some positive progress towards fully unearmarked humanitarian funding have been reported in 2021, although still limited (e.g in 2021, 30 per cent of humanitarian funding received by UNRWA was fully unearmarked, as compared to 2 per cent in 2020). The increase in the proportion of unearmarked contributions is mainly due to the resumption of funding from one of UNRWA's major donors, which had been suspended since 2018 and whose pledges are mainly unearmarked.

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.

UNRWA does not report against work stream 2- localisation. The Agency is a direct service provider with a workforce of almost 29,000 staff, the vast majority of whom are engaged in the direct delivery of assistance and are drawn from the Palestine refugee communities they serve. In addition, through an extensive network of area offices, camp services offices, schools, health Centres UNRWA ensures that refugees have direct and regular access to and interaction with Agency staff.

In 2021, UNRWA continued to ensure that Palestine refugees had access to timely, accurate and relevant information on their rights and entitlements, as well as on the availability of the Agency's services including during COVID-19. Proactive steps were also taken to consult refugees and involve them in the design, delivery and assessment of UNRWA services. This was done through active engagement with camp services committees, women's committees and youth committees to identify their needs and requests.

UNRWA also continued to encourage feedback, complaints and appeals from Palestine refugees through a range of confidential and more public channels. This was done through hotlines, complaints boxes at UNRWA installations, e-mail and social media accounts.

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.

UNRWA's commitment to the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment is enshrined in its Gender Equality Policy (2007) and the Gender Equality Strategy (GES) 2016-2021.² In 2021, the Agency's advancement on the implementation of the GES continued to be limited due to a scarcity of resources and staff. Built on a 'dual-track' approach that focuses both organisational and programmatic changes, the Agency advanced GES implementation through individual field office gender action plans that are focused on: (i) support for gender parity and women's access to senior positions; (ii) promoting gender-sensitive programming; and (iii) the development of staff capacity on gender mainstreaming and addressing GBV. Actions were taken to promote gender equality by the Commissioner-General including through regular engagement with female staff and on gender issues across all fields of operations and programmes, public statements to highlight the import of gender mainstreaming and gender-sensitive programming, and the promotion of female representation in staff unions and gender parity in senior staff.

UNRWA continues to work on advancing gender mainstreaming across its services, including through a focus on reinforced data disaggregation. Among other elements, UNRWA has progressed on the Agency-wide disaggregation of indicators and targets by sex, wherever appropriate, to ensure that the needs and interests of women and men, girls and boys receive specific attention at all stages of the programme cycle. Hence, sex-disaggregated results will be reported against 87 of the 218 indicators in the Agency's Annual Operational Report for 2021.³

A significant mainstreaming initiative in 2021 was a series of cross-departmental activities to promote girls in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) through celebration of the 10th Anniversary of International Girls in ICT Day. Amongst the initiatives, UNRWA conducted and disseminated a seminar in which 25 UNRWA students from different ages and from each field of operation were invited to participate to discuss with five successful businesswomen in the IT field. In 2021, UNRWA also continued its work on ensuring that gender was mainstreamed into the Agency's COVID-19 response. For example, UNRWA completed an analysis of the acute and long-term protection risks and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on refugee women and girls.

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

² A new Gender Equality Strategy (GES) for 2023-2028 will be launched at the end of 2022, following an evaluation of the current GES 2016-21 and building on findings and recommendations therein.

³ Reporting against some indicators cannot be sex-disaggregated due to the nature of the indicators (e.g. indicators referring to UNRWA installations, advocacy interventions, recommendations, etc).

During the reporting period, UNRWA made advances in building awareness and knowledge around gender equality. The mandatory UNRWA Gender Awareness e-learning Course, launched in July 2020, was completed by over a third of staff Agency-wide,⁴ of whom 40 per cent are male and 60 per cent female. The course focuses on: (i) what gender means and ways to promote gender equality; (ii) gender mainstreaming, gender analysis and practical strategies to integrate a gender perspective into UNRWA service delivery; and (iii) international standards on women's rights and gender equality.

In 2021, UNRWA reported on its 2020 performance under the UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP). UNRWA improved its performance despite the limited resources dedicated to gender equality and met or exceeded the requirements for 11 performance indicators out of 16 applicable. In the assessment of the Agency's performance against the UN-SWAP 2.0 indicators, for the first time UNRWA met the requirements for Evaluation and remained consistent for all other indicators. UN Women encouraged UNRWA to prioritise Financial Resource Allocation, the only indicator classified as "missing requirements", and the four indicators "approaching requirements". UNRWA reporting under the UN-SWAP for 2021 is currently under finalisation. As part of the Agency's efforts to continue improving performance on gender equality, UNRWA conducted preparatory work in 2021 to set up a Women Advisory Forum (WAF) which will provide an inclusive venue and a safe space for systematic engagement between the Commissioner-General and national female staff.

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.

During the reporting period, UNRWA continued to provide emergency assistance in parallel with human development activities, adapting its human development services to meet the needs of those affected by crises. Building on its existing programmes and infrastructure, UNRWA continued to adjust its services to integrate COVID-19 prevention and response measures, ensuring the continued availability of essential services in all of its fields of operation.

In response to the May 2021 hostilities in Gaza, UNRWA issued a standalone Humanitarian and Early Recovery appeal, which included the immediate emergency response (e.g. assistance to IDPs in collective shelters), as well as longer term recovery and rehabilitation needs (e.g. shelter rehabilitation and reconstruction). The damage assessment of the affected shelters and the identification of the eligible caseload were conducted in coordination with the Shelter sector, the Ministry of Public Works, and other relevant early recovery actors to ensure complementarity and avoid duplications.

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

In 2021, UNRWA focused on enhancing Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) within its own organizational structure, to ensure that the Agency is able to effectively address needs and operational realities in relation to risk, and integrate risk management in all systems, programmes and structures. As part of these efforts, the Agency-wide risk register was reviewed and updated to better reflect top risks and ensure that risk mitigation plans and relevant risk owners were identified. Business continuity plans at HQ and field level were also updated to reflect new developments, e.g. the protracted impact of the COVID-19 pandemics, increased tensions and

⁴ Completion rate for the Gender Awareness e-learning course by the end of 2021 was 40% for the English course and for the Arabic course it was over a third of staff for each level: Level 1 – 37%, Level 2 – 66%, Level 3 – 54%. During 2022, the Agency will undertake a restructuring of the gender awareness e-learning course and discussions with the Department of Human Resources are currently ongoing to ensure a higher percentage of staff will complete the course.

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.

hostilities in the oPt, and the disruptions caused by the socio-economic collapse in Lebanon. In 2022, UNRWA will continue to strengthen its enterprise risk management by ensuring that risks are regularly review and discussed at senior management level in the organization, with the participation of all relevant risk owners.