

Grand Bargain in 2019:
Annual Self Report – Narrative Summary

Name of Institution: International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

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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 2019?

Enhanced coordination and collaboration within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Throughout 2019, the ICRC intensified its collaboration and coordination with its partners within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (hereafter the Movement). Movement components made tremendous progress in understanding and increasing the interoperability of their systems, allowing better delivery and increasing the impact of their activities. The ICRC and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) further enhanced the **Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC)** process, through a new resolution, adopted at the Council of Delegates held in December 2019, that is aimed at achieving advancements in technical areas, such as improving interoperability in logistics, security and surge mechanisms, and the expansion of common tools and training. In order to further reduce **management costs**, the ICRC continued to share its Quality, Social and Environmental audit tools within the Movement and with all other major humanitarian agencies, enabling better control over the costs and the quality of relief items while respecting social and environmental standards.

The ICRC increased its **multi-year investment in the development of National Societies** both in core areas of expertise (e.g. Safer Access Framework) and in other aspects of organizational development, in consultation with IFRC and in partnerships with National Societies bringing relevant expertise. The first round of funding for the **National Society Investment Alliance (NSIA)** – which was jointly launched by the ICRC and the IFRC in 2018 to enable National Societies to access funding to increase their sustainability and improve their capacities to deliver services to communities – was completed in 2019; around CHF 1.5 million was allocated to ten National Societies.

As a member of the Movement Cash Peer Working Group, the ICRC participated in the development of standards and guidelines for **cash and voucher assistance (CVA)**. In 2019, the working group continued to focus on developing the capacity of direct implementers – National Societies and the ICRC – to use cash and vouchers when responding to emergencies.

Working more closely with affected communities

Based on its **Accountability to Affected Population (AAP)** Framework, the ICRC rolled out a self-assessment approach across its delegations, which outlines dimensions of community engagement, participation and diversity inclusion, and indicators for these. Some 1,500 ICRC staff members participated in the assessments, helping develop more awareness on the institutional AAP framework at field level. The ICRC also deployed Community Contact Centers in five countries and developed a “participatory techniques flipbook” for community engagement at the field level. In 2019, the ICRC created ten new positions – two at headquarters and eight in the field – to further support work around AAP and diversity inclusion. At the Council of Delegates in December 2019, a joint Movement Resolution on Community Engagement and Accountability was adopted. The resolution includes minimum commitments, which are aligned with the ICRC’s institutional framework, and is accompanied by a workplan.

Increased transparency

In 2019, the ICRC increased the frequency of its **publications to the IATI platform**. Unaudited financial data – budgets, expenditures and contributions – from its field delegations and at headquarters are now being published on a quarterly basis; publication of audited, consolidated results and statistics remain on an annual basis. The ICRC invested efforts to improve the quality of its publications to the platform by using the IATI validator. The ICRC also took part in the pilot

of IATI's new humanitarian portal, which seeks to further improve the usability of data published on IATI.

Question 2: Please explain how the outcomes/results have or will lead to long-term institutional changes in policy and/or practice.

The quality of Movement coordination improved across the board in response to medium- to large-scale emergencies. The reflex to coordinate around and in support of the National Society is ever more anchored in practice. A pool of **Movement Coordination Officers (MCO)** was created to help further reinforce such coordination; this was already demonstrated in the response to the Mozambique floods, which saw the first-ever deployment of a MCO. Approximately 40 % of ICRC delegations had a planning process with a National Society, as part of an institutional effort toward more inclusive Movement coordination in conflict, with a view to contributing to a progressive mindset change toward greater cooperation within the Movement.

The ICRC developed a multi-year engagement with many National Societies through Partnership Framework Agreements and, with other Movement partners, facilitated a **multi-year investment for their development**. Thematic partnerships with Movement partners were developed to increase support for a given National Society in specific aspect of organizational development (e.g. finance development).

After the first round of **National Society Investment Alliance** funding, ten National Societies were selected to receive financial assistance to further strengthen their own capacities to deliver relevant and effective humanitarian services. By extending multi-year financing and support to National Society development, the NSIA provides a unique mechanism for States to deliver on commitments to localization made as part of the Grand Bargain. However, the sustainability of this mechanism relies on the increased support it will receive from donors in the coming years.

The ICRC also contributed to a series of case studies and feasibility studies of the Movement's Cash Hub, as part of efforts to **share learnings on cash and voucher assistance (CVA)**, including risks and benefits. New frameworks and pilot programmes contributed to the ICRC's continued learning around multi-disciplinary CVA and are a key component of building organizational experience, knowledge and capacity in this field.

The ongoing efforts to reinforce the ICRC's people-centric approach is anchored on commitments in the Institutional Strategy 2019-2022, and regional strategic frameworks, and guided by key actions outlined in the **AAP framework**. The self-assessment exercise conducted in 2019 allowed the ICRC to check the degree to which related processes are implemented; in 2020, a perception survey will be rolled out in 10 to 15 delegations, to complement the results of self-assessments with the views of people affected by conflict themselves.

Question 3: 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).

The ICRC recognizes that gender dynamics, roles and responsibilities determine how armed conflict is experienced by women and men. Hence, gender analysis (or social power analysis) is crucial to ensuring equality of access to assistance and protection for all. In 2019, in order to further advance **gender, diversity and inclusion sensitive programming**, the ICRC commissioned the Humanitarian Advisory Group to conduct an **organizational assessment of diversity inclusion** in the ICRC's AAP framework and operational practices; the assessment will be finalized in 2020. Moreover, a document on "Diversity and Inclusion in the Accountability to

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

Affected People Framework” was finalised; it complements the AAP Framework by highlighting the diversity and inclusion dimensions of the nine guiding principles.

The AAP team developed a workshop on unconscious biases that allows people to notice the inherent biases that accompany them in their daily lives. In addition, with the completion of the generic training module on diversity inclusion, the Diversity and Inclusion team supported or led trainings in Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan. These trainings offered opportunities to further refine the training materials, for further roll-out in 2020.

In 2019, the ICRC conducted an internal study on **how gender was considered in economic security activities that use cash and voucher as modalities**. The findings helped identify priority action points to further improve gender analysis in the design and outcome monitoring phases.

The ICRC welcomed the adoption of a resolution on [Women and leadership in the humanitarian action of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement](#) at the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in December 2019.

Question 4: How has the humanitarian-development nexus been strategically mainstreamed in your institutional implementation of the Grand Bargain commitments?

In 2019, the ICRC strengthened and clarified **internal policy frameworks on issues that relate to the humanitarian-development nexus**. The Institutional Strategy 2019-2022 commits the ICRC to strengthening its programmatic approaches, tools and partnerships to better support the resilience of people affected by protracted armed conflicts and chronic armed violence, to build sustainable humanitarian impact.

Among the key aspects of the ICRC’s efforts in this regard are: **community engagement and community-centered assessment methodologies**, which are key to better informing resilience-strengthening approaches, especially in highly individualized economic security activities involving cash transfers, which is linked to GB commitments on participation and cash-based programing; and **organizational support to National Societies**, which is linked with the GB commitment on localization.

In 2019, the ICRC continued to pursue its **engagement with development stakeholders** along a three-pronged approach focused on policy dialogue, operational collaboration and knowledge and expertise exchange. Outreach progressed with multilateral development banks and with some national development agencies, such as the Agence Française de Développement. Of note, a collaborative project with the World Bank in the field of health was launched at the end of 2018, and the ICRC joined a knowledge exchange initiative with the World Bank, UNICEF, the Centre for Mediterranean Integration and urban water and sanitation utilities across the Middle East and North Africa region. This initiative will inform practices in the water and sanitation sector, especially on ways to minimize service deterioration during conflict and to enable rapid recovery.

“Operationalizing the nexus” is in its initial phases and likely deliver in the medium term, by helping bring a more sustainable and large-scale support to communities with long-term or systemic needs and vulnerabilities. In the meantime, transactional costs are high. Working cultures and operational paradigms remain very different and it is important to invest time and resources in fostering mutual understanding and **building compatibility between humanitarian principles and development working methods and approaches** in agreements and project documents, in the case of operational collaboration. This is key to ensuring that activities bear a sustainable humanitarian impact, but also that they can reach those in need in contexts that are politically, socially and military fragmented. Risk-averse financial institutions also need to be cognizant of the dynamic and unpredictable environment in conflict-affected contexts and be ready to shoulder some of the ensuing risk.