

Grand Bargain in 2019:
Annual Self Report – Narrative Summary

Name of Institution: International Rescue Committee

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 **3 pages in total** – anything over this word limit will not be considered by ODI in their analysis. Please respond to all of the questions below.)

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?

In 2019 IRC continued to make the most progress towards implementing Grand Bargain commitments in the areas of transparency, cash-based programming and reduced management costs.

Towards our transparency commitments, as of the end of 2019, IRC had completed IATI publishing for 78 awards, as compared to the 2018 GB Annual Report, where IRC had published 65 IATI Activities. IRC continues to be ranked amongst the ten highest scoring organisations on the original GB Transparency Dashboard (beta).

Towards our cash commitments, in Fiscal Year 2019 we delivered 24% of our material assistance in the form of cash or vouchers, keeping us on track towards our own target of 25% in cash assistance by 2020. IRC directly transferred \$23 million in Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) to clients. More than 80% of IRC country programs delivered some form of CVA in 2019. \$38 million were disbursed in Colombia and Ethiopia through collaborative cash delivery. Ten percent of in-country collaborative cash delivery actors were local.

Towards our commitment to improve cost effectiveness and value for money, IRC further refined its Systematic Cost Analysis (SCAN) tool, which is meant to improve the transparency and comparability of cost efficiency data across programmes and/or agencies. By the end of 2019, an additional four IRC country programs had been actively using SCAN for cost efficiency analysis and two INGO partners had installed and used SCAN in four of their country offices. We also held discussions with UNHCR to pilot the use of SCAN within the agency.

In addition, 2019 saw us intensifying our advocacy for more and better quality funding, particularly multi-year funding, which is an IRC strategic priority. Together with other NGOs and networks, such as InterAction, we led repeated calls to secure longer-term partnership agreements with UNHCR. Within the Grand Bargain, IRC started supporting the sub-working group on multi-year funding pass-through mechanisms together with UNICEF and NRC. The purpose of this sub-group is to identify ways to ensure multi-year funding cascades from bilateral donors to multilateral agencies to implementing partners, in line with the related Core Commitment.

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

All the progress IRC made on individual Grand Bargain work streams in 2019 was geared towards ensuring lasting outcomes for our clients. We are particularly encouraged by progress made on transparency, cash and reduced management costs, where IRC again played a leading role in the humanitarian sector. Our achievements on cash continued to meet our expectations, and created productive synergies with other work streams through the use of SCAN in new collaborative cash delivery collaborations and comparative cost-efficiency analysis of cash programmes across agencies.

In 2019 IRC also laid the groundwork for its evidence-based research work on enhancing quality funding. IRC believes a sharper focus on cascading multi-year, flexible funding to frontline implementers is an essential step to accelerate aid reform and adequately support the achievement of lasting outcomes for our target populations.

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

In 2019, the IRC launched its first "[Gender Action Plan](#)" (GAP) with the goal that by 2022, worldwide IRC has a gender balanced workforce with dynamic, varied and innovative perspectives that drive the effectiveness and success of the organization. The GAP measures progress towards this goal against 16 indicators geared towards 3 outcomes; 1) attraction & promotion of female staff, 2) consistent staff attitude that uphold gender equality, and 3) organizational culture where women are safe & respected.

The GAP supports IRC’s efforts to take a feminist approach to humanitarian response which looks beyond gender parity to power, and the multitude of ways power is stripped from individuals due to their gender, as well as other intersecting factors such as displacement, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, race, or religion. While taken through many projects at the IRC, this approach was first discussed publicly in a [June 2019 speech](#) by IRC President David Miliband.

To further our feminist approach and enhance our ability to contribute to Grand Bargain efforts towards localization, IRC has continued to engage in the Listen Up and Building Local Thinking Global projects, both supported by the US State Department Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, as reported in 2019. Additionally, the Women’s Protection and Empowerment team has created the position of a Senior Technical Advisor for Participation and Women’s Movement Building, which will provide technical assistance to both of these projects, while also evaluating ways the IRC can better partner with and support local women-focused and women-led organizations.

The IRC was a founding member of the Feminist Humanitarian Network (FHN), an international network of women leaders committed to a transformed humanitarian system that promotes a feminist humanitarian agenda. The FHN takes seriously the need to be driven by NGOs, not international NGOs, and has a strict membership policy that allows no more than 30% of membership to be from INGOs.

The IRC – both independently and with partners - also published multiple reports on the need to centre women and girls across programming and increase funding to these programmes. These reports highlight the need to increase funding and attention to GBV prevention and response, working with local women-led and women-focused organizations, and ensuring economic empowerment is taken into account in humanitarian contexts:

- [Safety First](#) – Time to Deliver on Commitments to Women and Girls in Crisis (supported by IrishAid)
- [Where’s the Money?](#) How the Humanitarian System is Failing to Fund an End of Violence Against Women and Girls (with VOICE)

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

- [Choices, Chance and Safety in Crisis](#): A Model for Women’s Economic Empowerment
- [Rescue Works: Unlocking Refugee Women’s Potential](#) (with Georgetown Global Women’s Institute)

Question 4: 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.

Bridging the humanitarian-development divide is central to the IRC’s advocacy and programming efforts. IRC is an outcomes-oriented humanitarian organization, meaning we develop our programming around a theory of change – and seek to measure the impact of our programs – towards outcomes in peoples’ lives (improved learning, income and assets, reduced mortality rates, etc.). These outcomes are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Measuring our progress based on outcomes, rather than inputs, outputs or activities, has supported our advocacy with bilateral donors and UN agencies around increasing multiyear, flexible financing. Furthermore, our orientation around outcomes has provided the foundation for our advocacy around inclusion of refugees in country SDG plans and Voluntary National Reviews reports. In 2019, we produced the report *Missing Persons*, which specifically illustrates how refugees are left out and left behind in the SDGs.

At the country level, we continued to engage with development partners, such as the World Bank to create opportunities for bilateral information sharing, including about needs, protection concerns and “what works” when it comes to programming for the vulnerable populations that IRC works with. We also developed partnerships with the private sector, collaborating on efforts to improve refugees’ opportunities for training and employment with the ultimate goal of enabling refugees’ to become self-reliant and become a net asset to local economies—ultimately supporting longer term, sustainable development. Finally, in 2019 we stepped up our engagement on the triple nexus by contributing to stronger coordination efforts and learning from IRC’s conflict prevention and peacebuilding programme in DRC and Somalia, funded by SIDA.