

**Grand Bargain in 2019:
Annual Self Report – Narrative Summary**

Name of Institution: Development Cooperation and Africa Division (DACD), Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ireland

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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?

In 2019 Ireland continued to enhance the *quality of its funding* – providing substantial and increasing amounts of multi-annual funding and unearmarked/softly earmarked to its partners. 2018 data shows 46% of total humanitarian spend was multi-annual, up from 42% in 2017. Multi-year funding partnerships continued with many partners, including NGOs and key UN agencies. New multi-annual partnerships took effect for funding to IRC, ICRC and the CERF.

Ireland's unearmarked funding remained significant, at 55% of total humanitarian spend. With the inclusion of softly earmarked funding (to country level), this rose to 76%. Ireland's funding to partners is both highly predictable and timely – in 2019 over 90% of funding was released in the first half of the year.

Ireland continued to increase and refine its *NGO funding mechanisms* in 2019, in line with Grand Bargain (GB) commitments. Funding to the two main funding schemes – the Humanitarian Programme Plan (HPP) and the Emergency Response Funding Scheme (ERFS) was increased. The HPP, which funds NGOs for programmatic responses in humanitarian contexts, moved from a 2-year cycle to a 3-year cycle, bringing it into line with our development funding in fragile contexts. Plans are ongoing to increase to a 5-year duration from 2022. This type of funding has helped Ireland's NGO partners to take a more participatory approach that is driven by community-identified needs rather than donor reporting cycles. It also encourages partners to develop more strategic partnerships with local and national NGOs in fragile contexts.

ERFS is a mechanism which pre-positions funding with NGOs, and allows them to seek rapid approval for projects (within 48 hours) to address a newly emerging crisis or a sudden deterioration in an existing crisis. An external review of the ERFS mechanism in 2019 found that the model promoted timely work on preparedness and enabled fast and effective humanitarian responses, often in less visible crisis. It has also been particularly effective in ensuring that often neglected areas, such as GBV, are incorporated into the initial stages of an emergency response. In 2019 Ireland increased ERFS funding by 15% and has reformed the management processes to further strengthen its speed and utility.

As Chair of the OCHA Donor Support Group (ODSG), Ireland championed the improvement of *joint and impartial needs assessments*. Working with OCHA and in close collaboration with the Co-Chairs of the GB workstream on needs assessments (ECHO and DfID), Ireland ensured this issue was high on the agenda. Ireland initiated briefings and technical meetings – bringing 29 ODSG members on, resulting in a clear set of donor agendas to advance this important issue.

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

The results described above are very much in line with the commitments reflected in Ireland's new Policy for International Development, 'A Better World' that was

launched in 2019. The Policy underscores Ireland's commitment to respond to humanitarian crises in accordance with humanitarian principles, whilst also strengthening our ongoing engagement in fragile contexts and protracted crises.

Our commitment to multi-annual and un-earmarked funding informs and shapes Ireland's strong partnership approach. This approach allows our partners to allocate resources where need is greatest and as effectively as possible. It implies strong and strategic partnerships with our key partners, with important dialogue on shared priorities such as gender and GBV, inclusion and Accountability to Affected Populations.

Ireland's Chairing of the ODSG, and its championing of joint and impartial needs assessments, provides an example of how we use humanitarian leadership roles to promote Grand Bargain commitments within the broader humanitarian community. In its current Co-Chair role of the ICRC, Ireland is promoting the mainstreaming of GBV prevention and response and effective engagement by humanitarian actors in protracted crises.

Ireland's NGO humanitarian funding mechanisms have provided important learning and good practice on our engagement in fragile contexts. We are in the planning stage of the of our 2022-27 humanitarian and development NGO funding, and as part of this we are seeking better alignment between development and humanitarian funding streams for 2021-2025. More broadly, this has advanced thinking around how we work effectively across the nexus and engendered a more coherent approach across DCAD and the broader Department.

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?

In 2019 two significant policy documents set out Ireland's commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment – (i) 'A Better World'; and (ii) Ireland's third National Action Plan (NAP) for Women, Peace and Security. 'A Better World' identifies gender equality as a key strategy for directing our development cooperation to the furthest behind first. The NAP builds on Ireland's strong track record as an influential actor in the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. It commits Ireland to prioritise gender in all aspects of our engagement in conflict affected and fragile contexts, to champion women's rights to equal participation and to promote their important role as leaders in peacebuilding. We also commit to increasing our engagement with and funding for women centred organisations and movements.

In 2019 Ireland entered into a new three-year partnership with International Rescue Committee (IRC) – providing €4.5 million for GBV programming in Somalia, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Kenya and Cameroon. This move to longer term funding supports a much more strategic approach to addressing GBV – enabling IRC to deliver life-saving services for women and girls survivors of GBV whilst also

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

supporting longer term initiatives that promote gender equality and women's empowerment. The partnership with IRC contains a specific outcome on building and improving capacity of local NGOs – ongoing support and mentoring improves the quality of service provision and promotes sustainable approaches for durable solutions. It also supports GBV Policy & Advocacy work across the global humanitarian system.

Ireland's work on improving joint and impartial needs assessments had a strong gender focus. This was part of broader efforts to enhance the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC). The HPC now has a much stronger focus on specific challenges faced by women and girls and the needs analysis includes a stronger gender analysis - an essential first building block of a gender-sensitive humanitarian response.

Under Ireland's co-chairing of the ICRC's Donor Support Group, we have made gender in humanitarian action one of the two key policy themes. As part of this, we convened a policy forum in Geneva, looking at prevention of GBV, and putting women and girls at the heart of humanitarian programming. We will also specifically focus on gender during the two donor field missions to South Sudan and Israel/Palestine.

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.

Ireland's institutional approach to the humanitarian-development-peace nexus is supported by a common policy framework across government. Ireland's development policy – A Better World – incorporates all elements of the nexus. The themes emerging from Ireland's foreign policy and international development policy – such as human rights, gender equality, climate action, governance and reducing humanitarian need – span the nexus conceptually. All humanitarian and development funding in Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is managed through a single management structure. Working across the nexus is an approach that helps Ireland to respond to 'human needs', rather than 'humanitarian' or 'development' needs. Our approach is a practical one, and informed and shaped by Ireland's strong track record of resilience programming at country level and our commitment to peacebuilding. It reinforces our strong commitment to engaging in fragile contexts and our reputation for sustained and predictable support.

Working across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus is therefore Ireland's starting point – and the implementation of many of the Grand Bargain commitments has helped Ireland to strengthen its efficiency and effectiveness in such contexts. Over the course of 2019, the provision of quality funding and improving joint and impartial needs assessments have been of particular relevance. The localisation agenda, cash based programming and the participation revolution are also approaches that have helped to strengthen Ireland's institutional approach to the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.