

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

**Name of Institution: Norwegian Refugee Council**

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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?**

NRC belief in the relevance and potential of the Grand Bargain resulted in the allocation of resources across multiple workstreams. Despite much progress, donor conditions continue to increase, and efficiency gains linked to better risk management and sharing are not yet fully exploited. We strongly encourage further engagement at political level to create the conditions for this change to happen.

**1. Launch of the Money Where it Counts Protocol**

Starting in 2015, the analysis undertaken by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and the Boston Consulting Group on the impact of the myriad of cost classification systems in use thoroughly confirmed what practitioners in the sector knew – that compliance with and management of such conditions cost the sector a significant amount of resources, curtailing those available for humanitarian action.

The purpose of the Money Where It Counts initiative is to identify and introduce sector-wide improvements and harmonisation in cost classification and charging, as well as financial budgeting and reporting, in order to return these resources to direct humanitarian action.

The initiative responds to clear commitments made by signatories within the Grand Bargain agreement to increase transparency, reduce management costs, and harmonise reporting. It is also included in the workplan of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Humanitarian Financing Results Group (HFRG) for 2019-2020.

After the successful partnership with the Boston Consulting Group, in September 2018 NRC secured a strategic agreement with Humentum. As a result of a year-long collaboration, the 'Protocol' was created. The protocol is an intensely practical solution that was effectively co-created by a group of nine INGOs which will enable harmonisation of cost classification and project financial reporting across the sector.

The protocol was formally presented at an ECHO-hosted event in Brussels on 25 September 2019 to donors, UN Agencies, and NGOs. Practical arrangements for piloting the initiative are undergoing.

**2. Co-convening of the quality funding workstream**

In 2019, NRC became a co-convenor of the clustered quality funding workstream. In this role, NRC commissioned the drafting of a think piece to advance the quality

funding agenda, contributed to the organisation of a highly attended acceleration workshop and undertook a field research jointly with Development Initiatives on the impact of multi-year funding in Lebanon and Jordan, with the objective of refining and further developing the evidence base of the benefits of multi-year funding.

NRC is also leading the work to develop a collection of best practices on quality funding as a way to increase quality funding beyond the Grand Bargain commitments. This work is expected to be completed in June 2020.

### **3. Engagement in Cash and Voucher Assistance across the board**

NRC strives to use cash and voucher assistance (CVA) well, and every time they are the most appropriate way to support the people we serve. Following several years of rapid growth, NRC has achieved considerable scale in the value of CVA disbursed, and is now mainly focussed on strengthening appropriateness and effectiveness. NRC programme teams are not just improving existing implementations but extending the range of approaches to the use of cash in programming.

We are positioned to provide tailored services to improve the impact of other actors' multipurpose cash, lead the CAMEALEON monitoring consortium in Lebanon, and invest in the CCD collaboration network - its way of working has been rolled out in 5 countries.

CVA experts continue to be deployed through CashCap, supporting evolution of delivery models. CashCap deployed experts in 20 countries in 2019.

### **4. Hosting of the Grand Bargain Secretariat**

NRC expert roster NORCAP continues to support to the Grand Bargain through the provision of experts to the Secretariat. An additional resource to increase communication was provided in 2019 (and 2020).

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

#### **1. Launch of the Money Where it Counts Protocol**

Following the launch of the protocol, NRC developed a concept note for its piloting and initiated negotiations with donors to engage in it. While the response from NGOs has been overwhelmingly positive, donors (incl. UN Agencies acting as such) expressed interest but fell short of committing to a pilot (as of Dec 2019). We need donors and UN agencies to join!

The benefits of a harmonised financial reporting and cost classification system have been fully explored by the Boston Consulting Group, but other aspects would greatly benefit from the implementation of this initiative, such as the building of trust among different constituencies and a more equal sharing of risks.

The Grand Bargain Eminent Person encouraged signatories to participate in the Money Where it Counts initiative as it holds potential for real transformative change.

## **2. Co-convening of the quality funding workstream**

The research and think piece provided instrumental elements to advance the agenda on quality funding. The main outcome from the workshop held with participation from most of the GB signatories is the agreement on practical strategies to move forward the agenda on quality funding.

As a workstream co-convenor, NRC made great efforts in raising the issue of quality funding at the political level. NRC continued to maintain an active dialogue with UN agencies, in particular UNHCR, to raise the profile and importance of quality funding and stimulating the introduction of tools for cascading down quality funding. As a result of these efforts, UNHCR introduced multi-year Project Partnership Agreements in 2019.

## **3. Engagement in Cash and Voucher Assistance across the board**

The volume of CVA disbursed by NRC has been growing at an average rate of 35% per year in recent years.

NRC's new Companion Programming model is due for trial in 2020. CashCap experts supported agencies in the routine consideration of CVA. Through learning from the 5 pilots, the CCD has developed initial collaboration standards and guidance that will be further tested, improved and contextualized in 2020.

Lastly, benchmark data on modality comparison to be available after first full year of collection, early 2021.

**Question 3: How has your institution contributed to the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment<sup>1</sup> 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.

As an organization working in countries of conflict, we are committed to achieving gender equality in all aspects of humanitarian assistance.

Our Programme Policy states that we will integrate a gender perspective into all programmes. This entails recognising and addressing the specific roles, needs, risks, vulnerabilities, capacities and opportunities that women, men, girls and boys face in displacement situations.

While all conflict-affected populations are at risk, displaced women and girls are often exposed to greater risk and may have additional protection and assistance

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

needs. We aim to identify these needs and address them through its programmes and advocacy activities.

Also through our Gender Policy we are committed to mainstreaming gender into projects, ensuring that NRC's assistance is based on a gender analysis of contexts, needs and priorities of people affected by crisis.

The gender policy recognizes that NRC's beneficiaries are a diverse group of people who have been affected differently by crisis and therefore have different exposure to risks, different needs and different priorities.

**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.

Becoming a champion for durable solutions is one of the ambitions of NRC current strategic period. In this framework new strategic partnerships are explored and developed with new actors including private sector. Further, to stimulate reflections at policy level, NRC published a study together with FAO and UNDP analysing gaps and opportunities in financing the nexus from a field perspective. Findings and recommendations are being discussed in the within the IASC and other relevant platforms at global and country level. Enhanced quality funding and increased capacity at operational level to plan and implement multi-year strategies and plans are instrumental to the achievement of our durable solution ambition hence part of NRC priorities.