

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

Name of Institution: Sweden

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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?

Sweden is an active and devoted signatory to the Grand Bargain. During the period October 2018-October 2019, Sweden was a member of the Facilitation Group. This increased the overall focus on the agenda and gave Sweden a platform to actively engage with other signatories to the Grand Bargain in and outside of the FG. Sweden is one of the co-convenors of WS 7+8 on flexible funding, which demonstrates a strong commitment to that part of the agenda. A total of 42 percent of the Swedish humanitarian assistance for 2019 was multi-year funding, 45 percent was unearmarked funding and 14 percent was softly earmarked funding.

The OECD-DAC peer review from 2019 concluded that *“Sweden is an effective and principled humanitarian donor. Sweden has a strong humanitarian tradition and actively works to drive a more efficient and co-ordinated humanitarian system at the global level. Its policies and strategies are aligned to the Grand Bargain and other international humanitarian commitments. Sweden has strengthened the quality of its partnerships with the humanitarian community, notably providing much-needed, long-term predictability for its partners engaged in protracted crises. A needs-based allocation model allows Sida (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) to also engage in forgotten crises where it has no specific political or development interests.”*

The commitments made under the Grand Bargain agenda are an integral and explicit part of the Swedish strategy on humanitarian assistance, 2017-2020. In 2020, a new strategy will be developed. Sweden provides substantial amounts of quality funding, notably through multi-year unearmarked core funding to humanitarian actors. In 2018, Sweden entered into four-year strategic partnerships with the CERF, WFP, UNHCR and UNRWA . Hence, Sweden was able to secure predictable core funding to these organisations for the period of 2018-2021. The core support provided by the MFA to the humanitarian actors in the UN system contributes to increased efficiency and enhanced quality in the humanitarian system.

Sweden would also like to highlight other efforts made for increased flexibility for partners as some of the data related to earmarking does not catch all the flexible aspects of Sida’s approach.

- Sida has entered multi-year agreements with approximately 20 “strategic humanitarian partners” enabling partnership and predictability despite funding on an annual basis as the major rule. The partnership is based on mutual trust and entails a high degree of autonomy and flexibility for partners over the funding that Sida provides. In this way, Sida supports partners to be flexible and adaptive to new or escalating humanitarian needs, despite the fact that much of Sida's humanitarian funding is earmarked for specific projects.

- Sida provides unallocated funding to the great majority of its multilateral strategic partners. The unallocated funds enable lifesaving responses worldwide within 24 hours (approval from Sida desk officer). This is a flexible response that enables multilateral partners to act swiftly in sudden and deteriorating crises. For example, this enabled UNICEF to respond immediately following the cyclone Idai in Zimbabwe and Mozambique.
- Sida's INGO strategic partners have access to a Rapid Response Mechanism to which funds are disbursed at the start of the calendar year and which can be used by the INGO partner through a quick application process and approval by Sida's staff member within 24 hours (i.e. no management decision necessary)
- Sida's Programme Based Approach (PBA) is provided to three INGO strategic partners, which gives these organisations flexibility and capacity to quickly adapt to new or escalating humanitarian needs. This funding is labelled as earmarked but entails a large portion of freedom for Sida's partners. Partners have reported that the PBA has enabled them to respond flexibly to new or changing needs.

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

The essence of the Grand Bargain commitments is part of Sweden's humanitarian priorities since the adoption of the principles on Good Humanitarian donorship (2003). Two out of four objectives in the Swedish strategy for humanitarian assistance, 2017-2020, directly corresponds to the commitments of the Grand Bargain; *'Increased influence for people affected by crises'* and *'Greater capacity and efficiency in the humanitarian system'*. Furthermore, the Grand Bargain is explicitly mentioned in the strategy as the important reform framework governing Sida operations.

The Grand Bargain commitments also fit well into the transition that Sida is going through agency-wise. The need to create conditions for more efficiency and the focus on affected populations are integral parts of Sida's ambition to support partners in adapting to changes in the contexts and being able to customise its work accordingly to achieve results for people in need. These ambitions are included explicitly in Sida's strategic operational plan since 2018. The Grand Bargain commitments are well in line with the long-term institutional change in both policy and practice, which Sida is aiming for as a donor.

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).

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

Sweden has continued to raise the importance of gender mainstreaming in dialogues with agencies and organisations for which we grant core contributions. Sweden has also highlighted the need for gender mainstreaming in policy documents, in country strategies and at donor conferences.

Sweden has contributed to the impact of the Call to Action on Protection of Gender Based Violence. An example of this has been our support to the Women's Refugee Commission's work on operationalising the Call to Action Roadmap i.a. through technical assistance to improve integration cash and voucher support as a tool within existing case management for gender-based violence.

Sweden also contributes to advocacy on a range of gender-related issues through outreach activities within the framework of Sweden's Feminist Foreign Policy.

Sida has conducted a mapping of partners and their policies and practises on gender mainstreaming, which has strengthened Sida's dialogue with partners on i.a. better needs assessments and reporting requirements. In Sida's current NGO-guidelines on humanitarian assistance, it is mandatory for partners to use the IASC Gender and Age Marker and Sida is ensuring that partners are complying with this requirement. Sida reviews partners' proposals and reports to assess the integration of gender equality as a standard procedure.

Sida notes a strong interest among partners to better understand the gender dimensions of humanitarian assistance and to emphasise this more strongly in the response. However, partners tend to rely too much on gender focal points and there is thus a need for stronger accountability at management level and throughout the organisations. Another weakness is the fact that too few women work in the field and that field offices tend to have limited gender mainstreaming capacity. It is important to increase the number of women in the field to ensure access to all affected populations.

Sida also contributes to GENCAP and thus improving the UNCT's capacity to conduct humanitarian needs overviews / assessment with a strong gender analysis. Within the work on Nexus, Sida has integrated as a priority to support local women's groups as they can be strong contributors to strengthening resilience, social cohesion and local rehabilitation. Sida has for example engaged in the gender aspects of resilience programmes in Yemen. During 2019, Sida has also conducted various workshops together with partners to increase the internal capacity to assess and review proposals to strengthen gender equality.

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.

The humanitarian-development nexus is a priority within Sweden's international development cooperation as well as the humanitarian assistance.

The OECD-DAC peer review concluded that “Sweden should now systematically apply its joined-up approach to addressing development, humanitarian and peace needs in all its fragile partner countries.”²

Over the years Sida has developed approaches to better coordinate humanitarian efforts and development cooperation. The conflict perspective is for example mandatory to integrate in both. In Sida’s strategic plan for 2019-2020, better coordination between humanitarian, development and peace is an explicit priority. A working group tasked to develop a guidance note (based on operational lessons and approaches) on how Sida can work on the triple nexus has been established and Sida has recruited staff, placed in in eight embassies around the world, to specifically work on nexus related issues .

Sida’s humanitarian unit works in close cooperation with development cooperation colleagues to identify synergies between needs assessments and programming. Joint analysis is taking place in the humanitarian unit’s annual Humanitarian Crisis Analysis (HCA) as well as through the Multi-Dimensional Poverty Analysis (MDPA) underpinning Sida’s regional and development strategies.

There are numerous good examples of projects that include both humanitarian and development aspects and actors, where humanitarian needs have been met with long-term development solutions taken into account. Other examples have resulted in an effective division of labour between development and humanitarian actors; when the humanitarian support is phased out, the development cooperation “takes over” with another set of activities to achieve change for an exposed population. The key conclusions from a Development Initiative report on Sweden and triple nexus (October 2019) are:

1. Top-level policy sets a solid foundation – now operational guidance needs to be built.
2. Shared analysis is undertaken - now there is a need to become synchronised and default.
3. Practice is ahead of policy – it now needs to be shared and understood.
4. Partners have flexible support –now there is a need to co-develop explicit expectations.
5. Leadership and investment in expertise is clear – know-how and communication also need to be mainstreamed.³

² <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/9f83244b-en/1/2/1/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/9f83244b-en&csp=1631568e088e7284b7d5562d1f35cb52&itemIGO=oecd&itemContentType=book>

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<https://www.devinit.org/publications/donors-triple-nexus-lessons-sweden/?nav=more-about>