

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

**Name of Institution:**

**Humanitarian Aid and SHA  
Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA  
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)**

**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?**

Three key highlights relating to the Grand Bargain in 2019 concern cash and voucher assistance, localisation and quality funding.

**Quality funding**

- **Multi-year funding provided by SHA steadily increases.** From 2018 to 2019 humanitarian funds allocated on a multi-year basis augmented from 22% to 27%. This reflects an increase 5% over the last year, and an increase of 8% since the signature of the Grand Bargain in 2016. In 2019, Switzerland, for instance, newly concluded a multi-year funding agreement with UNHCR for the 2019 - 2022 period.
- **Flexible funding target exceeded again:** As for flexible funding, 37% of SHA funding continues to be unearmarked or softly earmarked, thereby exceeding the Grand Bargain's target of 30% for the fourth year in a row.

**Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA):** Switzerland was strongly engaged in advancing the use and coordination of CVA, in particular through:

- **Strategic secondments:** Switzerland seconded 21 experts to organisations like WFP, UNHCR, UNICEF, CALP, IFRC and ICRC. The secondees supported efforts to strengthen operational capacities. Increasingly Switzerland also provided so-called "mixed profiles" to partner organisations. "Mixed profiles" are cash experts with a strong expertise in another area such as protection or wash, who have an easier access to thematic units within organisations and can thus help overcome barriers that might still exist.
- **Common Donor approach, policy dialogue and coordination:** Switzerland hosted a dialogue of the Global Donor Forum with representatives from WFP, UNHCR, UNICEF and OCHA in Geneva to discuss the UN Common Cash System. Representatives from IFRC, ICRC and the NGO community were also invited. The different stakeholders appreciated the open and constructive dialogue. They agreed that the exchanges should continue at global and country level.
- **Support provided to the Cluster cash working groups:** Switzerland provided financial support to the cash working groups of the respective clusters. The idea is to overcome sector-specific barriers to successfully increase the use of CVA.
- **Standard-setting and global partnership:** Switzerland continued to provide financial contributions and expertise to the Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP). A Swiss cash expert was seconded to CaLP in Geneva to advance CaLP's policy and advocacy work, and technical support to humanitarian clusters.
- **Direct implementation:** In response to the earthquake in Albania, Switzerland implemented an emergency cash pilot project and promoted the use of CVA to successfully address immediate needs of people affected by the earthquake. Switzerland convened the actors interested in CVA and laid the ground for the creation of the humanitarian cash transfers working group in Albania.
- **Localisation:** Switzerland accepted to co-lead the sub-workstream cash and local partnership. It is an attempt to seek synergies between two important Grand Bargain topics (localization and CVA). The subwork stream is co-led by Philippine NGO PDRRN, Oxfam International and Switzerland.

**Localisation:** Switzerland continued to build on its existing good practices by applying the "as-local-as-possible" principle at various levels.

- **Pilots by country offices:** Localization is increasingly part of the discourse, including in some country offices. In Nigeria for instance, Switzerland is engaged in a pilot project to strengthen the institutional capacity, strategies and leadership of national and local responders. The project is implemented by the Nigerian INGO Forum in close collaboration with Switzerland and relevant local and national actors. It aims to strengthen strategic and institutional expertise, leadership and funding skills, and set up of 10-12 national and local humanitarian responders through mentoring and twinning approaches. A further goal is to promote and foster partnership, exchange and cooperation on humanitarian affairs among local and national NGOs, international organizations and the private sector and foundations.
- **Normative changes:** The new SDC guidance for engagement with Swiss NGOs, published in 2019, defines "Strengthening civil society in developing and transition countries as well as in humanitarian crises" as one of two key measures to achieve its overall common goal. This measure will be considered in the new phase of Swiss NGO's international programmes 2021-2024.
- **Funding on an upward trend:** SDC/HA's direct funding to local and national actors continues on its upward trend. Together with funding through country-based pooled funds, SDC/HA's direct funding to local and national actors amounted to 9% in 2019. However, as data systems are yet unable to track funds provided through one single intermediary, the real amount provided to local and national actors "as directly as possible" is higher.
- **Active Co-Convenership of Workstream 2:** As Co-Conveners of the Localization Workstream, Switzerland, together with IFRC, continued to actively promote the localization agenda both at HQ and in the field. A demonstrator country missions to Nigeria took place, followed by a series of Regional Conferences in Africa (Ethiopia), the Middle East (Jordan) and the Asia Pacific Region (Indonesia). These regional dialogues allowed discussing opportunities and challenges in the respective regions. A global Conference in Brussels, hosted by DG ECHO and co-organised by Switzerland and IFRC, served to take stock and sketch out next steps for the workstream.

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

**Enhanced quality funding:** Progress in humanitarian multi-year planning and funding provides further predictability to Switzerland's partner organisations, thereby facilitating strategic dialogue and contributing to the reduction of management. Similarly, unearmarked funding is a key enabler for flexibility of partners, both to react to new emergencies and to address needs in under-funded contexts.

**Cash:** The direct implementation in Albania will contribute to strengthen Switzerland's capacity in using CVA in rapid and onset emergencies. Internal advocacy and capacity building (trainings) contributed to raise the institutional awareness and contributed to the successful implementation in Albania.

The planning phase for the new SDC CVA operational concept (2021 – 2024) has started. Switzerland's policy work, its direct implementation as well as feedback from secondees will help inform the strategic direction of the new concept.

**Localisation:** Building on already localization-friendly practices, further mainstreaming of the localization agenda is taking place. The normative and operational discourse starts to reflect localization commitments.

**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.

Strengthening Gender equality and the rights of women and girls is a common strategic objective of Switzerland’s Dispatch for International Cooperation 2017-2020. It therefore applies to all international cooperation efforts, including the implementation of the Grand Bargain. As such, gender equality can be considered **a nexus theme**.

As an example, Switzerland assumes an active role in the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies, advocating **for quality funding** to connect the fight against GBV with efforts to promote gender equality in emergency interventions. Switzerland has increased its funding for GBV projects and for the strengthening of the global coordination to fight GBV.

Through the Geneva-based Cash-Working Group, Switzerland supported efforts to ensure better synergy, development and cross-fertilization of **gender within the cash modality**. As for **localisation**, Switzerland attached great importance to reflecting gender considerations in the workstream’s ongoing efforts. Switzerland also contributed funding and experts to the GBV Area of Responsibility and particularly the Regional Emergency GBV Advisors, which build local capacity for GBV prevention and response, including for local actors. OCHA’s ProCap/GenCap initiative was supported.

**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.

Switzerland has a strong humanitarian tradition, blending humanitarian, development and policy efforts to prevent and manage fragility. In 2019, an independent evaluation of the linkage of Humanitarian Aid and Development Cooperation at SDC was completed, laying the basis for further efforts to institutionalize nexus efforts. Among the new measures subsequently adopted are, for instance, common committees of humanitarian and development staff who jointly decide over the approval of projects (“operational committees”). Another key measure is that, where applicable, common goals for country and regional programmes will be formulated. SDC’s partners will continuously be encouraged to use innovative approaches in combining different instruments of international cooperation.

The nexus will remain a priority for SDC in the coming years. It applies to international cooperation efforts in a crosscutting manner, including the implementation of the Grand Bargain commitments.

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