

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

Name of Institution: UNICEF

Point of Contact (please provide a name, title and email to enable the consultants to contact you for an interview):

Marilena Viviani, Senior Advisor, mviviani@unicef.org

Date of Submission: 14 February 2020

Revised submission: 19th March 2020

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?

As per preliminary data, UNICEF reported a decrease of Other Resources-Emergency (OR-E) funds received in 2019 (12 M USD less than 2018) and a decrease of multi-year financing.¹ Despite the above challenge, UNICEF contributed to stronger engagement towards Grand Bargain's commitments both at systemic and strategic level. We were able to improve our capacity in localization, to increase the number of beneficiaries of Humanitarian Cash Transfer as well as the number of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the UN Partner Portal, which was more broadly rolled out, up from 3 countries last year. We also transferred 27M USD more funds this year than last year to national and local partners. CSOs continued to account for around 50% of the total cash transfers made to all IPs from UNICEF's OR-E funds. A slightly larger percentage of the multi-year funds received by UNICEF and subsequently transferred to downstream partners in 2019 were for partners' multi-year humanitarian interventions (50% compared to 47% in 2018). We were also able to improve our work on transparency, reporting and quality funding. As part of the commitment to identify institutional constraints and possible opportunities related to tracking and passing on quality funding to implementing partners, UNICEF as a co-convenor of the WS 7-8 is undertaking a scoping exercise, and will engage with other key humanitarian actors and partners to obtain more data and understanding of the bottlenecks to cascade down the quality funding. Interesting progress was made in innovative financing, contributing to the financing of Linking Humanitarian-Development Programming.

At the organizational level, we were able to mainstream the Grand Bargain commitments in the review or consolidation of UNICEF's policies and strategies (Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, Mid-Term Review of the Strategic Plan, Gender Action Plans, etc). Furthermore, UNICEF was a member of the Grand Bargain Facilitation Group until October 2019, and a co-convenor for the WS 7-8 on Quality Funding, with Canada, Sweden, ICRC.

In particular, the following initiatives and achievements are highlighted in the 2019 report:

- In harmonizing engagement with partners, UNHCR, WFP, and UNICEF progressively rolled out UN Partner Portal (www.unpartnerportal.org). To date, 9,610 civil society organizations have self-registered on the Portal, and a CSO profile verified by one UN agency is accorded the same status by other UN agencies.
- UNICEF transferred 34% (USD 680 million) of OR-E funding to local and national responders, out of which USD 349 M was transferred to government responders and USD 331 M to national NGOs and community-based organizations. As in previous years, UNICEF's partners submitted activity-level reporting on expenditure in accordance with their own financial systems, as per the harmonized inter-agency HACT framework. In 2019, UNICEF completed piloting of the Partner Reporting Portal (www.partnerreportingportal.org), an innovative online platform for CSOs to submit quarterly progress reports and humanitarian reports. The Portal is now ready for progressive rollout in 2020 and will facilitate/expedite narrative reporting.
- In advancing predictable longer-term programming at the country level, in 20 out of 23 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) countries, UNICEF actively engaged cluster coordinators and Country Office (CO) staff in joint, inter-agency needs assessments and 18 COs contributed to multi-year humanitarian response (increase since 2018, with 16 Countries).
- The use of Humanitarian Cash Transfers (HCT) was scaled up in 30 countries, from 26 countries last year, reaching 2.8 million households (they were 2.4 million last year),

¹ Decrease MY funds: from 553 M USD in 2018 to 502 M USD in 2019, 24,7.1% of total OR-E funds.

covering 8.5 million children (they were 7 million last year), delivering 241 million USD (compared to 184 million last year) with 96% (232 million USD) through cash transfers and 4% (9 million USD) as vouchers. Of all households reached, 77% were reached with UNICEF funded cash programs delivered through parallel systems while 13% was delivered through existing national social protection systems. The remaining 10% was reached through technical assistance to governments.

- UNICEF provided dedicated resources to the OCHA-led inter-agency development of a comprehensive, cross-sectoral methodology for joint analysis of needs (JIAF) as a single framework for evaluating quality of multi-sectoral needs assessments and analysis. We also continue to play an active role in the refinement of the draft joint analysis framework (JIAF) which was partially rolled out in 2019. In 2020, further support will be provided to refine the framework and develop country level guidance.

In all above initiatives, high transparency standards, increasing efficiency and improving results reporting were critical components of UNICEF humanitarian action. Furthermore, we took steps to enhance the visibility of contributors to UNICEF Regular Resources and humanitarian thematic funding, to demonstrate the value of such funding by enhancing our donor profile pages and providing guidance to country offices. In the Humanitarian Annual Results Report, for the first time UNICEF reported on all humanitarian indicators in the UNICEF Strategic Plan and country-level reporting on the thematic humanitarian funding allocations was improved. UNICEF is also working toward publishing real-time information on humanitarian allocations and expenditures on the on-line public portal. UNICEF also created a new grant tagging in its financial system to facilitate better tracking and reporting of humanitarian funding regardless whether it is regular resources, emergency or development resources provided by donors. Lastly, with the aim of diversifying its resource mobilization, UNICEF recently launched a new partnership arrangement with KOIS Invest to pursue blended financing of WASH infrastructure projects in fragile contexts. Under this arrangement, UNICEF and KOIS will work together to pursue a feasibility study for a global financing facility for durable WASH interventions – leveraging both donor funds and impact investors to support sustainable projects linking humanitarian-development programming.

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

The outcomes from advancing Grand Bargain commitments have significantly contributed to UNICEF strategic processes such as the review of Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (reflecting UNICEF relevant commitments to the Grand Bargain), and will also inform priorities for acceleration measures in the Mid-term Review of the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018-2021. Building on the work done to achieve the commitments of the Grand Bargain in improving internal and external systems and partnerships, we are strategically engaging with several stakeholders – governments, private sector, civil society – to diversify its partnerships and funding and to find innovative ways to respond to humanitarian needs.

UNICEF Localization agenda aims to improve cost effectiveness through strengthening government and local actors to prepare and facilitate faster, more cost-effective and better-quality responses to humanitarian crises, helping UNICEF deliver on its Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCC's) and achieve results for children. Preparedness includes long and short-term actions to build the capacities of national and local governments, CSOs, UNICEF and the inter-agency system. UNICEF cash transfer programmes support families to gain access to goods and services in a dignified manner and strengthen national social protection systems improving delivery of essential services to the most disadvantaged children. This includes coordination and rapid scale up of life-saving and protection services in humanitarian situations and strengthening social protection systems to be ready to scale up cash transfers in emergencies.

Question 3: How has your institution contributed to the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment in humanitarian settings through its implementation of the Grand Bargain? What results/outcomes have been achieved in this regard?

UNICEF's advancement of gender equality, girls and women empowerment is guided by the UNICEF Gender Action Plan (GAP) 2018-2021, closely aligned with UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, the UNICEF Gender Policy 2010, UNICEF Gender in Humanitarian Action Policy 2008, and the IASC policy on Gender Equality and Women and Girls Empowerment in humanitarian action (2017). UNICEF in 2019 undertook an evaluation of its GAPs from 2014 to 2019 and noted -among other findings- that expenditure on gender-related issues has increased towards the 15 per cent target but that these plans need to be upscaled. UNICEF was able to invest portions of Regular Resources to advancement of gender issues and spent 14.1 % (USD 5,633,302,830) compared to 14.5% (USD 5,394,483,115) of its financial resources on transformative gender targets in line with its Gender Action Plan.

The expenditure on GBViE was 3.7% (USD 751,978, 187) of the total allocation to gender programming. As part of expanding the availability of guidance on the use of Humanitarian Cash Transfer for Child Protection outcomes, UNICEF developed specific guidance on GBV risk mitigation measures for humanitarian cash transfer programming. Gender experts were deployed to several locations, in partnership with UNFPA and GBV Area Of responsibility, to support integration of Gender based violence risks into Humanitarian Needs Overview and focus on child survivor services into the HRP. Gender has been routinely integrated into support and training of the Cluster coordination role. Finally, in the past year, 144 UNICEF projects globally submitted to the UNICEF led clusters and area of responsibility applied the Gender Age Marker (GAM) to reflect on and improve the design of their activities on gender equality and women empowerment programming.

Question 4: How has the humanitarian-development nexus been strategically mainstreamed in your institutional implementation of the Grand Bargain commitments?

UNICEF issued a procedure on linking humanitarian and development outlining engagement on strengthening social service delivery, building resilience through risk informed programming, and building local capacity. UNICEF risk analysis identified 28 countries as priorities for emergency preparedness. As part of the First Action Initiative pilot, following the identification of high-risk situations via the Horizon Risk Scan, five Country Offices (Afghanistan, Haiti, Pacific Islands, State of Palestine and Zimbabwe) received a total of US\$2.3M for preparedness. The five allocations improved UNICEF's speed of delivery in an emergency scenario by an average of 42 days, enabling approximately 57% in savings per investment (meaning that every \$1 spent for First Action is worth \$1.57 in an emergency response) and reducing UNICEF's carbon footprint by more than 1,000 metric tons of CO₂.² UNICEF also supported governments in 56 countries to develop shock responsive social protection systems. Of the total countries where UNICEF works, 12 countries reported having national cash transfer programmes that are ready to respond to crisis, indicating a steady and positive increase from the baseline (6 countries in 2016). Working with the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), UNICEF announced the establishment of a joint Global Muslim Philanthropy Fund for Children in 2019, which is specifically designed to encompass the humanitarian development nexus, by offering a channel for the strategic deployment of shariah compliant philanthropic capital. This Fund is currently generating financial support from both public and private sectors.

² Carbon savings are largely drawn from the avoidance of air transport for supplies due to greater usage of greener "slow" transportation methods like overseas shipping.