



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

Grand Bargain Annual Meeting 2020: IFRC Statement

IFRC remains committed to the Grand Bargain and to the spirit of reform which underpins it. We strongly believe that the possibility of systemic change is real, and the opportunity is now. The COVID-19 crisis has shown the speed at which change is possible when the situation necessitates it and the conditions are right. Over the remaining twelve months we must stay the course and continue to aim high while focusing on specific challenges that can unblock positive change at scale.

Looking forward however, the Grand Bargain should adapt to new realities and become more streamlined, focusing on fewer more strategic crosscutting issues which are realistic to achieve, while holding onto the critical quid pro quo element of the original bargain. At the same time, the bargain must remain relevant, particularly within the context of a post-COVID 19 world and would benefit from incorporating new critical elements such as digital transformation and responsible data sharing as well as reframing some of the original commitments.

COVID-19 has placed a spotlight on the localization agenda, with local actors such as the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (NSs) playing a key role in the preparedness and response to the pandemic. Their community presence prior to the crisis has made them impervious to international travel restrictions and thus better positioned to respond. Flexibility in funding agreements to ensure that they are able to make operational decisions and investment in their institutional capacity will be critical to sustain this response over time, particularly as many of the economic and societal effects of this crisis have yet to hit.

Positive changes around quality funding in the context of COVID-19 have been especially important. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) launched an appeal in response to COVID-19 and together with ICRC, IFRC developed a collective narrative outlining the key priorities of the Movement's response to the crises. IFRC's initial emergency appeal was fully funded, and our partners were especially generous in responding to our request for flexible, unearmarked funding with higher than ever levels of un-earmarked and lightly earmarked contributions. In a context in which conditions are constantly evolving and needs changing, flexibility has been paramount to allow for adaptation of the response and to pass down quality funding to our member National Societies. Although the figures continue to fluctuate, currently over 60% of IFRC's COVID-19 operating budget will be implemented by National Societies. This has enabled prioritization according to context and, reallocation and redirection of funds and resources in alignment with emerging needs as well as the continuation of investment in National Societies' institutional development.

We recognize that increased quality funding comes with a need for greater accountability, both to local actors and those whom we are trying to serve, as well as to donors and the public at large. Accountability therefore is both downstream, to communities and local actors, through community engagement, capacity development and approaches which level power imbalances, as well as upstream, through monitoring, evaluation and reporting. Greater transparency around how funding is allocated, spent, and prioritized is critical to ensure trust and mitigate risk. This core belief underpins all of our programming and IFRC is making great strides in this regard with National Societies collectively sharing real-time operational and financial reporting for the COVID-19 response which is enabling Federation Wide Planning and Reporting in coordination with the ICRC. This is a critical step in support of donors' requests for more coordinated planning, implementation, and reporting. Ultimately accountability is about strengthening our capacity to save lives in a manner that protects people's dignity and improve the quality of life for those who are at risk of disasters and other crises.



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Finally, none of these positive changes will be sustainable without advancing the dialogue around risk sharing. While the Grand Bargain has succeeded in raising awareness of this sensitive topic, further work around what can be done to better share the burden of risk is critical to ensure that the progress currently being made is sustained beyond the current COVID-19 response. The mutually inter-dependent variables described above can easily lend themselves to becoming strategic objectives of the Grand Bargain beyond 2021. IFRC looks forward to continuing this dialogue at the Annual Meeting and beyond.