

**Grand Bargain in 2020:  
Annual Self Report – Narrative Summary**

**Name of Institution: Alliance for Empowering Partnership**

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**Date of Submission: 10/02/21**

(NB. Please limit your answer to no more than **5 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.)

### **Grand Bargain in 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 2020?**

In January 2020, A4EP developed Grand Bargain 2030 paper to inform the future of the Grand Bargain from local actor's perspectives.

In May 2020 A4EP produced a paper "Reversing the inequity – <sup>[[[]]]</sup>Opportunity knocks again or missed opportunity again!?" with 10 recommendations for GHRP for Covid 19 response from the local perspectives.

In July A4EP and KUNO jointly organised a webinar "The perspectives of Local Actors on the Grand Bargain Annual"

In August 2020 A4EP published a paper Local Heroes – Solidarity and Diversity to raise awareness on the racism and discrimination faced by local organisations.

A4EP (Alliance 4 Empowering Partners) and KUNO (Platform for Humanitarian Knowledge Exchange) organised a webinar to provide space for hearing southern perspectives on the Grand Bargain: the proceedings and the needed next steps for the future. It brought together voices from different regions to provide their perspectives. In some countries, there had been the GB missions in the past, they shared information on progress made in the last year from their perspective and what actions are necessary to move things forward and contribute to what should be the shape of the future of the Grand Bargain.

A4EP organised a series of 4 dialogue sessions relating to GB localisation commitments to develop alternative knowledge and proposals in collaboration with local and national networks and international platforms such as KUNO, IASC RG2 and other partners to contribute to shaping GB beyond 2021.

Dialogue 1: Solidarity and Diversity – Is there crisis of solidarity? Have we lost our way?

Dialogue 2: Accountability – Who is accountable to whom?

Dialogue 3: Innovative and Empowering Partnership - Whose empowering whom?

Dialogue 4: Co-ordination and representation – Who is making the decisions?

We had over 500 hundred people participating in these dialogues from cross

sector of actors. The panel members were from local organisations, INGOs, UN, donors and academia.

KUNO, the Platform for Humanitarian Knowledge Exchange in The Netherlands, and A4EP, the Alliance for Empowering Partnership, organize during the Impact-Fest an NGO-donor dialogue on systemic innovations of the humanitarian sector for better responses.

This webinar looked at the issue of equitable partnerships and to address the power imbalance. It also discussed what do local actors need to do to build trust and address risks.

**Question 2: 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.

A4EP held meetings with women leaders from Bangladesh, Jordan, Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon, Nigeria, Liberia, South Sudan to document their views and to provided recommendations. The women leaders from A4EP network has been actively exchanging experiences and advocating for change. ARDD commission a paper on Localisation of Gender Agenda. "Going the extra mile – being at the table, not in the back seat - Localizing the gender agendas"

The women leaders in the A4EP have emphasised that they are still being left out of decision making and still struggle to find funding for their work. The International organisations who are working on promoting women led and women right organisation themselves do not follow the good practice they recommend in their reports. Often their country offices are not even aware of their global advocacy and GB commitments on this issue. So, although the women leaders take part in the advocacy that do not actually benefit from the investment of time and efforts. The due diligence and reporting requirement limit their access to pooled funds.

The women leaders have created a mentoring circle so they can support each other in their advocacy role.

**Question 3: 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.

In January 2020, A4EP developed Grand Bargain 2030 paper to inform the future of the Grand Bargain from local actor's perspectives. This paper advocated for

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

longer term perspective and which also recommended nexus approach. A4EP has been advocating for integration of nexus approach.

### **Grand Bargain 2016-2020: Overall achievements and remaining gaps**

**Question 4: What are the 2-3 key achievements/areas of most progress by your institution since 2016?** Please report on your institutional progress for the period 2016-2020, **even** if your institution did not become a signatory until after 2016.

Since its inception in 2018 A4EP has produced timely papers through consultation with members from 20 countries to inform the GB discussion. The aim of the advocacy papers was to highlight the issues from local perspectives and holding signatories to account for their commitments over all but also at country level.

A4EP has actively lobbied to increase the participation of local actors in various work streams of the Grand Bargain and the IASC structure. It has led to opening the space for local actors to take part in discussions at global and country level. A4EP member in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Jordan, South Sudan, Liberia, Nigeria and Lebanon are actively involved gathering evidence and disseminating information on localisation. Seven dimensions' framework was used to measure progress of localisation. Localisation studies have been carried out by members in Bangladesh and in Jordan.

**Question 5: What, in your institutional view, have been the main achievements of the Grand Bargain signatories, as a collective, since 2016?** Please indicate specific commitments, thematic or cross-cutting issues or workstreams where you think most progress has been made collectively by signatories.

The Grand Bargain was a great effort to collectively come up with commitments that can improve humanitarian response. It also put the supporting locally led response in sharper focus and highlighted issues of inequity in the humanitarian aid system. Various research and county studies have helped to identify the remaining blockages. It started a whole movement on how to localise various parts of humanitarian response. For example, localisation of GBV, Protection, Education etc. The cash programmes have had the biggest push and support from donors.

The studies on quality of funding has also have helped to highlight the inequitable distribution of administrative and core costs between international and local organisations and the need for multi-year funding support for local actors.

There has been increase in local actors being able to access pooled funds in some countries. However, this varies depending on the regions.

**Question 6: What has the Grand Bargain not been able to achieve in its five year tenure? What outstanding obstacles, gaps, areas of weakness still remain after five years, in terms of improving the efficiency and**

**effectiveness of humanitarian action?** Please indicate specific commitments, thematic or cross-cutting issues or workstreams where you think there remain key gaps or obstacles.

The biggest remaining gap has been the institutionalisation of commitments and implementation of commitments are country level. In some areas there has slow to no progress. There is a huge gap in increasing funds to local and national organisation, it has fallen well short of 25%.

The biggest issues remain the under representation of local actors in the governance and decision making structures. Even when the local actors can be part of the decision-making processes it is the international actors who decide who can participate, when and how local actors and participant and how they can participate. The unequal power dynamics and inequitable relationships has not been tackled systematically.

The lack of clear definition of local actors has meant that international organisation's local offices have been passing themselves as national actors benefitting from funding for national actors.

The huge fundraising drive at local level by international signatories is also shrinking space for local organisations. There is still too much focus on technical training instead of institutional support.

### **Risk and the Grand Bargain**

**Question 7a: How has risk (financial, operational, reputational, etc) affected your institution's implementation of the core commitments since you became a signatory to the Grand Bargain?**

The issues of trust deficit between international actors and local actors remain the biggest issue. The compliance and due diligence requirement remain remains a high bar to overcome for most local and national actors. Without sufficient institutional support, it is difficult for local actors to have systems and HR resources to maintain quality reporting. The aversion to risk by donors remain the biggest impediment to more funding being passed on to local actors directly as possible.

The biggest risk for local actors is the backlash against them for speaking out. Many of A4EP member face retaliation from international actors and others in their county for speaking out about the inequity in the humanitarian system. Some have seen funding being withdrawn or isolation in their own working environment.

**Question 7b: How has your institution sought to mitigate or address these risks to enable implementation of the core commitments?**

