

**Grand Bargain in 2020:**

**Annual Self Report - Narrative Summary**

**Name of Institution: Belgium - FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation**

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(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?**

1. **Additional funding COVID & LEBANON** : capacity to respond (+/-) fast with 22 MEUR for COVID & 5 MEUR for Lebanon.  
In 2020 record high HA budget
2. **Increased flexibility for NGO = BAHIA**  
Under the name of “*Belgian Alliance for Humanitarian International Action*”, seven Belgian NGOs set-up a coordinated response under a joint intervention logic to reduce the impact of the COVID-19 on preexisting humanitarian crisis in the Sahel region (Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger), the Great Lakes region (Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Tanzania, DRC), the occupied Palestinian territories (Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem), as well as Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan. Participating NGOs committed to ensure consultation and synergies – including pooling of resources, ensuring flexibility in a constantly changing environment. In supporting this project, Belgium pilots new ways of working, especially concerning the flexibility of funding for humanitarian NGOs and the coordination amongst them, both in Belgium and in the field.
3. In 2020, Belgium served for the sixth time as an elected member of the **United Nations Security Council** on behalf of the Western European and Others Group (WEOG). Under its mandate, Belgium has set conflict prevention, protection of civilians and the performance of United Nations missions as thematic priorities. It also uses its field expertise – particularly in Central Africa, the Sahel and the Middle East – to champion human security, human rights and respect for international humanitarian law.

**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.

In 2020, Belgian humanitarian aid finalised commitments as part of its participation in the **Call to Action on Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies (C2A)**. The C2A renewed its Roadmap for the next 5 years and more than ever the link between gender-based violence and gender equality was established there. In making these commitments, BE has also subscribed to the objectives of the Roadmap, the third of which is “Mainstream gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls throughout humanitarian action” - an annual report on the commitments is also planned. In addition, the Belgian commitments include an increase in funding for the fight against and prevention of gender-based violence; the integration of gender-based

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

violence into Belgian humanitarian strategy and advocacy for a better integration of this issue in the forums of which Belgian humanitarian aid is a part.

The various commitments mentioned above will therefore be applied in the partnerships which Belgian humanitarian aid maintains with its various humanitarian partners.

**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.

The alignment of the Belgian ODA system with the specific challenges of fragility and the implementation of the “nexus approach” has been consolidating and disseminating achievements.

Within multilateral bodies, Belgium uses its geographic and thematic expertise in fragile contexts to defend proposals for conflict prevention, human security, respect for human rights and specific attention to the most vulnerable. It also stands out for its balanced strategic approach to migration and forced displacement as well as its focus in recent years on innovative approaches in the humanitarian field and its inclusion of the private sector in fragile and crisis contexts.

In 2020, BE launched a 4 MEUR call for proposals aimed at mitigation the effects of COVID19 as well as to prevent and respond to GBV. The selected projects (in Lebanon, Burkina and Mali) aim at preventing and strengthening the resilience of populations in the long term while ensuring the participation of women and girls at the level of the intervention.

### **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.

1. **FLEXIBILITY** : Belgium has long been a strong supporter of **flexible funding**. In 2020, Belgium reached its target of 60% of flexible, unearmarked funding. Result of a steady increase over the recent years : 49,7% in 2017, 53% in 2018 and 58% in 2019.
2. **INNOVATION** : whether via tools, actors or approaches, BE is committed to support innovative solutions and partnerships. (cfr Humanitarian Impact Bonds, Connecting Business Initiative, 3D-printed limbs..)
3. **GENDER** : The fight against violence against women and girls, including SGBV, has long been a priority for BE. This has translated into concrete action through BE’s development aid gender strategy, our National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security and BE being a member of the Call to Action on protection from gender-based violence in emergencies , just to name a few. Through its humanitarian aid funding, BE has repeatedly been able to support its partners in their paramount work to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence.

**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.

1. **Joint needs assessments** : even though not totally successful yet, great progress in the mobilisation of humanitarian actors and donors for needs assessments. Culmination with the **COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP)**.
2. The GB has pushed the **nexus** agenda and tried hard to keep the signatories accountable for that commitment.

**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.

1. Localisation
2. Participation revolution
3. Simplification of the administrative burden

### **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?**

1. **Localisation** : legal/administrative/financial control obstacles prevent us from direct financing of local actors. We do have to rely on intermediaries (whether NGO's/UN)
2. **Administrative burden remains high.**
3. **Predictable funding has been made difficult in BE due to the political instability** : absence of a fully-fledged government for almost two years.

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

1. Localisation : BE supported the Start Fund and financed a coordinated NGO response to COVID. Moving towards a change in the law in order to be able to support structures such as START.
2. BE keeps on advocating in international for a for increased donor coordination in matters such as assessments/reporting/auditing.
3. Communication has been key : towards our humanitarian partners in order to safeguard some predictability;