

Grand Bargain in 2020:

Annual Self Report – Narrative Summary

Name of Institution: Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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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?

Enhanced quality of funding (more predictable and flexible funding)

- Norway has continued the move towards more multi-year funding to both UN, the Red Cross Movement and NGO partners, with a view to find a balance between ensuring predictable and flexibility for partners and maintaining the ability to respond to new and unforeseen crises. In 2020, 39% of the overall funding was provided through multi-year agreements up from 24% in 2019.
- In addition to the multi-year agreements with CERF, OCHA, and ICRC HQ appeal, Norway for the first time entered into a multi-year agreement (2020-2022) with the ICRC for its operational appeals in 2020. Several multi-year agreements with humanitarian think tanks and policy actors were also signed.
- Norway fulfilled in 2020 its multi-year pledge for the Lake Chad region (2017-2020) and continued to deliver on the multi-year pledge from the Oslo Conference to end SGBV (NOK 1 billion 2019-2021). Norway also announced a three-year pledge at the Central Sahel Conference, including the intent to enter into multi-year agreements with the UN and ICRC.
- Norway has since signing the Grand Bargain exceeded the target of providing 30% of humanitarian contributions as non-earmarked or softly earmarked funding. In 2020, approx. 42% was provided as unearmarked or softly earmarked funding (up from 40% in 2019). 22% was given as unearmarked funding whereof 11% was provided as core support to UNHCR and WFP, 8% was contributed to CERF and 3% to ICRC, OCHA and IOM. Approximately 20% was provided as softly thematic or geographic earmarked funding mainly through organizations such as UNHCR, UNFPA, WHO, WFP, ICRC, OCHA and UNICEF.
- Norway increased its contributions to the Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs) in 2020 to NOK 407 mill (up from NOK 394 mill. In 2019), constituting 5% of the overall budget.
- In 2020 MFA Norway entered into multi-year strategic partnerships with six Norwegian humanitarian NGOs with an annual contribution of NOK 1,7 bn.

Cash

- Norway continued to play a key role promoting the increased use of cash, with a focus on donor coordination, including as co-chairs of the Donor Cash Forum (DCF) together with Germany.
- In May 2020 a [Joint Donor Statement on Humanitarian Cash Transfers](#) in the response to the Covid-19 pandemic was adopted to guide donors' funding decisions and Covid-19 response.
- In 2020 NMFA strengthened the use of cash as an instrument in humanitarian response through Strategic Partnership Agreements with six Norwegian NGOs. All partners had to fulfil criteria linked to better and increased use of cash in their respective responses.

- Norway continued to support CashCap and CaLP, and as such contributing to policy development and the strengthening of cash responses globally and at country level.
- Norway also continued to provide support to the NGO-led network “Cash Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning Organizational Network” (CAMEALEON) in Lebanon ensuring continuous third-party monitoring and global learning.
- Norway became a member of the CaLP Board in 2020.

Question 2: How has your institution contributed to the advancement of gender equality and women’s empowerment¹ 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).

- The Gender perspective is integrated into all of Norway's humanitarian efforts. Norway requires all humanitarian partners to assess and mitigate any risks of negative effects of their work on women's rights and gender equality and to be familiar with UN Security Council Resolution 1325, and implement in a way that promotes the intentions of the resolution in the best possible way.
- Mainstreaming the gender perspective was one of the criteria used when determining to enter strategic partnership agreements with Norwegian humanitarian organisations.
- Norway continues to be the largest contributor to the Gender Standby Capacity Project (GenCap) and the Protection Standby Capacity Project (ProCap). Norway is member of the GenCap’s Advisory Board, and has worked closely with OCHA, NorCap and other donors to ensure the continued relevance and impact at country level of the projects.
- Norway made a pledge of NOK 1 billion over the period 2019-2021 at the Oslo Conference to end SGBV in May 2019 where it was agreed that strengthening SGBV prevention and response must be a humanitarian priority. The pledge will be fulfilled already at the beginning of 2021.
- Norway co-chairs the Call to Action network’s State and Donor Working Group.
- Norway provided in 2020 support to the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund, in order to ensure funding for local women’s organisations active in humanitarian response.

Question 3: How has the humanitarian-development nexus been strategically mainstreamed in your institutional implementation of the Grand Bargain commitments?

- The commitment to strengthen the humanitarian-development nexus has been integrated into white papers to the Storting (Norwegian parliament), strategies and policy frameworks

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

- Norway continued to mainstream nexus in policies and partner dialogues; In 2020 Norway initiated the work on a new Sahel Strategy to be finalised in 2021 where the nexus is central. Nexus is stated as one of the main priorities in the mandate for Norway's membership of WFP's Executive Board for the period 2020-2022.
- Norway has contributed to better financing across the nexus by providing predictable, flexible and multi-year humanitarian financing.
- Norway continued supporting the International Finance Corporation (IFC) by funding private sector development in the trust fund for Fragile and Conflict States. In 2020, the fund extended its activities to include Sahel and Lake Chad, Horn of Africa and Yemen, Central Africa and Great Lakes, Southern Africa and Indian Ocean.
- Norway invested in durable solutions for refugees and internally displaced people through a combination of humanitarian and development instruments (eg. core support to UNHCR, support for the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), support for the rollout of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, contributions to the Global Concessional Financing Facility) and supported the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement.
- Norway supported education in crises and emergencies, including significant contributions to Education Cannot Wait.
- Norway supported forecast-based financing mechanisms through DREF, CERF and WFP and engaged in discussions about anticipatory humanitarian financing, including through the Crisis Risk Financing Donor Working Group.
- Norway took the initiative to establish the new United Nations Covid-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Multi Partner Trust Fund to assist developing and middle-income countries in tackling the long-term consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic. By mobilising development funding, this fund helps ensure coordination and synergies across the nexus. Norway has so far contributed NOK 180 mill. to this fund.
- Norway has since 2017 increased its support for fragile states.

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.

Enhanced quality of funding (more predictable and flexible funding)

Norway has invested most efforts in enhancing quality funding. In 2017 it was reported that 21% of NMFA humanitarian funding was provided through multi-year agreements. (2016 data not available). This increased to 24% in 2019 and in 2020, 39% of funding was provided through multi-year agreements. If we include the indicative multiyear commitments for core support to WFP and UNHCR the figure increases to 50%.

When it comes to core contributions, un-earmarked funding and softly earmarked contributions, the target of 30% was achieved already in 2016.

NMFA's level of non-earmarked and softly earmarked has steadily increased to approximately 42% by 2020.

In our view, there is, however, a weakness in the GB definitions that a Programme Based Approach is not counted as softly earmarked. If this was included, numbers would have been substantially higher.

Cash

Since 2016, Norway has put considerable resources into furthering the Grand Bargain objectives on cash, recognising that cash should be systematically considered alongside other delivery modalities. The Grand Bargain objectives on cash were integrated into Norway's humanitarian strategy.

Norway has played a key role in furthering the Grand Bargain objectives on cash, in particular when it comes to donor coordination. 2016-2018 Norway co-led (with the UK) the Good Humanitarian Donorship's (GHD) workstream on cash. In June 2018, the GHD High Level meeting approved a new principle on cash. This was the first time a new principle has been added since the GHD principles were endorsed in 2003. Norway also co-chaired the sub-workstream on donor coordination under the Grand Bargain workstream on cash.

Norway together with Germany took the initiative to establish the Donor Cash Forum (DCF) with the objective to improve donor coordination and co-chaired the forum from 2018 to the end of 2020. The Common Donor Approach to humanitarian cash programming, developed by Norway and several key donors, was adopted in 2019. The CDA sets out a shared vision and principles that guide donors' support for cash programming.

Norway requires partners to use cash in situations where this is the most effective and efficient way of providing assistance, and cash has become mainstreamed into Norway's funding agreements with humanitarian partners. One example is that cash as a modality was considered when entering into Strategic Partnership Agreements with Norwegian humanitarian organisations in 2020.

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.

Cash is the thematic area where we consider there has been made most progress collectively by signatories over the years. It is therefore disappointing that the lack of cash coordination leadership, both globally and at country level, continues to be an obstacle for the increased use of cash.

Gender as a cross-cutting issue in humanitarian assistance has also been accepted and embedded to a large degree globally.

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.

There are still gaps and obstacles to achieve *enhanced quality funding* globally. Also, the thematic areas of *localisation* and *participation revolution*, seem to lag furthest behind the commitments set by the Grand Bargain. Due to limitations in the Norwegian donor model, we do with some exceptions not have the capacity to provide direct assistance to national and local humanitarian actors (localisation).

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?

Risks are always considered when the NMFA enters agreements with humanitarian partners. Risk has generally not negatively affected Norway's implementation of the core commitments of the Grand Bargain. Own capacity to follow rather than risk is a main reason for not being able to provide direct assistance to local NGOs.

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

In order to enable implementation of the core commitments, Norway has endeavoured to include and mainstream Grand Bargain commitments in policies, agreements, and partner dialogues. The commitments are now embedded in our [Norway's Humanitarian Strategy](#) (2019-2023). Due to limitations associated with the Norwegian donor model, funding to local humanitarian actors have been channelled through Country Based Pooled Funds and Norwegian NGOs. The commitment to strengthen local humanitarian response is also followed up in partner dialogues.