

Grand Bargain in 2020:

Annual Self Report – Narrative Summary

Name of Institution: Relief International

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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?

RI continues to focus on the four elements of the RI Way: Local Participation, Partnership, Integration and Civic Skills as our guiding principles for improving program quality and advancing long-term dignity and well-being of the communities we work with. Key achievements that exemplify RI commitment to progress are:

- RI is a leading member of the Movement for Community-Led Development (CLD). In this role, RI co-created an evaluation scoring method that took into account community voices in a collaborative and participatory manner.
- RI is a member of CHS alliance. In this capacity, RI has done its self-assessment and has developed a one-year plan to meet the targets in its priority areas including capacity building, community involvements and accountability mechanisms.
- RI MEL team launched the Relief International Data Explorer (RIDE), which is a compilation of relevant data sets available for all staff. Data sets include tracking of active projects by a variety of disaggregations, global sector indicators by quarter, as well as a tracker for covid-related projects.
- **Country Highlights:** Afghanistan has introduced a CVA intervention to cover WASH needs. In the Philippines and Sudan, RI have introduced CVA as a core response in 2020. CVA intervention represents a large volume of RI's operation in Yemen and Iran.

Question 2: How has your institution contributed to the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment ¹ 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.

Gender considerations are strategically mainstreamed across Relief International's programming in all of our core sectors. Women in situation of vulnerability are prioritized for cash-based programming, in particular female heads of household, elderlies and SGBV survivors. This goes with a risk analysis and measures to prevent/mitigate potential protection risks faced by women receiving cash, including engagement with community and religious leaders, men and boys, to get acceptance.

Women's capacity building and leadership is prioritized in all countries through gender responsive training, coaching and mentoring. When possible, RI develops partnerships with women's groups, equipping them with skills to lead activities across sectors. RI also creates and trains girls' leadership networks in advocacy and peers' support, and engage with men and boys to get acceptance.

In 2020, RI produced guidelines on Rapid Gender Analysis to be systematically included in needs' assessment, across sectors. These guidelines intend, at country level, to increase

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

knowledge and understanding of existing power dynamics, gender inequities and barriers, protection issues and risks of backlash to women's and girls' empowerment that can potentially affect the overall response.

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 2020, RI maintained its emphasis on utilizing a systems approach to program design. This approach allows for a holistic view of RI's operating environment, which continues to allow our programming to bridge the gap between humanitarian and development work. To reemphasize RI's commitment to this work, RI included nexus programming as a key strategic pillar in its next five-year strategic plan.

The strategic plan lays out initiatives and next steps that country and program teams should adhere to, in keeping with best practices on this type of programming. More details will be shared with country offices in 2021.

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.

Through membership in Core Humanitarian Standards alliance, RI is demonstrating its commitment to improving the quality of its work in areas such as accountability and capacity building.

Our commitment to increase our Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) has been demonstrated in many of our programs across countries.

In 2016, RI established the Technical Assistance Department (TAD) with a focus on providing improved global technical oversight and expertise to country offices and local partners. The TAD team now covers all major RI sectors, as well as cross-cutting themes such as gender, monitoring & evaluation, and cash.

Since 2018, RI has put a renewed emphasis on engagement with the Movement for Community-Led Development (CLD). This engagement is summed up in "communities at the center" being a key strategic pillar for RI's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan.

RI has also increased the percentage of local staff in all country offices for key staffing positions, compared to expatriates.

Lastly, RI has expanded its relationships with local partners and organizations in fragile settings.

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 signatories have placed significant weight on community-focused initiatives. Localization and broader participation are recurring themes throughout many of the Grand Bargain commitments, and it shows the broader international community believes this to be a valid and critical next step for the industry.

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.

Grand Bargain signatories still struggle with shifting the focus of programmatic leadership to local organizations. Engagement is still done primarily through contractual obligations or sub-agreements. There is more work to be done with the donor community to get tangible commitments on issues like streamlined reporting or funding allocation to nexus programming.

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?

Donor compliance continues to make it difficult to increase local participation at a leadership level due to increasingly stricter requirements for all risk categories.

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

RI continues to invest heavily in building the capacity of local organizations, across all aspects of program management and service delivery, in order for them to be able to meet donor requirements, and bid for projects at a prime and leadership level.