

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

Name of Institution: UNFPA

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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?

Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA)

In 2020, UNFPA strongly enhanced its use of CVA. When delivered correctly, cash-based programming can improve women's choice and access to essential sexual and reproductive services in a dignified manner, build resilience, reduce gender inequalities and violence and empower women and girls. UNFPA increased its use of cash in gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) programming in Philippines, Myanmar, Burundi, Northwest Syria/Turkey cross-border, Indonesia, Syria and Palestine. This included a flagship partnership with WFP in Syria to top up e-vouchers with a hygiene and protection grant reaching over 70,000 pregnant and lactating women.

Building upon UNFPA's global leadership of the GBV AoR, UNFPA brought on an additional expert to build accountability of humanitarian actors to consistently identify and mitigate GBV risks in multipurpose cash interventions. UNFPA in 2020 published two Tip Sheets on Cash, GBV and SRH programming during COVID-19 and the guidance "CVA: Your Role as a GBV Coordinator." A two-year research partnership with Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health was also initiated to develop a multi-country evidence base on CVA, GBV and SRH and inform current and future programming.

Reduced management cost

UNFPA has started using the UN Partner Portal as a repository of information from potential partners who are already working with other UN agencies. This simplifies the retrieval and use of existing information across the agencies, and minimizes the duplication of efforts and burden on the partners.

Localisation

In 2020, 39,2% of UNFPA humanitarian funding was provided to local and national actors (preliminary figures). UNFPA has included corresponding targets in funding proposals, such as the recent application for CERF. Additionally, UNFPA has strengthened its financial and programmatic tracking systems for more disaggregated visibility over the type of organizations receiving funding.

The UNFPA-led GBV AoR promotes localization through the involvement and participation of local actors, including women-led organizations; this reflects a core principle for humanitarian action and is essential to remain accountable to women, girls and other community members. According to the GBV AoR annual survey conducted in May 2020, 33% of GBV Sub-Cluster/Working Groups have national/local organizations or governments as the co-coordinators. Moreover, almost 50% of GBV Sub-Cluster members are national/local NGOs.

Question 2: How has your institution contributed to the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment in humanitarian settings

through its implementation of the Grand Bargain? What results/outcomes have been achieved in this regard?

UNFPA has taken forward its trademark approach of centering women and girls in the design and implementation of GBV programming through these activities and also through leveraging new areas such as cash and voucher assistance as well as better integration of feminist informed mental health and psychosocial support in GBV programmes.

In 2020, UNFPA has worked to roll-out the Inter-Agency Minimum Standards for GBV in Emergencies Programming (released in December 2019), that include a focus on investing in women's participation and capacity to lead and enhance community involvement for a better GBV response. UNFPA and UNHCR presented the *Facilitator's Guide: Applying and Understanding the Inter-Agency Minimum Standards for GBV in Emergencies Programming*. It is envisioned that the Guide will enhance meaningful participation of local women-led organizations and build a more inclusive and localized response.

In 2020, UNFPA has worked to enhance accountability of our commitment to strengthen the role of women-led organisations in the humanitarian response. UNFPA initiated and is leading efforts to introduce a field for partners to identify as a women-led organization during registration in the United Nations Partner Portal (UNPP). This will enable UNFPA, and other organizations who have signed onto the portal, to track funding to women-led organisations by 2021.

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.

UNFPA is continuously strengthening its nexus approach. On the normative part, UNFPA became adherent to the OECD DAC Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus, and is working with other adherent UN agencies on jointly promoting a nexus approach globally and in the field in cooperation with OECD DAC members.

Internally, in 2020, UNFPA strengthened efforts on anticipatory action, including with a successful pilot in Bangladesh and rolling-out of internal guidance. Anticipatory action is at the intersection of development and humanitarian planning and actions and has the potential to enhance the effectiveness of humanitarian and development funding, leading to beneficial outcomes and reduction of humanitarian cost and mitigate adverse consequences, and help people to build their own resilience.

In addition, UNFPA developed internal guidance on Collective Outcomes, and strengthened the sharing of best practices among country offices on peace-building, resilience, and applying a nexus approach in the COVID-19 response.

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 the launch of the Grand Bargain agreement in 2016, UNFPA has undertaken a number of structural changes to align its humanitarian actions with the Grand Bargain commitments. To highlight a few:

On quality funding, UNFPA succeeded in stepping up efforts to attract a higher degree of un-earmarked and multi-year funding, including with the establishment of UNFPA's Humanitarian Thematic Fund (HTF) in 2018. As a result of UNFPA's campaigning for increased flexible humanitarian funding, the HTF grew from \$5.8m in 2019 to \$30.4m in 2020, its second full year of operations. Moreover, a total of 13 new multi-year agreements were signed in 2020, up from 6 in 2016. In 2020, UNFPA received \$88.9 mil USD of its humanitarian funding from multi-year agreements, up from \$43.2 mil USD in 2016.

On Cash and Voucher assistance, there were only very few UNFPA programs in 2016. UNFPA has been making strides in creating a more systematic approach to scaling-up cash assistance as part of GBV and SRH programming in emergencies, with a focus on quality. UNFPA is documenting best practices and learning, conducting rigorous research in its operations, and developing organizational strategy and guidance for the next five years. UNFPA will track cash volume in 2021 onwards.

On Transparency and Reporting, since 2016, UNFPA has made significant improvements in tracking and reporting financial and programmatic data. 2020 Financial and Statistical Review will include humanitarian expenditure disaggregation. UNFPA has fully implemented its Global Programming System (GPS), which provides access to an online tool for the preparation of programmatic and financial reports by partners. Reports are heavily pre-populated by the system, simplifying the reporting tasks by the partners while at the same time ensuring standardization with UNDG formats.

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.

Overall, the Grand Bargain has been successful in achieving common definitions, and defining key gaps on which actors in the humanitarian system should work towards. The Grand Bargain has provided a forum for donors, agencies and organisations to meet and develop joint initiatives, and has accomplished to keep commitments on the agenda as well as enhanced collective accountability towards making progress. As such this is an achievement in itself.

Some issues would probably not have progressed to the same extent had it not been for the Grand Bargain; e.g. making the prioritisation for a shift towards localisation 'the new normal' as well as the sustained and enlarged pressure for increased quality funding.

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.

Generally, there has been some progress on most commitments, however, several came from a very low starting point, and none has been ‘fulfilled’ – it is work in progress.

Grand Bargain has not accomplished to be the primary forum to discuss Nexus (taken over by OECD/DAC and IASC/RG4), and Participation (IASC/RG2), why this might have negatively affected potential for joint donor/agency/NGO initiatives.

A major gap is the gender blindness in the original commitments. While efforts have been made to include gender considerations in the reporting template and work stream work plans, there is plenty of room to increase accountability towards this issue. Humanitarian action will not be efficient and effective if it does not include a gender lens.

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?

For UNFPA, as for other agencies and organisations, Grand Bargain has succeeded in providing positive incentives to work on the issues outlined in the commitments, as overall it could have reputational risks and thereby financial risks to be perceived as not living up to standards/targets set by the commitments.

In some cases, assessment of potential operational risks has impeded UNFPA’s fulfilment of commitments. This is true for the 8+3 reporting framework. A barrier for UNFPA roll-out to partners is the fact that the template only contains the narrative part, and UNFPA operates with an integrated and very light financial and narrative reporting. Likewise, for the commitment to cascade received flexible funding to partners, this carries certain risks for UNFPA in terms of challenged accountability towards donors.

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

UNFPA was part of the pilot of reporting template for the 8+3 template, and is considering further adoption in terms of UNFPA’s reporting towards donors.

On cascading flexible funding to partners, is it currently being considered what kind of other flexibility measures are in place beside funding.