

## ICRC Statement on the Grand Bargain 2.0

The ICRC welcomes the extension of the Grand Bargain as a **unique, multi-stakeholder platform** that aims to tackle system-wide challenges. We also welcome a **more focused Theory of Change** geared towards achieving better humanitarian outcomes for communities affected by conflict and crisis. We believe that **this ambition should be grounded in the humanitarian principles** and that **joint endeavours should be complimented by greater commitment by individual institutions** to advance on key priorities. Transformational change requires courage to transcend institutional positions and barriers.

To achieve better outcomes for communities affected by conflict and crisis, we need to redouble our **collective efforts to address the growing humanitarian financing gap**. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated fragility for populations already exposed to conflict and violence, increasing humanitarian needs, opening the door to further stigmatization, accentuating global poverty, heightening instability and tensions and reversing hard-won development gains. Many of the world's economies will contract as a result, with an inevitable impact on donors' readiness and ability to fund humanitarian action as they concentrate their efforts and resources on national recovery.

The COVID-19 crisis has underscored the importance of local actors and community engagement to ensure a response attuned to the assistance and protection challenges facing people in areas affected by conflict and violence, as well as the value of partnerships for greater impact. It has shown that when people face compounded vulnerabilities, the nature and impact of a shock is immediately multifaceted - with health, social, economic, political and security dimensions – and requires a multi-sectoral response that looks at protection and assistance needs and risks in an integrated fashion. It has accelerated the digital transformation, with the use of tools to reach and engage with affected populations and partners. It has equally highlighted the challenge to leverage the opportunities that new technologies present while ensuring responsible data sharing and the application of the principle of “do no harm” in a digital environment.

Looking ahead, we will need to step-up our **efforts to increase effectiveness**, further adapt our **approaches to protracted crises**, develop **new ways of working and widen the resource base for humanitarian action**. We see value in leveraging the Grand Bargain to bring together related reforms, to take stock of progress and to generate further political commitment to drive them forward. Greater **engagement at the highest level of global political leadership** to prevent and resolve conflicts will also remain crucial.

To enhance the relevance and impact of our responses, we need to create **a predictable, timely and flexible revenue stream for humanitarian action**. Improving the **quality of the funds** we receive is a prerequisite for more efficient and effective operations. We need to make the necessary institutional shifts that will enable the provision and distribution of more quality funding across the humanitarian system. We also need to urgently ensure that we become globally more **accountable to people affected by conflict and crisis**, recognizing that they are experts on their own situation, first responders and agents of change. We should aim to systematically implement more inclusive programming, with responses centered around **gender equality and the empowerment of crisis-affected women and girls**. Furthermore, we need to sustain efforts to support **local and national frontline responders**, mindful of their critical role. Supporting local capacities to prevent and respond to crisis is a step towards building more resilient communities, and we should explore ways to align humanitarian and development funding to further this objective. Together, we can also aim at improving the **quality of our partnerships**. More equitable and principled relationships along the delivery chain will help us increase trust across the sector. Finally, we need to shift our approach to **risk management** to ensure we share rather than transfer risk. This will enable us to better

support local responders, foster new opportunities for collaboration and innovation, enhance learning and sharing of best practices and ultimately increase the coherence and impact of our responses.

At the ICRC, we are committed to **enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of our humanitarian response**. We are transforming our approach to programme delivery to become more outcome-oriented. We are adopting a multidisciplinary approach to needs assessment. We are building robust compliance mechanisms, improving our reporting and increasing our transparency, with due consideration for data protection considerations, to ensure greater accountability to our donors. We are also increasingly cooperating and coordinating with other humanitarian actors to ensure complementarity, reduce costs and avoid duplication of efforts.

In the coming years, the ICRC will continue to put **people at the centre of its humanitarian action**, enhancing its inclusive programming and engaging further the communities it serves. To better address the needs that affected people themselves identify, we will **directly implement programs** while also exploring how we can **partner in new ways** – both across the Movement and with local actors to ensure we bring complementary strengths in responding to protracted crises. Together with the IFRC, we will invest further in strengthening the capacities of National Societies and encourage our donors to channel funding to the National Society Investment Alliance (NSIA). We will also strengthen our partnerships with National Societies in situations of armed conflict and scale up the support we provide in certain areas. In the same spirit, we will continue to pursue efforts aimed at Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation and explore ways to further leverage the unique and complementary strengths of the Movement at the local and international levels to achieve greater and more sustainable collective impact.

The ICRC will explore and seek **partnerships that can help improve on the delivery of and live up to the spirit of its mandate**, including with development actors, where opportunities for greater joint impact are found. We will pursue all avenues to promote **innovative financing models**, bringing in the knowledge and capacity of private sector and thus contributing to building public and private local capacities. Engagement across the nexus will require **knowledge exchange and adaptations** by all those involved, ensuring organizational readiness for greater collaboration and principled humanitarian action.

We believe that the next iteration of the Grand Bargain offers an opportunity to revisit our common approach, while not losing sight of the added-value of this unique platform: the Grand Bargain is a **space for humanitarian actors to come together to articulate common messages and formulate key asks** for political leaders and decision-makers beyond the humanitarian sector. We support the proposal to elevate the discussions to a political level through the **“caucus” approach**. However, we should ensure that we do not overburden the Grand Bargain process and that we remain fluid and agile. We also believe that high-level discussions across constituencies should be informed by issue-based collaborations that build on the knowledge and expertise of local, national and international actors. We should build **bridges with other initiatives and platforms**, to amplify our voices and reinforce our messages while leveraging the work being done in other fora. We should be **more inclusive**, engaging local actors, governments as well as climate, development, and private actors. Finally, we should ground our policy dialogue in concrete operational realities through **joint field projects**. In this manner, we can start to change realities.

The ICRC stands ready to work with the Grand Bargain Signatories to operationalize the new framework and agree on a **set of streamlined outputs and activities**, as well as on the **most suitable structure to achieve our goals**. We are also keen to engage with the wider aid community and external stakeholders to advance a more comprehensive financing reform agenda.