

ActionAid Grand Bargain Statement, July 2022

ActionAid welcomed the Grand Bargain 2.0 proposal which was endorsed by signatories at the 2021 annual meeting, recognising its value as a platform and space to discuss and take joint action among the UN, NGOs and donors to increase the effectiveness of the humanitarian system. For years, the Grand Bargain has played an important and unique role in providing opportunities to discuss critical issues including humanitarian financing and gender transformative change in the humanitarian system and has made important progress on identifying and addressing technical barriers to localisation.

Grand Bargain 2.0 represents positive thinking towards the inclusion of local actors, as a means to allow for an accountable, meaningful process and result. In order to meaningfully progress, it is imperative that we move ahead with an intersectional and intergenerational approach in anchoring national and local women's leadership at the core of humanitarian action, as well as integrating and recognising the blockages to progress gender equality and women's rights.

This requires collaborative efforts from all 64 signatories to make a large-scale investment in several countries affected by humanitarian crisis, and be held accountable to translating the global commitments into meaningful change and impact at the country level. An important aspect for ActionAid in taking our Grand Bargain commitments forward is partnering with the [Charter for Change](#) as well as being a proud founding member of the [Feminist Humanitarian Network](#) which is led by Global South women's organisations and networks and takes action to transform the humanitarian system to one that is guided by feminist principles, that challenges patriarchal and colonial practices and norms that are barriers to women's leadership, decision making, and meaningful engagement in the humanitarian system. ActionAid is also in the process of working with ActionAid country staff and partners to support civil society engagement in the National Reference Groups (NRGs).

The NRGs will play an essential role of progressing towards the change and transformation agreed and ensuring accountability of the signatories, who hold more power and resources in the humanitarian system, towards those with less: affected people and their local community organisations, in particular women and young people and their organisations. While an important initiative, it is disappointing that signatories have not rallied the requisite collective support to partner with civil society to roll out NRGs at national level within the one-year milestone of the Grand Bargain 2.0. This is especially disheartening after ActionAid's research in 2021, ["Bargaining for Better"](#) found that despite willingness, availability, and interest, only three percent (3%) of women's rights and women-led organisations surveyed directly engaged in any Grand Bargain meetings or events in the past 5 years. To create a more representative political space, that is intersectional and inclusive, there is a need for more support to local and national organisations.

Grand Bargain signatories need to target long-term investments for women and their organisations and acknowledge the leading role of women and their organisations affected by crisis. Specific measures, resources and political willingness are needed at global and national levels to ensure gender transformative action is centred in all technical and political level discussions as an essential political goal, including in those at country level through the National Reference Group. There should be sustained investment to ensure good functioning of national processes of the GB 2.0, mirroring the support given to global level engagements on caucuses and workstreams.

[In a joint statement](#), ActionAid and other NGOs and networks called for signatories to commit to a significantly longer timeline with specific and ambitious milestones, until 2030. This would allow the Grand Bargain initiative to be more inclusive and representative, as well as contribute to Sustainable Development Goals progress in fragile contexts and continue to expand the implementation in countries and apply learned experience. Local and national organisations have called for sustained investment to ensure national processes of the GB 2.0 mirror the global level engagements on caucuses and workstreams. To uphold the spirit of the Grand Bargain and ensure that it delivers on its commitments, specifically to women and young people at the frontlines of crisis and disasters, all signatories must have the same access, same resources to knowledge and information, and equal voices and decision-making ability.