

**Grand Bargain in 2018:**  
**Annual Self Report – Narrative Summary**

**Name of Institution: Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

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**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 2018?**

- A high proportion of our support to multilateral partners was **multi-year** and **unearmarked**: in 2018, 83.3% of core funding was multi-year; 79.7% of core funding was non-earmarked and 20% was soft earmarked. **Further multi-year packages** developed in protracted and displacement crisis contexts including Afghanistan (AUD60m, 2018-2020) and Iraq (AUD100m, 2019-2021)
- Over 59 local and national partners were **funded as directly** as possible in FY2017/18, including through Australian Humanitarian Partnerships (AHP). Greater detail on AHP approaches to localisation and accountability to affected populations is attached.
- To increase **transparency** of our humanitarian spend, DFAT upgraded to IATI 2.02 in late 2017 and began reporting humanitarian-specific elements of the IATI schema.

**Question 2: Please explain how the outcomes/results will lead to long-term institutional changes in policy and/or practice.**

Research by ALNAP has indicated that systemic change within the complex humanitarian domain is more likely to be 'incremental than 'seachange'. In this light, we consider that we continue to make reasonable progress towards meeting Grand Bargain commitments.

In meeting our commitments to predictable (multi-year) and flexible (unearmarked) funding to partners, we are reliant on the **quality of their reporting** in terms of monitoring progress against several other GB commitments. This has been variable and we will continue therefore to emphasise the commitment to '*enhance the quality of reporting to better capture results, enable learning and increase the efficiency of reporting*' as the priority sub-commitment under Grand Bargain Commitment #9 in our dialogues in agreements with multi-year partners.

**Multi-year commitments** that integrate activities to reduce vulnerability and build resilience are routinely considered in protracted displacement contexts. They involve close collaboration between humanitarian and relevant geographic desks. They entail a shift in our approach from decisions based on immediate needs to decisions based on vulnerability analyses that enable forecasts of likely needs in the out-years. Partners have also reported that multi-year packages allow them flexibility to adapt support in response to fluctuations in the context.

Australia's multi-year commitments have enabled partners to increase program effectiveness through greater cost efficiency, recruitment and retention of quality local and international staff, systems and capacity building, strengthened and sustainable public services, longer-term humanitarian programing, innovation, a multiplier effect in catalysing other donors and consortiums, and creating a 'position of leverage' when working with local and national government.

Importantly, partners have reported examples of tangible benefits e.g. uninterrupted funding coverage gives refugees the confidence to keep children in school, knowing they will have consistent monthly cash assistance. Partners have also documented how multi-year funding sends an important political signal to the host community of the commitment of the international community to remain engaged.

Supporting the Grand Bargain commitment to be **as local as possible and as internationally as necessary**, Australia recognises the primary role for national and local governments and civil society in leadership and decision-making in support of principled humanitarian action where this produces the best possible outcome for affected communities, with a complementary role for international actors. However, development of a reliable global metric would enable empirical evidence of progress towards this commitment. Australia's longer-term commitments to build sustainable national-, local- and community-based capabilities, will further enable national and local action. However, further work is required to identify – and, where possible, address – internal barriers to localisation.

**Transparency** is key to monitoring our progress against the Grand Bargain commitments. However, we are often unable to trace our funding throughout the transaction chain as downstream partners do not always report to IATI. This problem is compounded by the inadequacy of GLIDE and UNOCHA coding systems which do not cover smaller scale disasters that are more typical in the Pacific.

**Question 3: How has your institution contributed to the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment<sup>1</sup> 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 equality and the empowerment of women and girls was a key thematic priority in DFAT's Humanitarian Strategy prior to the Grand Bargain. Gender equality is viewed as central to the efficacy of all Australian aid with a target of 80 per cent of Australian aid program investments (including humanitarian) rated as effective in addressing gender issues in annual Investment Quality Reports.

At the World Humanitarian Summit, the Australian Government committed to applying a **gender marker** to all its humanitarian funding to allow us to track our spending on this priority. This remains work-in-progress.

DFAT integrates gender equality into a range of other commitments in the Grand Bargain, including:

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

- **Localisation:** by supporting capacity-building of women's leadership and prioritising leadership and participation in programming (e.g. the AHP Disaster READY Program in Vanuatu).
- **Participation revolution:** by supporting the active participation of gender and age groups in disaster response, and committing to strengthening the UN cluster system particularly regarding protection needs including gender equality.
- **Harmonized reporting:** by encouraging all implementing partners to disaggregate data by sex, age and ability, to better address key vulnerabilities including the needs of women and girls, and to report against the IASC gender marker.

**Question 4: 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.

Australia seeks to reduce vulnerability, address needs, build resilience and achieve sustainable solutions in our support to crisis-affected communities wherever feasible. When undertaking annual internal performance assessments of our humanitarian assistance, Australia specifically considers issues of 'connectedness' by seeking evidence that activities we fund are being delivered in ways that support recovery, resilience and long-term development, while also being coordinated and complementary.

Australia has mainstreamed the humanitarian-development nexus in its humanitarian reform actions relevant to the Grand Bargain. Highlights include:

- Australia supports the leadership of national governments and capabilities in disaster risk reduction, preparedness, response and recovery. In response to the Lombok earthquake, Australia deployed a Disaster Assistance Response Team from the Fire and Rescue Service NSW. The team consisted of engineers, who worked with the provincial government Department of Public Works in a mentoring capacity with local Indonesian engineers to assess damage to local infrastructure, particularly schools and hospitals.
- Effective risk reduction and preparedness integrated into development programming and development programs that can adapt to respond to crises as they occur are key in Australia's approach to supporting the localisation of humanitarian action.
- Australia's multi-year packages to protracted and displacement crises (Syria, Iraq) seek to integrate approaches that promote self-reliance and build resilience. Key focus areas of Australia's Syria package (AUD220m, 2017-2019) include education and livelihoods.
- Post-cyclone activation of shock-responsive, social protection mechanisms in Fiji (in 2016) and Tonga (in 2018) are positive examples of the adaptation of national systems supported under development programs, to respond better in the aftermath of disasters.