

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

**Name of Institution: EU/DG ECHO**

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**Date of Submission:**

(NB. Please limit your answer to no more than 3 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.)

**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?**

2018 has been a pivotal year in the European Commission/DG ECHO in terms of internalising the Grand Bargain commitments. The progress achieved in specific work-streams in 2017 was confirmed and consolidated, in particular the “routine” use of cash, which has become a delivery mechanism on its own. Coordination with other actors has also improved, with DG ECHO working with the Cash Learning Platform established to improve and harmonise the way donors and humanitarian organisations track the volume and type of cash transfer programming. Consolidation also occurred regarding work stream 1 on transparency and reporting, where DG ECHO is ranked 10th in the 2018 Aid Transparency Index published by *Publish What You Fund* and second among all Members States and institutions of the EU, showing a significant improvement compared to the previous period (20th place)

Progress was achieved also on more strategic aspects of contract management. Multi annual planning and contracting is increasingly the preferred option, with over 40% of DG ECHO contracts (in financial terms) going beyond 12 months and up to 36 months implementation period. This progress remains constrained because of the impact of committing in year N funding for years N and N+1 implying “delayed” implementation of actions, while our target beneficiary groups have acute immediate needs.

2018 has also seen extensive preparatory work related to defining ways of working that would allow decreasing the level of earmarking of DG ECHO funding, with the launch of a major pilot project and the creation of a team dedicated to developing strategic partnerships with humanitarian organizations, as part of a major periodic review of DG ECHO’s Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) with NGO partners. Moving towards a stronger focus on operational performance and strategic partnership should positively impact efficiency and effectiveness in line with Grand Bargain commitments. Drawing on the experience of other, less tightly earmarking donors, while ensuring a sufficient level of control and assurance (fiduciary and reputational risk management), will be at the centre of the planned new strategic partnerships. It is worth nevertheless mentioning that DG ECHO does not intend to move all its portfolio to strategic partnerships. The process can only concern partners with a sufficient level of confidence, and depends on the level of confidence that the new system can bring and the support of the institutional mechanisms that ensure accountability for EU spending. Similarly, a revision of DG ECHO’s reporting format (the ‘single form’) is envisaged, taking into consideration the recommendations of the relevant work-stream and the ‘8+3’ pilot.

Finally, it should be mentioned that DG ECHO is looking at the possibility of providing some funding in certain crises through Country-Based Pooled Funds, where these are considered to be well managed and significantly enhance the local coordination architecture.

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

Should all the preparatory actions which are currently ongoing in DG ECHO bring sufficient assurance regarding sound financial management, and efficiency and effectiveness of the operations, one could expect – with all necessary caveats related to gathering support and approval of the competent services in charge of approving those changes – that the nature of relationship between DG ECHO and its partners selected for strategic partnership would change significantly, in line with the Grand Bargain. It is worth noting that the preliminary results of pilot projects do indicate probable reductions in management costs and improved strategic dialogue.

**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).**

In 2013, the European Commission Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO) adopted its policy on gender "Gender – Different Needs, Adapted Assistance". This policy emphasises the importance for all EU-funded humanitarian aid to be gender sensitive and address the differentiated needs and capacities that women, girls, boys and men face during crises to facilitate gender equality and women's empowerment. This was to be done through gender mainstreaming, targeted actions and capacity building.<sup>2</sup>

To assess how well gender and age are integrated in EU-funded humanitarian actions, the EU introduced a humanitarian Gender-Age Marker in 2014. This is a quality and accountability tool that measures the extent to which EU-funded humanitarian actions integrate gender and age considerations. A first assessment report on the Gender-Age Marker was published in October 2018, and covers 2014-2015.<sup>3</sup> It highlights the usefulness of the Marker and calls upon partners to continue investing in capacity-building on gender and age. For 2017, our preliminary data suggests that 89.1% projects integrated gender and age to a certain extent (data not yet available for 2018).

The EU is particularly committed to addressing GBV in emergencies. In line with the EU's humanitarian policies on Gender, Health, and Protection, sexual and gender-based violence is addressed through comprehensive multi-sectorial approach including medical care, psychological support, legal/justice support and safety.

From June 2017 to December 2018, the EU led the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies (Call to Action). This is a global initiative that brings together 82 partners comprising governments and donors, international organisations and non-governmental organisations. The Call to Action Road Map 2016-2020 is mentioned as a valuable reference point in the Aide-Memoire on Gender Mainstreaming in the Grand Bargain. Its aim is to drive change and foster accountability from the humanitarian system to address GBV

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

<sup>2</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/gender-sensitive-aid\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/gender-sensitive-aid_en)

<sup>3</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/echo/sites/echo-site/files/gender\\_and\\_age\\_marker\\_2014-2015\\_full\\_report.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/echo/sites/echo-site/files/gender_and_age_marker_2014-2015_full_report.pdf)

from the earliest phases of a crisis. During our leadership of the Call to Action, we welcomed 18 new members to the initiative, initiated the piloting of the Call to Action in Nigeria and Democratic Republic of the Congo, organised 10 awareness-raising workshops through our field offices, and facilitated the drafting of the first Call to Action Progress Report (2017). In addition, we raised awareness on the issue of GBV in emergencies and on the Call to Action, by organising a number of high-level events in Brussels, Geneva and New York.<sup>4</sup>

In 2018, it is estimated that the EU allocated approximately EUR 30 million in humanitarian aid to help fight sexual- and gender-based violence under its protection and health programming. The EU also supports global capacity projects on sexual- and gender-based violence. At the end of 2017, the EU allocated €975.000 to UNFPA, the Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility and the Women's Refugee Commission, under the EU's Enhanced Response Capacity to support the implementation of the Call to Action in Nigeria and Democratic Republic of the Congo and develop global minimum standards on GBV (which is a major deliverable of the Call to Action Road Map). In addition, at the end of 2018, the EU awarded nearly €445.000 to Royal Tropical Institute of the Netherlands/Save the Children Netherlands to study access and barriers for survivors of sexual violence to medical and psychosocial support, with case studies Nigeria, Yemen, and Haiti. Furthermore, in 2018, it is estimated that the EU allocated more than €24m to reproductive health from its humanitarian health programming.

During the implementation of the European Union (EU) Gender Action Plan II (2016-2020), progress has been made towards the aim of transforming the lives of girls and women through ensuring their physical and psychological integrity, promoting their economic and social rights and strengthening girls' and women's voice and participation (see the 2018 report, which covers 2017).<sup>5</sup> At the end of 2018, the EU adopted also a new approach to Women, Peace and Security, which includes specific aspects on gender and humanitarian aid.<sup>6</sup>

**Question 4: How has the humanitarian-development nexus been strategically mainstreamed in your institutional implementation of the Grand Bargain commitments?**

The Grand Bargain and the Nexus team in DG ECHO work closely together, and with the colleagues in the development sector, ensuring that the nexus dimension remains mainstreamed in the other initiatives related to the Grand Bargain. The ongoing pilot countries (Sudan, Uganda, Nigeria, Chad, Iraq and Myanmar) provide valuable lessons on the field operationalisation of the nexus. For example, the EU nexus pilot process in Uganda managed to enhance programmatic synergies between EU services and Member States and modify ways of working. There is now a strong political and operational commitment from all EU sides to jointly contribute to the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework in Uganda.

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[http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/thematic/call\\_to\\_action\\_on\\_protection\\_from\\_gender\\_based\\_violence\\_in\\_emergencies\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/thematic/call_to_action_on_protection_from_gender_based_violence_in_emergencies_en.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/public-gender/documents/2017-annual-implementation-report-gap-ii>

<sup>6</sup> More information: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/12/10/women-peace-and-security-council-adopts-conclusions/>