
Dear World Bank colleagues:

Please convey my sincere thanks to Kristalina for this important message. I believe I can speak for us all in thanking her for her focus and dedication, which has enabled the progress and change that we take as our starting point today.

Dear colleagues,

Kristalina's message reminds us where the Grand Bargain came from. The Bargain is part of a bigger package to reduce the humanitarian financing gap. It's the part of the package that aims to make existing resources go further. An attempt to be more **efficient** in how we work together. But the Bargain also aims to enhance the **effectiveness** of our work. For people in South Sudan, DRC, Yemen and other humanitarian contexts.

And there is good news. Now in its third year, the Grand Bargain is changing the way we work. There's more cash-based programming, we've run a successful pilot on harmonised reporting, and progress has been made on establishing localisation as a key principle for our humanitarian assistance.

We've also made progress on including gender in the implementation of our Grand Bargain commitments.

I strongly believe that we can build on this overall progress, scale it up, and achieve some degree of standardisation – while respecting differences between our organisations within our humanitarian eco-system.

But there's also room for improvement. We have to be frank on some of these issues:

- there's no trend yet towards much-needed flexible and predictable funding;
- there's been no reduction in donor assessments and requirements; and
- too little progress is being made on passing flexibility of financing along to partners within the system.

That said, there's still no need for frustration or scepticism. On the contrary! We have to build on the positive results and bring renewed energy to the process. Work together to make further change happen – and I'm committed to helping.

Since the Grand Bargain was negotiated three years ago, the environment in which we all work has changed significantly, not least in our own donor countries. Yet again, we're seeing new record numbers of displacement and humanitarian needs, and funding for humanitarian assistance is under increased pressure. The changing environment makes the objectives of the High-Level Panel Report and the Grand Bargain more relevant than ever.

We must always keep in mind who we're doing this for. For the Rohingya children, women and men I spoke with during my visit to Cox's Bazar for example – they deserve a well-coordinated and dignified response. The Somalis suffering under the current drought in the Horn of Africa deserve closer cooperation among donors to understand their situation and include them in

humanitarian and long-term planning. Local NGOs in South Sudan deserve the opportunity to benefit from more flexible, multi-year financing.

And our humanitarian colleagues – they deserve the chance to focus on their core activity: helping people affected by crisis, instead of writing reports.

And let's make sure that we can explain to our citizens and parliaments why money for humanitarian assistance is well spent.

It's not easy, but together we can do it.

So let me propose the following.

2021 will mark the fifth anniversary of the Grand Bargain.

The first Grand Bargain negotiation took place in Amsterdam in 2016. I propose that we hold a high-level event in Amsterdam in 2021 to see where we've made progress and where challenges remain. And to decide there and then on how to move forward.

I'm committed to working with you over the next two years to scale up some of the progress that's been made so far and to address some of the obstacles in our way.

We should look ahead to 2021 now, and consider what results we want to achieve by then. What is it that we want to say to the women, men and children of Yemen or Somalia? But also: what do we want to say to your MPs and taxpayers?

In 2021, we should be able to report further concrete progress in how we work for and with people living through crises and disasters.

That would mean, for example:

That we've made progress for affected people, by:

- engaging directly with people, and listening to them so we can include them more in our responses and better reflect their short- and long-term needs;
- enabling those affected by a crisis to make their own choices through more cash-based programming;
- strengthening credible local and national responders to disasters and emergencies; and
- ensuring that humanitarian workers can help those affected as much and concretely as possible (which does not mean writing reports).

At the same time, we should have strengthened our own processes, by:

- providing more flexible and predictable financing;
- better reflecting the duration of crises in our planning and funding, and linking up more effectively with development actors;
- saving costs by innovating and aligning our processes; and
- ensuring greater transparency and a shared data standard for evidence-based decision-making.

The good news is: the Grand Bargain offers us the framework and instruments to work towards these objectives, individually and collectively. The recently developed indicators allow us to provide quantitative evidence in some areas and qualitative evidence in others, and that's important.

I propose that the Facilitation Group and I work together to specify the results that we'd all like to be able to communicate in 2021 and develop a short plan on how to get there.

I invite you all to commit to a continued focus on implementation, allowing our staff to advance changes within our organisations and potentially to provide resources to continue working on transformative change. I'll work with you, including through smaller meetings and by linking up with other forums such as the IASC.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We can't do everything at once. In today's meeting, we'll touch on a few key areas of the Grand Bargain that might lead to greater changes throughout the system. I propose that topics that are not on the agenda of today's meeting be addressed at future meetings and conversations. Prioritisation was necessary for today's meeting.

My hope and expectation for today's meeting is that we all leave this room motivated and knowing what we each need to do – individually and collectively – in the next two years to scale up the current progress and address obstacles.

It's also essential that we strengthen the way we communicate about the Grand Bargain, and not only with external partners, but also among ourselves. We need to explain better why we do what we do. And illustrate what we do: with stories that people can recognise and relate to.

If we look at the bigger picture, we all share a common interest: we want to help people affected by crises and disasters, and we want to do so in the best way possible. So let's have a substantive, forward-looking and results-orientated discussion today.

I'm thrilled to be a part of this effort – together with all of you. Let's all do our best and take our share of responsibility in order to make it a success. Let's start today, by building on the important work that's been done, and then taking it forward step by step, looking ahead to the horizon: Amsterdam in 2021.

Thank you.