

Grand Bargain in 2018:
Annual Self Report – Narrative Summary

Name of Institution: International Rescue Committee

Point of Contact (name, title, email): Farida Bena, Director of Humanitarian Policy and Advocacy, farida.bena@rescue.org

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(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?

Three critical areas where IRC is leading the industry towards achieving the Grand Bargain are cash, transparency and cost management.

Towards our cash commitments, the proportion of assistance we delivered as cash increased 8.32 percentage points, from 17.68% in FY17 to 26% in FY18, exceeding our target of 25% in cash assistance by 2020. To support other organizations efforts, we developed and disseminated a new report, “Seven Steps to Scaling Cash Relief: Driving Outcomes and Efficiency”, which reflects the steps we have taken towards the 25% target.

Towards our transparency commitments, as of the end of 2018, IRC had published 65 IATI activities, up from 37 activities in 2017. IRC continues to publish IATI data on all projects funded by the UK’s Department of International Development (DFID) and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We also published IATI data for a number of awards funded by other European donors that do not make it a requirement, including Irish Aid, Danida and Sida.

Towards our commitment to improve cost effectiveness, IRC partnered with a number of agencies to pilot our Systematic Cost Analysis (SCAN) tool, which is designed to improve the transparency and comparability of cost efficiency data across INGOs. As of the end 2018, an additional 10 IRC country programs are actively using SCAN for cost efficiency analysis, and 4 INGO partners have adopted and used SCAN in Iraq. We also launched a consortium to expand the tool sector-wide.

Not captured within the Excel spreadsheet, but of importance to achieving the Grand Bargain, the IRC has also been a leading voice on increasing the amount of multiyear financing from donors, including United Nations agencies. We produced and privately disseminated a two-page advocacy document, which illustrates how a number of government donors have increased disbursement of multiyear humanitarian aid (though some are less transparent about this than others), while UN agencies have failed to pass along this financing to implementing partners. This has been shared with the Grand Bargain Secretariat and other key stakeholders and has generated much interest among donors.

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

The SCAN tool consortium that we lead will design, build and pilot a sector-wide version of the tool, and will propose a jointly governed sector-wide solution for rigorous and consistent cost analysis. This tool and process can help ensure that

donors are getting value for money and implementers are delivering cost-efficient programs. This is particularly important work given the trend of too few or plateauing resources available to adequately respond to humanitarian crises around the world.

Towards improvements in multiyear financing, IRC will continue to advocate with key government donors and UN partners to reform policies that currently prohibit UN agencies from passing through multiyear financing to frontline implementers. These types of reforms to humanitarian financing should improve implementers' ability to plan for a medium and longer term response in protracted displacement contexts; it should also improve efficiency, for instance by cutting administrative costs associated with the 12-month (or less) cycle typical of UN grants.

Question 3: How has your institution contributed to the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment¹ 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.

In 2018, the IRC continued to update its operational infrastructure to carry out our commitment to gender equality across all programming. Investments include creating and hiring for the position of Deputy Director of the Gender Equality Unit (GEU) and continuing the practice of having regional and technical experts to support Gender Equality programming.

The growth and investment in the GEU supported the integration of gender-sensitive considerations in IRC's standard program practices, including the evaluation and capacity building of partner organizations, design of best-practices for cash-based programming, incorporating gender analysis in contextual needs and risk assessments, and the design of gender-sensitive feedback channels and responses.

Additionally, the following was achieved in 2018:

1. Technical units began submitting their own commitments towards preventing sexual exploitation and abuse to the GEU.
2. Over 1,800 IRC staff received gender equality training and sensitization; another 1,000 staff were trained on prevention of sexual harassment.
3. 222 staff have become official Gender Equality Champions.
4. 11 "Women at Work" groups have been formed in international programming.
5. Gender Equality is a cross-cutting expectation for 2019 country planning across all country teams.
6. The IRC's gender equality policy and anti-harassment policy were core components of mandatory review/training on IRC core values and expectations of staff.

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

7. The IRC has finalized and will soon roll out the IRC-wide “Gender Action Plan,” to analyze its own progress towards gender equality in policy, programming and operations.

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.

Bridging the humanitarian-development divide is central to the IRC’s advocacy and programming efforts. We are not only witness to, but are deeply engaged in responding to protracted humanitarian crises, requiring we use traditional humanitarian and development tools—especially in the education and livelihoods sectors.

IRC is an outcomes-oriented humanitarian organization, meaning we develop our programming around a theory of change – and seek to measure the impact of our programs – towards outcomes in peoples’ lives (improved learning, income and assets, reduced mortality rates, etc.). These outcomes are aligned with the development community’s objectives, i.e., the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Measuring our progress based on outcomes, rather than inputs, outputs or activities, has supported our advocacy with bilateral donors and UN agencies around increasing multiyear financing; achieving outcomes requires long-term, flexible financing. Furthermore, our orientation around outcomes has provided the foundation for our advocacy around inclusion of refugees in country SDG plans and Voluntary National Reviews reports. We produced, in collaboration with ODI, a report that specifically illustrates how refugees are left out and left behind in the SDGs.

At the country level, we are also seeking more consistent engagement and better coordination and collaboration with development partners, such the World Bank; so far, this has translated into creating opportunities for bilateral information sharing, including about needs, protection concerns and “what works” when it comes to programming for the vulnerable populations that IRC works with. We also have developed partnerships with the private sector, collaborating on efforts to improve refugees’ opportunities for training and employment with the ultimate goal of enabling refugees’ to become self-reliant and become a net asset to local economies—ultimately supporting longer term, sustainable development.