

Grand Bargain annual self-reporting exercise:

Italy

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Work stream 1 - Transparency

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

Where did your organisation stand on the work stream and its commitments when the Grand Bargain was signed?

The reform of the Italian Cooperation created a new body, the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (Agenzia Italiana per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo - AICS), in charge of managing development and humanitarian aid programmes since January 2016.

In May 2016:

1. AICS released a new web platform and opened profiles on social networks – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram in April/ May 2016; AICS opened a YouTube channel in May 2016;
2. AICS had not formalized its membership of IATI;
3. An open-source platform <http://openaid.esteri.it/> was on the web; this platform was not aligned to IATI standard;
4. Project documents: only Funding Decisions (*Delibere*) and call for proposals were published on our website. Most of the other project documents were not public. News on new programmes were published on AICS Newsletter “La Cooperazione Informa”;
5. Italy regularly published information on new humanitarian programmes on <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/hac> and, consequently, on <https://fts.unocha.org>.

2. Progress to date

Which concrete actions have you taken (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream?

1. AICS web platform and social networks are updated with news and information on new and ongoing humanitarian programmes;
2. AICS has formalized its membership of IATI, signing a joint letter with IATI on the 16th of December 2016. The membership will commence on 1st March 2017;
3. A new contract has been signed with a private company to adapt the open-source platform <http://openaid.esteri.it/> to IATI standards and to update it with the requested information on humanitarian and development programmes;
4. Project documents: only Funding Decisions (*Delibere*) and call for proposals are published on AICS website. Most of the other project documents are not public. News on new programmes are published on AICS Newsletter “La Cooperazione Informa”;
5. Italy regularly publishes information on new humanitarian programmes on <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/hac> and, consequently, on <https://fts.unocha.org>.

3. Planned next steps

What are the specific next steps which you plan to undertake to implement the commitments (with a focus on the next 2 years)?

1. The open-source platform <http://openaid.esteri.it/> will be adapted to IATI standard;

2. Project information and documents (project proposals, general implementation plans and final reports) will be published on OpenAid;
3. Italy will regularly keep on publishing information on new humanitarian programmes on <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/hac> and, consequently, on <https://fts.unocha.org>.

4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)

Please indicate, qualitatively, efficiency gains associated with implementation of GB commitments and how they have benefitted your organisation and beneficiaries.

5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)

Which concrete action(s) have had the most success (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream? And why?

Work stream 2 - Localization

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

Where did your organisation stand on the work stream and its commitments when the Grand Bargain was signed?

1. Italian law and regulation did not allow direct funding to local responders;
2. In 2015 Italy funded IFRC programmes for a total amount of 1.695.000 Euro.

2. Progress to date

Which concrete actions have you taken (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream?

1. New procedures have been approved on the 25th of July 2016 to allow local civil society organisations to submit humanitarian project proposals to AICS. Local CSOs are eligible to funding if they had previous partnerships with CSOs registered in Italy (so called “graduation”);
2. In 2016 Italy funded IFRC programmes for a total amount of 3.300.000 Euro.

3. Planned next steps

What are the specific next steps which you plan to undertake to implement the commitments (with a focus on the next 2 years)?

1. We consider localization a key driver to enhance efficiency and sustainability of humanitarian programmes, especially in LRRD activities. However, we recognize that involving local actors as direct beneficiaries of funding is challenging. Besides new norms and procedures, concrete obstacles still remain to enable direct funding to local CSOs, such as language and simplification of administrative procedures. Monitoring system also need to be adapted in order to allow a sound assessment of the local CSOs capacity. We are planning to work on that.
2. We will also work to strengthen partnerships and consortia between international and local CSOs, which is fundamental to enhance the capacity of local CSOs and avoid competition. International actors should be responsible of enhancing the capacity of local responders.

4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)

Please indicate, qualitatively, efficiency gains associated with implementation of GB commitments and how they have benefitted your organisation and beneficiaries.

5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)

Which concrete action(s) have had the most success (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream? And why?

Work stream 3 - Cash

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

Where did your organisation stand on the work stream and its commitments when the Grand Bargain was signed?

1. From January 2015 to April 2016, the Italian Cooperation has implemented the Program “*Emergency initiative to strengthen the resilience of Syrian refugees and host communities in Lebanon*” with the aim of supporting selected municipalities in the construction or rehabilitation of public infrastructure through the temporary employment of Syrian refugees and vulnerable Lebanese in the host communities. The support provided to the municipalities and the employment of a large number of unskilled workers allowed the Italian Cooperation to foster social cohesion between the Syrian and host communities, provided humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable groups and helped to stimulate local economies.

The Program has adopted the *Standard Operating Procedures for Cash for Work Projects in Lebanon*, developed by the *Livelihoods working group* established in response to the Syria crisis. In line with these procedures, the Program has employed unskilled workers for about 23 days of work in exchange of a financial incentive of 20 US\$ per day. In total, the Program involved in the temporary employment scheme 3,234 beneficiaries (65% Syrian and 35% Lebanese), out of which 14% are women. On average, each beneficiary received 460 US\$. The impact of the Program is shown by the fact that the monthly expenditure for the purchase of basic items for a family of five refugees in Lebanon is estimated at US\$ 435 (source: *Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon*, 2015). The Syrian refugees were more motivated to be involved in cash for work initiatives than the Lebanese citizens, who are generally interested in more stable employment opportunities. The involvement of women was negatively affected by the social and cultural context in the program’s catchment area and by the type of activities undertaken, which often require a huge physical effort. Children and people with disabilities were not directly involved in the temporary employment scheme, but their presence in the household was a criterion used in the selection of the direct beneficiaries. The financial incentive has allowed the beneficiaries to respond in the short term to their basic needs and has presumably reduced their negative coping mechanisms.

The Program was implemented in partnership with nine Italian NGOs selected through a Call for Proposals.

2. Italy supports multilateral programmes (ILO, WFP, Madad Fund) providing assistance through cash, especially in the Syrian crisis.
3. In 2015, Italy is also seeking new ways of generating funds. In partnership with DFID – the IC funded the Programme “Agriculture and Livestock Support for Syrian People”, implemented by **CIHEAM Bari** and aiming at strengthening the resilience of rural communities, supporting the stabilisation process and the mitigation of local conflict. The program operates primarily through technical assistance, delivery of inputs and services - through a revolving fund: the farmers / breeders are paying 70 – 80% of the cost of inputs and services that they receive and no “free distribution” is made. Total amount funded in 2015: 2,3 million euro.

2. Progress to date

Which concrete actions have you taken (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream?

1. In June 2016, the Italian Cooperation launched an initiative focusing to support selected Lebanese municipalities in the construction or rehabilitation of public infrastructure through the temporary employment of Syrian refugees and host communities. The Program is implemented in partnership with seven Italian NGOs selected through a Call for Proposals. Planned activities are scheduled from June 2016 to October 2017. The Program has adopted the same methodology explained in the previous paragraph. The Program targets 2.500 direct beneficiaries of cash for work initiatives.
2. Italy keeps supporting multilateral programmes (ILO, WFP, Madad Fund) providing assistance through cash, especially in the Syrian crisis.
3. **CIHEAM Bari:** Till 3rd February 2017 the sum of USD 768,471 has been collected from Syrian farmers/breeders and the program is already using these funds to purchase additional inputs, which will increase the revolving funds. These inputs and services are provided to farmers and breeders in order to improve the agriculture and livestock production and economy. The increasing productions are generating additional income for the rural families and improving their resilience.

3. Planned next steps

What are the specific next steps which you plan to undertake to implement the commitments (with a focus on the next 2 years)?

1. The Italian Cooperation is currently exploring the opportunity to increase its cash assistance activities in Lebanon through:
 - A financial contribution to WFP for a Program focusing on the distribution to vulnerable Syrian refugees of prepaid credit cards to be used to purchase food items;
 - The implementation of a Program on multi-purpose cash assistance to Syrian refugees and host communities.
2. Italy continues its support to multilateral programmes (ILO, WFP, Madad Fund) providing assistance through cash, especially in the Syrian crisis.
3. **CIHEAM Bari:** The program is currently scoping the feasibility of expanding to the North-East and South of Syria with additional agriculture centres managed remotely from Turkey , Lebanon and Jordan. An additional 1.3 mil Euro should be approved by the Italian Board shortly with the aim of expanding the geographical scope of the intervention.

4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)

Please indicate, qualitatively, efficiency gains associated with implementation of GB commitments and how they have benefitted your organisation and beneficiaries.

5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)

Which concrete action(s) have had the most success (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream? And why?

Work stream 4 – Management costs

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

Where did your organisation stand on the work stream and its commitments when the Grand Bargain was signed?

1. CSOs are strongly encouraged to submit project proposals with management costs lower than 25% of the amount of the contribution requested to the Italian Cooperation (IC);
2. Indirect costs of CSOs projects cannot exceed 7% of the amount of IC contribution;
3. AICS has not established thresholds for multilateral programmes, however overheads are generally kept lower than 7% of the amount of the contribution requested to the IC.
4. AICS does not have thresholds for management costs in programmes directly managed by the IC.

2. Progress to date

Which concrete actions have you taken (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream?

None

3. Planned next steps

What are the specific next steps which you plan to undertake to implement the commitments (with a focus on the next 2 years)?

None

4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)

Please indicate, qualitatively, efficiency gains associated with implementation of GB commitments and how they have benefitted your organisation and beneficiaries.

5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)

Which concrete action(s) have had the most success (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream? And why?

Work stream 5 – Needs Assessment

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

Where did your organisation stand on the work stream and its commitments when the Grand Bargain was signed?

2. Progress to date

Which concrete actions have you taken (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream?

3. Planned next steps

What are the specific next steps which you plan to undertake to implement the commitments (with a focus on the next 2 years)?

4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)

Please indicate, qualitatively, efficiency gains associated with implementation of GB commitments and how they have benefitted your organisation and beneficiaries.

5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)

Which concrete action(s) have had the most success (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream? And why?

Work stream 6 – Participation Revolution

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

Where did your organisation stand on the work stream and its commitments when the Grand Bargain was signed?

In relation to flexibility of the humanitarian programmes:

- a. Programme budgets could be reallocated **within results** up to a maximum of 15% of the total amount of the budget. For bigger amounts, reallocations are allowed upon authorisation by HQ.
- b. Programme budgets could be reallocated **between results** upon authorisation.
- c. Temporal extensions were also allowed for a maximum project duration of 12 month, unless the crisis persisted.
- d. Reallocations could not allow the increase of the maximum contribution authorised.
- e. CSOs' project could also be amended to adapt them to the evolving circumstances and the related humanitarian needs. Reallocations could never include the increase of the maximum contribution authorised.

2. Progress to date

Which concrete actions have you taken (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream?

New procedures and project formats were approved by AICS in October 2016. This new formats:

- a. introduce more flexibility to adapt bilateral programmes to the evolving circumstances and to the related humanitarian needs. Programme budgets can be reallocated within or between **sectors** up to a maximum of 15% of the total amount of the budget. For bigger amounts, reallocations are allowed upon authorisation by HQ. Temporal extensions are also allowed for a maximum project duration of 12 month, unless the crisis persists. Reallocations can never include the increase of the maximum contribution authorised.
- b. Project formats and monitoring reports have a specific focus on beneficiaries - with specific regard to women, children and people with disabilities - underlining the need to include them since the formulation of projects and throughout the implementation of activities.
- c. CSOs' project can also be amended to adapt them to the evolving circumstances and to the related humanitarian needs. Reallocations can never include the increase of the maximum contribution authorised.
- d. Italy endorsed the Charter on inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action. We introduced specific markers to verify the compliance of proposals to the principles listed in our Vademecum on Disability and Humanitarian Aid; we identified 3 focal points at HQ level and 12 focal points at field level, in order to

mainstream the issue of disability within humanitarian aid programmes and manage specific actions for people with disabilities.

3. Planned next steps

What are the specific next steps which you plan to undertake to implement the commitments (with a focus on the next 2 years)?

- a. In line with the *Charter on inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action*, we are planning to fund new programmes to be implemented in emergency situations not only to include people with disabilities in humanitarian projects but also to collect quantitative and qualitative data, train humanitarian staff, raise awareness and advocate on the need of persons with disabilities. With this in mind, a pilot project will be launched in Jordan in 2017.

4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)

Please indicate, qualitatively, efficiency gains associated with implementation of GB commitments and how they have benefitted your organisation and beneficiaries.

5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)

Which concrete action(s) have had the most success (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream? And why?

Work stream 7 - Multi-year planning and funding

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

Where did your organisation stand on the work stream and its commitments when the Grand Bargain was signed?

Humanitarian programmes had a maximum duration of 12 months, unless the crisis persisted.

2. Progress to date

Which concrete actions have you taken (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream?

Humanitarian programmes have a maximum duration of 12 months, unless the disaster persists.

3. Planned next steps

What are the specific next steps which you plan to undertake to implement the commitments (with a focus on the next 2 years)?

We are investigating ways to fund multi-year programmes, especially to link humanitarian programmes to development initiatives.

4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)

Please indicate, qualitatively, efficiency gains associated with implementation of GB commitments and how they have benefitted your organisation and beneficiaries.

5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)

Which concrete action(s) have had the most success (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream? And why?

Work stream 8 - Earmarking/flexibility

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

Where did your organisation stand on the work stream and its commitments when the Grand Bargain was signed?

- The Italian contribution to CERF was of 1 million euro

2. Progress to date

Which concrete actions have you taken (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream?

- The Italian contribution to CERF was doubled (2 million euro)

3. Planned next steps

What are the specific next steps which you plan to undertake to implement the commitments (with a focus on the next 2 years)?

- Italy will investigate other ways to increase unearmarking, including ways to widen our support to pooled funds.

4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)

Please indicate, qualitatively, efficiency gains associated with implementation of GB commitments and how they have benefitted your organisation and beneficiaries.

5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)

Which concrete action(s) have had the most success (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream? And why?

Work stream 9 – Reporting requirements

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

Where did your organisation stand on the work stream and its commitments when the Grand Bargain was signed?

- Since 2009, the Italian Cooperation (IC) started a process to standardise its proposals and reporting formats, in order to simplify and harmonise them. Simplified project formats were available for CSOs projects and for bilateral programmes managed by IC field offices.

2. Progress to date

Which concrete actions have you taken (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream?

- In October 2016 new formats have been approved, introducing more flexibility in the selection of indicators but – at the same time – requesting a better definition of the same indicators in order to improve the analysis of results achieved by programmes / projects.
- Regarding multilateral programmes, Italy does not request multilateral organizations to use a specific reporting format; however a narrative report is highly recommended, according to templates used by different partner's organizations. Project amendments are also allowed upon request.

3. Planned next steps

What are the specific next steps which you plan to undertake to implement the commitments (with a focus on the next 2 years)?

- In the frame of the EU commitments for the WHS and of the new implementation plan of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, we are planning to work together with the European Commission and EU Member States on the harmonisation of reporting requirements.

4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)

Please indicate, qualitatively, efficiency gains associated with implementation of GB commitments and how they have benefitted your organisation and beneficiaries.

5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)

Which concrete action(s) have had the most success (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream? And why?

Work stream 10 – Humanitarian – Development engagement

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

Where did your organisation stand on the work stream and its commitments when the Grand Bargain was signed?

- The reform of the Italian Cooperation (IC) created a new body, the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), in charge of managing development and humanitarian aid programmes since January 2016.
- AICS organizational structure includes an office with both humanitarian aid and development cooperation tasks – called “Office for humanitarian aid and fragile situations” – which works not only to respond to crises but also to tackle fragility and building resilience with medium-long term perspective.

2. Progress to date

Which concrete actions have you taken (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream?

- Thanks to this new configuration, in the immediate aftermath of an emergency, IC can launch response initiatives using both humanitarian and development instruments. It is the case of the emergency response to El Niño or to the migration crisis.

3. Planned next steps

What are the specific next steps which you plan to undertake to implement the commitments (with a focus on the next 2 years)?

- IC is planning to adapt its procedures to strengthen the links between humanitarian aid and development programmes.

4. Efficiency gains (optional for year 1)

Please indicate, qualitatively, efficiency gains associated with implementation of GB commitments and how they have benefitted your organisation and beneficiaries.

5. Good practices and lessons learned (optional for year 1)

Which concrete action(s) have had the most success (both internally and in cooperation with other signatories) to implement the commitments of the work stream? And why?