

Grand Bargain in 2018:
Annual Self Report – Narrative Summary

Name of Institution: Norwegian Refugee Council

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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?

In 2016, ahead of the WHS, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) made the decision to invest considerable resources in the Grand Bargain. With this history and considerable focus in mind, we are proposing that the self-report should provide an opportunity to reflect on challenges experienced and opportunities ahead more so than what is requested in this lengthy non-reflective proscriptive questionnaire.

Key outcomes of NRC engagement in the Grand Bargain throughout 2018 can be summarized as follows:

Simplification

NRC brought together a working group of nine NGOs to tackle harmonization of cost classification and financial reporting; the initiative ties well with workstream 4 and has clear connections to WS 1 and 9. NRC partnered with Humentum and developed a ‘common-denominator’ solution which is currently under discussion for endorsement by the said NGO group. We aim to roll out a pilot project in mid-2019 within the framework of our commitment to the Grand Bargain.

Quality funding

NRC continued its engagement in the now clustered workstream on quality funding contributing to multi-year planning and funding research (studies are ongoing) and launched an innovative study on Nexus financing flows (ongoing, see question 4 for details).

Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA)

NRC further increased its use of Cash and Voucher Assistance in 2018, with global volume up slightly from 2017. Importantly, the distribution of country programmes using CVA was less uneven than in 2017, indicating more country programmes using CVA beyond pilot programme scale.

Grand Bargain Secretariat

At the global level, NRC’s expert roster NORCAP continued its support to the Grand Bargain Facilitation Group and Secretariat. NORCAP’s emphasis has been to support the Grand Bargain Facilitation Group and Grand Bargain work stream co-convenors, in liaison with its signatories and partners, to prioritize and streamline activities that will improve the efficiency and impact of humanitarian aid.

A note on challenges and opportunities

The Grand Bargain is a highly nuanced framework that cannot be boiled down to a process measured exclusively by numeric or quantifiable indicators. While the

push for additional accountability is welcome, the **focus on process does not value progress and good practices** happening beyond the narrow focus of the self-report template. In fact, this self-report template symbolizes the process-heavy turn taken by the Grand Bargain, and, to be clear, it disregards the very principles of simplification it strives to promote.

Looking forward through 2019 and beyond, NRC hopes to see an even stronger engagement and leadership from UN Agencies to both fulfil their commitments and to propose concrete solutions to improved efficiency, cost saving, responsibility sharing and better partnerships. From our side, NRC (together with Sweden) will continue its support of the Grand Bargain Secretariat with an additional resource for communication.

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

NRC continues to see the Grand Bargain as still holding the potential to be a real game changer for the sector, particularly in promoting simplification and harmonization. The specific initiative being implemented by NRC, *Money Where it Counts*, has efficiency gains estimated in over 2.3m person/hours per year for the whole sector, as independently assessed by the Boston Consulting Group.

With regards to quality financing, the workstream offers an opportunity for a collective dialogue and approach versus the existing individual donor approach. Providing – for instance – evidence-based research on the benefits of multi-year or flexible funding will favour a shift in how overall humanitarian action is bankrolled. Moreover, the improvement of financing mechanisms focusing on “Nexus” programming approaches (see question 4) will lead to better collective planning and ultimately to the reduction of needs.

Lastly, with regards to the use of cash and vouchers, the benefits of the approach have been widely documented. NRC continues to play a constructive and challenging role in various coordination for a such as CaLP, the CaLP Risk Working Group, the Collaborative Cash Delivery (CCD) network, the Shelter and Protection Clusters' Cash Working Groups. NRC is a founder of CaLP, is on its board, and hosts CaLP in several locations. NRC co-chairs Cash Working Groups in several countries and leads the CaMEALeon third party monitoring consortium, working alongside WFP and UNHCR cash distributions in Lebanon. Significant directional alignment has been achieved through CCD further promoting the adoption of this delivery method.

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

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

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.

As an organization working in countries of conflict, we are committed to achieving gender equality in all aspects of humanitarian assistance.

Our Programme Policy states that we will integrate a gender perspective into all programmes. This entails recognising and addressing the specific roles, needs, risks, vulnerabilities, capacities and opportunities that women, men, girls and boys face in displacement situations.

While all conflict-affected populations are at risk, displaced women and girls are often exposed to greater risk and may have additional protection and assistance needs. We aim to identify these needs and address them through its programmes and advocacy activities.

Also through our Gender Policy we are committed to mainstreaming gender into projects, ensuring that NRC's assistance is based on a gender analysis of contexts, needs and priorities of people affected by crisis.

The gender policy recognizes that NRC's beneficiaries are a diverse group of people who have been affected differently by crisis and therefore have different exposure to risks, different needs and different priorities.

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.

From the outset, NRC does not use the terminology of *mainstreaming* instead we have focused on ensuring that our approach represents good, safe, quality programmes, this includes our work on the Peace-Humanitarian-Development nexus. NRC established a durable solutions for displacement roadmap to strengthen its protection of and assistance to people and communities in all phases of displacement. The implementation of this roadmap links to numerous workstreams, including participation revolution, capacity building and localization. In addition to the work NRC is doing as an individual agency at operational level to promote resilience, NRC is leading an initiative with FAO, UNDP, OCHA, OECD, ICVA and World Bank to analyse gaps and opportunities in financing the nexus from a field perspective. Field research has already taken place in five countries (DRC, Chad, Cameroun, Ukraine, CAR) and preliminary findings are currently under discussion. Results from the study will be shared with key stakeholders at the ECOSOC Humanitarian segment in June. Cross-cutting learning from the different countries will develop into recommendations for global policy discussion stimulating further the implementation of the nexus at operational level.