

Grand Bargain in 2018:

Annual Self Report – Narrative Summary

Name of Institution: UNICEF

Point of Contact (name, title, email):

Marilena Viviani, Senior Advisor Humanitarian Financing

mviviani@unicef.org

**Date of Submission: 26 March 2019 (revision with correction of 8th May 2019-
highlighted in yellow)**

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?

Two years into the launch of the Grand Bargain, UNICEF in 2018 was able to translate commitments and investments made in the past months to support transformative changes towards improved quality and efficiency of our humanitarian action and financing. As described below, UNICEF contributed in 2018 to the three inter-linked outcomes, as follows: 1) better systems and tools, 2) better service delivery and 3) better capacity.

Outcome 1: UNICEF in 2018 contributed to stronger engagement both at systematic, strategic level and in the development of new tools in the following key areas:

- i) **Transparency:** UNICEF published and complied with the International Aid Transparency Initiative Common Standard (V2.02), and all building blocks are in place for establishing adequate traceability of resources from source to recipients.
- ii) **Localization:** UNICEF developed 128 country preparedness plans in collaboration with national actors; signed 15 multiyear partnerships with Civil Society Organisations; and transferred up to 36% of all humanitarian funding received in 2018 to national and sub-national Civil Society Organisations. At cluster level, the UNICEF-led Child Protection Area of Responsibility supported the development of a localization coordination conceptual framework. It also increased the representation of national actors in the Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility Strategic Advisory Group.
- iii) **Cash-Based Programming:** UNICEF improved its systems and tools for humanitarian cash transfers, including by the implementation of a clear segregation of duties, which contributed to strengthening risk mitigation, financial controls and oversight. It scaled up the use of cash in emergencies up to 184 million USD in 26 countries, reaching 2.4 million households including 7 million children.
- iv) **Participation revolution:** UNICEF developed a framework and a roadmap to guide the systematic inclusion of Accountability to Affected Populations within humanitarian programme cycles. This led to over 70% of the 157 UNICEF country programmes implementing various elements of the framework, of varying quality and depth, with the best performance on provision of life saving information to affected population.
- v) **Enhanced quality funding:** UNICEF updated its Grant Master financial system to facilitate better tracking and reporting of Multi Year funding across the organization.
- vi) **Harmonised reporting:** UNICEF developed two new platforms, a Transparency Portal for reports (open.unicef.org.) and a Partner Recognition Portal, the latter being piloted in three countries with a broader rollout planned in 2019, as an online one-stop donors reports repository. This new system also simplifies performance and financial reporting requirements for governments and civil society partners, and increases efficiency in UNICEF internal processes.
- vii) See also **Humanitarian – development nexus** below (Question 4)

Outcome 2: UNICEF improved effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery through advancement in the following key areas:

- i) **Transparency:** UNICEF expanded the scope of the International Aid Transparency Initiative datasets to include monthly publications of humanitarian data, and identified transparency as an essential enabler in the UNICEF Strategic Plan (2018-2021), to streamline accountability in programme delivery.
- ii) **Localization:** UNICEF, together with UNHCR and WFP, launched the UN Partner Portal (www.unpartnerportal.org) for a more streamlined and harmonized approach to identifying and selecting civil society partners. The portal provides UN agencies and Civil Society Organisations, including local CSOs, with a simple platform for interacting and partnering with one another.
- iii) **Reduced management costs:** In 2018, UNICEF, along with UNDP and UNFPA, continued to implement the inter-agency Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers framework, but with a shift from a compliance focus to a more risk-informed quality focus, reducing numbers of minimally required financial assurance activities, while increasing their meaningfulness and appropriate follow-up.
- iv) **Cash-based programming:** UNICEF contributed to setting up joint indicators on effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian cash transfers, with UNHCR, WFP and OCHA, fostering increased coordination and harmonization in programming of humanitarian cash transfers.
- v) **Needs assessments:** Through UNICEF-led clusters, dedicated resources were provided to interagency projects through development of single cross-sectoral methodologies for joint analysis of needs;

development of a single framework for evaluating the quality of multi-sectoral needs assessments; and baseline reviews of Humanitarian Needs Overviews to support joint assessments.

- vi) **Enhanced quality funding:** UNICEF improved its reporting on the use of and results achieved with flexible funds (regular resources, thematic funds and unearmarked funds) and strengthened visibility and recognition of partners who contributed flexible funds to UNICEF through all its reports as well as through social media, press and other communication campaigns. UNICEF also enhanced guidance and training to regional and country offices on multiyear planning, increasing staff capacity and supporting alignment of humanitarian and development work processes.

Outcome 3: UNICEF increased capacity and knowledge contributing to efficiencies in the implementation of Grand Bargain commitments in the following key areas:

- i) **Localization:** UNICEF conducted multiple capacity building activities for Country Offices and implementing partners, leading to substantial shifts in partnering and programming approaches in capacity building around preparedness, response and coordination targeting sub-national and national responders.
- ii) **Cash-based programming:** UNICEF developed and disseminated its first comprehensive programmatic guidance on humanitarian cash transfers to help UNICEF Country Offices implement cash programmes in emergencies.
- iii) **Enhanced quality funding:** UNICEF commissioned a survey in order to improve partner recognition and visibility for donors providing regular resources and global humanitarian thematic funds. UNICEF also documented best practices, opportunities and examples related to multiyear flexible funding, and engaged with Development Initiatives on the multi-year global funding study.
- iv) **Harmonised reporting:** UNICEF piloted the harmonized reporting template (“8+3”) developed by the Work Stream 9, contributing to more streamlined and synchronized reporting. UNICEF is not using this template with civil society implementing partners, as UNICEF reporting system is less complex.
- v) See also **Humanitarian – development nexus** below (Question 4)

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

UNICEF has committed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of its service delivery, with high expectations on the change that the Grand Bargain could enable at all levels. The progress on the commitment for **localization** assists UNICEF in strengthening its systems to better support institutional capacity building with local actors. To promote predictability, flexibility, and lower transaction costs, progress on the commitments for **enhanced quality funding** and **reduced management costs** has led to sixty per cent of UNICEF offices developing multiyear project cooperation agreements with partners and will result in increasing the level of multiyear funding in the future. The changes and improvements introduced by UNICEF’s revised harmonised cash transfer procedure will lead to more meaningful risk management and substantial savings estimated at 6 million USD a year, because of greater efficiencies. Implementing partners are likewise expected to incur notable savings in staff time from a lighter burden of assessment and assurance activities. Two technological platforms developed to support **harmonized reporting** (the Transparency Portal and the Partner Reporting Portal) are leading to increased transparency and accountability for results and increased efficiency in internal processes. Since the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) of the United Nations requires that UN organizations organize dialogues with their respective donors to agree upon common reporting requirements, UNICEF intends to use this initiative to seek alignment with both Grand Bargain and JIU commitments. Future efforts would be needed also to engage the dialogue with Grand Bargain on interlinkages and synergies with the UN Development System Funding Compact as part of the UN reform. Looking ahead, UNICEF needs to galvanize new partnerships to bring additional resources and capabilities with new partners and advocate for innovative, **predictable, flexible/multi-year funding**. To succeed on this, UNICEF is also reviewing its internal systems to find solutions in providing more flexible resources to implementing partners. This requires stronger collective efforts to advance the bargain between more flexible and quality funding (sustainable, multi-year and unearmarked), reduced constraints related to reporting requirements and management costs, and better needs assessments, planning, monitoring and reporting for results. In particular, un-earmarked and multi-year funding which will allow UNICEF to prioritize, be efficient and effective in its humanitarian

responses, be better prepared, more predictable and stronger in connecting humanitarian and development interventions for children, at the field level and globally.

3) How has your institution contributed to the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment in humanitarian settings through its implementation of the Grand Bargain? What results/outcomes have been achieved in this regard?

UNICEF's advancement of gender equality, girls and women empowerment is guided by the UNICEF Gender Action Plan (GAP) 2018-2021, closely aligned with UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, the UNICEF Gender Policy 2010 and the IASC policy on Gender Equality and Women and Girls Empowerment in humanitarian action (2017).

- i) **Localization:** UNICEF conducted capacity building activities for local partners on gender-based violence in emergencies prevention, risk mitigation and response in several countries, and conducted prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse trainings with all national and local recipients of UNICEF funding.
- ii) **Cash-based programming:** UNICEF produced a good practice programming note on gender-based violence in emergencies and cash transfers, to support UNICEF and partners in designing cash transfer programmes that contribute to gender-based violence prevention and mitigation ([available online](#)).
- iii) **Needs assessments:** UNICEF gender and gender-based Violence experts were deployed to several locations, also with UNFPA, as part of the Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility global forum that supports integration of gender-based violence risks into humanitarian needs overview and focuses on child survivor services into the humanitarian response plan. Gender was also routinely integrated into support and training of the cluster coordination role and UNICEF supported government partners to conduct gender-based violence safety audits, as an integrated part of the humanitarian response plans, in several countries. Up to 55 country offices completed a gender analysis, integrating the recommendations into their programme strategies. Gender was also integrated into the risk informed planning tool that was applied in 24 countries.
- iv) **Participation revolution:** Relying on community-based Communication For Development platforms and strategies, UNICEF supported high-impact evidence-based interventions including young women and men's empowerment, and positive parenting, to demonstrate equality in gender norms.
- v) **Enhanced quality funding:** In addition to Regular Resources, UNICEF was able to mobilize multiyear thematic funding for gender equality, an important catalyst in spurring innovative solutions and positive gender socialization programming and raising the visibility of the importance of gender equality to achieve all programming results, including in emergencies.

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

In 2018, UNICEF clarified its [approach](#) and internal instructions to systematically implement Humanitarian-Development linkages to deliver better results for children affected by crises, which recognizes the need for investment in **strengthening systems and localization** of humanitarian-development programming; expanding risk-informed programming; strengthening **participation of affected population**; strengthening social protection systems to **scale up cash transfers** in emergencies; **emergency preparedness**; and **galvanizing partnerships** to mobilize quality resources. For example, UNICEF Head Quarters supported 47 UNICEF Country Offices to design programmes focusing on reinforcing institutions and structures to equitably expand social service delivery to all communities and individuals; leveraging service delivery to address the underlying structural causes in societies suffering from polarization, violence and tensions; and building bridges within and between divided groups. Furthermore, UNICEF also supported governments in 37 countries to develop shock responsive social protection systems. Of the total countries that UNICEF works in, nine countries reported having national cash transfer programmes that are ready to respond to crisis, indicating a steady increase from the baseline (6 countries in 2016). Up to 24% of the overall amount of 184 million USD delivered to beneficiaries as humanitarian cash transfers was delivered through **national social protection systems**, thus supporting systems' resilience to crisis. On another front, guidance was issued on alignment and integration of UNICEF humanitarian and development work planning processes. All 27 UNICEF Country Offices with a humanitarian response plan received continuous support to conduct **multiyear planning** aligned to multiyear humanitarian response plans via dedicated help desks and rapid response teams. In total, 11 UNICEF

multiyear plans were aligned with interagency multiyear humanitarian response plans serving to bridge the humanitarian-development response. In addition, 26% of UNICEF Country Offices have now met the requirement for **risk informed programming**, an increase from 16% reported in 2016.