

Grand Bargain Self-Reporting Explanatory Guidance

1. All signatories to the Grand Bargain are expected to complete the self-report annually.
2. Self-reports must be returned to the Grand Bargain Secretariat [gbsecretariat@un.org] no later than **Thursday 15 March, 2018**. Any submissions after this date may not be considered by the 2018 Independent Grand Bargain Report.
3. Reporting should reflect activities and progress that has taken place between January 2017 and December 2017.
4. The self-report requests information by work stream, however, in order to best track progress, signatories are asked to provide as much specific and relevant detail on progress made against each of the 51 individual commitments as possible. A full list of commitments for each work stream is included in the self-report template for reference.
5. The questions contained in this self-report are the same as in 2017, however some work streams include additional question for signatories, at the request of the work stream co-conveners. If you are unable to provide this information, please note the reasons for this.
6. Signatories who have not previously completed a self-report are asked to answer question one for each work stream, to provide a baseline of where your organisation stood when it became a Grand Bargain signatory. Existing signatories can complete questions two to five for each work stream, as your 2017 self-report will have already provided the baseline information sought by question one.
7. Please type your answers immediately below each question asked.
8. Signatories are encouraged to report both on progress made, and where they may have experienced obstacles or challenges to realising their commitments.
9. Signatories are encouraged, where possible and relevant, to reflect on their contributions to the Grand Bargain both as recipients of humanitarian funds and donors of humanitarian funds. This will allow us to capture the transfer of benefits accrued at higher ends of the value chain down to the frontline.
10. Signatories are asked to limit their responses to a maximum of 500 words per work stream.
11. Self-reports are public documents, and will be published as submitted on the IASC-hosted Grand Bargain [website](#) from 3rd June, 2018.

12. Self-reports will be used to inform the 2018 Independent Annual Grand Bargain Report, which will provide a collective analysis of the progress for each work stream, and for the Grand Bargain as a whole. The Independent Annual Grand Bargain report will be published prior to the 2018 Annual Grand Bargain Meeting on 18 June 2018, in New York.
13. The 2018 Independent Annual Grand Bargain Report is being prepared by [ODI/HPG](#). Signatories may be contacted by ODI/HPG as part of their research and preparation of the Independent Report.
14. If you require support or advice to complete your self-report, you may direct enquiries to the Grand Bargain Secretariat [gbsecretariat@un.org].

Gender Inclusion

Signatories are encouraged address to the gender dimensions of their Grand Bargain commitments. For reporting on each work stream, consideration should be given to the guidance provided by the [Aide-Memoire on Gender Mainstreaming in the Grand Bargain](#) that addresses the gender dimensions of resources, capacity, evidence and data, participation, leadership, accountability and communication within the Grand Bargain. Signatories are also welcome to provide additional detail on how they consider they have, at a macro level, ensured their Grand Bargain follow-up is gender-responsive, and to include any examples of good practice that they wish to share. This data will assist in the preparation of the 2018 Independent Grand Bargain report, which will assess the extent to which gender has been considered by Grand Bargain work streams.



2018 Grand Bargain Annual Self-Reporting – [Name of Signatory]

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Work stream 1 - Transparency

Aid organisations and donors commit to:

1. *Publish timely, transparent, harmonised and open high-quality data on humanitarian funding within two years of the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul. We consider IATI to provide a basis for the purpose of a common standard.*
2. *Make use of appropriate data analysis, explaining the distinctiveness of activities, organisations, environments and circumstances (for example, protection, conflict-zones).*
3. *Improve the digital platform and engage with the open-data standard community to help ensure:*
 - *accountability of donors and responders with open data for retrieval and analysis;*
 - *improvements in decision-making, based upon the best possible information;*
 - *a reduced workload over time as a result of donors accepting common standard data for some reporting purposes; and*
 - *traceability of donors' funding throughout the transaction chain as far as the final responders and, where feasible, affected people.*
4. *Support the capacity of all partners to access and publish data.*

Transparency work stream co-conveners reporting request: How will you use the data from IATI within your organization including, for example, for monitoring, reporting and vis-à-vis other Grand Bargain commitments?

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

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

At the time of signing the Grand Bargain a new internal database was being developed, with the aim of:

- stepping up the comprehensiveness, accuracy and the level of detail of our data;
- better monitoring the results achieved ;
- automatically generating IATI activity-files, which would in turn allow us to publish up to date data at any frequency requested for.

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 our new internal database, BE DGD is now able to publish data on its humanitarian financing more timely and more frequently.

We have implemented the IATI "humanitarian scope" element, and are adapting our system in order to include in our IATI published data Glide and FTS codes as well.

Belgium has been proactive in the discussions on the humanitarian data platforms, such as EDRIS at EU level. Belgium has been working closely with DG ECHO on modernizing EDRIS and ensuring coherence with the changes of the humanitarian architecture of the last five years (flexible and multiyear funding mainly).

Belgium also benefited from a specific briefing on the new FTS platform by OCHA, which allowed to understand better how Belgium's funding is reflected and to spot potential incoherence between the different humanitarian database, thus improving the quality of the data reported.

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 would like to promote/help to initiate/contribute to a discussion between Grand Bargain Signatories, IATI and OESO DAC, with a view to harmonise the differing reporting requirements/approaches, for instance regarding Glide/FTS codes and earmarking definitions, in order to come closer to Busan's aim of a "common standard".

Belgium will continue to work with DG ECHO on the modernisation of EDRIS.

4. Efficiency gains

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

It is difficult for us to report on efficiency gains at that stage. Concrete tangible gains probably won't be observed as long as:

- the different reporting requirements are not harmonised;
- IATI published data is not being used to feed into the humanitarian donors' coordinating mechanisms.

5. Good practices and lessons learned

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?

Same than for question 4.

Work stream 2 – Localization

Aid organisations and donors commit to:

1. *Increase and support multi-year investment in the institutional capacities of local and national responders, including preparedness, response and coordination capacities, especially in fragile contexts and where communities are vulnerable to armed conflicts, disasters, recurrent outbreaks and the effects of climate change. We should achieve this through collaboration with development partners and incorporate capacity strengthening in partnership agreements.*
2. *Understand better and work to remove or reduce barriers that prevent organisations and donors from partnering with local and national responders in order to lessen their administrative burden.*
3. *Support and complement national coordination mechanisms where they exist and include local and national responders in international coordination mechanisms as appropriate and in keeping with humanitarian principles.*
4. *Achieve by 2020 a global, aggregated target of at least 25 per cent of humanitarian funding to local and national responders as directly as possible to improve outcomes for affected people and reduce transactional costs.*
5. *Develop, with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), and apply a 'localisation' marker to measure direct and indirect funding to local and national responders.*
6. *Make greater use of funding tools which increase and improve assistance delivered by local and national responders, such as UN-led country-based pooled funds (CBPF), IFRC Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) and NGO-led and other pooled funds.*

Localisation work stream co-conveners reporting request: What percentage of your humanitarian funding in 2017 was provided to local and national responders (a) directly (b) through pooled funds, or (c) through a single intermediary?¹

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

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

Direct financing of local organisations under the current legal framework (i.e. the Law on Development Cooperation of 2013 and the Royal Decree on Humanitarian Aid of 2014) is not possible. However Belgium has recognised the need of shortening the distance between donor and ultimate beneficiary, while safeguarding accountability measures and requirements. It has therefore

¹ The "Identified Categories for Tracking Aid Flows" document agreed through silence procedure ([available here](#)) provides relevant definitions. The detailed data collection form ([available here](#)) may also assist you in responding to this question. Returning this form with your self report is optional, but encouraged.

gradually increased its budget for flexible funds (global funds and country based pooled funds) and changed within this budget the distribution between global funds and country based pooled funds in favour of the last. In 2016, 35% of total funding was allocated to flexible funds, of which 55% was attributed to CBPF. Furthermore 10% of total funding was allocated to Belgian NGO's which engage local actors for service delivery. All local funding combined shows a figure of 8% of our humanitarian funding going to local organisations.

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?

Belgium has taken a number of steps to ensure that local actors have a better and more direct access to humanitarian funds.

In 2017, Belgium continued to raise the issue of localisation with its humanitarian partners, in particular the multilateral organisations. Belgium has consistently stressed this point in our interactions with OCHA personnel managing CERF and CBPF. Of course we realize the capacity of local organizations needs to be at a certain level of quality (i.e. fund absorption, vetting procedures, reporting tools, accountability, respect for humanitarian principles, etc.). Belgium therefore used its position in the Advisory Boards of country based pool funds in order to advocate for increased funding to local actors, taking into account the importance of capacity-building. For instance, Belgium has supported the Nigeria UN managed country based pool fund, which has a specific window for capacity building initiatives for local and national actors.

Another concrete progress is the funding of 1.000.000 EUR that has been provided by Belgium to the Start Fund, which is managed by 42 international and local NGOs. In order to be able to provide funding to the Start Fund, an NGO pooled fund, Belgium had to change its legislation. One key element that determined Belgium's funding to the Start Fund is their current work on localisation. They published a report in August 2017 presenting a 'baseline assessment' of where the Start Fund projects currently sit with the 'localisation agenda'. The Start Fund is developing a NNGO led pooled fund in Bangladesh. Belgium follows closely how the fund is implementing this important aspect.

Another concrete steps taken is the creation of a "strategy working group" with our Belgian humanitarian NGOs, in order to discuss the main themes of the Grand Bargain, particularly on cash-based transfers, on localisation, humanitarian-development nexus. The discussion on the localisation agenda has led to the agreement of a common definition, being the one used in "Definitions Paper - IASC Humanitarian Financing Task Team, Localisation Marker Working Group" of the 21/12/2017. It was important for us and for our partners to agree on those terms as a first step for better reporting funding to local organisations.

Belgium is also funding a project from VOICE, aiming at contributing to strengthen further the quality of EU humanitarian aid through facilitating dialogue and providing operational expertise to the implementation of the Grand Bargain. The projects intends to foster NGOs and frontline responders engagement in the Grand Bargain, therefore contributing to a more inclusive and possibly a more contextualized implementation of the Grand Bargain.

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)?

Belgium aims to continue its advocacy towards more funding to local actors, in particular in the Advisory Boards of the country based pooled funds.

Belgium will also continue the work done in the working group created with the Belgian NGOs, and aims to have a better vision of the percentage of funding going to local actors. Dialogue will be maintained with our partners to find a coherent way to better report on this issue.

4. Efficiency gains

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

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?

The working group with our NGOs has proven to be a good format for exchanges on strategic issues, including on localisation, and showed the importance of a constant dialogue with our partners to ensure a coherent approach in the implementation of our commitments.

Work stream 3 – Cash

Aid organisations and donors commit to:

1. *Increase the routine use of cash alongside other tools, including in-kind assistance, service delivery (such as health and nutrition) and vouchers. Employ markers to measure increase and outcomes.*
2. *Invest in new delivery models which can be increased in scale while identifying best practice and mitigating risks in each context. Employ markers to track their evolution.*
3. *Build an evidence base to assess the costs, benefits, impacts, and risks of cash (including on protection) relative to in-kind assistance, service delivery interventions and vouchers, and combinations thereof.*
4. *Collaborate, share information and develop standards and guidelines for cash programming in order to better understand its risks and benefits.*
5. *Ensure that coordination, delivery, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are put in place for cash transfers.*
6. *Aim to increase use of cash programming beyond current low levels, where appropriate. Some organisations and donors may wish to set targets.*

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

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

Cash distributions were already possible for Belgium before the signing of the Grand Bargain. However they were conditional and tied to livelihoods items.

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 Royal Decree on Humanitarian aid has been reviewed and modified in June 2017. Funding unconditional cash is now allowed by our new legislation.

The donors and international organisations could not agree upon a target for cash based assistance during the Grand Bargain negotiations. However, the Minister of Development Cooperation announced in his policy brief for 2017 that 30% of all project and programme support on the Belgian humanitarian budget should be cash based by the year 2020.

In 2017, Belgium allocated 22,6% of its humanitarian project and programme support to CBT. Belgium has therefore made substantial progress since 2016 (15%) and aims at reaching the 30% target by 2020.

In order to report efficiently and in a consistent way on the percentage of CBT in our funding, a “strategy working group” has been created with our Belgian NGOs, in order to discuss the main themes of the Grand Bargain, particularly on cash-based transfers, on localisation, humanitarian-development nexus. The discussion on the cash-transfers has led to the agreement of a common definition of CBT, being the one used in the ODI report “Counting cash: tracking humanitarian expenditure on cash-based programming”.

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)?

Belgium aims to continue reinforcing the quality of its reporting, including regarding CBT. To that end, Belgium will pursue dialogue with its humanitarian partner on this issue.

Belgium is also funding projects aiming at reinforcing knowledge on CBT. In 2018, Belgium will host a series of trainings organised by NRC-Cash Cap aiming at enhancing efficiency and effectiveness of cash and market based response as well as documenting/sharing good practices.

Belgium will also host an event organised by NRC in order to bring together donors and high level parties, providing a platform for discussions with senior technical experts from the NRC CashCap expert deployment project.

4. Efficiency gains

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

On the issue of reporting, one element that seemed interesting to us is to have a breakdown of what part of budget is “purely cash” and what part comprises the “CBT related costs”, meaning the costs necessary to deliver CBT. This aspect seems essential to us to have a clear idea of the real costs of CBT. We think this information is actually useful not only for us as donors but also for the organisations themselves, and for the humanitarian system at large.

5. Good practices and lessons learned

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?

Discussions on CBT reporting brought on a broader discussion on the way we track the funding provided, and how we can have a better picture of the activities we are funding, without adding heavy burden on organisations.

The working group with our NGOs has proven to be a good format for exchanges on strategic issues, including on CBT, and showed the importance of a constant dialogue with our partners to ensure a coherent approach in the implementation of our commitments.

Work stream 4 – Management costs
Work stream 5 – Needs Assessment
Work stream 6 – Participation Revolution

Belgium does not report on work streams 4, 5 and 6, as the implementation of the commitments of those work streams are mainly the responsibility of international aid organisations, and not of donors.

However, Belgium has always put the Grand Bargain and the implementation of the 10 commitments on the agenda of its bilateral discussions with the international aid organisations in 2017, with the mutual understanding that each party should focus on what it can do best and can realistically achieve.

As mentioned above, Belgium is also funding a project from VOICE, aiming at contributing to strengthen further the quality of EU humanitarian aid through facilitating dialogue and providing operational expertise to the implementation of the Grand Bargain. The projects intends to foster NGOs and frontline responders engagement in the Grand Bargain, therefore contributing to a more inclusive and possibly a more contextualized implementation of the Grand Bargain.

Besides, a specific paragraph has been added in its agreement on core funding (2018-2020) on the great value Belgium attaches to the implementation of the Grand Bargain commitments by its different stakeholders. It is specifically mentioned that “the effective translation of these commitments into concrete action will be taken into account when Belgium will decide on its new financing cycle for core contributions (2021-2023).”

Work stream 7 - Multi-year planning and funding

Aid organisations and donors commit to:

1. *Increase multi-year, collaborative and flexible planning and multi-year funding instruments and document the impacts on programme efficiency and effectiveness, ensuring that recipients apply the same funding arrangements with their implementing partners.*
2. *Support in at least five countries by the end of 2017 multi-year collaborative planning and response plans through multi-year funding and monitor and evaluate the outcomes of these responses.*
3. *Strengthen existing coordination efforts to share analysis of needs and risks between the humanitarian and development sectors and to better align humanitarian and development planning tools and interventions while respecting the principles of both.*

Multi-year planning and funding work stream co-conveners reporting request: Please report the percentage and total value of multi-year agreements² you have provided (as a donor) or received and provided to humanitarian partners (as an agency) in 2017, and any earmarking conditions.³ When reporting on efficiency gains, please try to provide quantitative examples.

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

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

Belgium had at the time of the signing of the Grand Bargain four budgetary instruments available for humanitarian financing:

- Projects (with annual agreements)
- Programmes (with multi-annual agreements covering up to 2 ½ years)
- Core funding (with multi-annual agreements covering 3 years)
- Flexible funding (with multi-annual agreements covering 2 years)

Thus, multi-year financing was already embedded in the Belgian humanitarian mode of operation before the start of the World Humanitarian Summit.

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?

² Multiyear funding is funding provided for two or more years based on a firm commitment at the outset

³ For the Grand Bargain definitions of earmarking, please see Annex I. Earmarking modalities, as contained with the final agreement, available [here](#).

In order to further implement its commitment on longer term humanitarian funding, Belgium had decided in 2016 to extend the implementation period for programmes up to 5 years and the law on development cooperation had been revised on the 16th of June 2016.

Currently, three of the four budget lines for humanitarian aid are multiyear. They are therefore committed in year one and disbursed over the following years. In 2017, 72,5% of the humanitarian aid budget was multiyear.

In September 2017, Belgium has, together with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), formally issued, the very first Humanitarian Impact Bond. Belgium is, together with the ICRC, the groundbreaker of this new financing mechanism which will be rolled out to build three physical rehabilitation centres in conflict zones.

Belgium has also initiated discussions with platforms such as FTS and EDRIS, to ensure they reflect properly multi-year funding. Transparency and efficient reporting is key for donors as Belgium, which give a large part of multiyear funding.

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)?

Belgium will remain committed to provide a large part of multiyear funding to its humanitarian partners.

For the period 2018-2020, Belgium is also planning to increase the core funding given to humanitarian organisations. The core funding budget line is disbursed over three years, making Belgium funding predictable and reliable.

4. Efficiency gains

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

Predictable funding allows humanitarian partners to engage in more stable relationships with donors, such as Belgium. It helps donors and organisations to establish more strategic partnerships and provides secure commitments for organisations. Belgium consider multi-year funding to be essential to ensure continuity of humanitarian operations.

5. Good practice and lessons learned

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

Aid organisations and donors commit to:

- 1. Jointly determine, on an annual basis, the most effective and efficient way of reporting on unearmarked and softly earmarked funding and to initiate this reporting by the end of 2017.*
- 2. Reduce the degree of earmarking of funds contributed by governments and regional groups who currently provide low levels of flexible finance. Aid organisations in turn commit to do the same with their funding when channelling it through partners.*

Aid organisations commit to:

- 3. Be transparent and regularly share information with donors outlining the criteria for how core and unearmarked funding is allocated (for example, urgent needs, emergency preparedness, forgotten contexts, improved management)*
- 4. Increase the visibility of unearmarked and softly earmarked funding, thereby recognising the contribution made by donors.*

Donors commit to:

- 5. Progressively reduce the earmarking of their humanitarian contributions. The aim is to aspire to achieve a global target of 30 per cent of humanitarian contributions that is non earmarked or softly earmarked by 2020⁴.*

Earmarking/flexibility work stream co-conveners reporting request: Please specify if possible the percentages of 2017 vs 2016 of:

- Unearmarked contributions (given/received)
- Softly earmarked contributions (given/received)
- Country earmarked contributions (given/received)
- Tightly earmarked contributions (given/received)

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

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

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

Budget execution in 2016 was as follows:

⁴ For the Grand Bargain definitions of earmarking, please see Annex I. Earmarking modalities, as contained with the final agreement, available [here](#).

Payments budget	Budget 2016	Execution 2016	Execution rate
Programmes	46.800.000	46.579.494	99,53%
Core funding	20.000.000	20.000.000	100,00%
Flexible funds	61.500.000	61.500.000	100,00%
Projects	49.099.000	49.060.637	99,92%
Total	177.399.000	177.140.131	99,85%

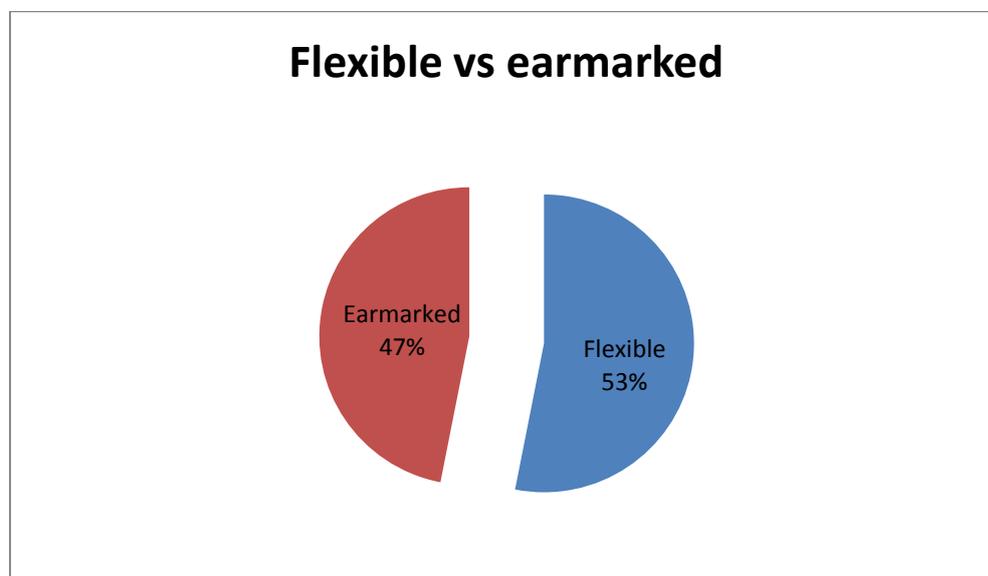
Belgium considers “core funding” and “funding for flexible funds” to be non-earmarked or very loosely earmarked. The rate for this kind of spending stands in 2016 at 46% of total spending. Therefore, Belgium already today exceeds the target of 30% to be reached by 2020, set during the Grand Bargain.

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 2017, Belgium has continued to support through core funding its humanitarian partners and has provided 52.900.000 EUR to the CERF and country-based pooled funds. Additionally, the flexible funds of humanitarian organisations, such as the SFERA (FAO), the IRA (WFP) and the DREF (IFRC) have also received significant support. In 2017, 1.000.000 EUR has also been provided to the Start Fund.

The percentage of flexible contributions in 2017 was as follows:



By providing 53% of its humanitarian funding in a flexible way, Belgium largely exceeds the target of 30% to be reached by 2020, set during the Grand Bargain.

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)?

For the period 2018-2020, Belgium aims at further increasing its percentage of unearmarked humanitarian funding. In order to do so, Belgium is planning to increase the core funding given to humanitarian organisations. The core funding budget line is disbursed over three years, making Belgium funding predictable and reliable.

4. Efficiency gains

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

Belgium had already, since 2014, a humanitarian aid strategy establishing the importance of flexible funding. Predictable and flexible funding allows humanitarian organisations to engage in more stable relationships with donors. The relationship moves towards a more consistent and strategic partnership, rather than ad hoc dialogues on specific projects. Time is gained by reducing the administrative burden, both on donors and on organisations.

5. Good practices and lessons learned

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?

In order to make flexible funding attractive to donors, reporting and transparency standards must be of high quality. Timely and reliable information of how the resources are used is essential. As a best practice, we can mention the Immediate Response Account (IRA) website of WFP, which provides a ranking of IRA donors, providing them enhanced visibility, and a list of the IRA allocations per country. The website is updated each month in order for donors to have up-to-date information.

Belgium holds a seat in the Advisory Boards of several CBPF (oPt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan...), whether it be as a full member, a shared seat or as an observer. In these Boards, Belgium is keen on seeing the humanitarian principles and the CBPF Global Guidelines respected in the funding attribution process. Belgium has with success pleaded to keep these in mind. It has been the case that in some CBPF a proposed funding allocation was perceived as being driven by arguments other than prioritized needs (i.e. made under pressure of certain partner/authority/context). Belgium pleads CBPF to stick strictly to the humanitarian principles and to the CBPF guidelines when deciding on funding allocations.

OCHA and donors have a duty of care to protect the funds provided to Country Based Pooled Funds (CBPF) and to ensure that these funds are used for the purpose intended, and are as such committed to working together to address concerns around fraud, diversion or misappropriation. Through its implication in the Pooled Fund Working Group for CBPF, BE has together with other donors, agreed on a set of principles for information sharing on investigations, and cases of potential fraud involving implementing partners.

Work stream 9 – Reporting requirements

Aid organisations and donors commit to:

- 1. Simplify and harmonise reporting requirements by the end of 2018 by reducing its volume, jointly deciding on common terminology, identifying core requirements and developing a common report structure.*
- 2. Invest in technology and reporting systems to enable better access to information.*
- 3. Enhance the quality of reporting to better capture results, enable learning and increase the efficiency of reporting.*

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

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

At the start of the World Humanitarian Summit Belgium had two different sets of reporting requirements:

- the reporting requirement for International Humanitarian Organisations were already fully aligned to the requirements agreed upon in the boards of the respective organisations;
- the reporting requirements for NGO's were partly aligned to the requirements imposed by DG ECHO upon their recognised actors (i.e. the "single form" which is a standardised template to be used for the proposal, the midterm and the final reporting). However, Belgium also required a separate administrative file to be attached to each financing proposal. This administrative file consisted of 1) the most recent strategy of the NGO, 2) the most recent work plan, 3) proof of being a signatory to the Red Cross/Red Crescent Code of Conduct, 4) proof of ECHO recognition or HAP accreditation, 5) proof of a similar past project or programme in the same region with 6) a positive evaluation).

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 Royal Decree on Humanitarian Aid has been revised in June 2017 and comprises measures to further simplify the reporting requirements for the NGO's. The changes in the Royal Decree have allowed to lighten the administrative burden for the NGO's. The administrative file is now required once a year and can now be uploaded electronically to the extranet of the Ministry.

Another concrete step taken is the creation of a "procedure working group" with our Belgian NGOs, aiming at improving our internal procedures, including on reporting. The working group on "strategy" with our Belgian NGOs has also allowed to address the issue of the quality of reporting, especially when it comes to CBT and localisation.

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 aim to continue the work undertaken with our NGOs on our internal and administrative procedures.

As we already accept the reporting requirement for International Humanitarian Organisations were already fully aligned to the requirements agreed upon in the boards of the respective organisations, there is no further progress to make on this issue.

4. Efficiency gains

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

Based on the discussions we had with our NGOs, aligning the reporting requirements to the requirements imposed by DG ECHO, a major humanitarian donor, was proven to be efficient and easier for our partners. They can indeed use the same form to apply to Belgium's funding and to report on the project/programme funded, which make their work lighter. We are still convinced alignment of reporting requirements between donors is essential in order to avoid duplication of reporting and heavy burden of humanitarian organisations.

5. Good practices and lessons learned

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?

As reported above, discussions on CBT reporting brought on a broader discussion on the way we track the funding provided, and how we can have a better picture of the activities we are funding, without adding heavy burden on organisations.

The "procedure working group with our NGOs has proven to be a good format for exchanges on strategic issues, including on CBT, and showed the importance of a constant dialogue with our partners to ensure a coherent approach in the implementation of our commitments.

Work stream 10 – Humanitarian – Development engagement

Aid organisations and donors commit to:

1. *Use existing resources and capabilities better to shrink humanitarian needs over the long term with the view of contributing to the outcomes of the Sustainable Development Goals. Significantly increase prevention, mitigation and preparedness for early action to anticipate and secure resources for recovery. This will need to be the focus not only of aid organisations and donors but also of national governments at all levels, civil society, and the private sector.*
2. *Invest in durable solutions for refugees, internally displaced people and sustainable support to migrants, returnees and host/receiving communities, as well as for other situations of recurring vulnerabilities.*
3. *Increase social protection programmes and strengthen national and local systems and coping mechanisms in order to build resilience in fragile contexts.*
4. *Perform joint multi-hazard risk and vulnerability analysis, and multi-year planning where feasible and relevant, with national, regional and local coordination in order to achieve a shared vision for outcomes. Such a shared vision for outcomes will be developed on the basis of shared risk analysis between humanitarian, development, stabilisation and peacebuilding communities.*
5. *Galvanise new partnerships that bring additional capabilities and resources to crisis affected states through Multilateral Development Banks within their mandate and foster innovative partnerships with the private sector.*

Humanitarian-Development engagement work stream co-conveners reporting request:

What has your organisation done to operationalise the humanitarian-development nexus at country level?"

1. Baseline (only in year 1)

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

At the time of signing of the Grand Bargain, Belgium already had an instrument on its humanitarian budget to bridge the gap between humanitarian and development efforts. On its programme budget line, Belgium can finance humanitarian programs with a timespan running up to 5 years.

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?

At the beginning of 2017, a new directorate was created within DGD. The new directorate comprises two different units: one focusing on humanitarian aid and one focusing on transitioning towards development and good governance. Both units have their own objectives, but nevertheless look at mutual reinforcing complementarities without compromising the underlying principles.

Belgium's humanitarian aid is well placed to support activities bridging the gap between development and humanitarian assistance. Our legal framework allows us to support a large panel of activities, from DRR to reconstruction. In 2017, Belgium launched an appeal for the humanitarian Belgian NGO's for proposals addressing the lack of preparedness in disaster-prone areas. These kind of interventions typically requires a longer term engagement which goes beyond the timeframe of more classical emergency activities.

Furthermore, Belgium has worked with the FAO in order to open a new window to the SFERA, aiming at funding activities of early action. In 2017, Belgium provided specific funding to this window (1.000.000 EUR) in order to translate warnings into anticipatory actions to reduce the impact of specific disaster events. It focuses on consolidating available forecasting information and putting plans in place to make sure FAO acts when a warning is at hand.

Another concrete step taken is the creation of a "strategy working group" with our Belgian NGOs, in order to discuss the main themes of the Grand Bargain, particularly on cash-based transfers, on localisation, humanitarian-development nexus. The discussions focus on understanding what the nexus concretely means for our partners. It is essential for us to avoid a top-down approach when it comes to implement the nexus, but instead to ensure a pragmatic approach that includes field experience and perspectives.

In terms of transitional development, three calls for proposals for a total estimated budget of 10 MEUR have been launched to identify projects in Burundi, the DR Congo and Lake Chad Region (Niger & Chad) that address the root causes of protracted crises, such as protecting human rights, addressing corruption and strengthening economic resilience with a focus on youth employment. This provides Belgium with a new instrument that goes beyond humanitarian assistance and prepares the ground for more structural development cooperation.

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 coming years, continued efforts will promote complementarity and coherence between humanitarian aid and the new development cooperation programmes. Belgium will encourage this coherence in its dialogue with UN partner organisations (e.g. in the context of the UN Development System reform) and within the European Union focusing on their aid instruments (e.g. MADAD Trust Fund for Syrian refugees; EU support to resilience).

The projects selected through the calls for proposals for transitional development will be financed and start implementation in 2018. This new aid instrument will be reviewed in order to consider making it a permanent channel of the Belgian development cooperation with annual calls for proposals.

4. Efficiency gains

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

Increased coordination efforts have been made internally since the adoption of the Grand Bargain. Clear progress has been made on this issue, and dialogue has been reinforced between the humanitarian and development units. The creation of a new directorate has directly contributed to the facilitation of exchanges between the two fields.

The new unit for transitional development has been able to regroup the available expertise on working in fragile situations and protracted crises, which allows for efficient management of directly focused interventions and policy dialogue in this area at the crossroad of humanitarian and development assistance.

5. Good practices and lessons learned

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?

From the discussions we had with our partners, the following elements can be highlighted:

- The guiding purpose is to work collaboratively on the basis of common context analyses and risks assessments, benefiting from comparative advantages of humanitarian and development actors. This is particularly relevant where risks are predictable and humanitarian needs are protracted or recurrent.
- the nexus between humanitarian and development cooperation does not imply an enlargement of mandates of humanitarian and development actors. Mandates and expertise should be maintained but synergies and complementarities should be found between the relevant fields of action.
- We feel that fostering complementarity and cooperation between humanitarian and development actors could usefully be built on the following steps:
 - Joint analysis consisting in a common overall situation diagnosis, encompassing joint assessments of risks, vulnerabilities and local/national capacities to address those, targeting the most vulnerable segments of a population.
 - On the basis of the results of the joint analysis and if the context allows it, joint targeting of beneficiaries, with the establishment of complementary planning of activities between humanitarian and development actors. This should be done only if it does not hamper the humanitarian principles.
 - Adoption of longer-term humanitarian planning cycles, predictable and flexible funding, and a more flexible transitional development approach.
 - Engagement of transitional development actors at an earlier stage in humanitarian crisis and fragile contexts.
- Specifically referring to refugees, a successful approach has been to include host communities amongst the beneficiaries of the humanitarian support programmes, as well as to include refugees as beneficiaries of development interventions that initially only targeted host communities.