

Grand Bargain in 2018:
Annual Self Report – Narrative Summary

Name of Institution:

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation - Italy
(MFAIC)**

Point of Contact (name, title, email):

**Mrs. Cristina Carezza, Counsellor and Chief of Humanitarian Aid
& Emergency office, Cristina.carenza@esteri.it**

Date of Submission: **22/03/2019**

Note: In 2014 Italy undertook a comprehensive reform of development co-operation which introduced two main institutional actors: the MFAIC (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation) and the AICS (Italian Agency for Development Co-operation). The DGCS (Directorate General for Development Co-operation) within the MFAIC is in charge of planning and policy making, country programming, decision making on multilateral and multi-bilateral policy, humanitarian assistance and provision of loans. DGCS is also responsible for impact evaluation of development co-operation activities. AICS mandate, under MFAIC oversight, is to perform technical and operational activities related to formulation, appraisal, financing, implementation, monitoring and control of programmes and projects. At country level AICS operates through its field offices.

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?

Localization. We continue to favour an approach towards localization of the response and participation of affected communities as a key driver to enhance efficiency and sustainability of humanitarian action. AICS local offices strive to enhance partnerships and consortia between international and local CSOs in order to boost local capacities. Current legal framework and operational procedures have been revised with a focus on new modalities aiming at strengthening the participation of local CSOs. Further improvements currently under discussion include the translation in different communication languages of Calls for Proposals for bilateral initiatives and project templates.

We also continue to provide support to IFRC/ICRC programmes recognizing the comparative advantages of the mentioned Organizations to actively engage and partner with National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies as the key first responders in case of natural disaster or complex crisis.

Moreover, we increased our support to funding tools, such as the country-based pooled funds managed by OCHA in oPt and Syria, aiming at strengthening assistance delivered by local and national responders,

Common Reporting. Italy participates to the "Harmonized Narrative Reporting Pilot" in 3 countries (Myanmar, Somalia and Iraq). Calls for Proposals launched in the 3 pilot countries were modified accordingly and selected CSOs were required to use the common reporting format (8+3 template). So far, we received: 4 intermediate and 10 final reports by CSOs for Iraq; 4 intermediate and 4 final reports by CSOs for Somalia. International Organizations that received funds from Italy and endorsed the common Reporting as implementing partners (i.e. UNICEF, WHO in Iraq; WFP in Somalia) have never used so far the 8 + 3 format in reporting to Italy.

Nexus. The 3-year Programming and Policy Planning Document (PPPD) 2019-2021 (see next paragraph) foresees the revision of the Italian Development Effectiveness Plan of Action as per OECD-DAC recommendations, which includes the introduction of the Policy Guidelines on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus (Triple Nexus), particularly in fragile and conflict-affected situations and protracted crises, in line with WHS/GB/New Deal commitments. The new

Guidelines, currently under preparation by a joint working group was formed by MAECI, AICS, CSOs and Accademia to draft the Guidelines., will provide: 1) an overall policy strategy on coordination, programming and financing 2) conflict sensitive and context specific tools to address fragility.

Significant elements of flexibility and complementarity have been already introduced in the programming and financing of humanitarian and resilience interventions. Together with EU and EU Member States, Italy participates to the nexus operationalization process carried out in Sudan, as EU pilot country for operationalizing the nexus. Field office continues to work mainly on the two selected areas (undernutrition and forced displacement), through a complementary response that includes humanitarian, development and peace approach. In the field, Italy continues its efforts to respond to crises using both humanitarian and development instruments wherever possible. It is the case of the response to the Syrian as well as to the Libyan crises.

Aid Effectiveness. MAECI and AICS are currently drafting the Italian Development Cooperation 3-year Plan of Action for Aid Effectiveness 2019-2021, as recommended by OECD DAC. The new Plan foresees the introduction of a results-based management (RBM) approach in line with aid effectiveness principles, the EU Agenda for Change and new Consensus on Development. In 2018 AICS commissioned a feasibility study to develop RBM approach at HQ and field level as part of its commitment to apply effectiveness principles.

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

Common Reporting. Feedbacks from the country offices regarding the adoption of the common reporting format (8+3 template) in the 3 pilot countries will feed discussions at HQ level: reporting formats and operational manual regarding bilateral initiatives will be revised and standardized accordingly, introducing a behavioural change among Italy and its implementing traditional partners. As for multilateral initiatives, feedbacks from the country offices will help to better understand how to adjust current reporting practice and standardize reporting requirements with international organizations, including revision of project agreements whenever feasible.

Nexus. The new draft Triple Nexus Guidelines will be discussed at the National Council for Development Cooperation (CNCS) in order to facilitate dialogue between policy makers and stakeholders that are part of the overall Italian Development Cooperation System and approved by the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Development Cooperation (CICS) The Aid efficiency marker for humanitarian and development projects will be revised according to new triple nexus policy guidelines and operational formats will reflect the changes.

Aid Effectiveness. The introduction of a results-based management (RBM) approach will lead to an enormous transformation which entails a cultural and organizational change, in order to align the Italian Cooperation system to principles and aid effectiveness objectives. The results of the feasibility study commissioned by AICS will help to develop an RBM approach at HQ and field level,

through the adoption of Result Frameworks (RF) and indicators, the revision of the methodology for the programming and budget exercise, the adoption of revised procedures, RBM manual, and quality control systems, staff training programs, development of related IT system.

Question 3: How has your institution contributed to the advancement of gender equality and women’s empowerment¹ in humanitarian settings through its implementation of the Grand Bargain? What results/outcomes have been achieved in this regard? (please outline specific initiatives or changes in practice and their outcomes/results).

Italy is strongly committed to the prevention of sexual violence in conflict and to combat all forms of gender-based violence and endorsed the Call to Action to end sexual violence in conflict. Italy follows a twin-track approach, implementing i) programmes who directly target women and their specific needs ii) as well as mainstreaming gender and fostering the role of women as driver of change.

New updated guidelines on gender equality and women empowerment, including specific commitments on humanitarian action and gender based violence, will reflect institutional changes in strategic programming and practice.

Several programmes are implemented to tackle malnutrition and support maternal health, especially in African countries – such as Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo and Central African Republic – and in conflict affected areas, such as Syria. In addition, Italy recently scaled up its support to gender based violence programmes – also to fulfil its commitment to the above mentioned Call to action. For instance – Italy funded UNFPA projects in Yemen, Afghanistan and Syria and UNICEF GBV programmes in Libya and Iraq – countries where conflict exacerbated all forms of violence against women and girls, including intimate partner violence. The case of Palestine is also to be mentioned as the Italian Cooperation is testing a new pilot approach to such protracted crises, particularly focusing on “advocacy” and strengthening the cooperation between humanitarian and development tools (Nexus), in order to empower women, sensitize the local population on human and women rights, also supporting the role of women as agents of positive transformation and resilience building.

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

Following the WHS, Italy started a re-organization process to improve quality of humanitarian action and to ensure synergy between humanitarian and development actions. For specific protracted crises (i.e. Libyan and Syrian crises), Italy started to adopt a comprehensive approach in the programming process, both at programme and project level, bearing in mind the key EU commitments and guidance on resilience building and humanitarian-development nexus. A working group at HQ level was created to draft policy guidelines on humanitarian-development nexus in order to mainstream the nexus approach into operational procedures.

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