



Grand Bargain Workshop Reports

A Lebanese NGOs perspective in the Grand Bargain implementation

Workshop 1: 26 October 2018

Workshop 2: 24 May 2019

Beirut, Lebanon

Sharing understanding and perspectives on the implementation of the Grand Bargain and fostering space for NGOs operating in Lebanon to bring a field perspective into the discussions

With the support of  Lebanon Humanitarian
INGO Forum and  **LHDF**

Highlights from the two workshops:

- Thanks to the support of Caritas Lebanon and the two NGOs platforms (LHIF – Lebanon Humanitarian INGO forum, and LHDF – Lebanese Humanitarian and Development Forum), participation from local, national and international NGOs was made possible – providing a comprehensive engagement from the NGO community operating in the country and reflecting its diversity.
- In the first workshop, NGOs operating in Lebanon welcomed the opportunity to learn and deepen their knowledge on the Grand Bargain and its implementation. Through open and constructive discussions, participants shared their operational perspective and exchanged relevant experiences linked to the Grand Bargain and the humanitarian financing architecture in Lebanon.
- The workshop enabled participants to explore the relevance of the Grand Bargain in relation to their daily work. By exploring work stream by workstream the commitments made and how they resonate in Lebanon; participants noted the relevance of the Grand Bargain in its entirety and its potential for field operations.
- Building on this first workshop, the second one gathered NGOs and other humanitarian actors present in Lebanon – including UN agencies, OCHA and donors representatives. Working collectively, in the spirit of the Grand Bargain, the second workshop allowed in-depth brainstorming sessions. Good practices and experiences were captured for most of the workstream.
- At the end of this second workshop participants had collectively developed a series of recommendations to foster the implementation of the GB and its nine workstreams in the Lebanese context. Those recommendations will be looked at by the NGO networks and might generate further discussions.

Notes from the Workshop 2

Organized by VOICE and Caritas Lebanon with the support of the LHIF and LNGO forum, the second Grand Bargain Workshop took place in Beirut on Friday May 24, 2019 with representatives from NGOs, INGOs, UN agencies, the EU and donors respectively.

In light of this, introductory remarks were made by Bruno Atieh, Director of Programs and Operations at Caritas Lebanon, which emphasized on the significant transformation in the role and contribution of local NGOs, while dealing with the many humanitarian, social and economic challenges facing Lebanon. He also added that following a long experience in humanitarian action and the partnerships that were built with international partners and donors, helped local NGOs enhance their internal structures and systems. Then he moved to introduce the Lebanon Humanitarian and Development Forum LHDF (previously known as the LNGO forum), which is an independent entity composed of a number of local NGOs (more than 60 regularly attending plenary meetings and 40 in the membership, at this stage) operating in Lebanon that facilitates coordination between them and other relevant stakeholders aiming at enhancing the efficiency and the impact of the response to the humanitarian and development needs in the country.

Finally, he concluded his remarks by mentioning some of the successful examples to committing to the Grand Bargain work-streams but still encouraged a lot of work from humanitarian actors in order to see better implementation and cooperation towards a more balanced humanitarian system and equal partnership.

UNHCR representative Ms. Mireille Girard, then took the stand to share some of the views and discussed how the Syrian Crisis has influenced the Grand Bargain and how Lebanon is now linking development to the humanitarian response. Moreover, in terms of the LCRP, actors have developed a monitoring & evaluating framework. They saw an increase in the level of funding but still was not enough. She believes that UN agencies can do more in terms of supporting local organizations and moved to speak about the several GB work-streams. In other words, Lebanon has the largest cash programs, which is one of the recommendation of the GB. She continues to highlight on multi-year funding and how we are still very far from accomplishing it, hoping to reflect on it during the workshop throughout the day. She also talked about the government and the private sector (which is a big sector in Lebanon) and how we can engage them in projects affiliated to humanitarian response, even how we can learn from them...

She resumed her speech by thanking the GB initiative and with a statement: "let's make sure we do not leave any refugee behind".

To conclude on the introduction section, Magali from VOICE took the platform and thanked the forum, OCHA, Caritas and partners for their support on the workshop. She then moved to a PowerPoint presentation to refresh attendees on the work of VOICE, on the GB work-streams, the structure and the increasing number of signatories ; and reminded participants of the workshop's objectives, that were to:

- a) Gather NGOs, UN agencies and donors' perspective on the progress made in Lebanon in the implementation of the Grand Bargain.
- b) Identify key commitments that would benefit the delivery of principled and efficient humanitarian aid in the Lebanese context.
- c) Suggest ways forward to foster the implementation of the Grand Bargain in the country.

THE GRAND BARGAIN WORKSHOP II, THE OUTCOMES

Group 1:

4. Reduce duplication and management costs with periodic functional reviews
7. Increase collaborative humanitarian multi-year planning and funding
8. Reduce the earmarking of donor contributions
9. Harmonize and simplify reporting requirements

Group 2:

2. More support and funding tools for local and national responders
3. Increase the use and coordination of cash-based programming
6. A participation revolution: include people receiving aid in making the decisions which affect their lives

Group 3:

1. Greater transparency
5. Improve joint and impartial needs assessments
10. Enhance engagement between humanitarian and development actors

Group 1:

4. Reduce duplication and management costs with periodic functional reviews
7. Increase collaborative humanitarian multi-year planning and funding
8. Reduce the earmarking of donor contributions



4. Reduce duplication and management costs with periodic functional reviews Witnessing more integrated approach within sectors = less duplication, less cost

Good Practices and Positive Experiences:

- Methodology of consortium = decrease of management cost
- More equal partnerships between INGO and LNGO redefining the role of each = reducing duplication cost (LNGO grant holder/INGO support)
- More funding channeled directly to local NGO (LHF % in 2017) either from UN or from foreign ministries

Constraints:

- No harmonized assessments of NGOs = duplication of capacity assessments (HACT)
- Direct funding to LNGO remains very low (less of 5%)
- Duplication of capacity building to LNGO by different organizations
- Lack of transparency about source of funding (missed opportunity for resource sharing)

Recommendations:

- An ISO label for NGOs (compliance to a set of specification)? = remove capacity assessments

- Partnership/Funding Mapping (Avoid duplication) + Incentive?
- Consortium with equal partnership + Share/give fair share of overhead to LNGO

7. Increase collaborative humanitarian multi-year planning and funding

Good Practices and Positive Experiences:

- Improved Multiyear planning (LCRP)
- Some progress by EU with MADAD
- Germany a pioneer in Multiyear Funding
- Canadian initiative through UNDP
- Some good US experience in past (Baladi Cap)
- Shabake Program (AFD)
- Well established LNGO accessing direct back donor and MYF more easily than before
- Orientation meetings by donors
- US based funding allowing for 2 year projects with annual review (better visibility – BPRM)

Constraints:

- MYF is still low
- Still difficult for humanitarian funding to extend to MYF
- Lack of info for LNGO about funding opportunities (need Calendar)
- Lack of capacity of LNGO to access direct back donor funding/MYF
- Lack of capacity of LNGO to answer call for proposal and requirements
- UN agencies remain on yearly or 6 months programs

Recommendations:

- Including Theory of change in the LCRP (MYP)
- Continue advocating for MYF
- Link donor group to LHDF (Donors Fair)

8. Reduce the earmarking of donor contributions

Good Practices and Positive Experiences:

- Consortium approach allows to reduce earmarking of funds

Constraints:

- Earmarking of EU funding remains high + regulation difficult to understand
- No or limited flexibility to re-allocate budget-lines
- No flexibility to change the structure of the budget along the project implementation
- Political agenda of the donors
- Quantity Vs. Quality leading to underfunded sectors (Shelter)
- Visibility Vs. Impact

Recommendations:

- More engagement during project implementation between donor/NGO: to meet on regular basis to review project orientation and adapt budget
- Pool of un-earmarked funding (e.g UK Start Network)
- Advocacy for less funded sectors (Shelter)

9. Harmonize and simplify reporting requirements

Good Practices and Positive Experiences:

- Use of technology and financial tracking: Activity Info – RAIS – Qudra Online
- More organizations are reporting on these platforms
- Some improvements in reducing the frequency of reporting (weekly to monthly to quarterly)
- International Data Management (data input in one spreadsheet filling automatically number of reports)

Constraints:

- Seems to be very difficult to align the reporting requirements of donors
- Data management can become complicated for organizations = cost of linking own data management systems with the reporting platforms – double reporting
- Reporting not harmonized even within the same agency (UNHCR)
- Little feedback from donors on narrative reports
- Multiplication of reports (MHPSS + Activity Info) – (Task force Ministry of Health?)

Recommendations:

- Harmonize reporting templates (UN agencies , EU countries)
- Remove duplication of Reporting
- More standardization requested – e.g on frequency

Group 2:

2. More support and funding tools for local and national responders
3. Increase the use and coordination of cash-based programming
6. A participation revolution: include people receiving aid in making the decisions which affect their lives



2. More support and funding tools for local and national responders

Good Practices and Positive Experiences:

- Design of country based plans with local partners
- Survey with LNGOs for CB (IA/Shelter)
- LHF (Country based pooled funds CBPF) supporting the LHDF
- Although funding should reach 25% for LNGOs, the funding volume is small and 3% is the overall response
- LHF mentoring small LNGOs with BIOFORCE self-assessment to be able to access funding
- OCHA's mapping of good donors initiatives = RDPP, SHABAKE (AFD), Baladi Cap

Constraints:

- Competition over funds
- Lack of capacities (for some it is technical, for others it's HR...)
- Lack of trust between international and local organizations
- Lack of political connections, PR, marketing to "sell themselves"
- Lack of Info on "who" are the local NGOs

- Risk-based choice (i.e. funding LNGOs)
- The perception that LNGOs do not worth partnering with
- The operational space in LNGOs is affecting their work as some organizations are getting smaller and are at risk of being closed
- Definition of an exit strategy

Recommendations:

- Quality of Operation: Having a localized approach for CB, Making sure that CB is not only compliant with donors (but 2 ways relationship)...
- (to donors) having in the guidelines of calls for proposals, the obligation to create “alliances” (i.e. consortia) to respond/implement and include in practice handover-transfer
- (To LNGOs) joining existing coordination mechanisms to “join their forces”
- (to donors) equal allocation of funds to all the partners (in particular management costs) to build their internal capacities (quality, capacity building, MEAL, staff care etc...)
- (to donors) ensuring the active involvement of the LNGOs in the drafting of the calls for proposals
- (to LNGOs) strengthening the access to information and contact of NGOs, networking and supporting NGOs in sharing their data
- (to NGOs) partnering with researchers and the private sector to strengthen the assessment + intervention localized/contextualized
- (to NGOs) asking for the support of the government of Lebanon (key ministers) to advocated with donors, for direct funding
- (to donors) giving systematically to LNGOs admin/overhead costs

3. Increase the use and coordination of cash-based programming

Good Practices and Positive Experiences:

- Voucher in Aarsal (ACF), complementary to cash (Dignity)
- Cash for Work for students
- 50/50 (Syrian refugees/Host communities) cash programs
- Cash as a cross cutting effort
- Complementarity with infrastructure (Health centers)

Constraints:

- Lack of Sustainability
- Tension with Host Community
- Political:
 - NPTP (National Poverty Targeting Program)
 - the Lists are not updated
 - no modalities
 - no processes
 - LCC (Lebanon Cash Consortium)
 - did not work because of competition
 - UN
 - they took over
- The number of beneficiaries decreased, and the targeting increased
- For LNGOs, Cash programs are considered to be very time consuming, there is a lot of reporting requirements and a lack of accountability mechanisms.

Recommendations:

- (to NGOs) enhancing our understanding on what is cash to adapt our programs and ensuring that cash is not the only modality
- (to donors/international agencies) raising the awareness of the donors and international partners on the protection threats related to cash and not considering it systematically as a modality
- (to NGOs + Donors) avoiding giving incentives / stipends and focusing on creating opportunities (SMES/ Tool kits/ etc.)
- (to NGOs + Donors) focusing on cash programming coupled with Livelihood opportunities, mitigating as well tensions with balanced targeting
- (to LNGOs) considering having the LNGO forum joining the Cash Task Force

6. A participation revolution: include people receiving aid in making the decisions which affect their lives

Good Practices and Positive Experiences:

- Qualitative assessment (participatory one of UNHCR) mainstreamed by the IA
- Having affected communities “employed” (but this is controversial – Labor law)
- Forming local committees to inform the design, the implementation and engagement in governance/design
- Outreach Volunteers/ Committees of UNHCR
- Parents – Teachers committees (Syrian Refugees/Host Communities) with a contextualized approach (But depending on the willingness of the school)
- Digital tools – feedback mechanisms (example of UNHCR)
- Focus Group Discussions

Constraints:

- Time consuming
- Costly
- Not systematically included in the proposal – guidelines
- The tools are not adapted to ensure participation (should be more inclusive)
- The data provided by partners is not analyzed

Recommendation:

- (donors) deciding on common IM tools
- (donors/international partners/NGOs) having simplified assessment/participation tools
- (NGO forum) making sure that LNGOs are familiar with AAP + support them (awareness raising, capacity building, mentoring...)
- (Donors) allocating systematically funding to accountability mechanisms (survey on how to communicate with AAP, accountability officers, etc...)

Group 3:

1. Greater transparency
5. Improve joint and impartial needs assessments
10. Enhance engagement between humanitarian and development actors



1. Greater transparency

Good Practices and Positive Experiences:

- Increased transparency

Constraints:

- Big Data Platform: where is this data drawn from?
 - Need to share + feed into platform
 - Unpack details on hidden field data – Why? (Lack of trust? Lack of systems?)
 - LINGO Capacity on Data -> gathering and analysis ability
 - Activity Info: only UN indicators but more data is collected than this (recommended to add new log frame to this such as data for protection concerns)

Recommendations:

- Transparency:
 - encourage all donors/actors to publish data on funding
 - ensure all actors working in the response take part in coordination mechanisms

5. Improve joint and impartial needs assessments

Good Practices and Positive Experiences:

- Collaborative needs assessment

Constraints:

- Humanitarian/Development Nexus
- Needs assessments should not raise unrealistic expectations: community level capacity is essential: knowledge of Lebanese context (personal relations are important in meaningful data gathering) + Technical skills
- Right data to assess Vulnerability?
 - is one common/comprehensive data set possible?
 - Some vulnerable populations are not covered
 - Tools availability in Arabic
- Questions:
 - Can need assessments be encouraged outside of Project Cycle?

Recommendations:

- Data Collection & Analysis:
 - encourage all actors to share data (incentives) to existing platforms
 - avoid duplication of platforms
 - harmonize indicators, data collection methods

10. Enhance engagement between humanitarian and development actors

Constraints:

- Progress in Lebanon on Coordination?
 - Still don't have a solid overview
 - Major gaps on Lebanese Poverty Data
- VaSyr + Resistance from Government of Lebanon to engage in granular detail on Lebanese Poverty
- Need the Enabling Environment to use data to inform program
- Finding of storm response (missed out of LINGOs)

Recommendations:

- Monitoring & Evaluating:
 - focus should move from output to impacts evaluation
 - foster peer review mechanism & sharing & learning

Notes from the Workshop 1

Introduction

Organized by VOICE and Caritas Lebanon with the support of the LHIF and LNGO forum, the objectives of the workshop were to:

- a) Exchange with NGOs partners on current Grand Bargain process at global level and national level.
- b) Gather NGOs perspective on the progress made in Lebanon in the implementation of the 10 work streams
- c) Suggest ways forward for strengthening further the NGO engagement in Lebanon and in international fora in future development linked to the Grand Bargain.

30 participants from NGOs representing all regions of Lebanon attended the workshop. Over two third of the participants worked for local NGOs while the other third were representatives of INGOs and networks. The workshop was opened by Rana Rahal, Head of Emergency & Refugees Department, Caritas Lebanon and facilitated by Magali Mourlon, programme coordinator at VOICE with the support from Camilla Jelbart Mosse, coordinator, LHIF and Virginie Lefèvre, Prog. & Partnerships Coordinator, AMEL on behalf of the LNGO.



The Grand Bargain: where are we at?

Magali introduced the Grand Bargain; how the initiative came about, its objectives and structure as well as its monitoring mechanism. The GB aims at reducing the humanitarian financing gap by improving the efficiency of the aid delivery. Two years after its launch, there are 59 signatories to the Grand Bargain and new NGOs are planning to join the initiative.

The Grand Bargain remains a unique initiative with a great degree of engagement from key humanitarian stakeholders from the donors, UN and NGOs community. Based on a 'quid pro quo' (bargaining deal) the Grand Bargain has a very innovative approach to foster change management in the humanitarian financing architecture.

Through the NGO networks and thanks to the co-championship initiative proposed by InterAction, NGOs have been well represented and engaged in the negotiation phase and continue to be in the implementation.

However because of the high number of commitments to work with, the parallel processes due to the work stream structure of the GB; NGOs find it extremely difficult to keep abreast of all the development and engage in a meaningful manner on the whole GB. Priorities had to be identified and for the VOICE network its NGO task force decided to first focus on localization, reporting and multi-year planning and funding work streams.

Following the first annual meeting and the findings from the first annual report VOICE together with the other NGO networks advocated for an increased outreach to be made at field level. If the GB is to foster aid delivery on the ground frontline responders need to have a say in those discussions and be able to positively influence them. On that basis the VOICE GB project funded by the Belgium MFA was launched in December 2017 – and this workshop in Lebanon is the second organised in its framework – after a first one held in Somalia.

A dedicated website: www.grandbargain4ngos.org has been developed to facilitate access to relevant information on the Grand Bargain and showcases relevant initiatives led by (or open to) NGOs at field level. Each one can submit relevant reports, initiatives or events online.

Work stream by work stream review:

Following the second annual meeting and the rationalization process proposed by the co-conveners, Magali introduced for each work stream the core commitment(s) agreed together with when relevant key commitment for the NGO community.

Exchanges were then framed around the three following questions:

- Current level of discussion in Lebanon
- Engagement of NGOs & objectives
- Connection with international discussions



Reduce the earmarking of donor contributions

Core commitment: Make joint regular functional monitoring and performance reviews and reduce individual donor assessments, evaluations, verifications, risk management and oversight processes.

The comments from the audience were unified as they all agreed on the importance to reduce earmarking when it comes to funding at 'national' level / NGO level. They believe that earmarking may sometimes lead to wasting fund should donors not be flexible enough to allow adaptation of projects due evolving needs or contexts and/or beneficiaries feedback.

In relation to earmarking at global or regional level, while participants understand the potential benefits of reducing earmarking, they also raised concerns based on previous experiences. Unearmarked funding provides flexibility to international actors to re-allocate funds from country (crisis) to others without early notification and despite annual plans (thus directly impacting the quality of aid in country). Some participants therefore called for the use of unearmarked funding not to impede on funding predictability.



Greater Transparency

Core commitment: *Signatories make use of available data analysis, explaining the distinctiveness of activities, organisations, environments and circumstances.*

The call for greater transparency was made by the major donors and it was expected that by being more transparent the trust between donors and implementing agencies could be reinforced.

Two years after the launch of the GB, the transparency workstream has made considerable progress especially in relation to providing a single platform and using the IATI standard to share financial datas. An increasing number of GB signatories are reporting to IATI (and some more since some donors have added reporting to IATI as a funding condition in their grant agreement).

However no tangible progress can be yet observed in relation to trust being reinforced between donors and partners; nor in relation to funding allocation mechanisms. Unless we reach a critical mass of donors and implementing agencies reporting on IATI on regular basis those expected outcomes won't realize.



More support and funding tools to local and national responders

Core commitments: *Increase and support multi-year investments in the institutional capacities of local and national responders, including preparedness, response and coordination.*

Achieve by 2020 a global, aggregated target of at least 25% of humanitarian funding to local and national responders as directly as possible to improve outcomes for affected people and reduce transaction costs.

Key work stream from the NGO community within the Grand Bargain, the localization debate was first and foremost initiated thanks to the regional consultations held ahead of the World Humanitarian Summit. The LGNO forum substantially engaged at that time and Lebanese NGOs contributed to a significant number of consultations, debates and position papers which fed into the WHS preparations.

Participants to the workshops shared a number of reflections on this workstream on how they see it progressing in the Lebanese context. There's a large consensus on the fact that over the last years and thanks to relevant support, capacity of local and national NGOs have significantly improved. However, only a limited number of L&NNGOs are directly accessing humanitarian funding (essentially from the Lebanese Humanitarian Fund). OCHA recently recruited an additional staff to accompany a small number of 'small NGOs' for them to strengthen their organizational and administrative capacity and be able to compete with other in funding application.

Lots of remarks also relate to the need to widen the localization debate to participation and 'quality'. Localization should not be seen as a option to cut costs or diminish funding to Lebanon – proper project hand over between INGO and LNGO takes time and can be costly to be made in a qualitative manner. It's equally essential to look into the commitments for local and national actors to have more space and influence in the decision making processes impacting the humanitarian response in their country. More work needs to be done to remove existing barriers that prevent local and national NGOs from participating to relevant fora and accessing funding.



Increase the use and coordination of cash-based programming

Core commitment: *Increase the routine use of cash, where appropriate alongside other tools. Some may wish to set targets.*

Lebanon has been a pilot country for testing out new cash modalities – and particularly a scaled up approach to multi-purpose cash based assistance. Many NGOs (particularly International ones but few national ones too) have been involved in and impacted by the new model in place. Overall NGOs agree and adhere to the principle that cash should be used as a preferred aid modality; also reflecting that this remains the main demand from the affected population. However, based on their experience, several concerns were shared.

Despite the objective of harmonization and single entry managed by UNHCR and WFP, there are still some others cards and banks that are being used by some NGOs (often because their targeting population does not match the criteria of the main cash-based humanitarian program). In relation to targeting and the definition of the Minimum Expenditures Basket (MEB), additional concerns were expressed. Recent revisions led to substantial reduction of the number of beneficiaries and households entitled to cash and the current MEB does no longer ensure that basic needs can be covered. These elements are particularly challenging for NGOs working along those population. Limited information was shared in advance and lack of transparency in the decision making process that led to those revisions are particularly worrying – going against the Grand Bargain spirit. Lastly NGOs deplore the restrictions to access beneficiaries' data: it should be made possible to enlarge the access of information of the humanitarian community while respecting data protection rights and legislations.



Reduce Duplication and Management costs with periodic functional reviews

Core commitment: *Make joint regular functional monitoring and performance reviews and reduce individual donor assessments, evaluations, verifications, risk management and oversight processes.*

Commitments made within the work stream to “**reduce duplication and management costs**” were identified as important and particularly relevant to the participants. Discussions focused essentially on the need to harmonize partnership agreements and share partner assessment information in order to reduce the administrative burden due to the duplication of the exercise.

Exchanges also touched on the issue of ensuring fair partnership agreements especially between INGOs and LNGOs. It is expected from INGOs to be more transparent in relation to the terms of the agreement they signed first hand with donors and equally share ‘the benefits’ including the indirect costs they are entitled to with their local and national partners. Positive examples of fair partnership were shared and should be used to inform upcoming ones to be developed.



Improve Joint and Impartial Needs Assessments

Core Commitment: Provide a single, comprehensive cross-sectoral, methodologically sound and impartial overall assessment of needs for each crisis to inform strategic decisions on how to respond and fund, thereby reducing the number of assessments and appeals produced by individual organisations.

As NGO co-champion of this work stream Magali provided a state of play in this work stream and the difficulties it went through in the first year before establishing its work plan. Lots of discussions have happened within the humanitarian community around this work stream and there's today a broader understanding of the importance of ensuring coordinated and streamlined data collection at first.

In the case of Lebanon participants shared how NGOs are engaged in the annual needs assessment exercise at country level which provides the basis for the development of the HRP. However while lots of data are collected there are not comprehensively made available to the humanitarian community afterwards.

NGOs also noted that managing data, updating them on regular basis and sharing them appropriately is a sensitive and time-consuming exercise which requires dedicated resources – but that only few donors consider it as eligible expenditures under direct costs.

A Participation Revolution: include people receiving aid in making the decisions which affect their lives



Core Commitment: Improve leadership and governance mechanisms at the level of the humanitarian country team and cluster/sector mechanisms to ensure engagement with and accountability to people and communities affected by crises.

NGOs participants in the room shared how they have seen the participation agenda progressing within the country and particularly within their respective organisation. Many shared that the adopting a participatory approach has become the norm as project development stage but also during implementation. It is in the DNA of NGOs working at community level – particularly for local NGOs.

One the challenge for NGOs remains the little flexibility they have due to stringent donors rules to fully embrace the participation revolution and easily adapt programmes or projects during their implementation based on beneficiaries feedback.

At national level, limited progress has been made in offering space for refugees and vulnerable communities to sit in governance mechanisms in place in Lebanon (be it to contribute to the HRP or cluster decisions).



Increase collaborative humanitarian multi-year planning and funding

Core Commitment: Signatories increase multi-year, collaborative and flexible planning and multi-year funding. Aid organisations ensure that the same terms of multi-year funding agreements are applied with their implementing partners.

Similar to localization, **multi-year funding and planning** has been the most debated subject among the invitees during the workshop.

Magali and Camilla both mentioned how NGOs have been advocating for multi-year funding given the potential positive impact multi-year funding and planning bring to operations. Participants shared some positive examples of multi-years grants they received recently and how such longer term funding had allowed them to move beyond a one year activities planning – articulating some longer term objective and theories of change. Among the donors mentioned were BMZ (Germany), DFTA (Australia) and Sweden – with grants being funded for 3 to 5 years.

However participants acknowledge that those examples remain the exception – and the norm is still to one-year funding or shorter at least from NGO perspective. NRC recently launched a study with the objective to identify whether multi-year funding (and other funding beneficial characteristics) are passed through partners along the funding chain. The study is expected to be published in 2019.



Harmonize and simplify reporting requirements

Core commitment: Simplify and harmonise reporting requirements by the end of 2018 by reducing the volume of reporting, jointly deciding on common terminology, identifying core requirements and developing a common report structure.

Finally, the last core commitment discussed was to “**harmonize and simplify reporting requirements**”. This has been often requested by many aid organizations since the early stage of the Syrian crisis response. Implementing partners and employees find the templates provided by donors too complicated and time consuming. The issue is further emphasized by the diversity of templates used by donors and some participants highlighted that UNHCR is also using different templates for reporting activities in different regions of the country.

Magali shared information regarding the ongoing pilot initiated under this work stream led by ICVA and Germany in Myanmar, Iraq and Somalia – actually using the template now adopted by OCHA for all CBPFs reporting (including the Lebanese Humanitarian Fund). It is hoped that lessons learnt from this pilot will inform the future of this workstream and that a critical mass from donors will adopt the template in other countries.



Closing Remarks and Next steps

Throughout the day, participants constructively engaged on the discussion on the Grand Bargain implementation in Lebanon. They welcomed the opportunity of having a general state of play of the progress made on the initiative at international level – and it was emphasized that the 9 work streams of the Grand Bargain and their respective commitments are relevant in the Lebanese context.

Having an NGO only discussion was useful in order to share different perspective and experiences in relation to NGOs engagement with donors- and to be equipped with deeper knowledge on the process and how NGOs can engage in it.

As a next step, many participants would welcome having a follow up workshop or conversation with representatives from donors and UN agencies in order to hear their perspective and jointly reflect on the possibilities in the Lebanese context to move forward the Grand Bargain agenda.