



A Grander Bargain 2030

Synopsis:

[The Grand Bargain \(GB\)](#) is coming to an end in 2021 without achieving much on the 51 commitments made in 2016. The GB commitments largely remained confined to the headquarters of the signatories without proper dissemination to humanitarian actors on the ground. The Agenda for Humanity aimed at shrinking the humanitarian needs, but the humanitarian needs have continued to grow, as also highlighted in the most recent [Global Humanitarian Overview \(GHO2020\)](#). In absence of further extension of the Grand Bargain, or lack of a long-term humanitarian framework, it is challenging to seek sustainable reform of the humanitarian architecture. This is why, it is recommended to modify the GB commitments into humanitarian goals and align them with [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction \(SFDRR\)](#) and [Paris Agreement on Climate Change](#). Therefore, it is necessary that GB gets extended up to 2030 to have the same timeline as the three most endorsed global frameworks. The humanitarian architecture also ought to be more inclusive of emerging donors, Southern governments and CSOs to create wider ownership and have more informed discussion that would usher more efficient, effective and impactful humanitarian action on ground.

The Alliance for Empowering Partnerships (A4EP) is a network of organisations committed to rebalancing the humanitarian architecture and practices to enable locally-led responses. Considering the discussion above, this paper asks for “A Grander Bargain 2030”, reducing the commitments so they are practically achievable.

Humanitarian Overview:

The Global Humanitarian Overview¹ (GHO) 2020 launched by UN OCHA on 4 December 2019 provides staggering data on the humanitarian funding and the projected needs in 2020. In 2020, 167.6 million people would be in need of humanitarian assistance, out of which 108.8 million would be targeted through a budgetary need of \$28.8 billion.

We began 2019 expecting humanitarian needs to be similar to those of 2018. We were wrong. Climatic shocks, the unexpected spread of infectious disease, and the impact of protracted and often intensifying conflicts have combined to drive needs to unprecedented levels this year.

Mark Lowcock

United Nations Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator

The table below presents the statistics since 2015, indicating the continuous increase in the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance and thereby the increasing budgetary requirement.

Year	People in Need	People to receive aid	Funding required
GHO 2020	167.6 million (▲27.3%)	108.8 million (▲6.2%)	\$28.8 billion (▲1.5%)
GHO 2019	131.7 million (▼2.9%)	93.6 million (▲3.0%)	\$21.9 billion (▼2.7%)
GHO 2018	135.7 million (▲5.5%)	90.9 million (▼2.0%)	\$22.5 billion (▲1.4%)

¹ https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/GHO-2020_v8.8%20%281%29.pdf

GHO 2017	128.6 million (▲2.6%)	92.8 million (▲5.9%)	\$22.2 billion (▲10.4%)
GHO 2016	125.3 million (▲60.8%)	87.6 million (▲52.3%)	\$20.1 billion (▲22.6%)
GHO 2015	77.9 million	57.5 million	\$16.4 billion

(Note: figures in % in parenthesis are with comparison to the preceding years)

Some other trends and challenges highlighted in the GHO 2020 are:

- in 2019, many more people needed humanitarian assistance than had been forecast, largely because of conflicts and extreme climate events
- compliance with international laws is declining
- armed conflicts are killing and maiming a record number of children, forcing them to flee their homes
- highly violent conflicts are causing widespread hunger, displacement, death and destruction around the world
- climate change is increasing people's vulnerability to humanitarian crises
- globally, at the start of 2019 some 821 million people were undernourished, including 113 million who suffered from acute hunger
- the situation will keep getting worse unless climate change and the root causes of conflict are better addressed

Despite adoption of the [Global Compact for Refugees](#)² and the [Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration](#)³ in December 2018, the global population of forcibly displaced increased by 2.3 million people according to the Global Trends⁴ report published by UNHCR. As of now, almost 70.8 million individuals are forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, or human rights violations.

The Current Humanitarian Reform Process:

The former UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said in his report for the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS), *"I remain deeply concerned about the state of our humanity. In too many places, peace, stability and sustainable economic growth remain elusive. Brutal and seemingly intractable conflicts have devastated the lives of millions of people, threatening the futures of entire generations. More countries are slipping into fragility, marked by extreme poverty and weak institutions and compounded by natural hazards and climate-induced disasters. Climate change continues to cause increased humanitarian stress as it exacerbates food insecurity, water scarcity, conflict, migration and other trends. Disasters are becoming more frequent and intense. Pandemics, epidemics and other global health threats continue to emerge frequently, and at worrying levels. As millions of people leave their homes in search of safety or opportunity, the capacity and willingness of countries to absorb them is being seriously challenged"*⁵.

In order to address the above concern, the secretary general put forward a new [Agenda for Humanity](#)⁶, consisting 5 Core Responsibilities and 24 strategic transformations to address and reduce humanitarian needs, risk and vulnerability. More than 9,000 participants from 180 countries rallied behind the Agenda for Humanity, a five-part plan and made more than 3,500 commitments to alleviate suffering, reduce risk and lessen vulnerability on a global scale.

² https://www.unhcr.org/gcr/GCR_English.pdf

³ https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/73/195

⁴ <https://www.unhcr.org/5d08d7ee7.pdf>

⁵ https://www.agendaforhumanity.org/sites/default/files/resources/2019/Jun/%5BA-70-709%5D%20Secretary-General%27s%20Report%20for%20WHS_0.pdf

⁶ <https://www.agendaforhumanity.org/agendaforhumanity?referer=home>

Despite some progresses being made on the commitments, the third global synthesis report *Sustaining the Ambition – Delivering Change*⁷ states that, “...turning normative and policy commitments into tangible change for affected people and moving beyond a pilot mentality remains a challenge across nearly all Core Responsibilities”.

Grand Bargain⁸ is another key outcome of the WHS, which has, so far, been signed by 24 donor countries, 12 UN agencies, 21 INGOs, two Red Cross movements and two inter-governmental organisations. The third annual report⁹ of the Grand Bargain, while acknowledging some progresses made against the core commitments, admits that many of the challenges to further and speedier progress identified in the second annual independent report persist. According to the report, “the Grand Bargain remained both over-structured and under-governed, creating an unnecessary burden on signatories to engage, but without clear leadership on where their collective efforts are heading”. The report also identifies that different work streams continued to work in silos, with little or no substantive dialogue between different co-conveners on specific or general cross-cutting themes. The report further identifies, “there is still no clear deadline for achieving the goals that were originally set, no targets to clarify what achieving those goals would look like and few targets or deadlines for individual commitments”.

The third annual report of Charter4Change¹⁰, another key localisation framework established by INGOs which also emerged out of the WHS, also records in its annual report, “The averaged compliance data shows that overall the C4C initiative, and the signatories that have committed to change their ways of working, have not yet achieved the desired level of compliancy by end 2018¹¹”.

Thus it is evident, not much has been achieved to shrink the humanitarian needs, risk and vulnerability even after more than three years since the WHS. On the contrary, the needs have continued to grow and the humanitarian architecture hasn't been reformed to the desired scale.

The underachievement of humanitarian targets is not only confined to the humanitarian sector. The annual reports of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) also show the same trend. In fact, inadequate achievements on these two are also contributing to increasing humanitarian needs, risk and vulnerability. A brief summary is presented below.

Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019:

Some highlights of the relevant goals, according to the SDG Report 2019¹², are presented below:

Goal 1 - End poverty in all its form everywhere: The decline of global extreme poverty continues, but has slowed. The deceleration indicates that the world is not on track to achieve the target of less than 3 per cent of the world living in extreme poverty by 2030.

Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture - hunger is on the rise again globally and undernutrition continues to affect millions of children. An estimated 821 million people – approximately 1 in 9 people in the world – were undernourished in 2017, up from 784 million in 2015.

⁷ https://www.agendaforhumanity.org/system/files/asr/2019/Dec/AfH%20Synthesis%20Report%202019_full.pdf

⁸ https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Grand_Bargain_final_22_May_FINAL-2.pdf

⁹ <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/resource-documents/12735.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://charter4change.org/>

¹¹ https://charter4change.files.wordpress.com/2019/06/c4c_progressreport_2019.pdf

¹² <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>

Goal 3 - Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being: despite major progress made, the progress has stalled or is not happening fast enough with regard to addressing major diseases. At least half the global population does not have access to essential health services and many of those who do suffer undue financial hardship, potentially pushing them into extreme poverty.

Goal 4 - Inclusive and equitable quality education: despite the considerable progress over the past years, 262 million children and youth aged 6 to 17 were still out of school in 2017.

Goal 5 - Gender inequality: insufficient progress on structural issues, such as legal discrimination, unfair social norms and attitudes, decision-making on sexual and reproductive issues and low levels of political participation, are undermining the ability to achieve this goal.

Goal 6 - Water & Sanitation for all: despite progress, billions of people still lack safe water, sanitation and handwashing facilities. Data suggests that achieving universal access to even basic sanitation service by 2030 would require doubling the current annual rate of progress. Increasing frequency and severity of droughts and floods resulting from climate change pose big threat.

Goal 13 - Combat Climate Change: climate change is occurring at rates much faster than anticipated and its effects are clearly felt worldwide. During the period 1998–2017, direct economic losses from disasters were estimated at almost \$3 trillion. Climate-related and geophysical disasters claimed an estimated 1.3 million lives.

Goal 16 - Peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development: advances in ending violence, promoting the rule of law, strengthening institutions and increasing access to justice are uneven and continue to deprive millions of their security, rights and opportunities and undermine the delivery of public services and broader economic development. Attacks on civil society are also holding back development progress.

Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction:

The Global Assessment Report (GAR) on Disaster Risk Reduction highlights the following¹³:

- in terms of losses, there are severe inequalities of burden sharing between low- and high-income countries, with the lowest-income countries taking the highest toll and greatest costs of disasters. Asset and human losses tend to be higher in countries that have the least capacity to prepare, finance and respond.
- since 1990, 92% of mortality attributed to internationally reported disasters associated with natural hazards has occurred in low- and middle-income countries, persistently concentrated in the Asia–Pacific region and Africa.
- Disasters stemming from natural hazards have displaced an average of 23.9 million people each year over the last decade. Disasters, the main triggers of forced displacement recorded, show no signs of decreasing
- extensive risks represent an ongoing erosion of development assets, such as houses, schools, health facilities, roads and local infrastructure.
- losses in the housing sector account for two thirds of total economic losses
- disasters have a significant impact on rural livelihoods, food value chains, trade flows of agricultural commodities, and food and non-food agro-industries
- Financing for DRR has been highly volatile, ex post and marginal. A total of \$5.2 billion for DRR represents 3.8% of total humanitarian financing between 2005 and 2017 – less than \$4 for every \$100 spent

¹³ https://gar.unisdr.org/sites/default/files/reports/2019-05/full_gar_report.pdf

- Economic losses from disasters totalled \$75 billion in 2017 (UNDRR data), and over \$300 billion from other sources (Munich Re and Swiss Re)

Ms. Mami Mizutori Special Representative of the UN Secretary- General for Disaster Risk Reduction said in the foreword of Sendai Framework Voluntary Commitments Synthesis and Analysis Report 2019¹⁴, “In 2018 alone, more than 60 million people were affected by natural hazards, including losing family members, being insured, or losing their livelihoods. Since 2000, on average, more than 200 million people have been affected and almost 70,000 lives are lost every year. Among those affected, high income countries have suffered in terms of higher absolute economic losses, but people in low- and middle-income countries have paid a greater price, sometimes losing all they have. Addressing these interconnected challenges demands an interconnected response”.

While climate continues being a big barrier, COP25 has also ended without any significant achievement. UN secretary general António Guterres said he was “disappointed” with the results of COP25 and that “the international community lost an important opportunity to show increased ambition on mitigation, adaptation & finance to tackle the climate crisis¹⁵.”

With the third annual synthesis report of Agenda for Humanity the follow-up process of the commitments made during the WHS has concluded. The Grand Bargain has now been extended up to 2021 but with no concrete plan, at least as of now, to follow-up beyond that. The Charter4Change commitments got extended from 2018 to 2020 and as of now there is no clear future plan of that too. If all these significant processes end without substantial achievements on the commitments and any concrete plans to move forward, it will lead a major setback to the processes aimed at reforming the humanitarian architecture.

Recommendations for the way forward:

There are dedicated development goals, adopted by the UN General Assembly and 193 countries. The SDGs succeeded MDGs to ensure continuum. The SFDRR, successor of Hyogo Framework for Action, was adopted at the Third UN World Conference in Sendai, Japan on 18 March 2015, and has been adopted by 187 UN Member States. Therefore, there is longevity as well as wider ownership of these two processes. The same is not true when it comes to the humanitarian architecture.

The Grand Bargain is the most recent process of reform ending in 2021. Out of the 61 signatories of the Grand Bargain, 24 are OECD member States, with the exception of Bulgaria. The remaining signatories include 12 UN agencies, 21 INGOs, two Red Cross movements and two inter-governmental organisations. Therefore, this process is neither aligned with the duration of SDGs and SFDRR, nor inclusive of the Southern actors, including the emerging donors from the global South.

With such scenario, it is unlikely to reform the humanitarian architecture the way it is intended to, and that would be at the cost of disaster-affected people and scarce humanitarian funding. Therefore, there is a need to:

- Modify the GB commitments to transform them into humanitarian goals which should be practical and achievable
- The humanitarian action framework (HAF), with dedicated goals should have a timeline up to 2030 and aligned with the SDGs, the SFDRR and Paris Agreement on Climate Change
- The policy platforms, including IASC to be adequately inclusive of Southern actors, including governments and CSOs

¹⁴ https://www.preventionweb.net/files/submissions/65545_sfvcreport20190503light.pdf

¹⁵ <https://www.carbonbrief.org/cop25-key-outcomes-agreed-at-the-un-climate-talks-in-madrid>

- The follow-up process of BAPA+40¹⁶, working on South-South Cooperation should have adequate reference of humanitarian framework too
- Work with country governments to influence their buy-in. It must be said that State is a major humanitarian actor

Actions for way forward:

- Advocate with various networks and actors for a wider buy-in of the idea.
- Discussion with the Eminent Person
- At least one regional/global event in 2020 to shape the idea further
- One global event prior to the 2021 GB meeting
- Formation of a global taskforce to work on the concept and follow-ups to take care of targets and achievements
- Develop clear strategy for wider dissemination among the local humanitarian actors, sector leaders, country governments

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¹⁶ <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/bapa40/>