



TIME FOR A RESET?

The World Humanitarian Summit and the Grand Bargain, 5 Years On

Ralf Südhoff
Goda Milasiute

April 2021

Contents

List of Abbreviations	3
Summary: 10 Theses on the Anniversary of the World Humanitarian Summit and the Grand Bargain	4
Grand Bargain Signatories	6
1. The Importance of the Grand Bargain and the Challenges in Humanitarian Aid	8
2. The Grand Bargain's Current Status – Successes and Deficits	12
2.1. Pilot Projects versus Processes – the Grand Bargain's Process-Relevant Workstreams	13
2.1.1. Flexible, Multi-Year Funding	13
2.1.2 Transparency and Reduction of Bureaucracy	18
2.2 Limited Transformation – the Grand Bargain's System-Relevant Workstreams	20
2.2.1 Localisation and Participation Revolution	20
2.2.2 Cross-Cutting Issue: Triple Nexus	26
2.2.3 Cross-Cutting Issue: Innovation	30
3. The Reform of the Humanitarian System, the Grand Bargain, and Humanitarian Principles	32
4. The Future of the Grand Bargain and its Need to Adapt	35
Endnotes	38
Bibliography	39

List of Abbreviations

- BfAA** Bundesamt für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten / Federal Office for Foreign Affairs
- BMZ** Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung / Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
- CBPF** Country-Based Pooled Funds
- CERF** Central Emergency Response Fund
- DFID** Department for International Development
- DI** Development Initiatives
- EU** European Union
- FAO** Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
- Fbf** Forecast-based Financing
- GB** Grand Bargain
- GBV** Gender-Based Violence
- GFFO** German Federal Foreign Office
- GHD** Good Humanitarian Donorship
- IATI** International Aid Transparency Initiative
- ICRC** International Committee of the Red Cross
- ICVA** International Council of Voluntary Agencies
- INGOs** International non-governmental organisations
- IOs** International organisations
- IRC** International Rescue Committee
- ODI** Overseas Development Institute
- MSF** Médecines Sans Frontières
- NGOs** Non-governmental organisations
- NRC** Norwegian Refugee Council
- UK** United Kingdom
- UN** United Nations
- UN OCHA** United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
- UNHCR** United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Summary:

10 Theses on the Anniversary of the World Humanitarian Summit and the Grand Bargain

1. The year 2021 might become an important turning point for global humanitarian aid as well as the Grand Bargain (GB) and its reform agenda. The Covid-19 pandemic represents an intensification of a series of underlying humanitarian challenges, which ought to be addressed by the GB, a reform package that was first launched at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit (WHS). Since agreeing on the GB, a process of humanitarian aid reform was created that has been **more inclusive and far-reaching than any other**, as it brought together four groups of humanitarian actors: governments, international organisations (IOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the Red Cross / Red Crescent movement.

2. Five years after the WHS, the GB has triggered important discussions and **initiated many pilot projects and programmes at the micro level**. In so doing it helped identify highly relevant opportunities, oftentimes with impetus and support from the German Federal Government. However, the GB has so far **very rarely changed processes sustainably at the macro level or developed a systemic relevance** that would amount to substantial reforms.

3. With regard to many of the initiatives it sparked, the GB has so far remained predominantly **output-oriented and has rarely achieved comprehensive outcomes**. The GB's aims defined in this paper as process-relevant (more transparency, more flexible financing, a reduction of bureaucracy) oftentimes materialised in interesting pilot projects, but rarely in a change of the processes themselves. At the same time, the GB's aims defined in this paper as **system-relevant** set important initiatives in motion. Fundamental questions, for instance concerning the localisation of aid and a so-called participation revolution of actors from the Global South, as well as cross-cutting issues such as an integrated Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus approach, gender equality or humanitarian innovation, were not furthered in any decisive way. The **responsibility** for important advances as well as slow implementation of the GB's aims **lies with governments as well as United Nations (UN) agencies and (I)NGOs**.

4. **German public engagement in the GB has engendered considerable success**. The Federal Government's high and financially growing engagement goes hand in hand with an **increase of multi-year funding, simpler reporting procedures and approaches for an "anticipatory humanitarian action"**, which may render the humanitarian system far more effective and efficient. Nonetheless, there often is a lack of transparency, and only some **German initiatives continue beyond a pilot phase**.

5. The results attained by both international and German aid organisations with regard to their GB commitments are mixed as well, and criticism of "cherry-picking" depending on organisational interests is common. A lack of transparency among some UN agencies and (I)NGOs reporting on their GB achievements must be asserted, including the GB aim – often underlined by INGOs – of a localisation of humanitarian aid and its means.

6. In future, it seems **necessary to implement a thematic focus** on the topics that are of a high strategic relevance for the GB, such as localisation of aid, quality funding and gender equality. At the same time, this requires clear goals and indicators on how these goals may be implemented and strategically advanced beyond the project level. Because of their strong influence, donor institutions have a special responsibility in this context among the signatories of the GB.

This is why influential donors such as the German Federal Government ought to take action on the following issues:

a) Concerning the **localisation of humanitarian action**, international aid organisations should be required to provide reasons if they choose not to cooperate with local partners on the ground. A percentage of **administrative expenses** should be stipulated in programme funding for **onward transfer to local partners**, and be partially covered by donors like the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO) to promote local capacity building. **Cooperation** on an equal footing between IOs and INGOs with local actors should be made a relevant **criterion for funding**, and thus enable a systemic change in the medium term. The so-called **pooled funds** should be used on a much greater scale for localisation efforts, as, among other things, they can ease the burden of donors with a high administrative load such as Germany, and push back organisational interests. At the same time, local actors' access to these funds and their **participation** in all relevant committees on the ground **needs to be ensured**, for instance via trainings.

b) Concerning the **quality of humanitarian financing, flexible programme funding should replace project funding** as the norm, and the GB goals for multiyear, flexible funding should be implemented in a meaningful manner. Suggestions such as the eleven **"best practice examples" in the "Catalogue of quality funding"** (FAO, DI and NRC 2020) should **be taken up seriously**. In this context, too, pooled funds are gaining traction when it comes to allocating resources flexibly and transparently. Most donors, however, have a long way to go until reaching the WHS goal of allocating 15% of their means in such funds.

c) **Gender-sensitive or gender-transformative humanitarian aid**, needs to be taken seriously **as a cross-cutting issue** by placing greater emphasis on the **substantial and transformative quality** in funding decisions versus "box-ticking" in project applications. The programmes' impact needs to be measured by **transparent indicators** and be made the basis of future funding decisions.

7. In order to render the GB process- and system-relevant, a refocusing of the reform plan on **strategic issues, political momentum and measurable reform projects** are necessary. At the same time, the increasingly threatened **humanitarian space and its principles must also be protected** in the GB context and its actions.

8. **Within Germany's humanitarian aid and its commitment to the GB, too, humanitarian principles must be heeded more consistently.** On the one hand, the Federal Government has started important political initiatives to protect humanitarian principles and international law. On the other hand, these partly contradict other approaches of the Federal Government, such as a **mixing of humanitarian and security policy goals in the GB-relevant Triple Nexus issues**, or German and European migration, sea rescue and arms export policies, which lead to an incoherent humanitarian commitment. **Institutionally, too, humanitarian aid in the GFFO should be strengthened through the creation of an independent and well-staffed "Department for Humanitarian Aid".**

9. In 2016, international **political commitment at a high level of seniority** – for instance by the German Chancellor – decisively ignited the momentum of the WHS and thus of the GB. Such momentum in the spirit of the GB and the humanitarian reform is needed again. On the German side, for example, this would require a higher **prioritisation of humanitarian issues by the highest management level** in the GFFO.

10. If the above-mentioned changes are tackled successfully, **from 2021 on, the GB could turn into a catalyst for reforms in humanitarian aid** which, in the face of record numbers of people in need, is more important today than ever, and for this very reason needs to change fundamentally.

Grand Bargain Signatories

- 
1. ActionAid International
 2. Alliance for Empowering Partnership
 3. Australia
 4. Belgium
 5. Bulgaria
 6. CAFOD
 7. Canada
 8. CARE International
 9. Catholic Relief Services
 10. Christian Aid
 11. Czech Republic
 12. Danish Church Aid
 13. Denmark
 14. Estonia
 15. European Commission - ECHO
 16. FAO
 17. Finland
 18. France
 19. Germany
 20. Global Communities
 21. ICRC
 22. ICVA
 23. IFRC
 24. ILO
 25. InterAction
 26. IOM
 27. IRC
 28. Ireland
 29. Italy
 30. Japan
 31. Luxembourg
 32. Médecins du Monde
 33. Mercy Corps
 34. Near Network
 35. New Zealand
 36. Norway
 37. NRC
 38. OCHA
 39. OECD
 40. Oxfam
 41. Relief International
 42. Republic of Korea
 43. Save the Children
 44. SCHR
 45. Slovenia
 46. Spain
 47. Sweden
 48. Switzerland
 49. Syria Relief
 50. The Netherlands
 51. UN Women
 52. UNDP
 53. UNFPA
 54. UNHCR
 55. UNICEF
 56. United Kingdom
 57. United States of America
 58. UNRWA
 59. WFP
 60. WHO
 61. World Bank
 62. World Vision International
 63. ZOA International

Updated: 23. September 2020

Source: IASC (2019),
["What is Grand Bargain?"](#)

THE GRAND BARGAIN

July 2019

WHAT IS THE GRAND BARGAIN?

As part of the preparations for the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in 2016, **the High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing sought solutions to close the humanitarian financing gap**. Their report made recommendations to shrink the needs, deepen and broaden the resource base for humanitarian action, and to improve delivery. In relation to the latter recommendation, the report suggested “a *Grand Bargain between the big donors and humanitarian organisations in humanitarian aid*”. The Grand Bargain, launched during the WHS in Istanbul in May 2016, is a unique agreement between some of the largest donors and humanitarian organisations who have committed to get **more means into the hands of people in need** and to **improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the humanitarian action**. Currently **61 Signatories** (24 Member States, 21 NGOs, 12 UN agencies, two Red Cross movements, and two inter-governmental organisations) are working across nine **Workstreams** to implement the commitments:

1

Greater transparency

Co-conveners: The Netherlands, World Bank

2

More support and funding tools for local and national responders

Co-conveners: Switzerland, IFRC

3

Increase the use and coordination of cash-based programming

Co-conveners: UK, WFP

4

Reduce duplication and management costs with periodic functional reviews

Co-conveners: Japan, UNHCR

5

Improve joint and impartial needs assessments

Co-conveners: ECHO, OCHA

6

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

Co-conveners: USA, SCHR

7

Increase collaborative humanitarian multi-year planning and funding

Workstreams 7 & 8 were merged in 2018.
Co-conveners: Canada, Sweden, UNICEF, ICRC

8

Reduce the earmarking of donor contribution

9

Harmonize and simplify reporting requirements

Co-conveners: Germany, ICVA

10

Enhance engagement between humanitarian and development actors

Workstream was mainstreamed in 2018.

1. The Importance of the Grand Bargain and the Challenges in Humanitarian Aid

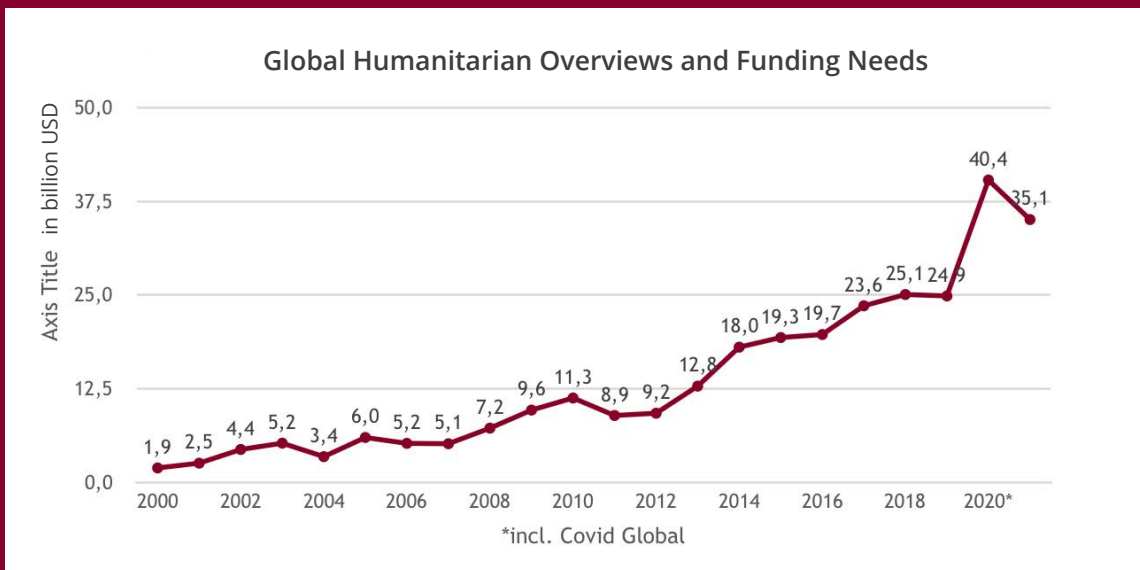
The year 2021 might become an important turning point for global humanitarian aid as well as the Grand Bargain (GB) and its reform agenda. The Covid-19 pandemic, which sent shock waves through entire countries and their national economies, did not stop short of international cooperation and especially the humanitarian aid system with all its challenges. At the same time, the pandemic represents the culmination of a series of fundamental humanitarian problems, which the Grand Bargain – a reform package adopted five years ago at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) – was also intended to address. Its own future is up for discussion again this year. While the GB primarily promised to address aid effectiveness and efficiency, these aims have reflected the much broader challenges to the humanitarian system. At least four elementary issues count among these:

The year 2021 might become an important turning point for global humanitarian aid as well as the Grand Bargain.

- What financial means are available to help the global record number of 235 million people in need? On the one hand, humanitarian needs have increased by roughly 2000% since the year 2000, recently reaching almost 40 billion USD per year (Figure 1). On the other hand, financial contributions to humanitarian aid and development cooperation from the countries of the Global North threaten to shrink by 25 billion USD in 2021, or have already been cut by around a third by a top donor like Great Britain (see Tew, Knox, and Dodd 2020).
- How can the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, independence and neutrality – the core values and operative base of humanitarian aid – be preserved in the deployment of the available resources, when fewer and fewer actors strive to protect these principles, and when they are no longer called into question only in Damascus, Riyadh or Caracas, but increasingly in Washington, London or Brussels, too?
- How can humanitarian aid, development cooperation and peace work come to complement each other in creating sustainable solutions, rather than stand in isolation in a time of increasingly protracted crises and large-scale conflicts that now go on for an average of 27 years? How and where can this be achieved in practice without undermining the impartial core of humanitarianism, or without instrumentalising aid?
- How can aid be provided centred not on an often effective but ignorant humanitarian aid machinery of the Global North, but on the affected people and their communities themselves?

Graphic 1:
Necessary funds for humanitarian
aid according to UN appeals 2000-2021.
Source: OCHA FTS.

Graphic 1



The Covid-19 response underscored what the GB demanded in its workstreams in 2016.

As the above list of issues illustrates, the humanitarian system is simultaneously more important and more endangered today than ever before. The Covid-19 pandemic has also underscored this:

Before the pandemic, according to estimates, local aid on the ground already covered the vast majority of support delivered globally in the shape of neighbourhood, family and community aid. Now, local aid has become central to an international humanitarian system that has largely lost its mobility and with that its access to persons in need. Simultaneously, restrictions on local civil society and thus on local aid workers have continued to increase. Numerous governments utilised the restrictions caused by the pandemic to further curtail a “civil society space”, which is reflected in a “shrinking humanitarian space” as well (Milasiute 2020).

The Covid-19 response underscored what the GB demanded in its workstreams in 2016: “support for local and national responders” (workstream 2) and a “participation revolution” (workstream 6). According to these aims, local aid and its resources, its skills and scope, as well as the participation of the affected people themselves need to be revolutionised. Not least due to the better crisis management abilities some Global South actors demonstrated in the current pandemic: Despite all crisis scenarios, many countries of the Global South, experienced in dealing with pandemics, were able to successfully contain the spread of Covid-19, while many of the traditional donor countries are currently struggling with the pandemic’s third wave.

Akin to acting as a magnifying glass, the consequences of Covid-19 showed that only integrated measures were capable of curbing the rapidly growing global needs. While the Global South was in many cases successful at fighting the health-related consequences of Covid-19, the socio-economic consequences of the pandemic are devastating. The Global South is threatened by new famines, the number of people living in poverty is growing rapidly all over the world, sexual and gender-based violence is increasing, and substantial development progress, e.g. in the area of education, may be reversed. Moreover, the most recent developments underlined the relevance of the GB aim of an integrated Nexus approach (originally GB workstream 10), in which humanitarian aid and development goals are better integrated.

The same is true in the case of the GB aims of reduced bureaucracy and a higher quality of funding in order to at least cap rapidly growing financial demands: multi-year and flexible funding (GB workstreams 7 and 8), shared instead of competing needs analyses (workstream 5), a reduction of bureaucracy through standardised reporting formats and review processes (workstreams 4 and 9), as well as a revolution in the transparency of all actors (workstream 1).

This is why the year 2021 is crucial to the question what lessons humanitarian actors will draw from the Covid-19 pandemic and from the fundamental challenges facing humanitarian aid. This question is tightly linked with the future of the GB itself, whose “function, focus and format” (Metcalf-Hough et al. 2020) will be redefined by its signatories in June 2021.

The Potential of the Grand Bargain

In the run-up to decisions regarding the GB's future, the Grand Bargain itself also appears both more relevant and more endangered today than at its start. In light of a possible instrumentalisation of the WHS and the GB itself, its political context was somewhat controversial in 2016. A few actors questioned even the fundamental aims of the GB, such as the lasting call for comprehensive localisation (see Schenkenberg 2016 for MSF). The process itself, however, soon came to be regarded as one of the most inclusive, informal and therefore flexible processes in humanitarian aid reform, as the GB continues to bring together four different groups of actors in a unique way: governments, UN actors, the Red Cross and Red Crescent movements and NGOs.

The GB thus soundly and inclusively complements already existing coordination forums such as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and the Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) initiative. In terms of the global volume of aid, the initial 52 signatories of the GB alonetoday represent at least 75% of aid deployed by aid agencies and around 90% of global donor funding (Derzsi-Horvath, Steets, and Ruppert 2017).

As a result, criticism of the GB targeted fundamental issues, such as its strong focus on questions of efficiency and effectiveness, or the fact that tendencies towards the increasing instrumentalisation of humanitarian aid and its consequences went ignored (see also Chapter 3). Overall, criticism of the GB was aimed less at its basic idea or its existence, and more at questions regarding its right forums and more agile formats as well as pointing out its partially isolated ways of dealing with various issues. Today, GB's basic objectives and relevance seem largely undisputed among humanitarian actors, including numerous organisations and networks that are not among the formal signatories (Charter for Change 2020a; NEAR 2019; VOICE 2017).

So what do we know, five years on, about the implementation of the WHS's aims? What has the GB actually been able to contribute to humanitarian aid reform, and to mastering multiple humanitarian challenges?

In terms of the global volume of aid, the initial 52 signatories of the GB alonetoday represent at least 75% of aid deployed by aid agencies and around 90% of global donor funding.

2. The Grand Bargain's Current Status – Successes and Deficits

Five years after its launch, preliminary assessments of the GB are diverse and dependent on the expectations of those making them. In addition to the assessments made in more detail below, the following overall judgement seems appropriate: ¹

It is important to stress here that the GB, while sometimes perceived as a donor-oriented reform project, holds all humanitarian actors accountable.

The GB kicked off a process of humanitarian aid reform that is unparalleled in its inclusivity and scope. It has initiated many **pilot projects and programmes at the micro level**. In so doing it helped identify highly relevant opportunities. However, contrary to what was hoped for, the GB has so far **very rarely changed processes at the macro level in a sustainable manner or developed a systemic relevance** that would amount to substantial reforms.

Accordingly, its **impact remains largely output-oriented and has rarely turned outcome-relevant**. Cross-cutting issues of the GB and of humanitarian aid more broadly, such as the Triple Nexus approach and gender equality issues further illustrate these limitations of what has been achieved so far. They will be taken up again below.

It is important to stress here that the GB, while sometimes perceived as a donor-oriented reform project, holds all humanitarian actors accountable within their areas of activity. In the spirit of a mutual "Grand Bargain", meant as a comprehensive agreement, the GB demands reforms from all of them. The following assessments thus address the fact that, on the one hand, numerous donor governments, UN agencies as well as civil society organisations have substantially advanced GB goals. On the other hand, there is also a lack of transparency, commitment and measurable results among all groups of actors, as well as frequent "cherry-picking" ongoing regarding GB goals attractive for one's own institution while others are being neglected.

2.1 Pilot Projects versus Processes – the Grand Bargain’s Process-Relevant Workstreams

Key GB goals can be defined as the ambition to substantially improve humanitarian aid **processes**. These include the goals for a qualitative leap in **humanitarian funding in terms of its multi-annuality and flexibility** (GB workstreams 7 and 8), as well as the goals for **more transparency and less bureaucracy in humanitarian aid** (“greater transparency” (workstream 1); “reduce duplication and management costs” (4); “joint needs assessments” (5); “harmonise and simplify reporting requirements” (9)).

2.1.1 Flexible, Multi-Year Funding

The question of more flexible, multi-year and thus higher quality funding has been a crucial one in humanitarian practice for many years. The rapidly growing number of crises and of people in need in fragile states and contexts, and the increase in weather-related catastrophes and other shocks in development contexts previously deemed relatively stable have massively increased the demands on aid organisations to respond quickly and with agility, as well as to switch between development programmes and emergency responses. Beside numerous other challenges (see section 2.2.2. on the Nexus), flexible financial resources that can be quickly reallocated and deployed according to the humanitarian principle of humanity and greatest needs are crucial for this. Moreover, cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, addressed through gender-sensitive or gender-transformative humanitarian aid, highly benefit from flexible, multi-year funding, since changing social norms and behaviours requires long-term planning (Informal Friends of Gender Group for the Grand Bargain 2017).

The question of more flexible, multi-year and thus higher quality funding has been a crucial one in humanitarian practice for many years.

Only 11 of the 25
signatory
donor states
reported
having reached
the 30% target.

The benefits of multi-year flexible funding are well documented (IRC 2020). The Grand Bargain therefore set the target that **a minimum of 30% of global aid should be unearmarked or only moderately earmarked**. In 2020, however, only 11 of the 25 signatory donor states reported having reached the 30% target. Bilateral donors such as Sweden and Canada are praised for their flexible budgetary means and programmes in Somalia, Cameroon and the Central African Republic, among others (IRC 2020). In its “Catalogue for Quality Funding Practices to the Humanitarian Response”, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), Development Initiatives (DI), and Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) highlight eleven exemplary funding mechanisms that stand for flexible aid (FAO, DI, and NRC 2020).

While NRC, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other civil society actors have developed concrete suggestions in this field, and initial progress in the international Covid-19 response can be noticed, few initiatives went beyond pilot status, as there seems to be “only limited interest and action among the main donors”.² INGO representatives state that funds remain mostly inflexible, and that “funding patterns have not changed at all — their funding from institutional donors remains largely earmarked, projectised and short-term” (Metcalf-Hough et al. 2020). The decline in very flexible or mostly flexible resources, for example, of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) from 52% in 2012 to 28% in 2020 illustrates this, too.³

To what extent UN agencies and INGOs are passing on the financial flexibility they have been provided with to their local partners, thus fulfilling their own GB commitments, often **remains opaque**. In surveys, local partners give a rather negative verdict on the flexibility of their Northern partner NGOs (Ground Truth Solutions 2019). Moreover, **not all local actors benefit to the same extent from the flexible funding** available: for instance, local women-led NGOs and/or NGOs working in a gender-sensitive way, report that they benefit less from flexible funding than larger NGOs dominated by men (Latimir and Mollett 2018).

The **conflicting goals of a parallel dominant accountability debate** among many donors, resulting in increasingly detailed project applications and reporting undoubtedly **poses a hurdle for more flexibility on the part of donors**. This trend is even more in contrast to flexible aid when, for example, micromanagement at the European Union (EU) level is being applied in new dimensions, or when counterterrorism laws increasingly restrict flexible humanitarian action (Gaus et al. 2020; Roepstorff, Faltas, and Hövelmann 2020).

The **German Federal Government points to 36.9% flexible humanitarian funding in 2020**, an impressive increase from 11.2% in 2016 and a trend that German aid for the global Covid-19 emergency has reinforced, as the latter has largely been softly earmarked for this overarching goal. Recent studies confirm that the German government provides far more flexibility here than, for example, Great Britain or the European Commission (Gaus et al. 2020).

Pooled Funds – an Often-Untapped Opportunity

However, it was largely the Red Cross Movement and the respective UN agencies who profited from the flexibility of Germany's Covid-19 response, as the Federal Government itself admits (GFFO 2021). With regard to the use of these funds, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) for instance, in an analysis of the international Covid-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan, criticises that only about 21% of the funds allocated to UN partners have so far been passed on transparently to other implementing organisations.⁴ In this context, pooled funds are increasingly coming to the fore as a means of allocating funds flexibly and transparently. However, most donors, like Germany, are far from the WHS target of allocating 15% of their funds through pooled funds. Moreover, opportunities for local participation are also crucial here in order to make them an effective instrument for quality funding (Koepl 2019).

On the German side, approaches to further **develop small-scale project management** – which is costly for all participants – **into more flexible programme funding** deserve greater attention. For example, the GFFO is funding the German Red Cross within the framework of a multi-year cooperation with a sum of €100 million within four clearly defined thematic areas that leave substantial scope at the implementation level. In case of a positive evaluation, this is an interesting pilot project for similar cooperation projects with German NGOs.

At the same time, concerning earmarking of funds, the potential for a conflict of diverse legitimate aims of donors such as Germany needs to be acknowledged: On the one hand, political support for large extrabudgetary funding allocations needs to be secured, such as in the case of the pandemic response, or regarding Germany's rapidly rising Syria crisis funding in 2015.

This political support for extrabudgetary means often goes hand in hand with earmarking the latter, due to a perceived higher level of accountability, among other things. On the other hand, from an operational perspective, fully flexible funds are always the preferred option.

In the case of German Covid-19 aid, the GFFO was able to secure considerable amounts of additional funding towards its Covid-19 response with the political support of the German Parliament, which naturally meant that these funds were earmarked.⁵ Thus the key challenge in this context might now lie in rendering a substantial portion of these financial means permanent and in anchoring them as flexible items in the GFFO's budget in the future, as it was done after 2015 in the case of the rising Syrian crisis funding. The humanitarian budget estimate for 2021 of a minimum of €2.1 billion seems to be a successful first step in that direction.

However,
most donors,
like Germany,
are far from the
WHS target of
allocating 15%
of their funds
through
pooled funds.

The international picture concerning multi-annuality of means and predictability of funding is mixed as well – despite an era of protracted crises.

Multiyear Funding – Germany Sets an Example

The international picture concerning **multi-annuality** of means and predictability of funding (GB workstream 7) is mixed as well – despite an era of protracted crises and in spite of comprehensive evidence in favour of multiyear aid pledges (IRC 2020)⁶. Following substantial criticism by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), at least seven donor governments noted in their 2020 reports that they had achieved a slight increase in multi-annual humanitarian aid as compared to the previous year, even if this was often accompanied by only partly transparent reporting measures.

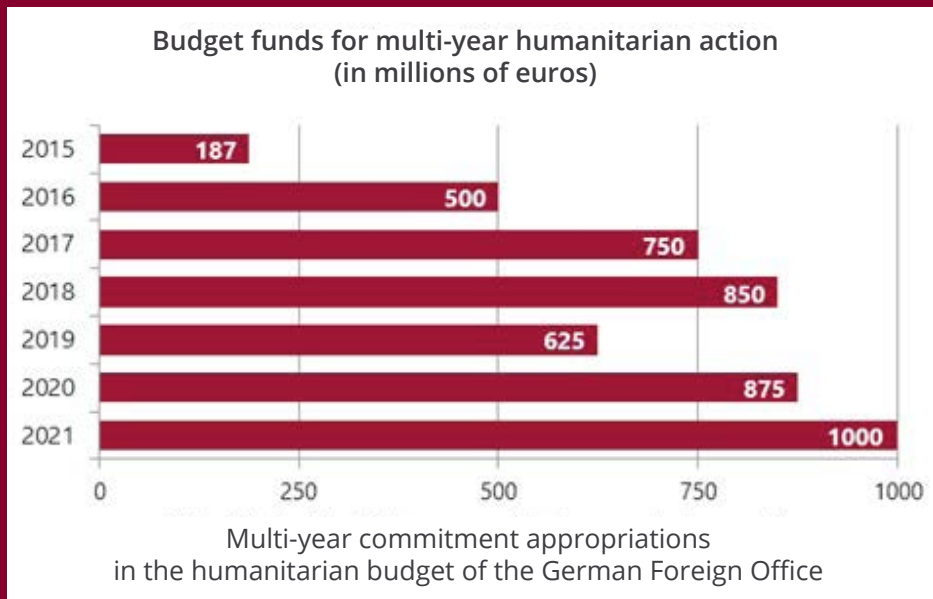
The latter problem is true in the **German context**, too: According to the GFFO, Germany now offers almost 70% of its aid funding in multi-annual form but this impressive figure is difficult to verify due to a lack of accessible data. However, it is undeniable that German humanitarian aid has undergone substantial reform at the operational level towards improved conditions for multi-annual planning. Another indicator also underpins this trend:

Using the so-called multi-year “commitment appropriations” in the GFFO's humanitarian aid budget as an indicator, which allow the ministry to make early commitments to partners for future budget years, an impressive cumulative increase in multi-year aid from €185 million (2015) to €1 billion (2021) can be observed (Chart 2).

To summarise, **“quality funding” as a key workstream of the GB has produced valuable pilot projects** and initiatives, which are being promoted by the German Federal Government as well. However, here too **no truly process-changing dimensions** have been discernible so far.

Graphic 2:
Source: German Federal
Foreign Office (2015-2021).

Graphic 2



A significant gap between reporting and actual high quality gender projects exists.

2.1.2 Transparency and Reduction of Bureaucracy

Other process-relevant goals of the GB mirror the lack of process-changing progress as well as the successes that have until now remained mostly output-rather than outcome-oriented. Numerous approaches aimed at increasing transparency and decreasing bureaucracy in the humanitarian system have produced relevant first steps, but so far, hardly any of them have turned into process-altering reform. The goal of increased donor allocations' **transparency**, to be achieved via reports to the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), resulted in the highly untransparent outcome: in 2019, 85% of donors reported having published "certain data" in the IATI's system (Metcalf-Hough et al. 2020). Meanwhile, **funding criteria, as well as the allocation of the funds themselves, remain obscure in many cases:** the **German Federal Government's** latest country and crisis-specific overview of its allocation of humanitarian funds, for instance, was published in 2018. A continuous review of the extent to which Germany and other governments let their aid efforts be guided by the principle of humanity and of greatest need is thus almost impossible to deliver (see Chapter 3).

The Challenge of Transparency in Gender Issues

Gender sensitivity in humanitarian aid, too, is a good example of lacking transparency. It remains unclear how and to what extent humanitarian measures targeting women or LGBTQ people are receiving funding, as well as how much funding women-led organisations receive (Bennett 2019; Fletcher-Wood and Mutandwa 2019; Metcalf-Hough et al. 2020; UN Women and UNFPA 2020). Despite 97% of all GB signatories reporting that they integrate "gender equality and women's empowerment" in their activities (Metcalf-Hough et al. 2020), analyses show that gender-targeting mostly happens based on a binary understanding of gender which considers only two – male and female – categories (Grabowski and Essick 2020). Additionally, a significant gap between reporting and actual high quality gender projects exists (ibid.).

Germany, too, systematically encourages its partners to include gender equality in all phases of project planning and implementation, and has recently introduced a so-called Gender, Age and Disability Marker. However, this output is still in its pilot phase, and data on gender equality in German humanitarian aid still needs to be systematised and published in order to develop lasting effects. This illustrates that the issue has not become a cross-cutting one in German humanitarian aid, yet.

Reduction in Bureaucracy? Number of Needs Assessments Has Doubled

Similar challenges persist among the process-oriented workstreams of the GB regarding the **reduction of bureaucracy** like the aim to “reduce duplication and management costs”, which is characterised by a “glacially slow pace of coordinated activity”, according to Metcalfe-Hough et al. (2020). The same is true of the aim of joint needs assessments, an area in which only very few donors are making progress. A recent study shows that the number of individual needs assessments has even doubled since 2016, specifically at the instigation of Great Britain and the European Commission (Gaus et al. 2020).

In this context, the results of the **GB workstream coordinated by the German government and ICVA on reducing bureaucracy** for aid organisations on the donor side through workstream 9 (“harmonise and simplify reporting requirements”) are more concrete. German aid organisations praise the simplified and standardised reporting format “8+3”, which, among other aspects, allows project reports to be submitted to the German government in English for the first time. The output of the workstream is thus receiving appraisal from practitioners.

However, the outcome must become more effective here as well. The reduction of international administrative expenditure was at the core of this aim. In future, all funding signatories of the GB were to employ uniform reporting templates and thus reduce the significant administrative burden for aid workers in the implementation chain. However, this has **probably only been achieved to a limited extent** so far: in early 2020, only six of the GB’s signatories had introduced the use of the 8+3 template. Upon request, several partners explained that they were not aware of the template’s pilot phase having been completed, or of the template’s availability for use. According to GFFO and ICVA, almost half of the concerned GB signatories had begun using the reporting template towards the end of 2020, or were “considering doing so” (see IASC 2020).

A recent study shows that the number of individual needs assessments has even doubled since 2016.

The far-reaching restrictions on international actors, who have rarely had as little access to humanitarian crises as they do today, offer an opportunity born out of necessity.

2.2 Limited Transformation – the Grand Bargain’s System-Relevant Workstreams

2.2.1 Localisation and Participation Revolution

“**Localisation**” of aid is one of the most fundamental systemic reforms in humanitarian aid: putting those in need and actors in their home regions at the centre of aid has been a demand for years. This is also one of the few areas where the Covid-19 pandemic is sometimes associated with great hopes.

The **Covid-19 pandemic is seen as a major opportunity to shift humanitarian aid** towards what the GB defines as a “participation revolution” and “more support and funding tools for local and national responders”. The far-reaching restrictions on international actors, who have rarely had as little access to humanitarian crises as they do today, offer an opportunity born out of necessity. Other crises with very limited access for international humanitarian workers, such as the Ebola or Syrian crises, as well as significantly worsened security situations like, for example, in Pakistan have led to greater dynamism and a diversification of partnerships between IOs and local NGOs (see Hövelmann 2020a; Barbelet, Bryant, and Willitts-King 2020).

Similar effects can be discerned or are still expected in the Covid-19 response. However, so far the change is often limited to an increase in remote management as opposed to building new capacities and ownership on the ground (RedR Australia 2020; Humanitarian Advisory Group and VANGO 2020). Previous crises have also raised the question of **how sustainable the shift to local partnerships will turn out to be** when access for international aid workers improves again.

Localisation – New Opportunities Thanks to Black Lives Matter?

The goal of localisation thus continues to raise practical **operational and financial questions** in the GB context, as well as the issue of a systemic cultural change in the light of the debate on **racism and neo-colonialism in humanitarian aid** a debate rekindled thanks to the Black Lives Matter movement (Pellowska 2021).

With regard to the measurable GB targets, in particular **a 25% funding quota for local actors**, localisation successes still appear modest in the GB context. Only ten GB signatories had reached this target by the end of 2019, according to their own reports. The GB criterion of funding “as directly as possible”, which allows the **use of an intermediary organisation** to achieve the 25% quota, is also controversial. Critics complain that, depending on the calculation, only a few per cent of global humanitarian funding was paid directly to local actors. In the **Covid-19 response the share has been only 0.1%** so far (Charter for Change 2020b).

Nevertheless, it should be noted that a different standard was agreed upon in the GB, which explicitly allows for an intermediary organisation to be in place between donors and local actors. Depending on the context, there may be good or bad reasons for this. If, for example, donors insert competent intermediary organisations in the processing of their donations, this increases the transaction costs on the one hand. On the other hand, depending on the context, the **comparative advantages** of intermediaries can partly justify these higher costs, as intermediary organisations can fulfil important tasks such as monitoring, evaluation or project handling, which would otherwise also incur administrative costs on the donor side. Moreover, intermediaries can add competencies that are lacking on the part of donors. Take, for **example, the German government**: in the light of a highly centralised structure of the GFFO in Berlin as well as very limited staff and humanitarian know-how at its embassies on the ground, clear comparative advantages of using intermediary organisations can arise here.

Accordingly, the GFFO states that “direct humanitarian support to local and national actors is not feasible for the German government in the medium term” (German Federal Government 2020). In fact, **only 0.02% of German humanitarian aid went directly to local partners** in 2020. The GFFO’s self-assessment may be an accurate though regrettable description of the status quo – also in light of the continued massive understaffing of German humanitarian donor departments as compared to other countries (see Chapter 3). Nevertheless, it remains the task of all actors to at least meet the GB standards of indirect funding (Working Group “Localisation” of the Humanitarian Aid Coordination Committee 2018).

The German government claims having achieved this. By its calculation, in 2020 **a good 26% of its funds flowed to local actors via one intermediary at most**, including 22.8% via another organisation and 3.7% via humanitarian country funds such as the UN Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPF) (German Federal Government 2020). While the GB target is formally met, the real achievements remain partly opaque. However, this is an issue with respect to both public and civil society actors as donors, and regarding support channelled via pooled funds, as will be outlined below.

Intermediary organisations can fulfil important tasks such as monitoring, evaluation or project handling, which would otherwise also incur administrative costs on the donor side.

The Lack of Transparency Among Many Aid Organisations

What portion of funds is transferred to local partners and through which intermediaries often remains untransparent: Only a few INGOs publish concrete figures related to their transfers to local partners, and the known figures vary greatly if we look at the funds these INGOs have received, for example, from Germany. For instance, for Caritas international, the figure is 78% while for another NGO, which had pledged far more ambitious goals, it is 12%.

Results are similarly mixed when we look at **funding for administrative costs that German and international aid organisations receive and then possibly pass on to their local partners**, thus enabling the much-debated local capacity building. On the one hand, there are some ambitious programmes, such as the UNHCR's much-praised partnership agreements. On the other hand, surveys show that local actors rate financial cooperation with international partner organisations most negatively (Ground Truth Solutions 2019). Recent analyses confirm this: "This disconnect between rhetoric and reality is most visible in terms of funding" (Barbelet, Bryant, and Willitts-King 2020).

These deficits are serious, especially since a corresponding Guidance Note was drafted within the framework of the GB on how the work of such intermediaries should be defined in the future (Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream 2020). Many **German aid organisations** admit that they hesitate **to pass on the administration allowance of 7% of project costs**, only recently granted by the GFFO, **to their local partners**, and that only a few organisations transfer it at least partially. "When funding reaches local and national actors through intermediaries, they usually do not have access to administrative allowances to cover their indirect costs. This, however, would be crucial for strengthening the capacities of these actors," Oxfam Germany criticises (2021). Other German NGO representatives therefore suggest that a percentage to be forwarded to local partners should be stipulated in funding agreements, or that a demonstrable partnership-based cooperation on an equal footing between IOs/INGOs and local actors should be made a relevant funding criterion in order to strive for a systemic change, at least in the medium term.

When funding reaches local and national actors through intermediaries, they usually do not have access to administrative allowances to cover their indirect costs. This, however, would be crucial for strengthening the capacities of these actors.

No Localisation Without a Participation Revolution

What portion of funds is transferred to local partners and through Similar demands are also directed at the **instrument of pooled funds**: On the one hand, these funds are welcomed as an instrument, as they can relieve the burden on donors and aid organisations (Oxfam Germany 2021).⁷ On the other hand, they, too, must develop further in order to advance the localisation goals of the GB:

While the GFFO, for example, tallies its CBPF funding as completely localised aid, on average about 25% of these funds flow directly to local actors, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). At the same time, in this regard the UN-administered fund performs substantially better than the NGO network START. The global START Network Fund for NGOs, also supported by the GFFO, has so far not allocated funds to local partners directly, and only 22% of its funds flow through intermediaries (Featherstone and Mowjee 2020). Due to the criticism of this practice, START country funds are now to be established, for example in Bangladesh.

To deal with these challenges, concrete reform proposals are on the table. These include free training for local partners on how to apply for pooled funds and, in particular, local participation in all decisive bodies on the ground (Koepl 2019). However, this touches on a much more far-reaching cultural shift of the humanitarian system and the GB workstream of a participation revolution: A systemic change towards locally anchored aid requires a cultural shift of a system whose genesis is based on the **cliché of the “white male aid worker” from the Global North** doing good to the poor in the Global South. The Covid-19 pandemic has again raised questions regarding possible approaches to partnership; the crisis management of more pandemic-experienced and Covid-19 resistant countries in the Global South further inspired this debate, as these governments could have provided humanitarian advice to governments in Washington or London, or, according to “Northern standards”, theoretically could have started humanitarian interventions in the Global North.

In the broader localisation and participation context – not only in the Cov-

The UN-administered fund performs substantially better than the NGO network START.

Local women-led organisations or local organisations working on gender are being particularly neglected.

id-19 response – local women-led organisations or local organisations working on gender are being particularly neglected. Persisting cultural norms and beliefs hinder efforts to achieve gender equality and empower women and girls; international actors still often see women as victims as well as systematically underestimate or ignore their agency (Martin and de la Puente 2019). As already indicated, overall, **hardly any funds reach local civil society organisations working on women’s rights or gender-sensitive national humanitarian NGOs** (Latimir and Mollett 2018). Moreover, evidence suggests that the lion’s share of the already low funding for addressing gender-based violence (GBV)⁸ is concentrated in the hands of large, male-led NGOs that rarely work in a gender-sensitive manner (GBV AoR 2018; Bennett 2019).

Moreover, **persons with disabilities** make up one of the most underrepresented and least included groups in humanitarian decision-making processes. Although it is widely recognised that people with disabilities face much higher levels of abuse, violence and exploitation in humanitarian crises, many humanitarian agencies still do not automatically consider dealing with and being aware of this as their core mission (Al Jubeh and Abdalla 2020). In the Grand Bargain Annual Report 2020, disability was not mentioned once. This reflects the **low priority of the issue, and the insufficient consultation with and participation of disability movements** (ibid.).

There is no doubt that some changes have taken place in the humanitarian system, which is exemplified by the **commitment of local forces in many international aid organisations, including at management level**. Nevertheless, it is still true today that while discussions have been held at many localisation levels and certain outputs have been achieved, these have only had limited outcomes. Not only governments and UN agencies, but also “large international NGOs have yet to accept localisation and partnership approaches as the strategic way forward” (Barbelet, Bryant, and Willitts-King 2020). “Who is really putting all their energy into making themselves superfluous?” as a leading German NGO representative frames the challenge.

It is in particular the area of risk management that will show whether a fundamental cultural shift between international and local aid actors can succeed at the international level. So far, localisation has taken place at a dynamic pace in areas where international actors temporarily have no access or shy away from the associated risks, be they health risks during the pandemic or security risks in ongoing large-scale conflicts. The associated **risk transfer to local partners and staff** is substantial, and donor governments have a big part in this. Massive **conflicts of aims as well as unrealistic expectations** towards risk management at the operational level may ensue, especially as a result of growing expectations among donors in terms of accountability and their justified calls for value for money, while around 80% of humanitarian aid is flowing to conflict regions, today. The associated risks are at the same

time transferred down to the local level and thus to the weakest link in the chain. Complex **counterterrorism laws** further exacerbate the legal and operational challenges and risks for all practitioners (Roepstorff, Faltas, and Hövelmann 2020).

There is a need for action at the level of the UN and of INGOs, as they are “typically highly-risk averse” (Barbelet, Bryant, and Willitts-King 2020), as well as among donors. While on the part of governments some isolated improvements could be noted in the Covid-19 response (NRC 2020; Schenkenberg van Mierop et al. 2020 in Barbelet, Bryant, and Willitts-King 2020), the fact remains: **a new allocation of risk is a topic that in international donor circles is talked about more than it is acted upon.**

Participation, a Challenge to the Grand Bargain Itself

In many cases the same analysis applies to participatory elements of aid itself and its approaches to better accountability for affected populations, as well as to an improved representation of local actors in decision-making bodies such as humanitarian forums, clusters, steering groups in charge of pooled funds and the GB itself. International NGOs already feel underrepresented in GB forums and, like the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), plead for a “community of the willing” to represent them in the future. Even more obvious is the lack of representation of local actors and their networks, while they are supposed to be at the centre of the participation revolution, and rightly demand better inclusion in a comprehensive way (NEAR 2019).

Overall, the **GB has managed to put the topic of localisation on the international agenda** and to link it to concrete, measurable goals. Its **successes, though, are few and far between in the light of the systemic challenges**, some of which go to the root of decades-old organisational cultures and interests. Analyses suggest that outdated management cultures in aid organisations in the Global North may be at the root of the lack of participation in partnership approaches in the Global South (Pellowaska 2021). They illustrate in what a fundamental way systemic changes in the localisation context would need to be addressed.

The associated risks are at the same time transferred down to the local level and thus to the weakest link in the chain.

2.2.2 Cross-Cutting Issue: Triple Nexus

One common criticism of the GB process to date is that it does not sufficiently target synergies and linkages between the GB workstreams (see Chapter 4), and that this contributes to its rather selective than systemic successes. This criticism is particularly relevant for cross-cutting issues that the GB has set as its goals, such as the **Humanitarian-Development Nexus** (originally workstream 10, supplemented at the WHS by the element of peace), as well as for **gender and innovation issues**, which have become more prominent in GB discussions in recent years.

With the **Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus** (or the Triple Nexus), the WHS set some ambitious goals. To better dovetail short-term emergency aid and long-term development cooperation is a challenge that has been known for decades. It seems obvious that questions of peace and conflict prevention cannot be ignored in the today's context, when around 80% of humanitarian aid has to be provided in conflict contexts. To combat the causes of the rapidly increasing numbers of people in need of aid worldwide, it is imperative to address the causes of conflict in addition to the pandemic and climate issues.

However, given its mostly political character, the Nexus idea poses major challenges especially to humanitarian aid, whose operational as well as value-based foundation is founded on principles like neutrality and impartiality (Hövelmann 2020b). The integration of humanitarian actors into a Nexus approach that is perceived as politicised has also been at the centre of criticism of the WHS. Nevertheless, the **Triple Nexus gained strong momentum in the international debate in the following years**, also among civil society actors (Fanning and Fullwood-Thomas 2019; Plan International 2018; Thomas 2019).

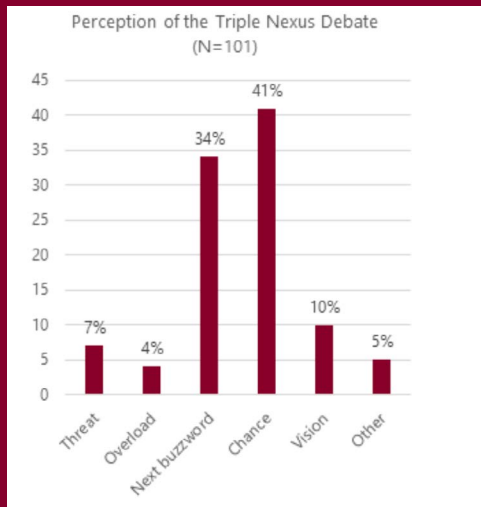
Today, according to a non-representative survey by the Centre for Humanitarian Action (CHA), a large swath of German actors sees the Triple Nexus as an "opportunity" or "vision" (51%, Chart 3). Although 43% of the respondents see risks for the humanitarian principles, a majority would like their own organisation to be involved in the Triple Nexus. At the same time, they name **three substantial deficits**:

- (1) Considerable uncertainty on how the Triple Nexus can be turned into practice.
- (2) A self-critical assessment of the extent of the organisations' ability to engage in the peace sector.
- (3) A donor paradox: many donor governments propagate the Nexus and demand it from aid agencies but change little in their own practices and budget mechanisms to make the change possible (Charts 4-6).

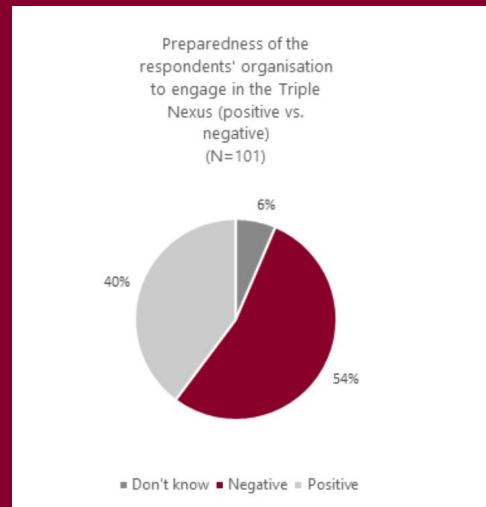
A large swath of actors sees the Triple Nexus as an "opportunity" or "vision".

Graphics 3, 4, 5, 6:
Source: CHA Nexus Survey (2020).

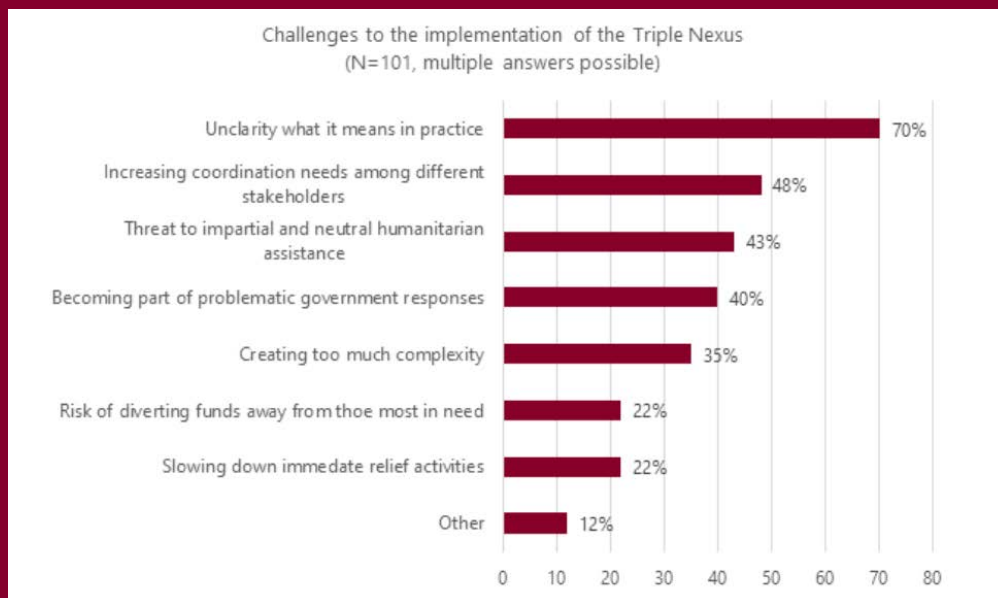
Graphic 3



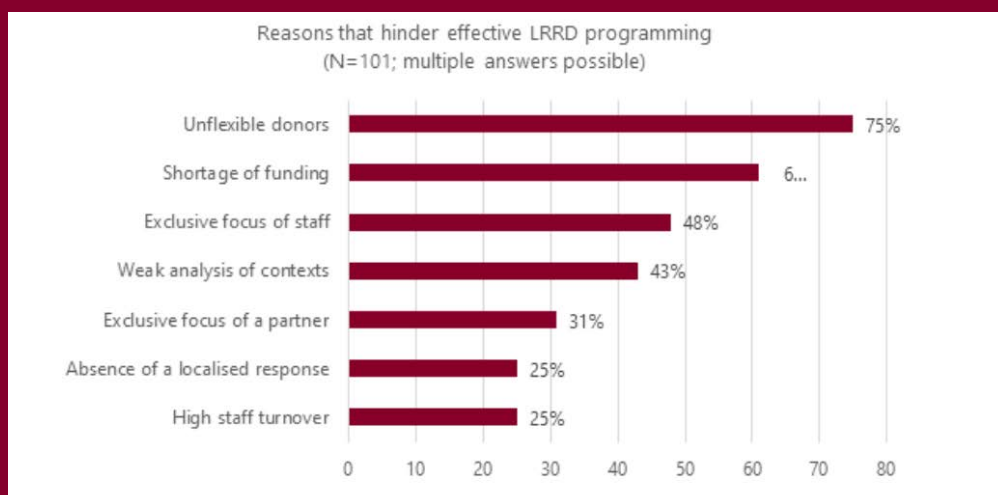
Graphic 4



Graphic 5



Graphic 6



The UK Foreign Office explicitly announced a new strategy, according to which the UK's development and humanitarian aid will fall by around a third in 2021 and must always serve British interests.

The following aspects are key elements of the **donor paradox: institutional barriers, inflexible funding and budget lines, insufficiently practice-oriented approaches, as well as a potential politicisation** of the Nexus approach (Südhoff, Hövelmann, and Steinke 2020; Hövelmann 2020b). The latter criticism identifies an overarching danger to humanitarian aid and its principles that cannot be dismissed. Some of the few existing analyses of the Triple Nexus in practice – for example, of the country cases of Nigeria, Pakistan or Mali (Hövelmann 2020a; Steinke 2021.; Tronc, Grace, and Nahiki-an 2019) – illustrate the consequences when substantial interests of governments or a mixture of military and humanitarian approaches (e.g., through the UN mission MINUSMA) come into play.

Nevertheless, **depending on the local context, the Triple Nexus offers potential for a systemic overcoming of the silos** within which international actors work (for the example of South Sudan, see Quack and Südhoff 2020). Humanitarian principles can also become a pretext for a lack of readiness to overcome the silos and lead to a blanket defence of one's own fields of work and ways of working, despite complex grey areas and challenges in humanitarian practice, as former Médecines Sans Frontières (MSF) director Marc DuBois (2020) acknowledges.

This makes it clear that in the GB process, too, the Nexus approach can only be advanced in a practice-oriented way that is appropriate to its complexities. However, **the successes in this regard are modest at the international as well as at the German level.** Within the framework of the EU, it remains largely non-transparent which concrete results have been achieved so far in the six Nexus pilot countries; at the same time, in the course of the EU's new Financial Framework until 2027, there is a threat of a political as well as budgetary **mixing of migration issues, security issues and humanitarian approaches** (Oxfam International 2020). Meanwhile, the government of the United Kingdom (UK) recently integrated the independent Department for International Development (DFID) into the UK Foreign Office, raising major concerns about independent aid (Mitchell 2020). Shortly afterwards, the UK Foreign Office explicitly announced a new strategy, according to which the UK's development and humanitarian aid will fall by around a third in 2021 and must always serve British interests (Worley 2021).

Triple Nexus – Forever a Pilot Project?

In the context of the **German Nexus commitment, a continuing “pilotisation” of the topic** is particularly striking. German Nexus projects in Somalia, Iraq and Lebanon, for example, remain at a pilot stage, and outputs and outcomes can only be partially identified. The same applies to the new **“Joint Analysis and Agreed Planning” instrument** of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (German: Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung, short BMZ) and the GFFO, which was initiated a full four years after the WHS. New funding mechanisms such as the **“chapeau approach”** of a parallel application for humanitarian aid from the GFFO and transitional aid from the BMZ are praised by practitioners on the one hand, but criticised on the other hand for their limited effectiveness as long as they cannot be transferred to development cooperation programmes and peace building.

Meanwhile, at the structural level a debate has been smouldering for many years about institutional cooperation between the GFFO and the BMZ in particular, in which there has undoubtedly been progress at the working level. At the same time, the process-relevant deficiencies have once again become apparent with the Federal Ministry of Finance's 2018 Spending Review and its demands for reform, which have only been met to a limited extent.

On the whole, there is a lack of concepts on the German side for integrating the peace issues that are fundamental to the Triple Nexus, as government representatives confirm. Moreover, in the German context, there is a need to address the extent to which the instrumentalisation of humanitarian aid and its mixing – for example with security and stabilisation interests – can be better avoided institutionally (see Chapter 4).

Nexus and the Potential of Gender-Transformative Humanitarianism

The cross-cutting issue of gender, in principle a classical Triple Nexus issue, sheds more light on the systemic relevance of the Nexus debate within as well as outside of the GB process:

As far as **gender equality is concerned, the division between humanitarian and development work is often artificial**. As a result of this division, efforts to promote women's leadership, to ensure their active participation and promote the full protection of women's rights in humanitarianism are limited (Martin and de la Puente 2019). Given that humanitarian practitioners cite short-term humanitarian timeframes as one of the main obstacles to women's meaningful participation in humanitarian crises (Latimir and Mollett 2018), the Nexus approach could contribute to longer-term gender transformative change through better coordination between humanitarian, development and peace actors – including the local actors. Local women's organisations play a crucial role here: through their participation, humanitarian services provided in times of crisis can become part of long-term development and peace work, and thus enable the transformation of gender relations (Martin and de la Puente 2019b).

Transformative programmes are important since problems such as gender-based violence (GBV) are deeply systemic and rooted in unequal gender norms; and humanitarian emergencies can either exacerbate existing causes of GBV or be a catalyst for transformative change (Bennett 2019). Working to change social norms is therefore crucial in this context, so that gender hierarchies are not deepened, and aid would not run counter to the Do No Harm principle.

There is a lack of concepts on the German side for integrating the peace issues that are fundamental to the Triple Nexus, as government representatives confirm.

With the working area of “anticipatory humanitarian aid” the German Federal Government, together with partner organisations introduced a system-relevant innovation to the humanitarian system.

2.2.3 Cross-Cutting Issue: Innovation

While **innovation** is not an explicit objective of the GB, it represents another cross-cutting theme, a **cultural shift in the humanitarian system**. It also indirectly mirrors explicit GB objectives, such as improving the quality of funding and expanding cash assistance (Cash – GB workstream 3).

Against this backdrop, it should be noted that with the working area of “**anticipatory humanitarian aid**” and its financing mechanisms, the **German Federal Government**, together with partner organisations such as the German Red Cross, Welthungerhilfe and WFP, introduced a system-relevant innovation to the humanitarian system. This has great potential. The effectiveness of anticipatory aid, which is to be used on the basis of forecasts before floods or droughts occur, or conflicts break out, has been proven many times over.⁹ The German government has therefore rightly put the issue of forecast-based financing (Fbf) on the international agenda, made its own funds available for this purpose, and won over instruments such as the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) for this purpose.¹⁰ Nevertheless, the project has not yet gained systemic relevance: still less than 1% of global humanitarian aid is used for anticipatory aid (Weingärtner and Spencer 2019).

Progress, though no breakthrough, is also evident in innovations such as cash-based aid and the GB aim of scaling it up. **Cash programmes** can make humanitarian aid more dignified, more individually appropriate and far more fruitful for local economies in crisis contexts with functioning markets than traditional commodity-based aid. The GB signatories have therefore committed to always consider “why not cash?” and to expand cash assistance.

Internationally, this has garnered some success: between 2016 and 2019, global cash assistance doubled to 5.6 billion USD (Metcalf-Hough 2020). UN agencies such as WFP and UNHCR have significantly expanded their cash assistance, and innovative programmes such as “multipurpose cash” were initiated. In Turkey, for example, cash support can drastically reduce the number of aid programmes and aid actors through a kind of lump sum social assistance for Syrian refugees.

Cash Assistance – a Non-Transparent Boom?

Nevertheless, due to a lack of data, it remains unclear how large the share of cash programmes at the international level is today. With regard to German humanitarian aid, it is a particularly virulent problem: Since the German Federal Government’s NGO partners do not systematically record the extent to which they use cash in their programmes, the Federal Government is also unable to provide information on the extent to which it – or its partners – have fulfilled their pledge to use significantly more cash aid.

Thus, in highly GB-relevant fields of innovation, the potential of German humanitarian aid has not yet materialised, as can also be seen in the cross-cutting issue of **digitalisation**. The potential of digitalisation has been underlined by the Covid-19 pandemic, for example in digital cash programmes expansion. At the same time, more far-reaching hopes for a breakthrough in remote management, for instance through the use of drones, have not yet materialised (Bryant et al. 2020). Meanwhile, at the international level, major players such as WFP and UNHCR are making rapid progress with the use of innovations such as biometric data and blockchain, and are achieving significant gains in aid efficiency. According to the UNHCR, ten million refugees worldwide have now been registered biometrically, resulting in a far more efficient and effective registration system, which has also enabled substantial savings in previously misdirected aid transfers.

Critics, meanwhile, bemoan a lack of balance on the part of some international actors with regard to the potential of digitalisation for the participation rights and personal rights of those affected. The latter field seems to be particularly well-suited to German actors given Germany's relatively sensitive data and personal rights policies, yet it is still lying fallow. Digital competences of German civil and public humanitarian actors are very limited in this regard, even according to their own assessment, and the topic is only being dealt with to a limited extent.

Overall, it can be said that there are **some beacons of German humanitarian aid in the field of innovation**, such as anticipatory aid or the promotion of the WFP Innovation Accelerator, and thus some relevant outputs. Nevertheless, the topic has not yet achieved systemic significance or broader outcomes internationally, as the lack of change towards an innovative "no blame" culture and a willingness to take risks in global humanitarian aid underscores.

The potential of digitalisation has been underlined by the Covid-19 pandemic.

3. The Reform of the Humanitarian System, the Grand Bargain, and Humanitarian Principles

The politicisation of humanitarian aid and shrinking humanitarian space for its work and practice are important aspects in the reform process of humanitarian aid and thus of the GB. The GB workstreams do not address the increasing **instrumentalisation of humanitarian aid**, but in many cases they are closely connected considering areas like the transparency of the allocation of funds, interlinked approaches of humanitarian, development and peace-oriented aid, or localisation issues. Moreover, the monumental task of protecting the humanitarian sector and its values and reforming it at the same time requires actors who can convincingly advocate for said values on the basis of their own coherent practice.

The humanitarian space and its values of impartiality, neutrality, independence and humanity being increasingly questioned or actively undermined even in Western capitals therefore appears highly problematic — especially since humanitarian aid must also be provided to an ever-increasing extent in Europe and at its external borders. Problematic German or European developments include the following facets:

The humanitarian space and its values being increasingly questioned or actively undermined even in Western capitals appears highly problematic.

A. The denial or even obstruction of civilian humanitarian aid in the European migration contexts such as sea rescue operations in the Mediterranean; the repatriation of migrants to Libya, where conditions are untenable by any humanitarian standard; the practice of pushbacks of refugees in the Aegean (Reiche 2021), including the denial of their right to asylum, a practice openly tolerated by the EU border protection agency Frontex; as well as the refugee policies in Greece and in the EU's neighbourhood (Roepstorff, Faltas, and Hövelmann 2020; Hammerl 2020; IOM 2021).

B. The accusation of mixing humanitarian principles and political goals, for example in migration, defence and security policy in the Sahel, including the institutional entanglement of stabilisation and security policies with the humanitarian aid units within the Directorate-General S of the GFFO (Südhoff 2020).

C. The perception of a lacking coherence in German and European foreign policies, for example with regard to geopolitics and arms export policies, for example to crisis regions such as Yemen by violating the EU's own guidelines.

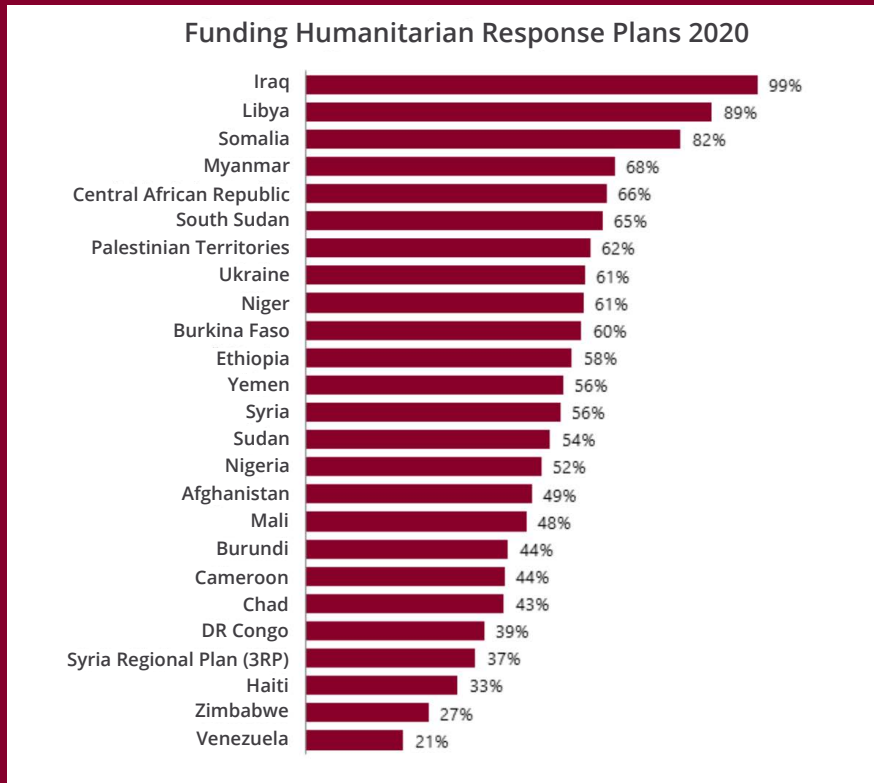
D. The criticism of allocating humanitarian funds according to political criteria rather than to the principle of humanity and greatest need (Quack 2018).

With regard to the above challenges A., B. and C., it must also be stated that **in the German government, humanitarian actors and departments' influence appears limited to enforce their humanitarian approaches and goals.**

Graphic 7:
Financing of crisis response plans in 2020 in per cent. Source: OCHA FTS (2021), Appeals and response plans 2020.

Graphic 8:
Source: Federal Government's response to an inquiry in the German Bundestag. 2020. Publication 19/23978.

Graphic 7



Graphic 8

Humanitarian Aid	Total funds (rounded) in million euros 2020	Number of employees	Funds per employee (rounded) in million euros
Germany	2.137	76,5	27,9
Sweden	405,9	45	9,0
USA	4.972	750	6,6
Great Britain	1.762	150	11,7
European Commission	1.823	600	3,0

The UK, for example, employs more than twice as many staff as the German government for every euro of humanitarian aid provided, and the European Commission more than nine times as many staff as the GFFO.

Criticism D., according to which the allocation of German humanitarian funds is informed by political **criteria rather than by greatest need, cannot be systematically proven**, despite long-standing criticism in this regard. Neither analyses of the German Federal Government's report on humanitarian aid between 2014 and 2017 (Südhoff and Hövelmann 2019), nor current data is supporting this point of criticism. While the German government does have for example major geopolitical and migration policy interests regarding the Syria crisis, the Sahel or Afghanistan, these are among the worst-funded Humanitarian Response Plans in 2020 even despite Germany's commitment, so even higher funding would be justified on humanitarian grounds. None of the above-mentioned humanitarian crisis plans received even half its funding in 2020, and the "Syria Regional Plan", which is particularly relevant for Syrian refugees, was only covered to an extent of 37% (Chart 7).

Nevertheless, it should be noted that a **lack of coherence on the part of the German government in policy areas relevant to humanitarian issues** weakens or politically counteracts the GFFO's honourable initiatives to protect humanitarian space, access and humanitarian principles, for example in the UN Security Council or in the course of Germany's EU Council Presidency. In addition, there is a **lack of personnel capacities** and thus also of strategic agenda-setting capabilities at the Federal Foreign Office. This deficit is quantitatively expressed in the disproportionate number of staff and financial resources of the Federal Foreign Office compared to other donors: The UK, for example, employs more than twice as many staff as the German government for every euro of humanitarian aid provided, Sweden three times as many, the USA four times as many, and the European Commission more than nine times as many staff as the GFFO (Table 1).

Even the new Federal Office for Foreign Affairs (Bundesamt für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten, BfAA) will only be able to change this imbalance to a very limited extent. The rapid rotation in the German diplomatic service is an added factor standing in the way of the permanent development of humanitarian expertise, and its lack of decentralisation prevents an adequate German presence in humanitarian aid hubs such as Beirut, Bangkok or Nairobi, where many decisions are taken today. These aspects represent structural deficits that can by no means be remedied quickly, assuming the political will would exist.

However, the **annual reports by the German Federal Government** on the use of its humanitarian aid according to country and crisis contexts would, for example, be a simple measure to help achieve **more transparency** for a needs-oriented versus a politically instrumentalised allocation of funds. Reporting on this only every four years does not seem very timely and also contradicts the GB goals.

4. The Future of the Grand Bargain and its Need to Adapt

In 2016, the decisions at the World Humanitarian Summit, including those regarding the Grand Bargain, were based on commitment at often the highest government and leadership levels of its signatories, which was crucial for the **political momentum of this reform package**. As that commitment waned, the GB, too, is risking to turn into a rather technical working-level process that only rarely produces coherent, strategic reform projects.

With the commitment of, among others, the Dutch Minister Sigrid Kaag as an Eminent Person of the GB, a certain dynamism has emerged again. It has sparked new hopes for a more strategically oriented and effective GB. This **momentum will be a crucial** prerequisite for rendering the approaches and pilot projects, which were developed in the GB, process- and system-relevant, and for achieving substantial outcomes via the partly relevant outputs of the GB workstreams. In the light of the described fundamental challenges faced by humanitarian aid, a **GB reform process that is effective in a strategic way could retain its relevance beyond 2021**. Regardless of whether they are GB signatories or not, the vast majority of humanitarian actors share this view, as well as emphasise that the GB process adds value and therefore should continue (Metcalf-Hough 2020).

To achieve this goal, the “function, focus and format” (Metcalf-Hough et al. 2020) of the GB must be reviewed. Accordingly, approaches to turn the GB into a more unified multilateral, political mechanism, which leaves very technical issues of its current workstreams to other forums, are to be welcomed. A **“more political GB”** would also be very relevant to protect and propagate the humanitarian space and its fundamental principles through the GB process as well as within it. In an international environment that increasingly challenges humanitarian principles, lines of conflict run within multi-mandated institutions and organisations, while individual GB actors often share similar approaches and concerns.

With regard to the **focus of the GB**, objectives classified here as process-relevant should be integrated and their synergies used; at the same time, the focus on cross-cutting topics such as quality funding would be advisable. Integration and strategic focus would also be relevant at the level of the goals classified here as system-relevant: it was not only the Covid-19 pandemic that made it clear that the goals of **localisation and participation are crucial**. The latter must first and foremost start with the GB itself and enable a much more relevant participation in the sense of a co-leadership role of local actors and their networks (see also Charter for Change 2020).

The “function, focus and format” of the GB must be reviewed.

Comprehensive civil society engagement, especially on cross-cutting issues such as localisation, gender equality and diversity, or innovation, will be a prerequisite for systemic success of the GB.

Nevertheless, a more strategic impact of the GB will only be possible if a **renewed commitment can be sparked at a high level of all signatories – governments, UN agencies, NGOs** – and if all actors are committed to the goals agreed as priorities in the future, in contrast to cherry-picking according to organisational interests (Charter for Change 2020a; Barbelet, Bryant, and Willitts-King 2020). This also applies to German public institutions. While the German Chancellor travelled to the WHS in 2016, today the top management of the Foreign Ministry gives humanitarian issues a rather lower priority.

A **shift in the German Foreign Ministry in this respect could also be institutionally underpinned by the establishment of an independent “Directorate-Generate H”** for humanitarian aid **with significantly better staffing**. In the sense of the genuinely different mandates of a principle-oriented humanitarian aid versus a security and stabilisation-oriented foreign policy, this would appear to be crucial in terms of policy approaches as well as financially: the humanitarian units today administer more than one third of the total budget of the GFFO.

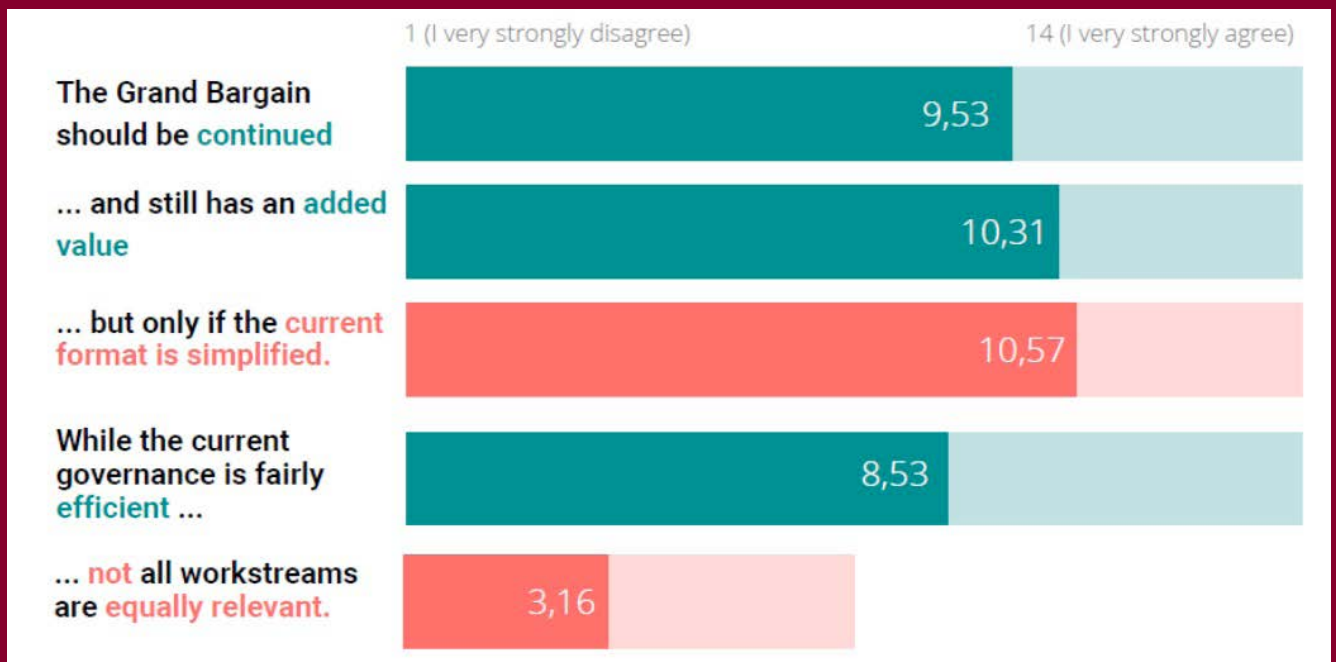
Strong engagement of German aid organisations will also be necessary for a more strategic humanitarian reform project, regardless of the fact that few of these agencies are GB signatories. Comprehensive civil society engagement, especially on **cross-cutting issues such as localisation, gender equality and diversity, or innovation**, will be a prerequisite for systemic success of the GB.

To achieve these successes, the currently not pursued approach of **developing integrated country-specific GB programmes** could also be discussed again. This could be instituted in a selection of countries first, if necessary. It would be in line with both its holistic approach and the basic idea of the Grand Bargain, in which donor governments and aid actors converge and initiate complementary reforms in parallel.

If the above-mentioned changes are tackled successfully, **from 2021 on, the GB could turn into a catalyst for reforms** in humanitarian aid which, in the face of record numbers of people in need, is of crucial importance today and for this very reason needs to change fundamentally.

Source: IASC (2020),
"The Future of the Grand Bargain
– Findings of the Survey".

Graphic 9



Endnotes

¹ This paper and its evaluations are based on virtual interviews with representatives of governments, NGOs and UN agencies in January and February 2021, the review of secondary literature and the GB documents and annual reports of the GB signatories. The self reports of the GB signatories due in 2021 could not be included in this analysis.

² Interview, February 2021

³ Interview, February 2021

⁴ Interview, February 2021

⁵ Interview February 2021; AA 2020 budget increase from €1.5 bn plan size for humanitarian aid to approx. €2.1 bn.

⁶ https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/gb_2019_annual_meeting_presentation_final.pdf

⁷ Interview, February 2021

⁸ Global humanitarian funding data reported to the Financial Tracking System (FTS) between 2016 and 2018 found that GBV funding accounted for only 0.12% of all humanitarian funding (IRC 2019).

⁹ <https://www.forecast-based-financing.org/>

¹⁰ <https://www.chaberlin.org/en/event/discussion-with-mark-lowcock/>

Bibliography

- Al Jubeh, Kathy, and Alradi Abdalla. 2020. "A Participation Revolution': Creating Genuine Dialogue and Partnerships between Humanitarian Actors and the Disability Movement". *Humanitarian Exchange: Disability Inclusion in Humanitarian Action*, Nr. 78 (Oktober): 9–13.
- Barbelet, Veronique, John Bryant, and Barnaby Willitts-King. 2020. "All Eyes Are on Local Actors': Covid-19 and Local Humanitarian Action". HPG (ODI). https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/All_eyes_are_on_local_actors_Covid-19_and_local_humanitarian_action.pdf
- Bennett, Karly. 2019. "Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Localization: Humanitarian Transformation or Maintaining The Status Quo? – A Global Study on GBV Localization Through Country-Level GBV Sub-Clusters". CARE. <https://careevaluations.org/evaluation/gender-based-violence-gbv-localization-humanitarian-transformation-or-maintaining-the-status-quo-a-global-study-on-gbv-localization-through-country-level-gbv-sub-clusters/>.
- Bryant, John, Kerrie Holloway, Oliver Lough, and Barnaby Willitts-King. 2020. "Bridging humanitarian digital divides during Covid-19". HPG (ODI). <https://www.odi.org/publications/17580-bridging-humanitarian-digital-divides-during-covid-19>.
- Charter for Change. 2020a. "From commitments to action. Progress Report 2019-2020". Charter for Change. https://charter4change.files.wordpress.com/2020/09/c4c_progressreport_2020.pdf.
- . 2020b. "Charter for Change Statement on the Revised UN Global Humanitarian Response Plan on Covid19". Charter for Change. May 7, 2020. <https://charter4change.org/2020/05/07/charter-for-change-statement-on-the-revised-un-ghrp-on-covid19/>.
- Derzsi-Horvath, Andras, Julia Steets, and Lotte Ruppert. 2017. "Independent Grand Bargain Report". GPPi. <https://www.gppi.net/2017/06/19/independent-grand-bargain-report>.
- DuBois, Marc. 2020. "The Triple Nexus — Threat or Opportunity for Humanitarian Principles?" Berlin: Centre for Humanitarian Action (CHA). <https://www.chaberlin.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/2020-05-discussionpaper-triple-nexus-threat-opportunity-humanitarian-principles-dubois-1.pdf>.
- Fanning, Emma, and Jessica Fullwood-Thomas. 2019. "The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus. What Does It Mean for Multi-Mandated Organizations?" Oxfam Discussion Papers. Oxfam. <https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/620820/dp-humanitarian-development-peace-nexus-260619-en.pdf;jsessionid=751B-87D3A5937CF056E874922AA318F8?sequence=1>.
- FAO, DI, and NRC. 2020. "Catalogue of quality funding practices to the humanitarian response: A reference tool for policymakers and practitioners to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of programming". Rome. <https://www.nrc.no/resources/reports/catalogue-of-quality-funding-practices-to-the-humanitarian-response/>.
- Featherstone, Andy, and Tasneem Mowjee. 2020. "Desk Review on Enhancing the Potential of Pooled Funds for Localisation". https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/18276/pdf/final_gbw2_pooled_funding_for_localisation.pdf.
- Fletcher-Wood, Elizabeth, and Roy Mutandwa. 2019. "Funding a Localised, Women-Led Approach to Protection from Gender Based Violence: What Is the Data Telling Us?" ActionAid. <https://actionaid.org/publications/2019/funding-localised-women-led-approach-protection-gender-based-violence>.
- Gaus, Alexander, Steffen Eckhard, Marie Wagner, Vytautas Jankauskas, and Julia Steets. 2020. "Independent Review of Individual Donor Assessments in Humanitarian Operations". GPPi. <https://www.gppi.net/2020/12/08/independent-review-of-individual-donor-assessments-in-humanitarian-operations>.

- GBV AoR. 2018. "Report on Workshop to Consult on the GBV AoR Task Team on Localization". https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2019-12/Final%20report_Africa%20GVB%20Localisation%20report_EN.pdf.
- German Federal Government. 2020. "Antwort der Bundesregierung auf die Kleine Anfrage der Abgeordneten Gyde Jensen, Alexander Graf Lambsdorff, Jens Bieck, weiterer Abgeordneter und der Fraktion der FDP – Drucksache 19/21943 –". Drucksache 19/22854. <https://www.fdp.de/sites/default/files/2020-11/1922854.pdf>.
- GFFO. 2021. "Grand Bargain in 2020: Annual Self Report – Narrative Summary by Germany".
- Grabowski, Aria, and Parker Essick. 2020. "Are They Really Gender Equality Projects? An Examination of Donors' Gender-Mainstreamed and Gender-Equality Focused Projects to Assess the Quality of Gender-Marked Projects". Oxfam. <https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/620945/rr-are-they-really-gender-equality-projects-donors-050220-en.pdf>
- Grand Bargain Localization Workstream. 2020. "Guidance note on arrangements between donors and intermediaries". <https://interagency-standingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-05/Guidance%20note%20on%20arrangements%20between%20donors%20and%20intermediaries%20May%202020.pdf>.
- Ground Truth Solutions. 2019. "Grand Bargain: field perspectives 2018". Ground Truth Solutions. https://groundtruthsolutions.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Grand-Bargain_briefing_note_June-2019.pdf.
- Hammerl, Sarah. 2020. "Nach Dem Pakt Ist Vor Dem Pakt". Humanitarian Views (blog). December 2020. <https://www.chaberlin.org/en/blog/nach-dem-pakt-ist-vor-dem-pakt/>.
- Hövelmann, Sonja. 2020a. "Triple Nexus in Pakistan: Catering to a Governmental Narrative or Enabling Independent Humanitarian Action?" Centre for Humanitarian Action (CHA). <https://www.chaberlin.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/2020-09-triple-nexus-pakistan-hoelmann-en-online.pdf>
- . 2020b. "Triple Nexus to Go: Humanitarian Topics Explained". Centre for Humanitarian Action (CHA). <https://www.chaberlin.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/2020-03-triple-nexus-to-go-hoelmann-en-online.pdf>
- Humanitarian Advisory Group, and VANGO. 2020. "No Turning Back: Local leadership in Vanuatu's response to Tropical Cyclone Harold". Humanitarian Horizons Practice Paper Series. <https://humanitarianadvisorygroup.org/insight/no-turning-back/>.
- IASC. 2020. "The Grand Bargain Bimonthly updates – November 2020". November 2020. <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain-official-website/grand-bargain-bimonthly-updates-november-2020>.
- Informal Friends of Gender Group for the Grand Bargain. 2017. "Aide-Memoire on Gender Mainstreaming in the Grand Bargain". <https://www.icvanetwork.org/resources/grand-bargain-aide-memoire-gender-mainstreaming>.
- IOM. 2021. "IOM Calls for End to Pushbacks and Violence Against Migrants at EU External Borders". International Organization for Migration. February 9, 2021. <https://www.iom.int/news/iom-calls-end-pushbacks-and-violence-against-migrants-eu-external-borders>.
- IRC. 2019. "Where's the Money? How the Humanitarian System Is Failing to Fund an End of Violence Against Women and Girls". <https://www.rescue.org/report/wheres-money-how-humanitarian-system-failing-fund-end-violence-against-women-and-girls>.
- . 2020. "A Win-Win: Multi-Year Flexible Funding Is Better for People and Better Value for Donors". <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/win-win-multi-year-flexible-funding-better-people-and-better-value-donors>.

- Koepl, Dominik. 2019. "Country-based pooled funds – a reality check". Caritas Germany, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, The Johanniter International Assistance, Malteser International and Deutsche Welthungerhilfe.
- Latimir, Kate, and Howard Mollett. 2018. "Not What She Bargained for? Gender and the Grand Bargain". ActionAid UK and CARE International. <https://actionaid.org/publications/2018/not-what-she-bargained>.
- Martin, Sarah, and Devanna de la Puente. 2019b. "WPS and Humanitarian Action". In *The Oxford Handbook of Women, Peace, and Security*, published by Sara E. Davies and Jacqui True, 627–42. New York: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxford-hb/9780190638276.013.48>.
- . 2019b. „How Can We Bridge the Gap between Humanitarian Aid and Peacebuilding?“ Gender, Peace & Security in Brief #2. Gender Associations. https://www.genderassociations.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Gender_Peace_and_Security_in_Brief_2_Sarah_Martin.pdf
- Metcalfe-Hough, Victoria. 2020. "The Future of the Grand Bargain: A New Ambition?" HPG (ODI). <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-06/Grand%20Bargain%20ODI%20Think-piece%202020.pdf>
- Metcalfe-Hough, Victoria, Wendy Fenton, Barnaby Willitts-King, and Alexandra Spencer. 2020. "Grand Bargain Annual Independent Report 2020". ODI. <https://www.odi.org/publications/17044-grand-bargain-annual-independent-report-2020>.
- Milasiute, Goda. 2020. "Covid-19 in humanitarian settings: a multiple challenge". In *the Corona crisis: a voice from civil society* (blog). May 15, 2020. https://web.maecenata.eu/images/Stimme_15_V_2020.pdf.
- Mitchell, John. 2020. "We Need to Talk about Principles". Humanitarian Views (blog). August 2020. <https://www.chaberlin.org/en/blog/we-need-to-talk-about-principles-2/>.
- NEAR. 2019. "NEAR Statement on the future of the Grand Bargain". NEAR. https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/near_-_grand_bargain_annual_meeting_2019_statement.pdf.
- NRC. 2020. "Make or break – the implications of Covid-19 for crisis financing". NRC. <https://www.nrc.no/resources/reports/make-or-break--the-implications-of-covid-19-for-crisis-financing/>.
- Oxfam Deutschland. 2021. "Der deutsche Beitrag zur Lokalisierung der humanitären Hilfe".
- Oxfam International. 2020. "EU Aid Increasingly Taken Hostage by Migration Politics". Oxfam International. January 29, 2020. <https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/eu-aid-increasingly-taken-hostage-migration-politics>.
- Pellowka, Darina. 2021. "Lokalisierung nach COVID-19 und Black Lives Matter". Humanitarian Views (blog). January 2021. <https://www.chaberlin.org/en/blog/lokalisierung-nach-covid-19-und-black-lives-matter-2/>.
- Plan International. 2018. "Lake Chad Programme Strategy 2018-2023". Plan International. <https://plan-international.org/publications/lake-chad-programme-strategy>.
- Quack, Martin, ed. 2018. *Based on Need Alone? Impartiality in Humanitarian Action*. <https://www.chaberlin.org/en/publications/based-on-need-alone-2/>.
- Quack, Martin, and Ralf Südhoff. 2020. "Triple Nexus in South Sudan – Learning from Local Opportunities". Berlin: Centre for Humanitarian Action. <https://www.chaberlin.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/2020-10-triple-nexus-south-sudan-case-study-suedhoff-quack.pdf>
- RedR Australia. 2020. "Deployment update: Adapting humanitarian assistance during COVID-19". May 22, 2020. <https://www.redr.org.au/news-and-publications/latest-news/adapting-humanitarian-assistance-during-covid-19/>.

- Reiche, Matthias. 2021. „EU startet Untersuchung gegen Grenzschutzagentur Frontex“. tagesschau.de. 23. Februar 2021. <https://www.tagesschau.de/ausland/europa/eu-frontext-untersuchung-101.html>.
- Roepstorff, Kristina, Charlotte Faltas, and Sonja Hövelmann. 2020. “Counterterrorism Measures and Sanction Regimes: Shrinking Space for Humanitarian Aid Organisations”. Centre for Humanitarian Action (CHA). <https://www.chaberlin.org/en/publications/counterterrorism-measures-and-sanction-regimes-shrinking-space-for-humanitarian-aid-organisations/>.
- Schenkenberg, Ed. 2016. “The Challenges of Localised Humanitarian Aid in Armed Conflict”. MSF.
- Steinke, Andrea. 2021. “Triple Nexus in Mali: Coordination, Securitisation and Blurred Lines”. Berlin: Centre for Humanitarian Action (CHA). <https://www.chaberlin.org/en/publications/the-triple-nexus-in-mali-coordination-securitisation-and-blurred-lines/>
- Südhoff, Ralf. 2020. “Germany: Global Player without Strategy”. Humanitarian Views (blog). April 2020. <https://www.chaberlin.org/en/blog/germany-global-player-without-strategy/>. <https://www.chaberlin.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/2019-03-statement-humanitarian-assistance-cha-en-2.pdf>
- Südhoff, Ralf, and Sonja Hövelmann. 2019. “Where Does German Humanitarian Assistance Stand?” Centre for Humanitarian Action (CHA).
- Südhoff, Ralf, Sonja Hövelmann, and Andrea Steinke. 2020. “The Triple Nexus in Practice: Challenges and Options for Multi-Mandated Organisations”. Berlin: Centre for Humanitarian Action (CHA). <https://www.chaberlin.org/en/publications/the-triple-nexus-in-practice-challenges-and-options-for-multi-mandated-organisations-2/>
- Tew, Rob, Duncan Knox, and Amy Dodd. 2020. “Coronavirus and Aid Data: What the Latest DAC Data Tells Us”. Development Initiatives. <https://devinit.org/resources/coronavirus-and-aid-data-what-latest-dac-data-tells-us/>.
- Thomas, Manisha. 2019. “NGO Perspectives on the EU’s Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus Approach: Exploring the Challenges and Opportunities”. Brussels: VOICE. <https://voiceeu.org/publications/ngos-perspectives-on-the-eu-s-humanitarian-development-peace-nexus.pdf>.
- Tronc, Emmanuel, Rob Grace, and Anaide Nahikian. 2019. “Realities and Myths of the ‘Triple Nexus’: Local Perspectives on Peacebuilding, Development, and Humanitarian Action in Mali”. Boston: Harvard Humanitarian Initiative. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3404351.
- UN Women and UNFPA. 2020. “Funding for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls”. UN Women and UNFPA. https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/GEEWG_UN_WomenUNFPA.pdf.
- VOICE. 2017. “Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream: VOICE Grand Bargain Task Force Input to DG ECHO”. VOICE position papers.
- Weingärtner, Lena, and Alexandra Spencer. 2019. “Analysing Gap in the Humanitarian and Disaster Risk Financing Landscape”. ODI and START Network. <https://startnetwork.org/resource/financial-flows-mapping-paper-2>.
- Working Group “Localisation” of the Humanitarian Aid Coordination Committee. 2018. “‘So lokal wie möglich, so international wie nötig’ – die Lokalisierung des humanitären Systems”. VENRO. https://venro.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Dateien/Daten/Newsletter/Eckpunkte_Lokalisierung_11.04.18_Layout_final.pdf.
- Worley, William. 2021. “FCDO staff ‘in shock’ at scale of aid budget cuts”. Devex. February 1, 2021. <https://www.devex.com/news/sponsored/fcdo-staff-in-shock-at-scale-of-aid-budget-cuts-99038>.

IMPRINT

© Centre for Humanitarian Action, April 2021.

This publication is part of the research project "Strategic and policy capacity of German humanitarian organisations" at the Centre for Humanitarian Action (CHA).

Ralf Südhoff is Director at the Centre for Humanitarian Action.
Goda Milasiute is a CHA-Fellow.

SUGGESTED CITATION

Südhoff, Ralf, and Goda Milasiute. 2021. Time for a Reset? The World Humanitarian Summit and the Grand Bargain, 5 Years on. Berlin: Centre for Humanitarian Action.

NEW CHA PUBLICATIONS

Faltas, Charlotte 2021. Humanitarian topics explained. Counterterrorism impact on humanitarian action to go. Berlin: Centre for Humanitarian Action.

Steinke, Andrea. 2021. The Triple Nexus in Mali: Coordination, Securitisation and Blurred Lines. Berlin: Centre for Humanitarian Action.

Schellhammer, Lena 2021. Breaking the silence – Lessons from humanitarian access negotiations under counter-terrorism legislation in north-western Syria. Berlin: Centre for Humanitarian Action.

Südhoff, Ralf, Sonja Hövelmann, and Andrea Steinke. 2020. The Triple Nexus in Practice: Challenges and Options for Multi-Mandated Organisations. Berlin: Centre for Humanitarian Action.

Südhoff, Ralf, and Martin Quack. 2020. The Triple Nexus in South Sudan. Learning from Local Opportunities. Berlin: Centre for Humanitarian Action.

CHA | Maecenata Stiftung

Rungestrasse 17

D-10179 Berlin

Fon: +49 (0)30 2838 7911

info@chaberlin.org

April 2021