

2026 Grand Bargain Report

Terms of Reference

A. Overview and Background

The Grand Bargain was negotiated between the 15 biggest donors and 15 biggest aid organisations in 2016 in response to the UN's High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing report *Too Important to Fail: Addressing the Humanitarian Financing Gap*. The Bargain includes a set of specific commitments for donors and aid organisations to make humanitarian assistance more effective and efficient. The number of Signatories has grown to 71 and now includes Local and National Actors alongside donors, UN agencies, the ICRC/IFRC and INGOs. It is the most inclusive platform of the humanitarian community. Its current iteration, the Grand Bargain 3.0, complemented by its Implementation Agenda, has been agreed until 2026. It thereby contributes to addressing the increasing funding gap between humanitarian needs and available humanitarian funding. Since its inception, annual independent reports have measured progress of the Grand Bargain Signatories against the initial commitments from 2016.

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), on behalf of the Grand Bargain Facilitation Group, is seeking external entities to undertake an independent assessment of progress under the GB 3.0 from 2023-2026, with a light analysis of achievement trends throughout previous iterations of the process.

For this independent report 2026, a team of independent researchers will be hired to present the status of implementation of the GB3.0. The analysis will be done based, on the signatories' self-reported data in 2024-2026, further supplemented by individual interviews with the Signatories, selected thematic Champions (FG members as well as leads of caucuses and CoPs) and other key informants. The researchers will also consult with seven National Reference Groups to capture the perspectives from humanitarian contexts. In addition, the report will include a light comparative analysis of progress achieved since 2016, using findings of previous Annual Independent Reports. Finally, the researchers will situate their analysis within the broader context of transformation of the humanitarian sector using data and findings from other relevant research such as the GHA 2025 and State of the Humanitarian System report (SOHS) 2026.

The final product will be released ahead of the 10-year Grand Bargain Annual Meeting 2026.

B. Objectives

1. Analyse to which degree the GB 3.0 and the different caucus outcomes have achieved their objectives including in selected crisis contexts.
2. Provide an overview of progress achieved per GB constituency - Donors, UN, INGOs, Red Cross Red Crescent Movement;

C. Expected outputs

1. Inception note and independent Report on the Grand Bargain in line with the objectives above:
 - a. Full report, with a 2–3-page executive summary and annexes with details on the findings as necessary and relevant.

- b. Infographic, PowerPoint, animated video or other communication tools for broader audience and presentation at the Grand Bargain Annual Meeting.
2. Support the presentation and dissemination of the report by the Grand Bargain Facilitation Group, at the Grand Bargain Annual Meeting in 2026 to ensure the report's reach and impact.

D. Timeline

An **indicative timeline** is laid out in the table below. *Note: the Independent Report should consider the self-reported data for progress in 2025. The deadline for the submission of this date depends on the deadline for the finalisation of the Independent Report. This deadline is linked to the date for the Annual Meeting 2026.*

The Grand Bargain Secretariat has tentatively allocated 110 days in total for this project, subject to further discussion.

Activity	Description	Preliminary timeframe
Contract finalised	Contract signed between NRC and the chosen supplier	15 September 2025
Inception Note	Short document outlining agreed methodology and data collection, prepared by the chosen supplier	15 October 2025
Chosen supplier/Secretariat discussion	Chosen supplier and Secretariat discuss the main Grand Bargain developments and main milestones of the GB 3.0 and context since 2016	End-October 2025
Desk Study, data analysis, self-report data	The supplier should draw on a variety of resources during this phase, including past AIRs, analysis of self-report data, and external resources (e.g. FTS, GHA 2025, CaLP reports, Anticipatory Action Hub reports etc).	November 2025-January 2026
Interviews	Interviews with National Reference Groups, , Ambassadors, key informants to complement the information conducted by the chosen supplier.	January - February 2026
Self-reports 2026 available	Self-reports submitted by the Signatories outlining progress in meeting the Grand Bargain commitments, for the chosen supplier to still take information from	Mid-March 2026
Interviews with selected Signatories as a follow-up to self-reports	The chosen supplier will interview selected Signatories to complement the submitted 2025 self-report data as required.,	Mid-March to End of April 2026
Draft report outline	Draft outline of the report submitted by the chosen supplier to the Facilitation Group	Early June 2026
Draft report	Draft final report shared with the Signatories for factual review	End June 2026

Finalisation	Chosen supplier respond to comments and finalise document	End July 2026
Output due: Release	Public release of final report	End August 2026
Presentation of the final report		Annual Meeting 2026

E. Methodology

The independent experts should propose a methodology that they consider suitable to the scope of work, within the constraints of the available budget, timeframe and available data, but it is expected to include the following:

Desk study:

- As background: AIRs between 2016-2023
- Capitalizing on research, such as the ALNAP State of the Humanitarian System Report, the Global Humanitarian Assistance Report (GHA), the Global Overview Report on Anticipatory Actions, Reports from CaLP, and other reports linked to GB3.0 commitments and as suggested by the Facilitation Group.
- Analysis of self-reporting data and of the analysis provided by the GB Secretariat of Grand Bargain signatories 2024-2026.
- Interviews with the Signatories, at a minimum the 30 initial GB Signatories, (also in their roles as workstream Co-convenors or caucus champions), Facilitation Group, Eminent Persons since 2016, GB Ambassadors, non-Signatory stakeholders as relevant.
- Consultations with seven priority Grand Bargain National Reference Groups (NRGs) to be determined by the Facilitation Group.

The objectives, outputs, timeline and methodology will be further refined with the team of selected consultants.

Independence:

The annual report is drafted by a diverse team of independent, external experts from the global north and the global south who do not belong to any of the Grand Bargain Signatory organisations and are not involved directly in any of the Grand Bargain's processes. The expert team shares draft reports with the Facilitation Group and Signatories for comments and fact checking. Factual errors and methodological weaknesses and unsubstantiated findings are to be corrected. The conclusions and recommendations represent the opinion of the experts who have the final editing rights.

F. Qualifications and competencies

The supplier should propose a team of expertise that they feel can deliver on the Terms of Reference.

Candidates must be a widely recognised expert in humanitarian affairs with an extensive track record in the sector, including an in-depth knowledge of humanitarian policy, financing, and reform as well as robust portfolio of publications, presentations, and advisory roles.

The required qualifications and competencies include:

- A solid understanding and experience in the aid sector, particularly in humanitarian assistance and reform, financing, and trends.
- Clear understanding of the different actors in the humanitarian system and their interests.
- Experience of conducting and managing independent assessments including knowledge of relevant methods and techniques for data analysis;
- Strong analytical skills and knowledge of system thinking. Ability to process large volumes of information and data, to analyse and to synthesis potentially diverging sets of inputs and ideas.
- Demonstrable experience carrying out similar research and analysis.
- Ability to work independently, but within a team, and remotely while adhering to tight deadlines.
- Strong interpersonal communication skills to ensure a smooth flow of information with the team and the Secretariat.
- Experience in co-writing and collaborating on research with another consultant.
- Excellent drafting skills and command of the English language.
- Registration as a consultant in the country of residence (or as an employee within a consultancy company) is required. Experience working in or with actors from the Global South will be considered an asset, and teams that include consultants from these contexts are strongly encouraged.
- Graphic designers/publishers for publication (to be defined further towards publication date)

G. Preferable Arrangements

We aim to partner with a team of consultants (3 at a minimum), ideally representing different geographical regions. Interested parties are invited to submit one proposal on behalf of the team.

If the lead consultant is not from the Global South, the team must include an additional consultant who can bring a different perspective, and approaches the Report. This person should possess both contextual understanding, as well as a sound grasp of system-wide reforms, financing, and sectoral dynamics. The purpose of this requirement is not only to ensure diversity of viewpoints but also to strengthen the quality of the analysis by integrating different perspectives. This consultant should be integrated as a member of the team.

H. Management

- Grand Bargain Facilitation Group acts as Reference Group which approves expert team, inception note on methodology and final report.
- All Grand Bargain Signatories are invited to comment on draft final report for factual errors.
- Payment will be based on the successful completion of deliverables to the required standard. The consultancy will be managed directly by the Grand Bargain Secretariat, together with NRC. Contact: Grand Bargain Secretariat: gbsecretariat@un.org

Application process

Consultants who meet the requirements and qualifications outlined in the Terms of References are invited to submit an expression of interest by **Wednesday 27 August 2025, 23:59 CET** to the email address Grand Bargain Secretariat: gbsecretariat@un.org. The bid application should be titled '2026 Grand Bargain Report Consultancy' and include the following:

- Cover letter, including a short motivation for this consultancy including rough outline on how to approach the report.
- (Link to) Curriculum Vitae / LinkedIn Profile
- Links to past research papers or similar publications demonstrating experience in conducting comparable research and analysis.
- Full budget proposal including daily consultancy rate in CHF or EUR, inclusive of all costs, VAT and charges.
- Workplan outlining your understanding of the assignment and proposed approach.
- Proof of registration as a consultant/sole trader/proprietor or a company in country of residence as required

Payment will be based on the successful completion of deliverables to the required standard.

Please note: All service providers/consultants working with NRC should maintain high standards on ethical issues, respect and apply basic human and social rights, ensure non-exploitation of child labour, and give fair working conditions to their staff. NRC reserves the right to reject quotations provided by suppliers not meeting these standards. Consultants doing business with NRC will be screened on anti-corruption due diligence before NRC confirms a contract.