WHS: May 2016
NGO perspective on the Grand Bargain

_There has been a lot of interest in the GB in the NGO community. How can you explain this?_

Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of ICVA, InterAction and SCHR, thank you for the opportunity to share an NGO perspective on the Grand Bargain. Over the last 18 months, excellent people have come together to help make humanitarian funding more efficient. We thank Vice President Georgeiva and her secretariat for opening up space that generated momentum needed to make some change possible.

There has been a lot of interest in this process. We engaged because we thought the Grand Bargain provided us with opportunities for important change.

The Grand Bargain commitments are an attempt to bring significant improvements in the way aid is collectively mobilized and delivered, including a reduction in the number of links in the humanitarian funding chain, with a clearer view of what value each layer is adding along the way.

NGOs recognise that the Grand Bargain is not a panacea for all the problems of the humanitarian ecosystem. We believe though, that those who have come together to agree on these 10 commitments have negotiated a serious and realistic way forward. This should be seen as the first stage of an ongoing process.

Now the onus is on implementation - let's make it happen. There are Grand Bargain commitments that NGOs can take forward on our own, and others that are more systemic in nature, and to which we can only contribute.

NGOs recognize that the implementation of some commitments may reflect incremental steps towards larger improvements. The humanitarian system must move away from a centralized, one-system-fits-all approach to one that reflects the reality. Our vision is for the GB to support an ecosystem of diverse actors, with affected people at the centre, in which frontline and national responders receive adequate and timely resources.

Our diversity in approach is our strength, and so depending on whether individual NGOs are direct responders, working with partners, channeling funds, or a mix of all, what we each can commit to will vary. Nevertheless, as NGOs we are committed to being as ambitious as possible in the individual targets for Grand Bargain commitments that we set for ourselves.

The success of the Grand Bargain will rise and fall on the backs of implementing organisations. They need funding that is commensurate with the task at hand, accessible, nimble, longer-term, not tied up in red tape. They need to be treated as partners, not contractors.

In three years time, when we talk to aid workers and the populations they assist in the field, we want them to say the Grand Bargain has made a positive difference in their lives.
For this to happen, we need a robust implementation plan that brings together the technical experts from states, UN agencies, NGOs and other stakeholders.

Making change will cost. But staying the same will cost more.

Drafted by representatives of World Vision, ICVA and SCHR