

Piloting Harmonized Donor Reporting: A Guide to Participation

Updated: 14-June-2017

Participation in the harmonized reporting pilot project is a way to demonstrate that organizations are taking practical steps to fulfill the commitments made as part the Grand Bargain on Humanitarian Aid.

What are we piloting?

- The group of donors, partners, and UN agencies that met in Berlin on 24 March affirmed the primary pilot objectives:
 - Examine the effectiveness of a common donor reporting framework to:
 - 1) Meet the common narrative reporting needs of humanitarian donors
 - 2) Reduce the burden of donor reporting for partners in the field
- The pilot will test the “8+3 Template” proposed by GPPi as the framework for harmonized reporting. Final feedback on the specific template elements to include in the pilot is still being accepted.

Where and when will we pilot?

- We have agreed on initial pilot locations: Myanmar, Somalia, Iraq.
- Presence or ability to pilot in all locations is not required to join the pilot.
- The pilot period is two years, to begin in June 2017, with interim feedback presented during implementation, and a final report completed in mid-2019. The reports included within the evaluation of the pilot will be any reports submitted between 1 August 2017 and 30 April 2019.

Answers to FAQs on joining the pilot:

- **The harmonized template is the maximum expected from a report, not minimum.** This is a core element of the primary objective to reduce burden on the field. If the common harmonized template used in the pilot has 8 core report items, and only 5 are required in a donor-partner relationship, donors would not ask partners to report more than what is required.
- **The pilot will replace existing reporting, not require double reporting against multiple frameworks.** Donors participating in the pilot will only ask implementing partners to complete one set of reports using the common harmonized template in the agreed pilot locations.
- **UN agencies are encouraged to participate in their capacities as both donors and partners, or the one they find most relevant to their role.** For the pilot, it is up to UN agencies if they wish to participate as a donor, as a recipient of funds or both.
- **The additional questions (the “+3”) in the common template are not optional questions.** The common template provides a baseline number of questions, and then gives donors the choice to also include up to 3 additional questions in their version of the template. These additional questions are not “optional” or secondary in nature, but simply allow for limited variation among donors while ensuring a core set of harmonized questions. Where donors have selected one of these additional questions (up to 3) in their template, it is mandatory that implementing partners to respond to the question.
- **The pilot does not alter the timing, deadlines, frequency or sequencing of reporting.** All reporting deadlines and the frequency of reporting continue to be governed by the project proposal and contract. Given the goal of streamlining, donors are encouraged to limit narrative reporting to an annual basis only for new projects, but this is ultimately at the discretion of donors. In addition, although deadlines

do not have to be harmonized among pilot participants, donors and implementing partners should inform the research partner, GPPI, of the reporting deadlines to facilitate data collection.

- **Reporting for projects that began before, or continue after, the pilot dates can be included in the data analysis.** Some projects, and reporting on those projects, may have commenced before 01 August 2017, or be completed following 30 April 2019 – the begin and end dates for data collection. Where it does not present an issue with the existing reporting and contract, those projects can also be included in the pilot, but the only reports examined will be those completed in the “8+3” template between 01 August 2017 and 30 April 2019.
- **Donors are still able to conduct field/beneficiary monitoring and verification.** The pilot does not limit other aspects of reporting. However, to better understand the full reporting cycle and how this affects (or is affected by) the common template, GPPI will conduct a simple survey or qualitative interviews with relevant staff to document what other monitoring and reporting processes happen alongside narrative reporting for the pilot projects.
- **The expected commitment on staff time to participate in the pilot should be light.** There will be some initial learning involved in switching to the new harmonized report template. Additionally, participants will forward completed reports to the research partners, GPPI, and staff will be asked to respond to short surveys or qualitative interviews about the reporting experience (time involved, issues in reporting, other informal reporting that occurred).
- **Reports will be sent to GPPI by the relevant donor-participant.** By participating in the pilot, donors agree to replace existing reporting forms with the 8+3 template, and to forward submitted reports that are part of the pilot to GPPI. NGOs will signal consent when they fill in the provided reporting templates in the 8+3 format.

Key Contacts

If you need any further **technical support** or have questions about the implementation of the common reporting template, please contact GPPI: HarmonizingReporting@gppi.net.

For questions about the **overall direction and purpose** of the pilot, its linkages with other workstreams, development of best practices, or other general questions about the process, please contact:

Alexander Sultan-Khan (Germany FFO): s08-0-1@auswaertiges-amt.de

Christiane Kapashi (Germany FFO): s08-00@auswaertiges-amt.de

Melissa Pitotti (ICVA): melissa.pitotti@icvanetwork.org

Jeremy Rempel (ICVA – Less Paper More Aid): jeremy.rempel@icvanetwork.org