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EVALUATION OF THE DANISH SUPPORT TO CIVIL SOCIETY

*Thematic Evaluation 3:
Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CHS	Core Humanitarian Standard
CISU	Civil Society in Development
CKU	Centre for Church-based Development
CRRF	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
CSF	Civil Society Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DCA	Dan Church Aid
DERF	Danish Emergency Relief Fund
DIB	Dansk International Bosætningsservice
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EPI	Everyday Peace Indicators
EU	European Union
EQ	Evaluation Question
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GCR	Global Compact on Refugees
HD	Humanitarian-Development
HDP	Humanitarian-Development-Peace
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
IAS	International Aid Services
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IMS	International Media Support
INCAF	International Network on Conflict and Fragility
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
KII	Key Informant Interview
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
LRRD	Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation

ODA	Official Development Aid
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
PBF	Plan Børnefonden
RG4	Results Group 4 (of IASC)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
SPA	Strategic Partnership Agreement
TE2 and 3	Thematic Evaluations 2 and 3
UN	United Nations
WFP	World Food Programme

HUMANITARIAN DEVELOPMENT PEACE NEXUS

Why Nexus? Many of the world's most vulnerable people live in fragile and conflict-affected contexts with the share of the global poor living in these contexts projected to reach 67 per cent by 2030. The magnitude of displaced populations is alarmingly high driven by conflict and increasingly by climate change and shocks, which severely impacts livelihoods in many regions around the world.

The recognition of the scale of need and the protracted nature of current crises has led to a rethink and reorganisation of the siloed way Official Development Assistance(ODA) has been delivered in crisis affected situations.

What Nexus? Focusing on coherence and complementarities a nexus approach takes different forms. The humanitarian-development (HD) nexus is at this point quite common, building on earlier paradigms of Linking Relief Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD).

More recently peacebuilding has been included as a key part of nexus approaches. The rationale for a humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus approach is to address the root causes of crisis.

One influential endeavour to define the triple nexus and specifically add peace as a core element in nexus approaches is the 2019 Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus by the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC). The Recommendation is a non-binding legal instrument addressed to OECD/DAC Adherents – member and observer states.

The 2019 OECD-DAC Recommendation on HDP Nexus. The Recommendation calls for strengthening collaboration, coherence and complementarity between the humanitarian, development and peace 'pillars'; and for collective outcome setting. Specific operative paragraphs stress:

- Joining up humanitarian, development and peace outcomes with coherent political and stabilisation interventions which address root causes of conflict
- Prioritising prevention, investing in development while ensuring immediate humanitarian needs are met
- Promoting conflict sensitivity and ensuring that interventions do no harm
- Strengthening national and local capacities
- Joining up programming with the risk environment
- Investing in learning and evidence
- More predictable, flexible, multi-year financing

Civil society perspectives on nexus. A CSO reference group has been established with the aim to follow and advocate for the implementation of the OECD-DAC Recommendation. The reference group i.a. advocates for donors to increase funding to fragile and conflict affected contexts; institute flexible policies and effective coordination of nexus approaches; and promote localisation.

At the organisational level, mainly international NGOs have engaged in the discourse on nexus, both as advocates and skeptics. Some CSOs, especially humanitarian organisations note challenges in working with 'peace' elements, which can jeopardise their neutrality and impartiality, affecting access to communities in need. Another challenge is noted for local NGOs, who often work as implementers with limited say on how they engage with nexus approaches. It is mainly when there are opportunities e.g. for multiyear financing and working towards outcomes and greater flexibility in implementation that they are able to change their modus operandi.

NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY IN THE REPORT

Nexus refers to the interlinkages between humanitarian, development and peace (HDP) actions (OECD/DAC Recommendation, February 2019).

Nexus approach refers to the aim of strengthening collaboration, coherence and complementarity. The approach seeks to capitalize on the comparative advantages of each pillar – to the extent of their relevance in the specific context – in order to reduce overall vulnerability and the number of unmet needs, strengthen risk management capacities and address root causes of conflict (OECD/DAC Recommendation, February 2019).

Double nexus is used interchangeably with humanitarian-development nexus, although a double nexus may also be a development-peace nexus. In the latter cases the nexus relation is specifically mentioned. **Triple nexus** is used interchangeably with humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

Peace is used as a general description of the peace related activities in a Humanitarian Development Peace (HDP) nexus approach.

Danish CSOs; CSOs; and **organisations** are terms used interchangeably in the report to describe **SPA and pooled fund organisations.**

Annex 1 includes a glossary of terms and a timeline of international frameworks that constitute building blocks of relevance for nexus approaches.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This report is one of three thematic evaluations carried out under the *Evaluation of Denmark's support to Danish Civil Society* commissioned by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in mid-2020.

This evaluation assesses how Danish civil society organisations (CSOs) work with nexus approaches from 2017 to 2020. The focus is on recipients of Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) funding, and to a lesser degree on smaller organisations financed by pooled funds.

Between 2017 and 2020 the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) support to civil society amounted 21.5 percent of total Danish Official Development Assistance (ODA). The main modality of support to civil society was the SPA, with two main funding pillars, called "Lot CIV" and "Lot HUM". Both funding pillars include specific language on the humanitarian-development (HD) nexus. Peace is more implicit, but included in the priority to support implementation of *Sustainable Development Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.*

The evaluation therefore covers both the HD nexus and the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus approaches among Danish CSOs. Given the novelty of working across the HDP nexus, the evaluation is learning-oriented, particularly with respect to unpacking what peace means in a nexus approach, both conceptually and in the sample of projects assessed by the evaluation.

The evaluation questions cover overarching and broad topics – i.e., asking for an overview of the different approaches to engage in HDP efforts, and asking how sustainable results are being measured and achieved. More specific questions include how organisations' approaches can contribute to durable solutions for displaced populations and have addressed root causes; exploring the links between nexus approaches and adaptiveness, reduced vulnerability and marginalisation, and natural disasters and climate change.

Conclusions

The evaluation found the SPA modality to be conducive to HD and HDP nexus approaches. Nexus approaches are important in fragile, and conflict affected situations, and the SPA modality is flexible and offers relevant and effective programming opportunities in response to conflict, fragility and displacement.

Nexus approaches among Danish CSOs

Organisations participating in the evaluation find a HD nexus approach to be relevant and effective for programming in fragile contexts. The projects assessed show a variety of nexus-like approaches, without these necessarily being labelled as a HD nexus approach.

With regard to HDP nexus, interviews at HQ-level and survey results found that HDP approaches were embryonic and quite loosely defined in most Danish CSOs. Implementers (field level staff and partners) and beneficiaries had a clearer understanding of the peace element in the nexus and based on their views of the projects, the evaluation found that more than half of the organisations in the sample work with peace alongside development and humanitarian approaches. These organisations are working with projects that establish local conflict resolution mechanisms, economic opportunities, and durable solutions in forced displacement contexts.

The illustration below shows the spread of nexus approaches among the organisations participating in the evaluation. The overview includes both HQ, implementing partner, and beneficiary views and perceptions. The large crosses signify the primary entry point of the organisation, with smaller crosses signalling the additional instruments/approaches the organisation draws on in their nexus approach, depending on the context, needs and relevance.

OVERVIEW OF ORGANISATIONS WORK WITH NEXUS APPROACHES

Instruments	Organisation													
	Action-Aid DK	ADRA	CARE DK	Caritas DK	DCA	Dan. Red Cross	DRC	DIB	IAS	IMS	Mission East	Oxfam IBIS	PBF	VIVA
Humanitarian	✕	✖	✕	✖	✖	✖	✖	✕	✖		✖	✖	✖	✕
Development	✖	✖	✖	✖	✖	✖	✕	✖	✖	✖	✕	✖	✖	✖
Peace			✕	✕	✕	✕	✕			✕		✕		✕

Linkages and coherence

The conducive policy framework for durable solutions in Uganda is enabling for an HD nexus approach, leading to a proliferation of organisations working in this setting. Uganda illustrates how government-led implementation of global frameworks, support joint analysis and planning, collective outcome setting, and strong coordination. The situation in Uganda is contrasted with contexts where the security situation is volatile (Afghanistan) or where political will to work on conflict prevention, mediation and resolution is lacking (Sudan). In environments where a nexus approach is challenging, but relevant and necessary, only few Danish CSOs seem to be engaged. In such contexts results are harder to come by; nonetheless civil society organisations are a critical player in supporting democratic forces, defending civic space and protecting vulnerable groups including forcibly displaced populations.

A HD nexus approach is at the core of the SPA modality's strategic service delivery mechanism. Strategic service delivery has shown its relevance in contexts where there is a need to shift between humanitarian aid and development activities. With this mechanism in the SPA, organisations are found to be able to work with a rights-based approach and to fall back on humanitarian aid, when required by a challenging political context.

Vulnerability and marginalisation

The evaluation looked at vulnerability and marginalisation under the framing of Leaving No One Behind (LNOB). LNOB is well consolidated in organisations' work with a Human Rights Based Approach. Nexus approaches and addressing LNOB are mutually strengthening, and there is a positive correlation which has the potential to enhance the quality of outcomes. Using LNOB as a conceptual label can open doors in some contexts because LNOB is universally accepted, while using peace language may be seen as taking a political standpoint and therefore closes doors for CSOs in some contexts.

Changing risk patterns and extreme events

Organisations in the sample have solid experiences and expertise with localised, resilience-oriented programming that supports the adaptiveness of communities and institutions in the face of changing risk patterns. Disaster Risk Reduction and climate change projects are at the core of the work of these organisations. The SPA modality has been instrumental in allowing organisations to build their expertise and deliver projects that address resource issues, strengthen resilience, build community level capacity and enhance livelihoods. These projects have, over time, consolidated a double nexus approach and organisations are in a position to report outcome level results – mostly without nexus language.

The flexibility of the SPA modality has granted organisations the opportunity to adapt interventions in the wake of COVID-19. Both the organisations and their partners have quickly taken actions to address

impacts the pandemic. Internationally it has been found that COVID-19 has been an enabler in the direction of more localisation and nexus approaches.

Organisation, partnerships, localisation and coordination

Danish CSOs have organisational set-ups that are suited to nexus approaches. Nevertheless, some larger organisations still have work to do to reduce internal silos between their humanitarian and development units/departments. Overall, however, there appears to be no major organisational barriers for nexus work.

Partnerships in nexus approaches centre on working with others to their comparative advantage in joined-up and complementary efforts towards collective outcomes. The organisations work in partnerships with those that have humanitarian and development expertise, but partnerships with peacebuilders were not evident in the project samples.

It is a requirement from MFA that CSOs should have a Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) certification, which in spite of organisations' criticism because of the high costs, has been enabling for development of nexus engagement skills and application of nexus approaches. The CHS gives an overall competence certification for working in crisis contexts.

Exchanges between the organisations and Danish representations/ embassies often centre on nexus related approaches in as far as the SPA organisations work in countries and regions of fragility and conflict. There is, thus far, limited engagement around peace-related issues. With MFA's introduction of *country strategic frameworks,* closer relations are expected and will be of mutual benefit.

Danish CSOs emphasise localisation, and therefore contribute considerably to the 'grounding' of nexus approaches. Nevertheless, local actors are often left out of the fora where coordination takes place. Several organisations are working to ensure that local actors and conflict-affected communities have a greater involvement in analysis, planning, implementation and evaluation as part of their localisation efforts.

Results and sustainability of nexus approaches

The results achieved by the organisations at this point in time are, by and large, outputs and outcomes achieved by tested approaches of projects in crisis contexts – without pointing to the nexus dimension.

The Danish CSOs understand the challenges of measuring results attributed to a nexus approach, and internal reflections on this have led organisations to test different approaches. Some organisations have started to include a nexus dimension into their results frameworks. A nexus marker is one way to point to nexus linkages. Narrative approaches are also seen as valuable to show the additionality of a nexus approach.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1:
Nexus approaches among Danish CSO
- **The organisations** should internalise their conceptual understanding of peace in the nexus and operationalise peace in ways that include stakeholder understandings. The *peace spectrum* presented in this evaluation could be used to bring clarity to what a HDP approach entails in different contexts and in relation to specific programmes, especially with regard to sustaining peace and structured approaches to peacebuilding. This will strengthen theories of change and results frameworks with regard to peace contributions.

Recommendations 2 and 3:
Linkages and coherence
- **Organisations** should engage with nexus approaches in volatile contexts, even though development and peace engagements in such contexts are challenging. This requires in-depth political economy analysis, agility/adaptiveness, and realistic expectations or milestones in the short term.

- Strategic service delivery is a key mechanism that enhances a nexus approach in fragile and conflict affected situations – the mechanism is an HD approach, but opens perspectives to potential entry points for addressing aspects of peace. **MFA** should pay particular attention to the value of this mechanism and potentially expand its applicability.

Recommendation 4:
Vulnerability and marginalisation
- **Organisations** should develop the LNOB and nexus linkages further and advocate with partners and donors in relevant contexts to strengthen and integrate LNOB in nexus approaches, as a way to strengthen the focus on vulnerability and marginalisation.

Recommendation 5:
Changing risk patterns and extreme events
- **Organisations** could further strengthen the sustainability of their HD projects through the addition of a peacebuilding perspective. This is important in light of the increasing importance of local level institutions and platforms for conflict mitigation as climate change and disasters, and related violent conflicts become more visible, and felt more frequently. Such institutions and platforms for conflict mitigation offer opportunities for more distinct peace outputs and outcomes.

Recommendations 6 and 7:
Organisation, partnerships, location and coordination

- **Organisations and MFA** should strengthen dialogues in order to build joint knowledge on nexus approaches, and in particular *peace within* a triple nexus approach. This is important as Denmark increasingly prioritises fragile and conflict affected contexts. The dialogues can also help to showcase such efforts in relation to the Denmark's candidature for the Security Council.

- In order to achieve people-centred collective outcomes, **organisations** and their international and local partners should strengthen their advocacy roles and engagements for interlinkages and coherence between different engagements and different actors in coordination mechanisms.

Recommendation 8:
Results and sustainability of nexus approaches

- **The organisations** should continue to systematise and aggregate learning gained from introduction of nexus markers, and a combination of existing indicators and narrative/qualitative approaches that spell out the nexus interlinkages. It is also important to include a focus on peace and conflict variables in order to show the potential value or unintended negative consequences of nexus approaches. Such monitoring will be valuable for the overall monitoring of results of Denmark's strategy *The World We Share,* as well as feeding into the international workstream related to the OECD/DAC Recommendation on HDP.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Evaluation scope

The following report is one of three thematic evaluations carried out under the *Evaluation of Denmark's support to Danish Civil Society* commissioned by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in mid-2020. The evaluations aim to inform a new round of Strategic Partnership Agreements (SPA) – i.e., multi-year funding agreements for Danish civil society organisations (CSOs). The three thematic areas were identified as priorities both by CSOs and by the MFA, and were structured as three thematic evaluations. This report covers the third thematic area, the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus.

Thematic evaluation 1:
Evaluation of Danish public engagement in the international cooperation agenda promoted by Danish CSOs.

Thematic evaluation 2:
Strengthening civil society in the Global South.

Thematic evaluation 3:
Evaluation of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus.

The core evaluation team of the HDP evaluation included Anne-Lise Klausen (team leader), Ayla Yurtaslan and Eddie Thomas. The team was joined by three local researchers: Assoumane Maiga, Santa Vusia and Hisham Bilal.

1.2. Framing of the thematic evaluation on HDP nexus

In 2016 the MFA launched *'The World 2030',* the first Danish joint strategy for development cooperation and humanitarian action. A basic tenet of the strategy was the need to enable stronger linkages and coherence in areas affected by conflict, fragility or recurrent natural disasters. In June 2021 a new strategy, *"The World We Share",* was launched. This strategy has reinforced the focus of the former on fragile and conflict-affected areas, and prioritises "*the link between development, peace and humanitarian action*" in these areas through the complementary use of instruments and integrated approaches[1].

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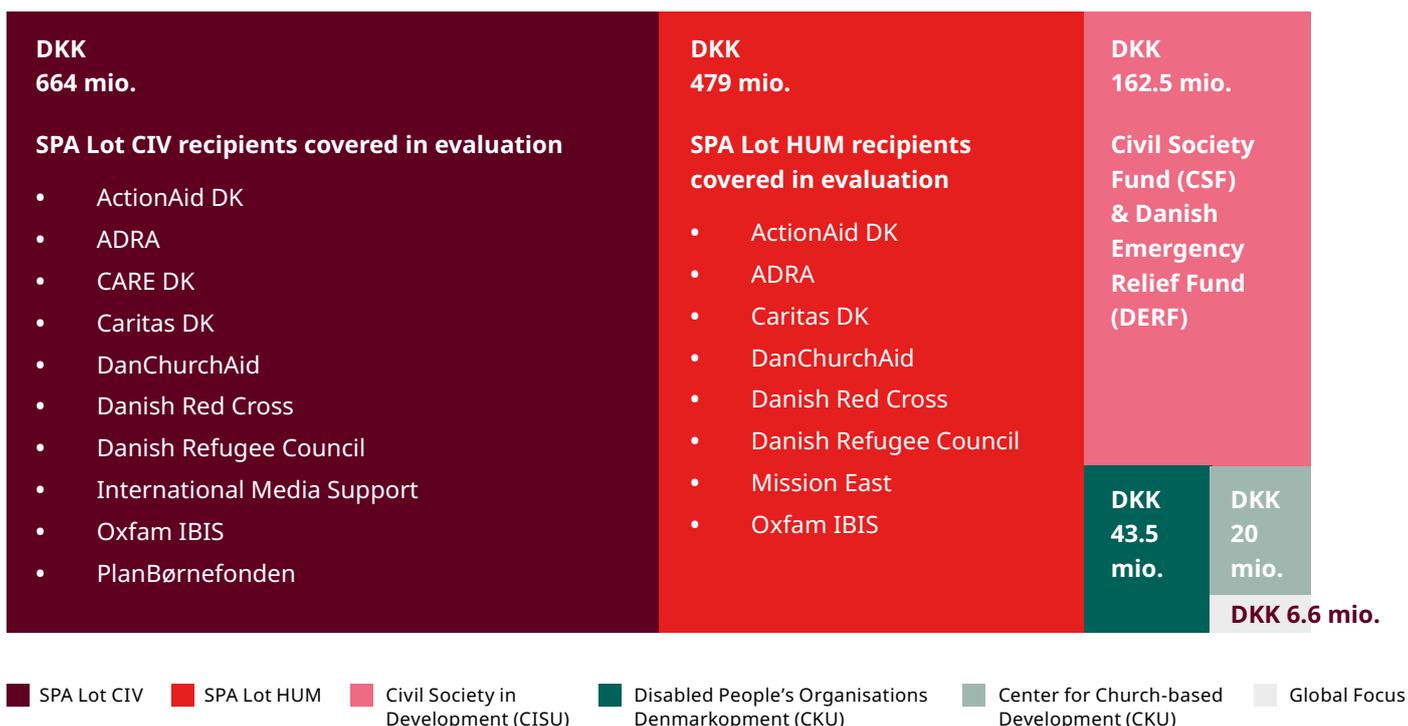
1   Ministry of Foreign Affairs: The World We Share (2021), p. 25.

Between 2017 and 2020, the time covered by the evaluation, MFA support to civil society amounted to almost 2.5 billion DKK, or 21.5 percent of total Danish Official Development Assistance (ODA). The funding in the period of the evaluation was organised in Strategic Partnership Agreements (SPA) with two main funding pillars, called "Lot CIV" and "Lot HUM". Sixteen organisations have received SPA funding, amounting to 1.2 billion DKK, which constitutes almost half of the total funding to CSOs. The Lot HUM made up 479 million DKK and Lot CIV was 664 million DKK.

In addition to the SPA, the MFA allocated a total of 260 million DKK to smaller organisations through several pooled funds: the Danish Arab Partnership Programme's (DAPP); the Youth Grant Facility; the Democracy Pooled Fund; the Disability Fund; the Civil Society Fund (CSF); the Danish Emergency Relief Fund (DERF); the Centre for Church-based Development Cooperation (CKU) pooled fund for faith-based organisations; and the Danish Youth Council (DUF) managed youth fund. SPA organisations which do not have access to Lot HUM may also apply for DERF funding (i.e. CARE Denmark and PlanBørnefonden), and likewise organisations that only have access to Lot HUM may apply for CSF funding (i.e. Mission East).

The evaluation does not cover the totality of Danish support to civil society, but a large proportion of SPA partners and a few organisations receiving pooled funds have been included. An overview of the funding modalities covered in the evaluation is shown below (Figure 1).

FIGURE 1: MFA FUNDING MODALITIES AND CIVIL SOCIETY RECIPIENTS (ANNUAL BUDGET)

DKK 664 mio.

SPA Lot CIV recipients covered in evaluation

- ActionAid DK
- ADRA
- CARE DK
- Caritas DK
- DanChurchAid
- Danish Red Cross
- Danish Refugee Council
- International Media Support
- Oxfam IBIS
- PlanBørnefonden

DKK 479 mio.

SPA Lot HUM recipients covered in evaluation

- ActionAid DK
- ADRA
- Caritas DK
- DanChurchAid
- Danish Red Cross
- Danish Refugee Council
- Mission East
- Oxfam IBIS

DKK 162.5 mio.

Civil Society Fund (CSF) & Danish Emergency Relief Fund (DERF)

DKK 43.5 mio.

DKK 20 mio.

DKK 6.6 mio.

■ SPA Lot CIV	■ SPA Lot HUM	■ Civil Society in Development (CISU)	■ Disabled People's Organisations Denmarkopment (CKU)	■ Center for Church-based Development (CKU)	□ Global Focus

Both Lot CIV and Lot HUM include specific language on the Humanitarian-Development (HD) nexus (see Figure 2). Peace is not specifically mentioned, but it may be argued that since *The World 2030* strategy considers *SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions and SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.* Partnerships for the Goals to be at the core of the strategy, the HDP nexus is implicitly a priority.

FIGURE 2: NEXUS APPROACHES DESCRIBED IN LOT CIV AND LOT HUM

SPA Lot CIV
In risk prone, fragile and/or conflicted affected areas or areas of affected by natural disasters development engagements "may be supplemented by activities that reach across the humanitarian-development nexus, including strategic service delivery, such as for instance health care or water, to address immediate needs but importantly also to create invited space to support humanitarian action and begin working with much more sensitive issues – such as protection of vulnerable groups and advocacy for human rights".

SPA Lot HUM
"Efforts that are coherent with development work and aimed at reducing vulnerabilities of communities and people affected by crisis in a sustainable manner by building self-reliance and resilience and through supporting durable solutions for displaced people; and strengthening the capacity of affected communities, including communities hosting displaced people, civil society organisations as well as local and national authorities and other relevant actors to respond to both immediate and long-term consequences of crises" .

1.3. Evaluation questions

The evaluation questions, as presented in the Terms of Reference (ToR) were directed both at the HD nexus and the HDP nexus. It was resolved during the Inception Phase that the intention in the ToR was to document and learn how the CSOs work with and show results in particular on the HDP nexus. In addition, the evaluation was to assess the extent to which the HD nexus already is implemented by the organisations. Given the novelty of working with the HDP nexus, it was also decided that this evaluation would have a stronger focus on learning than the other thematic evaluations. Therefore, HDP and in particular the unpacking of peacebuilding, has been given more emphasis in the evaluation than in the original ToR.

The evaluation questions (EQs) cover overarching and very broad questions – i.e. what different approaches the organisations use to bridge HDP efforts, and what barriers exist to achieving sustainable results (EQs 1 & 2). While EQs 3, 4 and 5 cover more specific questions on how organisations' approaches have contributed to durable solutions for displaced populations, addressed root causes, built resilience, and reduced vulnerability and

marginalisation, and addressed natural disasters and climate change. This has required some 'balancing' in the report presentation.

The original questions were, in some cases, both windy and long. In the Inception Phase the questions were unpacked to be clearer and shorter and avoid overlaps. This resulted in the evaluation working with seven EQs rather than the original six EQs. Although these clarifications have been made, the reader has to note that some questions are discussed from different entry points and angles in different chapters.

BOX 1: EVALUATION QUESTIONS AT A GLANCE

Relevance	**EQ 1:**	What different approaches are found to bridge humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts among the strategic partners?
Coherence	**EQ 3:**	To what extent does the intervention ensure stronger linkage and coherence between humanitarian assistance and development cooperation, including the Danish country programmes, e.g., by supporting durable solutions for displaced populations or addressing root causes of crisis through building resilience and capacity for crisis response?
	EQ 6:	To what extent has the SPA modality been conducive to more coherent approaches in response to conflict, fragility and displacement in countries prioritised by MFA?
Effectiveness	**EQ 4:**	(Adapted): How have the interventions contributed to addressing vulnerability and marginalisation using interlinkages between triple nexus (humanitarian-development-peacebuilding) or double nexus approaches?
Efficiency	**EQ 5:**	How adaptive have the organisations been in changing risk patterns and extreme events e.g., natural disasters or effects of climate change?
	EQ 7:	(Added): To what extent are organisations organised internally, with partners, and with coordination mechanisms and other joint processes to formulate and deliver on collective outcomes?
Impact/ Sustainability	**EQ 2:**	(Adapted): To what extent have sustainable results been achieved when working across nexus approaches? (What are the barriers? What lessons can be learned? Are they applicable elsewhere?

2. EVALUATION APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The overall evaluation approach has been elaborated in the Inception Report. This chapter briefly outlines the evaluation approach and methodology specific to this thematic evaluation. The evaluation starts from the assumption that nexus is a set of interlinkages, rather than an objective or a tangible outcome or result.

The Inception Phase was highly participatory and a sounding board, composed of representatives from civil society and the MFA, was convened during each stage of the process. Fourteen organisations participated in the evaluation, thirteen of which submitted projects[2]. The organisations, together with the evaluation team, identified 20 relevant projects for assessment. Annex 2 gives an overview of the projects and how they relate to the evaluation questions and the evaluation matrix.

The projects were grouped to inform six case study themes that relate directly to the evaluation questions. The thematic cases are: a) Durable solutions for refugees; b) Nexus approaches to 'Leave No One Behind'; c) Inclusivity in peacebuilding; d) Nexus and strategic service delivery; e) Nexus approaches to climate change and natural disasters; f) Measuring results. Some projects inform more than one of these thematic case studies.

The projects selected are implemented across 15 countries (see Figure 3). Based on a screening of the projects – taking due note of building sufficient evidence in the case studies as well as ensuring a geographical spread – deep dives were conducted in Mali, Uganda, Sudan and Afghanistan. Country offices, partner organisations, relevant local authorities and beneficiaries were interviewed individually, in groups and in focus groups. The four country situations reflect different contexts where durable solutions as well as peace/security and stabilisation issues present both opportunities and constraints. The thematic case studies are not limited to evidence from one field visit. They include comparative analysis across contexts and actors. Independent national researchers were contracted in Mali, Uganda and Sudan. In Afghanistan, due to increasing insecurity, it was decided to carry out remote fieldwork, with the support of the Mission East country office who arranged for the evaluation to conduct remote interviews with partners and beneficiaries[3].

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2   International Media Support (IMS) opted to participate partially, and interviews were carried out at HQ level and IMS participated in the Sounding Board. IMS submitted documentation, which has been included in the analysis, but no projects were reviewed, nor were partners and beneficiaries interviewed.

3   Fieldwork could not take place as anticipated due to COVID-19. The local researchers worked online with the core evaluation team in the analysis and reporting phases. A COVID-19 research protocol was developed and applied.

FIGUR 3: DATA COLLECTION APPROACHES

The following sources of information were used in the evaluation and triangulated to substantiate findings and build up the thematic case studies.
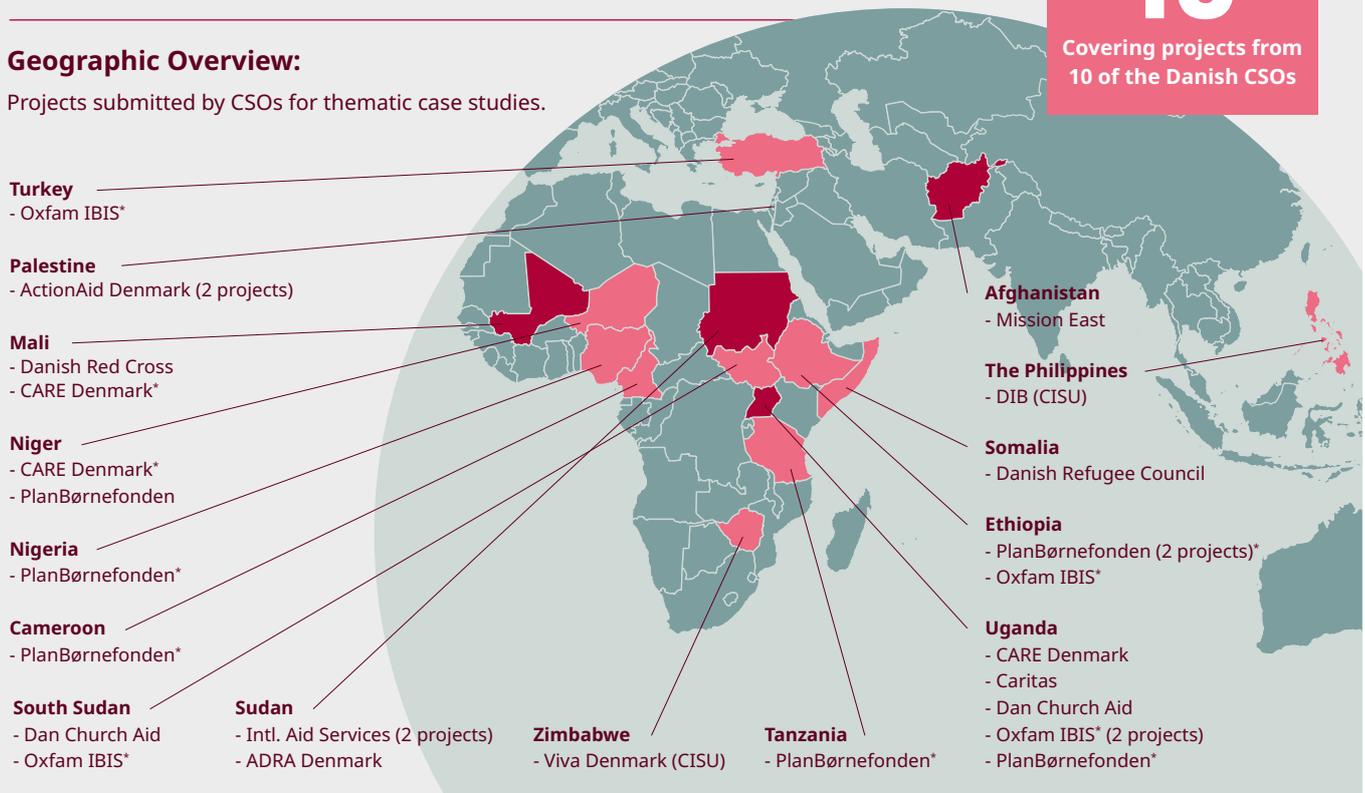
- *Literature review:* including primary case material and position papers on nexus shared by CSOs and relevant secondary literature on nexus approaches
- *Interviews:* key informant interviews (KIIs) and/or Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with selected CSO representatives, partners and with focus on beneficiaries in Mali, Uganda, Sudan and Afghanistan
- *Digital survey:* disseminated to CSOs participating in TE3, both SPA and pooled fund recipients, consisting of 29 questions informing EQ 1, EQ 6 and EQ 7.
- *Workshops:* conducted with the Sounding Board in order to stimulate discussion, substantiate and potentially extrapolate findings for wider learning.

4

**Fieldwork in
4 countries**

10

**Covering projects from
10 of the Danish CSOs**

Geographic Overview:

Projects submitted by CSOs for thematic case studies.

Turkey
- Oxfam IBIS*

Palestine
- ActionAid Denmark (2 projects)

Mali
- Danish Red Cross
- CARE Denmark*

Niger
- CARE Denmark*
- PlanBørnefonden

Nigeria
- PlanBørnefonden*

Cameroon
- PlanBørnefonden*

South Sudan
- Dan Church Aid
- Oxfam IBIS*

Sudan
- Intl. Aid Services (2 projects)
- ADRA Denmark

Zimbabwe
- Viva Denmark (CISU)

Tanzania
- PlanBørnefonden*

Afghanistan
- Mission East

The Philippines
- DIB (CISU)

Somalia
- Danish Refugee Council

Ethiopia
- PlanBørnefonden (2 projects)*
- Oxfam IBIS*

Uganda
- CARE Denmark
- Caritas
- Dan Church Aid
- Oxfam IBIS* (2 projects)
- PlanBørnefonden*

Types of data collected

Survey responses from all 14 CSOs participating in the evaluation. *Interviews* reached a total of:
- 50 representatives of Danish CSOs & 2 pooled funds (CISU and CKU)
- 68 representatives from local partner organisations
- 6 representatives from the MFA, and from local authorities in Uganda & Sudan
- 317 beneficiaries (across the four deep dive countries)

441

**A total of 441
persons interviewed**

Mali	Uganda	Sudan**	Afghanistan
CARE DK & Danish Red Cross:	DRC, DCA, Oxfam IBIS, Caritas DK, & CARE DK:	IAS & ADRA DK:	Mission East:
• 4 staff from partner organisations interviewed • 63 beneficiaries interviewed (42 m/21 f)	• 53 staff from partner organisations interviewed, • 219 beneficiaries interviewed (104 m/115 f)	• 2 staff from partner organisations interviewed • 5 beneficiaries interviewed (3 m/2 f)	• 5 staff from partner organisations • 30 beneficiaries interviewed (13 m/17 f).y

* Cases or projects marked with an asterisk are regional or implemented across several countries.
** Fieldwork in Sudan was cut short due to outbreak of violent conflict in fieldwork areas.

3. NEXUS APPROACHES AMONG DANISH CSOS

This chapter maps out the different nexus approaches of the Danish CSOs participating in the evaluation. The chapter answers EQ1 *(Different approaches to bridge humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts among the strategic partners).* Nexus approaches are not a formula; approaches are conceptualised and operationalised based on relevance in particular contexts, and no nexus approach and combination is superior to others. Some nexus approaches do not identify as a HD or HDP approach, but for example as development-peace or humanitarian-peace or other combinations of approaches. In this evaluation the focus in on HD nexus and HDP nexus[4].

The chapter first provides an overview of how organisations perceive their nexus approaches. It shows that the HD nexus is a common approach, while HDP nexus approaches remain quite undefined. The evaluation therefore unpacks "peace" conceptually and at programmatic level, which leads to a more nuanced picture of how organisations currently work with an HDP approach and how they can strengthen their work in this regard (Section 3.2.).

3.1. HD and HDP nexus at a glance

Approximately half of the organisations in the evaluation have developed nexus position papers. The papers show the importance paid to change processes in the direction of nexus approaches. Organisations without nexus position papers also conceptualise nexus; some have internal learning sessions, while others simply go ahead and operationalise nexus approaches at project level.

HD nexus

Organisations by and large work with elements of an HD nexus approach in fragile contexts. The projects in the sample show a variety of HD nexus approaches, and overall the organisations can be said to have internalised an HD nexus approach. A recent survey conducted by CISU supports this finding. The survey included the member organisations (which include the SPA organisations), and of the 188 organisations that responded, 65 percent (121 organisations) reported that they have experience working across the HD nexus, and 1 in 5 organisations

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4   This chapter does not fully reflect the most recent project developments. Additional materials and interviews showed that some organisations in recent non-SPA funded projects (2021) are quite explicit in their HDP nexus approach.

stated that most of their work is done through an HD nexus approach. Organisations cited a mix of different nexus approaches – from the simultaneous delivery of life-saving and longer-term development assistance, to shifting from development assistance to a humanitarian approach when crises arise[5].

HD projects in the sample aim, in particular, to enhance the *resilience* of targeted individuals and communities. There is a close interlinkage between resilience and nexus approaches, and some organisations even see resilience and an HD nexus approach as the being the same thing. However, there are differences between the two. *Resilience* is stated as an objective through projects. In the project sample (and brought to light in interviews), resilience-building is seen in projects that capacitate communities, partners and local authorities to prevent and reduce natural disaster phenomena, as well as projects that support sustainable livelihoods of vulnerable and/ or crisis-affected communities. *Nexus* refers to approaches, which aim to address situations/problems holistically and develop and implement joined-up outcomes (and a number of other attributes as per the OECD/DAC HDP Recommendation). While working toward resilience encompasses the coherence and linkage aspects of a nexus approach (i.e. breaking down the siloes between the humanitarian and development sector), the rationale behind a nexus approach goes beyond resilience, with the attention given to structural changes in the whole aid architecture, and a focus on addressing root causes through peacebuilding where possible. While the latter, addressing root causes through peacebuilding, is not at odds with a resilience-approach, the Danish CSOs more frequently refer to resilience in relation to a HD nexus approach (without explicit mention of peace).

HDP nexus

With regard to peace elements, a number of organisations reported that they have started to think through or operationalise HDP, both in projects and by participating in Global Focus' nexus working group and the Danish Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Network. The survey conducted by the evaluation asked the organisations at HQ if they were actively involved in processes and activities supporting conflict resolution, or in solidifying and establishing peace, and in avoiding relapse into conflict. Less than a third said they were engaged in such activities.

However, neither the interviews at HQ-level nor the survey results seemed to capture the more nuanced reality of working with peace elements at programmatic level, which relates to the lack of clarity around what constitutes "peace elements". Interviews conducted by the evaluation at field level revealed that perceptions of peace vary widely between HQ and their staff at country level, partners and beneficiaries (discussed in Section 3.2.). Differing perceptions seem to stem from three

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5   CISU (2021) CISUs medlemsundersøgelse: Erfaringer og udfordringer med klima, nexus, det civile råderum og folkeligt engagement. Access here.

main causes. First, peace is a complex and multidimensional concept. Second, peace means different things in different contexts. Third, most organisations have not internalised peace in a nexus approach. The exception are humanitarian organisations that approach peace with caution because it, in certain contexts, is perceived as securitised or politicised. Another angle to this comes from faith-based organisations, such as VIVA, who noted that aspects of their dialogue work could be labelled as peacebuilding. However as a development organisation they have not explicitly unfolded this as a triple nexus element; rather, they have traditionally labelled such activities as *dialogues and diapraxis.* Based on the above the next section unpacks peace conceptually and situates the organisations in a peace spectrum, based on the projects submitted to the evaluation and the interviews conducted.

In relation to the discussion on resilience and HD approaches (in the previous section), resilience is also seen by the evaluation as a relevant concept when discussing HDP approaches. This is because peacebuilding activities may contribute to communities' resilience, and the sustainability of humanitarian and development interventions, e.g., in relation to natural resource management and disputes. Several of the organisations covered by the evaluation work with peacebuilding mechanisms at community level (as will be discussed further in the subsequent chapters), however these activities are often not framed in terms of resilience.

3.2. Peace in the nexus approach

Unpacking peace concepts

Organisations/actors may approach peace from different vantage points, and for this reason the peacebuilding community applies several distinctions to characterise types of peacebuilding activities and approaches. An important differentiation is between *negative peace and positive peace. Negative peace* is, simply put, the absence of violence, often related to military stabilisation, state-level ceasefire agreements or other use of external actions. The opposite is *positive peace,* related to the attitudes, structures and practices in society that contribute to sustaining peace (see Figure 4).

Peacebuilding is in this evaluation understood as an encompassing term that refers to action taken to prevent the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict, to address drivers and root causes of conflict, and more generally to promote attitudes, structures and institutions that sustain peaceful societies.
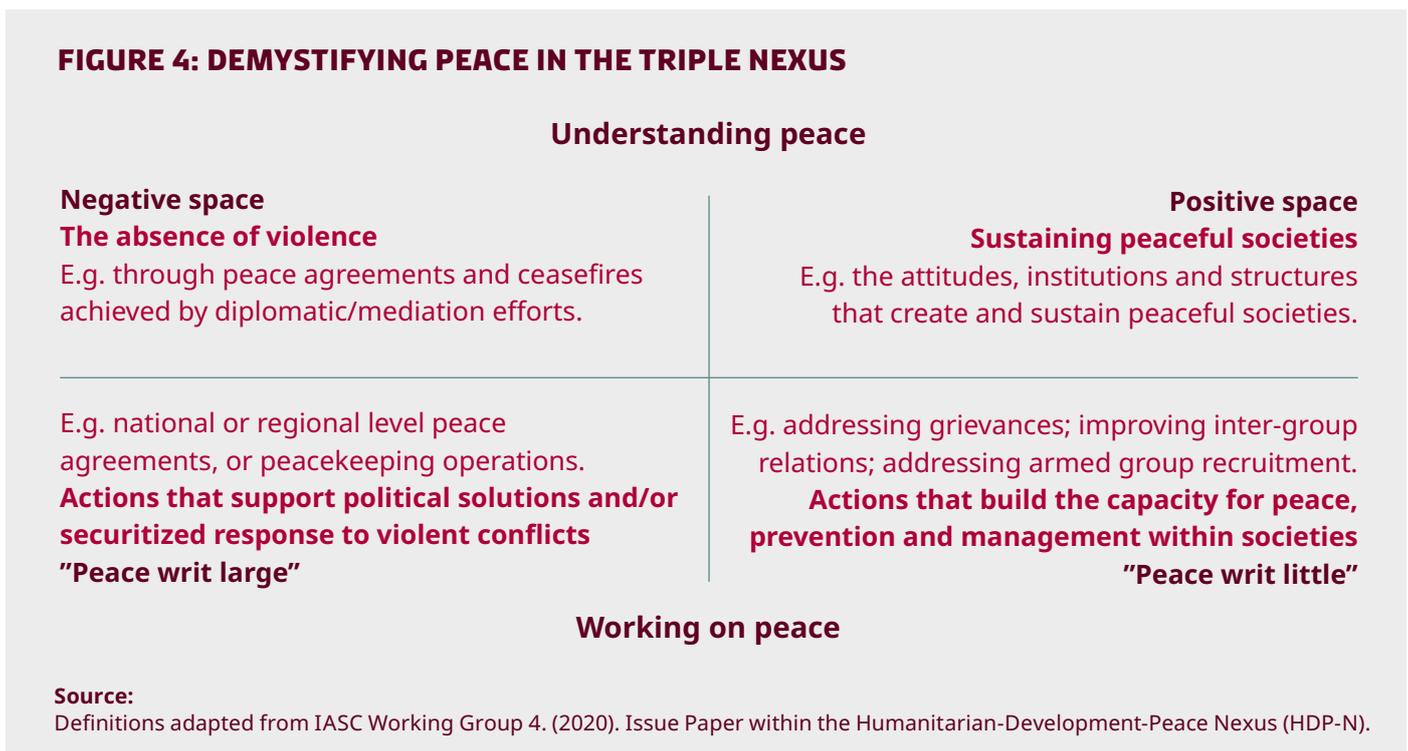
A growing body of literature on peace and the nexus likewise seeks to make distinctions between different kinds of peace interventions, which might help nexus practitioners link humanitarian and development engagement

to peace. A common differentiation adopted by practitioners is between *'Peace Writ Large'* and *'peace writ little'*[6]. The first refers to armed-force responses or political resolutions of violent conflict, and the second to actions which build capacity for peace and help manage local conflicts.

'Peace Writ Large' is no longer as prominent as it has been in the past, because the nature of conflicts has changed over the last decades, with fewer conflicts between states, and more intra-state conflict. Moreover, many current conflicts relate to horizontal and vertical inequalities[7], thus addressing root causes and lending itself to *'peace writ little'* activities.

While humanitarians may approach working on peace with caution, working toward positive peace and applying a *'peace writ little'* approach can help deliver humanitarian assistance that promotes localisation. Local capacities for sustaining peace and conflict prevention are important dimensions in humanitarian response, to avoid aid becoming a driver of conflict – and to counter the escalation of conflict - or renewed conflict and protracted crises[8].

FIGURE 4: DEMYSTIFYING PEACE IN THE TRIPLE NEXUS

Understanding peace

Negative space **The absence of violence** E.g. through peace agreements and ceasefires achieved by diplomatic/mediation efforts.	**Positive space** **Sustaining peaceful societies** E.g. the attitudes, institutions and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies.
E.g. national or regional level peace agreements, or peacekeeping operations. **Actions that support political solutions and/or securitized response to violent conflicts** **"Peace writ large"**	E.g. addressing grievances; improving inter-group relations; addressing armed group recruitment. **Actions that build the capacity for peace, prevention and management within societies** **"Peace writ little"**

Working on peace

Source:
Definitions adapted from IASC Working Group 4. (2020). Issue Paper within the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus (HDP-N).

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6   CDA, 'Claims and reality of linkages between PEACE WRIT LARGE and peace writ little,' Cambridge MA: CDA, 2012.

7   As documented in the UN World Bank Pathways for Peace Report "many of today's violent conflicts relate to group based grievances arising from inequality, exclusion, and feelings of injustice" where impartiality may have a central role in addressing conflict drivers.

8   IASC WG4. (2020) Issue Paper: Exploring peace within the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus.

Peacebuilding interventions can contribute to both negative and positive peace, and may contain a mix of *'Peace Writ Large'* and *'peace writ little'* activities. The approaches are not mutually exclusive. Diplomatic actors such as the UN, and regional governing bodies like the European Union or the African Union, are more geared to work on the top-down, *'Peace Writ Large'* interventions, such as official mediation between countries, and among major groups within a country. There are also dedicated peace building organisations which enjoy particular trust because of their expertise working with *'Peace Writ Large'.* Most civil society organisations working with peacebuilding, focus on locally-anchored, bottom up *'peace writ little'* interventions rather than politicised, high-level peace operations.

Peace is not equal to stabilisation. The UN and regional bodies also engage in mandated 'stabilisation missions,' such as those in Somalia and the Sahel. Stabilisation missions do not always bring peace, but they shake consensus about peace and peacebuilding, making it harder for humanitarian and development actors to engage. While stabilisation and peacebuilding are separate concepts with their own specific approaches, many actors package peace, security and stabilisation together, blurring boundaries both conceptually and in practice on the ground.

Some CSOs including some Danish CSOs express reservations at a conceptual level toward triple nexus engagement out of the above concern of being taken hostage by a stabilisation agenda, which may jeopardise humanitarian principles (Danish Red Cross, Oxfam IBIS, DCA) and for reasons of fear of securitisation of development engagements (CARE).

Local understandings of peace

To shed light on the peace element in a nexus approach in practice, the evaluation asked project staff, local partners and beneficiaries to describe their understandings of peace, and the kind of activities that might contribute to peace. The information gathered showed that the projects are contributing more to peace than perceived at HQ of the organisations (as discussed in Section 3.1.). The organisations' focus on inclusion and equality, rights, access to services and economic opportunities, were seen by stakeholders as central to conflict prevention and sustaining peaceful societies. For many, particularly those that have fled from conflict, an end to violence was the first step of peace (i.e. 'negative peace'). A woman in Uganda made the statement: *'If you don't hear gunshots, you can live peacefully ... and nothing is scaring you'.* Sudanese and South Sudanese interviewees identified accountability for past abuses as a necessary condition for peace, an indication of the growing importance of transitional justice provisions in peace processes, and the need to turn 'negative peace' into 'positive peace'.

At the local level, the link between peace and development came out very clearly, with many beneficiaries citing peace as having access to livelihoods, water, education, and land. In Mali, a local government official expressed it in concrete terms, stating *'In my opinion, whatever speaks to development, speaks to peace.'*
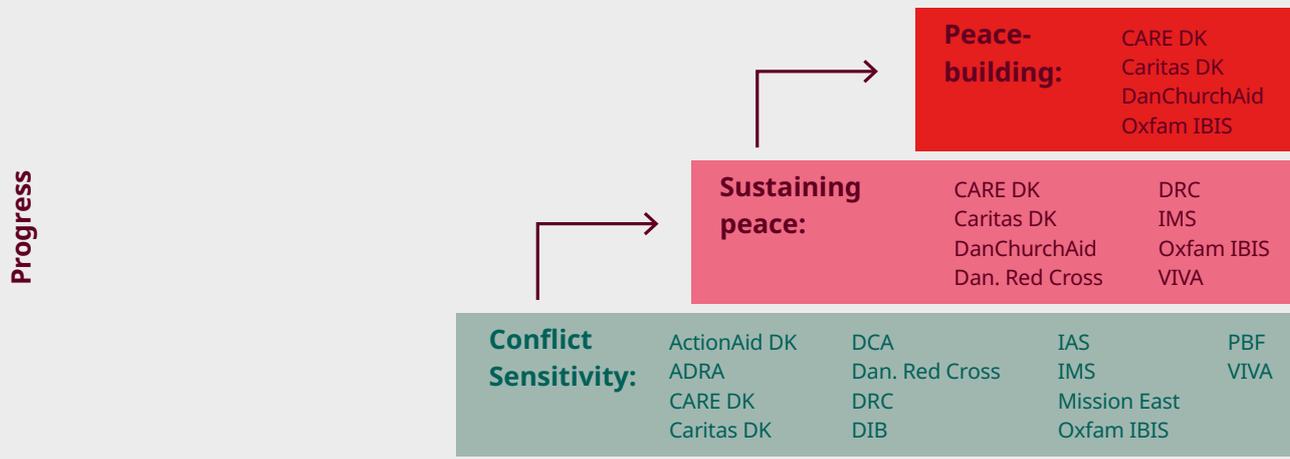
3.3. Operationalising peace

Following the unpacking of peace (in the section above), it is useful to categorise the peace activities of the CSOs. This has been done using the IASC 'peace spectrum,' which has been developed as a result of a broad stakeholder demand to reach a better understanding of the peace dimension in a nexus approach[9].

FIGURE 5: CSOS' PROJECTS PLACED ALONG THE 'PEACE SPECTRUM'

Source: Peace Spectrum Model is taken from IASC Working Group 4. (2020). Issue Paper: Exploring Peace within the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus (HDP-N).

9 Ibid.

The spectrum places peace actions along a line which runs from *'doing harm'* to *'contributing to peace,'* and illustrates three levels of engagement with conflict drivers and positive contributions to peace: conflict sensitivity, sustaining peace and peacebuilding. The evaluation has attempted to map the organisations and their submitted projects along this peace spectrum. In this spectrum, activities of Danish organisations' engagement in conflict affected contexts can run across several levels. Overall, the organisations are found to be more engaged in peace activities that they initially reported to the evaluation (as alluded to in the section below).

Conflict sensitivity

Conflict sensitivity is a minimum requirement for all organisations working in fragile and conflict affected contexts, ensuring that programming is based on sound contextual analyses that account for conflict drivers. No intervention is neutral, thus conflict sensitivity is essential to ensuring the principle of 'Do No Harm'. While all organisations in the sample address conflict sensitivity in their programming, conflict sensitivity does not in itself constitute working *on* conflict/peace, but it is rather a critical part of working *in* conflict. As such, there is no guarantee that conflict sensitive programming will address drivers of conflict. The evaluation finds it useful to include conflict sensitivity in the peace spectrum but does not consider conflict sensitivity as an active approach to peace in the nexus. It is a basic requirement for organisations working in fragile and conflict affected situations, and all organisations in the sample have internalised processes in this regard.

> **Social cohesion** was cited by several organisations as part of their peace engagement in the nexus. However at a closer look social cohesion is loosely defined and handled differently by different organisations. For example, some organisations note that working in a conflict sensitive way, equals supporting social cohesion. Based on the sample, the evaluation notes that many Danish CSOs see social cohesion as an outcome of conflict sensitive programming, rather than handling it as an outcome of concrete activities to sustain peace in the 'peace spectrum'. The latter implies an active effort to reinforce positive attitudes and relations, rather than minimizing negative ones as an outcome of programming.

Sustaining peace

Moving up a level in the 'peace spectrum' are the organisations that contribute to sustaining peace, defined as *'activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation, and recurrence of conflict'*[10].

The organisations that work on sustaining peace have interventions aimed at preventing conflicts and contributing to positive relations e.g., between pastoralists and farmers in Mali; between refugees, IDPs and host communities; or between refugees belonging to different ethnic/ religious groups.

Some organisations also address the root causes of conflict that have driven displacement. Conflict drivers are transferred, and tensions can move with refugee populations to their new context. In the Ugandan refugee context, this is seen in the interethnic violence between South Sudanese refugees resulting in casualties in refugee camps. One barrier to addressing these conflicts, is the Ugandan policy of segregating ethnic groups associated with the opposition and the government, which can feed suspicion and hostility. However, Oxfam IBIS and Caritas work to improve intra-refugee relations despite segregation measures by distributing radios and funding peace talk-shows to combat misinformation and hate speech and to mediate in disputes. Beneficiaries noted the importance of such activities.

Livelihoods and financial inclusion projects that, from the outset, are structured to encourage peaceful co-existence between host and refugee communities are another area where organisations are working on sustaining peace. Much of DCA's livelihoods work in Uganda falls into this category, because of the necessity to prevent conflicts that invariably arise over scarce resources and access to land. In the same vein, Caritas seeks to reduce wood-fuel dependency in a livelihood project, because wood-fuel is scarce, and therefore a major conflict driver.

Peacebuilding

At the peacebuilding level in the 'peace spectrum', organisations engage in processes and activities that address conflict and peace at a more structural level, i.e. by building institutions or spaces that prevent and mediate conflict, and sustain peace. There are fewer examples of this in the evaluation sample, mostly still within the realm of *'peace writ little'* – although there are a few examples of the more formal *'Peace Writ Large'* activities.

In Mali, CARE has established committees to address conflicts between pastoralists and farmers which create both a formal democratic space and guidance on how to mediate local-level conflicts and prevent

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10   IASC Results Group 4 (2020) Issue Paper: Exploring peace within the humanitar-
        ian-development-peace nexus. p. 14.

them from escalating. However, CARE does not label the activities as peacebuilding to avoid politicising these in a context where peace and security are highly politicised terms. Instead social cohesion is referred to as the outcome (rather than peace).

Another example comes from South Sudan, where civil society and church organisations have had a prominent role in formal peace negotiations *('Peace writ Large').* Oxfam IBIS supported a structured engagement with women's inclusion and participation through a Women, Peace and Security lens, and DCA has, more broadly, supported church participation in peace negotiations. Importantly, a key tenet of both organisations' *'Peace writ Large'* engagement is the inclusion of affected communities, as failure to do so has led to non-success of such processes in the past.

3.4. Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

Organisations participating in the evaluation find a HD nexus approach to be relevant and effective for programming in fragile contexts. The projects assessed show a variety of HD nexus approaches, without these necessarily being labelled as an HD nexus approach[11].

With regard to HDP nexus, interviews at HQ-level and survey results found that HDP approaches were embryonic and quite loosely defined in most Danish CSOs. However, in the unpacking of peace elements at conceptual and programmatic level, and in interviews with field level staff, partners and beneficiaries, the evaluation found that over half of the organisations in the sample are working with peace elements alongside development and humanitarian approaches (see Figure 6). These organisations are working with projects that establish local conflict resolution mechanisms, economic opportunities, and durable solutions in forced displacement contexts that contribute to peace.

The illustration below (Figure 6) indicates the spread of nexus approaches among the organisations participating in the evaluation. The large crosses signify the primary entry point of the organisation, with smaller crosses signalling the additional instruments/approaches the organisation draws on in their nexus approach, depending on the context, needs and relevance[12].

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11   IMS works with a Development Peace Approach: the organisation did not submit any projects for the evaluation but participated at HQ level.

12   International Media Support has noted that they work in humanitarian situations, and as such they play a role in emergency situations. However, they have not received funding from SPA or from pooled funds for humanitarian purposes between 2017 and 2020.

FIGURE 6: OVERVIEW OF ORGANISATIONS WORK WITH NEXUS APPROACHES

Instruments	Organisation													
	Action-Aid DK	ADRA	CARE DK	Caritas DK	DCA	Dan. Red Cross	DRC	DIB	IAS	IMS	Mission East	Oxfam IBIS	PBF	VIVA
Humanitarian	✕	✖	✕	✖	✖	✖	✖	✕	✖		✖	✖	✖	✕
Development	✖	✖	✖	✖	✖	✖	✕	✖	✖	✖	✕	✖	✖	✖
Peace			✕	✕	✕	✕	✕			✕		✕		✕

While eight organisations in the sample include peace elements in their nexus approach, the depth of peace engagement varies. For this reason, organisations were placed in a peace spectrum of three levels – showing that all organisations work with conflict sensitivity and over half of the organisations in the sample work with sustaining peace activities (8), and a smaller number work with a structured approach to peacebuilding (4).

Recommendation
1. The organisations should internalise their conceptual understanding of peace in the nexus and operationalise peace in ways that include stakeholder understandings. The *peace spectrum* presented in this evaluation could be used to bring clarity to what an HDP approach entails in different contexts and in relation to specific programmes, especially with regard to sustaining peace and structured approaches to peacebuilding. This will strengthen theories of change and results frameworks with regard to peace contributions.

4. LINKAGES & COHERENCE

The core of this chapter is an assessment of coherence and linkages in contexts of seeking durable solutions for forcibly displaced populations, including an assessment of the link to addressing root causes of conflict. The chapter further looks at strategic service delivery which, in essence, is a HD nexus mechanism included in the SPA. The chapter answers the main parts of *EQ3,* i.e. an assessment of *the extent to which the interventions ensure stronger linkage and coherence between humanitarian assistance and development cooperation, including the Danish country programmes, e.g., by supporting durable solutions for displaced populations or addressing root causes of crisis through building resilience and capacity for crisis response?*[13]

4.1. Durable solutions and nexus

Humanitarian approaches to forced displacement often fail to build self-reliance and to integrate refugees into the economies of host countries. The HD nexus has long been seen as a way to address these shortcomings[14].

The Global Compact for Refugees – a nexus approach. In 2016, the international adoption of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) and later the Global Compact for Refugees (GCR) took strides to address refugee self-reliance through a framework for 'multi-stakeholder, coordinated responses to displacement crises, with refugee integration at the heart. Integration means giving refugees access to services and jobs, and are included in development plans of host countries. In return, development partners agreed to share the cost burdens of refugee-hosting countries. The GCR/CRRF encourages actors to link up humanitarian and development approaches by promoting self-reliance of refugees and host communities, integrating long-term planning at the outset of a crisis to reduce humanitarian needs, and supporting the development of – and sustained peace in, refugee hosting countries.
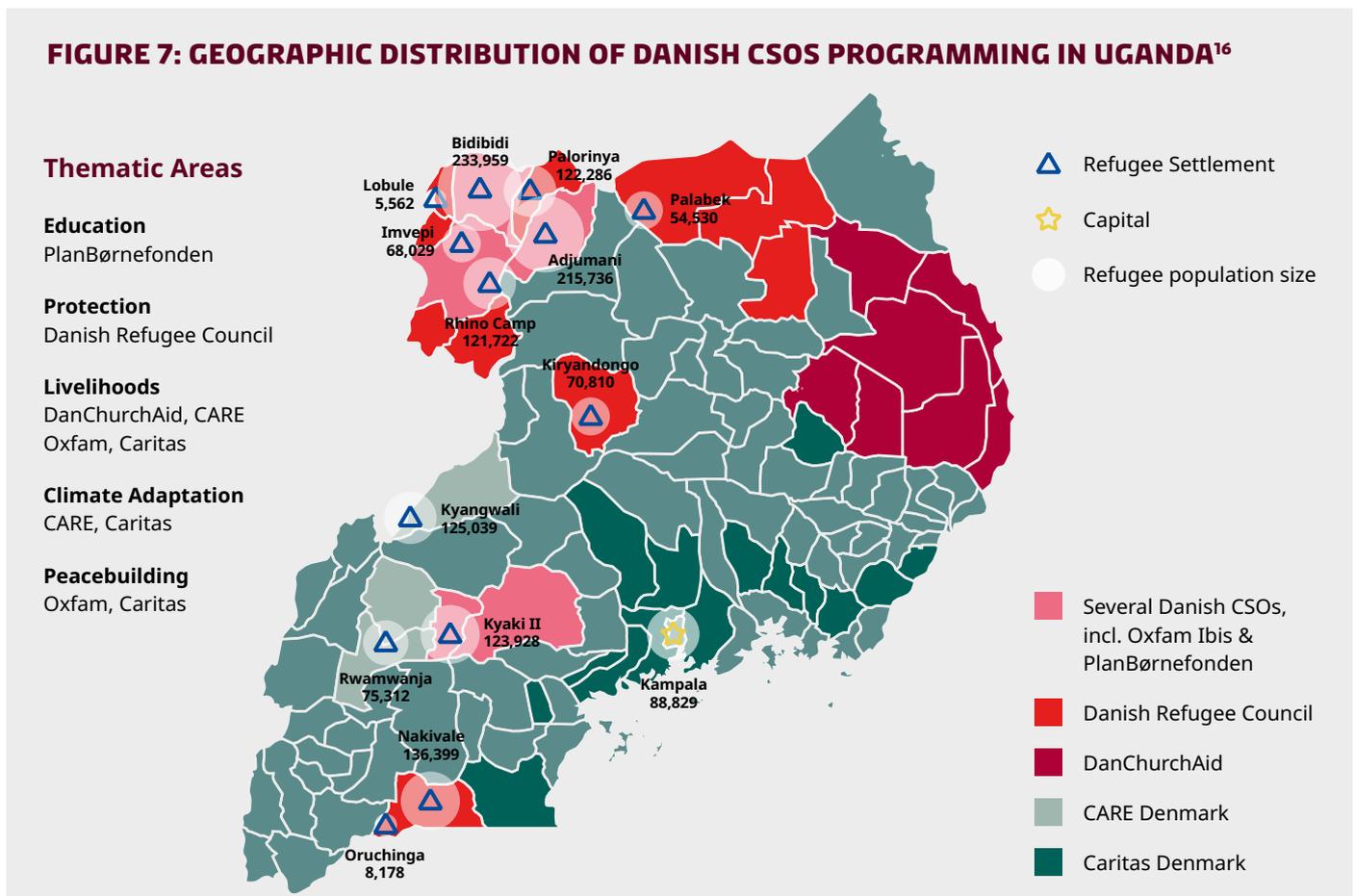
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13   Although the ToR requests a focus on the double nexus, the evaluation includes peace aspects when relevant in the analysis. The EQ includes several key issues, which are related to other evaluation questions. As an example, is the sub-question on linkages to Danish country programmes, answered in Chapter 7, because of the close relation to organisational issues.

14   Crisp, J. (2001). Mind the Gap! UNHCR, humanitarian assistance and the development process. In New Issues in Refugee Research. UNHCR Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit.

The majority of the projects submitted to the evaluation focus on nexus approaches addressing forced displacement. Many of these projects are located in Uganda, where the stable and peaceful environment and progressive refugee policies make it an 'easy' context to apply nexus approaches. There is political support for refugee inclusion in labour markets, and the Government, led by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), takes lead in coordination under the auspices of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), and seeking coherence and complementarity to reach collective outcomes.

The humanitarian-development nexus is thus integrated into all organisations' work, and organisations are asked to follow a rights-based approach, including working on social cohesion to promote peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities[15]. As such, Uganda's adoption of the CRRF provides a solid framework for organisations to work toward collective outcomes, to coordinate and to collaborate with other actors.

FIGURE 7: GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF DANISH CSOS PROGRAMMING IN UGANDA[16]

Thematic Areas

Education
PlanBørnefonden

Protection
Danish Refugee Council

Livelihoods
DanChurchAid, CARE
Oxfam, Caritas

Climate Adaptation
CARE, Caritas

Peacebuilding
Oxfam, Caritas

△ Refugee Settlement
☆ Capital
◯ Refugee population size

- Several Danish CSOs, incl. Oxfam Ibis & PlanBørnefonden
- Danish Refugee Council
- DanChurchAid
- CARE Denmark
- Caritas Denmark

Bidibidi 233,959
Palorinya 122,286
Lobule 5,562
Palabek 54,530
Imvepi 68,029
Adjumani 215,736
Rhino Camp 121,722
Kiryandongo 70,810
Kyangwali 125,039
Kyaki II 123,928
Rwamwanja 75,312
Kampala 88,829
Nakivale 136,399
Oruchinga 8,178

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15   Uganda's Roadmap for the Implementation of the CRRF in Uganda 2018-2020.

16   The Figure draws on a) projects submitted to the evaluation b) organisations' websites for information on where in Uganda they have engagements c) UNHCR's overview of refugees & asylum seekers in Uganda from 31 January 2021.

In Uganda, Danish CSOs cover all districts where there are refugee settlements (see Figure 6). Coordination structures help avoid duplication: for example, DRC discontinued its livelihoods programming in the north-east because DCA was doing livelihoods work there. Beneficiaries noted that duplication has decreased in recent years, where it previously has been a source of conflict among refugees. Coordination structures in Uganda lend themselves to a nexus approach because coordination occurs across mandates and modalities. The projects illustrate how a conducive policy framework and coordination lead to more interlinkages and coherence and potentially collective outcomes.

Nonetheless structural inequalities are persistent. In spite of the favourable policy and funding frameworks in Uganda that promotes refugee self-reliance, a 2019 ODI study found that 80 percent of refugees lived below the international poverty line and 89 percent recently experienced food insecurity at the time that the study was undertaken[17]. The study authors concluded that *"Self-reliance policies may not necessarily lead to self-reliance outcomes,"*[18] due to limited access to land, the geographic isolation of many refugee settlements and the lack of off-farm livelihood opportunities. This points to the issues of the root causes of poverty and inequality not being addressed through policies of interlinkages and coherence. Several of the organisations noted this challenge, and one of the ways they address the issue of access to land is through *'peace writ little'* activities that improve relations between host communities and refugees.

In more challenging contexts of forced displacement, it is important that CSOs adopt nexus approaches, even when these are difficult to implement. With relapses into conflict, development gains are easily eroded, and short-term humanitarian actions prevail, often paired with limited trust in government leadership (Sudan is an example). In these situations, organisations must lower their expectations of sustainable outcomes. This is not to say that engagement in challenging contexts is futile, but rather a wake-up call for organisations to reflect on how to measure incremental gains, particularly at community level where they have a presence and their contributions are more evident. Local partners are of the utmost importance, not least to ensure a sound contextual understanding and adaptiveness, but equally to build foundations for a citizenry and civil society.

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17   Crawford, N., O'Callaghan, S., Holloway, K. and Lowe, C. (2019) The Compre-hensive Refugee Response Framework: Progress in Uganda. HGP Working Paper. London: ODI. www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/resource-docu-ments/12937.pdf

18   Ibid, p. 4.

Sudan's government has not mustered the political will to address displacement crises, like the one precipitated by attacks on IDP camps in West Darfur in early 2021, which displaced hundreds of thousands of people[19]. The crisis received little attention from Sudan's preoccupied government and the international community. Against this backdrop, CSOs operate in a limited space, which only allows them *"to address underlying natural resource issues that potentially can support national peace processes, if reconciliation happens",* as noted in a partner interview. In such situations CSOs have an important advocacy role combined with on the ground presence, where they can pressurise for root causes to be addressed and draw international attention to the situation.

BOX 2: CAN POOLED FUND ORGANISATIONS WORK ACROSS THE NEXUS FOR DURABLE SOLUTIONS?

For the smaller organisations who are ineligible for a SPA, the pooled funds present both opportunities and challenges to establishing linkages and coherence in displacement situations. DIB's work in the Philippines is a case in point.

At the outset of the Marawi siege in May 2017, DIB had CSF funding for a disaster risk sensitive planning project to address the vulnerabilities of informal settlements in the city of Iligan. The outbreak of armed conflict in the neighbouring city Marawi, led to the displacement of over half a million people, with vast numbers fleeing to the city of Iligan.

Against this backdrop, DIB applied to the DERF to respond to IDPs' needs. The DERF granted support to DIB for nine months to address urgent needs, from health monitoring to prevention measures and psychosocial support. When the DERF funding came to an end, many of the humanitarian needs remained a reality, but the situation could no longer be called an 'emergency', and DERF could not be used. DIB once again turned to the CSF but found there was no funding that could bridge between the emergency situation and longer-term development. In the year that it took to secure funding, many of the IDPs that DIB were working with had 'disappeared'. Luckily, DIB's local partner was able to mobilise some funding from charitable networks to address some of the most acute needs during this period. IDPs and informal settlements are often neglected by local government and other actors in the area, and they are a vulnerable group with no quick solutions to their displacement.

DIB's response to the Marawi IDP situation illustrates that the DERF is an asset for organisations without a SPA Lot HUM grant to provide much needed humanitarian assistance. However smaller organisations that rely on pooled funds may find it difficult to work on durable solutions because of the lack of funding for protracted crises and recovery.

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19   Reports from Reliefweb & The New Humanitarian.

4.2. Strategic service delivery – a nexus approach

This section looks at strategic service delivery in two sectors – education and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) – and how Danish CSOs' activities in these sectors illustrate a double nexus approach. The 2014 *Policy for Danish Support to Civil Society* notes that standalone service delivery is unsustainable, and it is not an endorsed form of civil society support. However, strategic service delivery is allowed in SPA Lots (CIV and HUM), as a way of bridging activities and building capacities of duty bearers to deliver services.

> The SPA information note encourages **strategic service delivery.**
>
> - In Lot CIV, strategic service delivery should be "designed to reinforce advocacy, legitimacy of partners in the global South, innovation, learning, and capacity development of change agents and partner organisations in relation to the promotion of the SDGs". Moreover, in areas affected by armed conflict, crisis or recurrent natural disaster.
> - Lot HUM may engage in "strategic service delivery to address immediate needs but importantly also to create invited space to support humanitarian action and begin working with much more sensitive issues – such as protection of vulnerable groups and advocacy for human rights".
>
> Thus, the framing of strategic service delivery in the SPA enables organisations to adopt a double nexus approach in service sector programming, where service delivery is a means to reach a longer-term goal, rather than the end itself.

Education

Education is multi-dimensional and very sensitive to conflict, and therefore a sector where there is an emerging understanding of the value not only of a HD nexus approach but also including a peace perspective[20]. While only a few of the projects submitted to the evaluation directly focus on the education sector, interviews pointed to education as a key contributor to sustainable development and long-term peace.

While not directly working on peace education, Caritas has, for example, used schools as a venue for debates on peace, or for theatre events related to peacebuilding (e.g., in Uganda), seeing the potential of schools in bringing children of different backgrounds together, and building their

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20   See for example: Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE). (2021). Humanitarian-Development Coherence in Education: Working together in crisis contexts. New York, NY.

capacity to engage with peace. Plan Børnefonden, with the education in emergencies approach for refugees in East Africa, links the humanitarian approach to longer-term development of school curricula, in order to improve quality of education and learning outcomes for displaced children. International Aid Services (IAS) works in Sudan to provide accessible educational infrastructure for children with disabilities and advocates for an educational system that is inclusive and responsive to the needs of children with disabilities. The intervention, funded by pooled funds, is another example of strategic service delivery, because IAS' support to educational infrastructure, teaching capacities, etc., is paired with their efforts to create space- and to advocate for disabled children's rights. IAS' work on education is used as an opening to work on inclusion and tackle vulnerability and marginalisation of disabled children. However, there are mixed opinions among project stakeholders as to whether the project constitutes a nexus approach. While some explain that the project addresses both humanitarian needs of disabled children and works toward greater inclusion (development), others point to lack of coordination, and lack of collective outcome setting, and the mismatch between the narrow scope of the project and the scale of needs.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
In the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector, actors recognise the advantage of nexus approaches, and see strategic service delivery mechanisms of the SPA as a good entry point[21].

With SPA Lot HUM funding, Mission East has been building on a longstanding engagement in Afghanistan through its Integrated, Community-Driven Approach to Relief, Recovery and Rehabilitation Programme in the North-Eastern part of the country. The programme includes a focus on WASH. Field staff noted that the communities experience fewer water-related conflicts, because the committees have created a water governance structure. WASH is seen to link to governance, social cohesion and peace. However, progress towards social cohesion is undermined by the deeply unstable context.

When the interviews of the evaluation was conducted in June 2021, two decades of foreign involvement were ending[22] and Mission East had actually started to work in Taliban controlled areas based on a direct request from a community. However, the work could only include

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21 For example, evident in the 2019 learning event hosted by the global WASH cluster, UNICEF, ICRC/IFCRC and others on Building Resilient WASH systems in fragile contexts.

22 Civilian casualties in the first quarter of 2021 are nearly 30 percent higher than the same period in 2020. Security threats are compounded by food insecurity, natural disasters and the Covid-19 pandemic. Report of the Secretary General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security. (A/75/926 – S/2021/570).

purely humanitarian support with water provision without inclusion of governance and rights (of women) being part of the engagement. With time, the staff noted they hope to build trust with local actors in these areas, and to provide a more integrated programme. This example shows how a strategic service delivery approach is difficult in certain situations, but also how an organisation can remain engaged with humanitarian action as the "baseline" and an entry point for working with more sensitive issues in the future. Strategic service delivery offers opportunity and flexibility in this regard.

> The correlation between fragility and inadequate access to WASH is well documented: children living in fragile contexts are eight times worse off across WASH-related indicators, with a detrimental impact on health, nutrition and educational outcomes. The link to peace is dual, as water can be a connector and a divider: on the one hand, water scarcity and unequal access is a 'threat multiplier' that can fuel conflicts, while on the other, water resource management presents an entry point for dialogue and collaboration between opposing parties.
>
> **Source:** *UNICEF (2019) Water Under Fire report*

4.3. Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

The conducive policy framework for durable solutions in Uganda is enabling for an HD nexus approach, leading to a proliferation of organisations working in this setting. Uganda illustrates how government-led support for the implementation of global frameworks supports joint analysis and planning, collective outcome setting, and strong coordination. The Government has also recently asked organisations to include in their reports an indicator on the peace contribution of their work, pushing organisations to think of peace as integral to their work.

Uganda is contrasted with contexts where the security situation is volatile (Afghanistan) or where political will to focus on conflict prevention, mediation and resolution is lacking (Sudan). In environments where a nexus approach is challenging, but relevant and necessary, only few Danish CSOs seem to be engaged. In such contexts results are harder to come by; nonetheless civil society organisations are a critical player in supporting democratic forces, defending civic space and protecting vulnerable groups including forcibly displaced populations.

For smaller organisations who don't receive SPA funding, the pooled funds present both opportunities and challenges to establishing linkages and coherence to address forced displacement. While the DERF is a clear asset to all organisations without a HUM Lot grant when crises strike, there is a continuity gap in the pooled fund set-up for working in protracted crises or recovery/transitional contexts, where humanitarian needs persist, but the initial emergency has passed. In contrast, the SPA modality is very flexible, and allows for continuity in response from humanitarian emergencies to recovery/transition in a protracted crisis.

Lot HUM and Lot CIV include strategic service delivery. While nexus approaches are frequently seen in response to complex, multi-sectoral issues, a HD nexus approach is at the core of the strategic service delivery of the SPA modality. Strategic service delivery has shown its relevance in contexts where there is a need to shift between humanitarian aid and development activities, and in the latter case to work with a rights based approach as well as to back track to humanitarian aid when required by a challenging political context.

Recommendations
2. Organisations should engage with nexus approaches in volatile contexts, even though development and peace engagements in such contexts are challenging. This requires in-depth political economy analysis, agility/adaptiveness, and realistic expectations or milestones in the short term.

3. Strategic service delivery is a key mechanism that enhances a nexus approach in fragile and conflict affected situations – the mechanism is an HD approach, which opens perspectives to assess potential entry points for peace. **MFA** should pay particular attention to the value of this mechanism and potentially expand its application.

5. VULNERABILITY & MARGINALISATION

The chapter analyses how the CSOs work with the linkages and the value addition of pairing LNOB and nexus approaches. The ToR requests the evaluation *to address how interventions have contributed to addressing vulnerability and marginalisation using interlinkages with nexus approaches* (EQ4). The evaluation has taken Leave No One Behind (LNOB) as the overall framing of vulnerability and marginalisation, as the SPA Information Note (2017) places LNOB at the core of the Danish strategy, involving the inclusion of vulnerable groups[23].

5.1. Conceptual linkages

Assessment of strategic level documents and project documentation available show that LNOB is at the core of the work of organisations through their strong Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) focus. A HRBA is seen to further the principle of LNOB, and SPA applicants proposing engagements in areas affected by conflict and disasters were expected to have a strong focus on protection of, and support to the most vulnerable groups.

> **Leaving No One Behind.** The SPA requirement follows the UN SDG adoption text which notes that LNOB not only entails reaching the poorest of the poor but requires combating discrimination and its root causes. A major cause of people being left behind is persistent forms of discrimination, including gender discrimination, which leaves individuals, families and whole communities marginalised and excluded.
> In fragile and conflict affected situations LNOB is challenged in implementation because military actions, siege, occupations etc., make it difficult to reach vulnerable and marginalised populations. A LNOB lens aims to address such perceptions and realities.
> The DAC Recommendation on HDP makes a strong link between the triple nexus and LNOB, stating that a triple nexus approach is expected to reduce the *"humanitarian caseload, and ensuring that we meet our collective pledge of "leaving no-one behind."*

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23   Vulnerability – identifying the people in society with the biggest burdens – and marginalisation – identifying the people who face structural exclusion.

Some organisations make the link between LNOB and nexus approaches explicitly in their documentation, for others it is more implicit. ActionAid DK, in their "humanitarian signature", discusses the relationship between nexus and HRBA, and how to address different vulnerabilities, discrimination and rights. Oxfam IBIS notes that LNOB is at the core of the nexus. LNOB is not mentioned specifically by CARE, but there is a strong focus on poverty together with the inclusion of vulnerable and marginalised groups in their nexus approaches.

It was reported in interviews with partner organisations that they are comfortable with the LNOB terminology, because it is a universally agreed concept of the 2030 Agenda, and when using this language they are not necessarily challenged by the perception that they are taking sides in a conflict when they address vulnerability and marginalisation or peace.

5.2. Project level linkages

It is in the DNA of all organisations to include vulnerable and marginalised groups in their projects, and establishing a connection between LNOB and nexus approaches is seen by organisations as a positive development that strengthen engagements. Nexus approaches were said to make organisations reflect more on their activities and how they can stay relevant in volatile situations, and build more coherence between activities, as well as funding mechanisms. A representative from one organisation with a strong development mandate said that access to *"Lot HUM has given a bigger and better understanding of the different groups that are marginalised and vulnerable, in line with LNOB."* Field staff from another organisation said that they call their work in linking LNOB and nexus *"a nexus human rights approach, because we automatically think more about "tying things together".*

On the negative side there were reflections in interviews with regard to the difficulties encountered in conflict settings of addressing, especially, marginalisation and peace aspects – irrespective of nexus approaches. This related to powerholders favouring their own groups (ethnically affiliated for example) and suppressing or ignoring others (such as political opposition groups) and lack of leverage to address such practices. In such situations there seems to be a need for strong linkages between the CSOs, the Danish embassies and MFA in Copenhagen, and not least broader alliances at different levels, where the actors use different channels and entry points. For Denmark the country strategic frameworks seem to be a relevant platform in this regard (see Section 7.4).

FIGURE 8: WAYS NEXUS APPROACHES AND LNOB ARE SEEN TO REINFORCE ONE ANOTHER

Nexus approaches strengthen LNOB:

- More comprehensive analysis and reflection (viewpoint of organisations)

- Risks and advantages of different instruments (viewpoint of organisations)

- Nexus approach makes organisations focus on longer term support and sustainability (beneficiaries)

- Better quality of assistance (partners and beneficiaries)

LNOB strengthens nexus approaches:

- Brings rights into a nexus approach (organisations and partners).

- Empower communities to identify their own most vulnerable and marginalised groups (partners).

- HDP terminology carries a risk of peace work being seen to be political, LNOB language is a 'safer space' (partners)

- Awareness raising on women's rights (partners, organisations).

5.3. Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusion

The linkages between nexus approaches and addressing LNOB are mutually strengthening, and there is a positive correlation, which has the potential to enhance the quality of outcomes. LNOB is well consolidated in organisations' work with a Human Rights Based Approach. Using LNOB as a conceptual label can open doors, while using peace language may be seen as political and therefore closes doors for CSOs in fragile and conflict affected situations.

Recommendation

4. Organisations should develop the LNOB and nexus linkages further and advocate with partners and donors in relevant contexts to strengthen and integrate LNOB in nexus approaches, as this is seen as strengthening the focus on vulnerability and marginalisation.

6. CHANGING RISK PATTERNS AND EXTREME EVENTS

This chapter assesses if and how organisations' projects/programmes *strengthen the adaptiveness of communities and institutions in response to changing risk patterns and extreme events, such as climate change and disaster risk reduction (DRR)* (EQ5). The chapter also looks into adaptation of approaches using COVID-19 responses as a case in point of an extreme event.

6.1. Adapting to changing risk patterns

Climate change and natural disasters exacerbate conflict related fragilities and the combination poses severe threats to households and communities' ability to manage their situation. Most of the assessed interventions focus on resilience building of communities to manage their environment in disaster prone contexts (as discussed in Section 3.1). Disaster risk reduction (DRR) is at the core of how approaches to prepare and address disasters have developed over time. These projects are strong examples of HD approaches.

> **Resilience – an outcome of nexus approaches.** Organisations have elaborate and systematic methodologies for building resilience in fragile and disaster prone contexts, ActionAid for example uses an approach with steps of "absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities". Other organisations have adopted similar systematic approaches, which aim to reduce humanitarian needs and strengthen long term development.
>
> The interventions prepare communities for early warning and early action, and strengthen mitigation and response systems at community and local authority level. Projects also assist impacted populations to negotiate for their rights and access to resources and services, facilitate linkages to services and climate information, climate adaptation planning (at community level), secure resilience through climate-sensitive agriculture and entrepreneurship.

Most organisations and their partners have a long-term presence in the project locations and are therefore knowledgeable of the relationships between people and environment. Projects show deep understanding of local contexts and activities are designed with people-centred and inclusive approaches. They mainstream HRBA and include vulnerable and marginalised groups (discussed in Chapter 5). Projects are

multidimensional and some projects strengthen conflict prevention capacities and platforms for conflict mitigation at community level, and thereby tap into an HDP approach (analysed in Section 6.2).

The SPA modality has flexibility and because of the close collaboration between the Danish CSOs, partners and beneficiaries, activities are flexible and adapted to be able to fit into changing contexts. This was confirmed by interviews with beneficiaries and other stakeholders in the locations visited. Some interview respondents in the field also found that the focus on climate-related activities by the Danish CSOs has encouraged local partners to prioritise environmental issues. The private sector was, as noted by a few interview respondents, seen to be taking up climate responsive actions based on advocacy and good examples.

6.2. Platforms for conflict prevention and mitigation

There is emphasis across the projects on development of democratic spaces, i.e., neutral and trusted forums for local conflict mitigation between different interest groups in relation to resource use. The focus is both on communities and local authorities (rights holders and duty bearers). DCA, Oxfam IBIS, Caritas, the Danish Red Cross, CARE and Mission East and their partners emphasise the link between community resilience and conflict mitigation, and how reduced levels of conflicts strengthen economic opportunities.

> **Peace as linked to climate change and resource scarcity** is an emergent and relevant area of triple nexus implementation. Some organisations have shared their latest projects which explicitly take the step from a HD approach to a HDP approach. Both Danish Red Cross and CARE projects in the Sahel are such examples. Other organisations presented evidence of the evolution in their projects which specifically link disaster risk reduction and climate change with peace, using a triple nexus approach terminology.

The project examples are in general seen as an HD nexus approach, although the project activities include elements that can be interpreted as peace activities and thereby, in essence, a HDP nexus approach: i.e. conflict prevention, sustaining peace and peacebuilding activities (as also discussed in Section 3.2). One barrier for extending activities to include peace related activities in projects is the inclusion of IDPs, because this may not be in the interest of local communities nor local governments. An example of such resistance was found in the Philippines where DIB works with IDPs and informal settlements. They have initiated dialogues in order to bring the different stakeholders together on risk analysis in order to promote inclusion, although this a difficult process because of local resistance.

6.3. Extreme event - COVID 19

COVID-19 has since early 2020 challenged both organisations, their partners and beneficiary communities. The evaluation included questions relating to COVID-19 as an example of an extreme event and how the SPA modality and the pooled funds could be used as a flexible and fast instrument to address the pandemic. All organisations and partners responding to the question noted that the funding modalities were sufficiently flexible to allow organisations to reroute funds and start supportive actions towards protective gear, campaigns etc., i.e., meeting immediate needs to reduce the health impact of the pandemic. Organisations and partners noted that other donors also showed goodwill – nonetheless there were delays in allowing their funds to be redirected as quickly as SPA funds. In fact, the SPA funding was so flexible that organisations did not need to have asked for permission from MFA according to one respondent.

The pandemic has helped bring the relevance of nexus programming to the forefront in some organisations. It was also mentioned that COVID-19 has instilled a sense of the importance of localisation in the international CSO community, and IASC has, for example, released an Interim Guidance on Localisation and the COVID-19 response, in close collaboration with several civil society organisation. The guidance highlights the importance of the availability of local expertise and capacity.

COVID-19 has increased vulnerabilities and marginalisation, and organisations reported that their existing work and HRBA approaches have been important for including vulnerable and marginalised groups. The pandemic has also shown the need, in a crisis situation, to link and bring coherence between immediate needs and longer-term broader development issues. A community in Mali noted that they had not had any COVID-19 cases themselves (immediate crisis), but that the local economy had been heavily affected, impacting on their income, and that services had been interrupted (schooling, health), all of which pointed to the need for long-term recovery support.

In Gaza, ActionAid DK had interesting experiences, where local authorities started to see youth as credible actors to work with, and the need to conduct a vulnerability assessment to identify potential vulnerability and marginalisation in the community. The authorities *"had not thought of the diverse needs of the people who came to the COVID centres and extra services to elderly".*

6.4. Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusion

Organisations in the sample have solid experiences and expertise with localised, resilience-oriented programming that supports the adaptiveness of communities and institutions in the face of changing risk patterns. DRR and climate change projects are at the core of the work of SPA organisations. The SPA modality has been instrumental for organisations to build their expertise and deliver projects that address resource issues, strengthen resilience, build community level capacity and enhance livelihoods. These projects have, over time, consolidated a double nexus approach and organisations report outcome level results (often without using nexus language).

The flexibility of the SPA modality has granted organisations the opportunity to adapt interventions in the wake of COVID-19. Both the organisations and their partners have quickly taken actions to address impacts the pandemic. Internationally it has been found that COVID-19 has been an enabler in the direction of more localisation and nexus approaches.

Recommendation

5. Organisations could further strengthen the sustainability of their HD projects through the addition of a peacebuilding perspective. This is important in light of the increasing importance of local level institutions and platforms for conflict mitigation as climate change and disasters, and related violent conflicts become more visible, and felt more frequently. Such institutions and platforms for conflict mitigation offer opportunities for more distinct peace outputs and outcomes.

7. ORGANISATION, PARTNERSHIPS, LOCALISATION & COORDINATION

This chapter discusses issues related to organisation, partnerships, localisation and coordination including with Danish representations (embassies). The focus of analysis is on these topics in relation to nexus. The chapter also briefly touches on financing, especially for pooled funds. The ToR requests an assessment of: *the extent to which organisations are organised internally, with partners, and with coordination mechanisms and other joint processes to formulate and deliver on collective outcomes? (EQ7), as well as coordination with Danish embassies (part of EQ 3).*

7.1. Organisation and nexus approaches

Organisations participating in the evaluation were asked how big a part of their portfolio they would call nexus projects. The ballpark figure across the board was one third. The portfolio composition is influenced by where the organisations work (in stable or crisis contexts), how different donor funding is structured (is a nexus approach allowed, encouraged, or discouraged), and if there are opportunities to work longer term. Nexus approaches are difficult when humanitarian needs are overwhelming and recurring, and only humanitarian organisations may have access in certain crisis situations.

In the survey conducted by the evaluation, all organisations, with the exception of the smaller ones, noted that they have geographically-based units/teams or thematic units/teams that include both humanitarian and development activities both at HQ and in country offices, and that such set-ups facilitate a nexus approach. As regards organisations that have traditionally been either focusing on development (such as ActionAid DK and Oxfam IBIS), or on humanitarian action (DRC), the SPA funding has opened up opportunities to become multi-mandated. These organisations have, according to capacity reviews (conducted by MFA in 2019), had teething problems with bringing a nexus approach into the mainstream organisational structure. ActionAid DK works closely with the humanitarian team in the global ActionAid Federation, while the small humanitarian team in ActionAid DK is not yet well integrated internally and is currently demonstrating – through the power of examples – the complementarity and value added of nexus approaches to the organisation's objectives. Likewise, DRC has a small civil society team that aims to make its mark on the durable solutions approaches, bringing in rights and empowerment issues to the core of the organisation's objectives (and platforms). Oxfam IBIS, DCA

and DRC have dedicated peacebuilding functions in their organisations. Other organisations may have peacebuilding experts among their staff, but this was not communicated in the interview or the survey.

One criticism of the SPA is the MFA requirement for development-mandated organisations to seek Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) certification, which for some has been seen as requiring a huge effort with limited immediate gain, especially for organisations that only to a limited extent engage in protracted crisis contexts and have limited levels of humanitarian engagement. It has also been argued that the CHS certification standards perpetuate existing silos between instruments[24]. The evaluation is of the view that, from the perspective of organisations engaging in nexus approaches, the CHS requirement enables the development of nexus engagement skills and application in crisis contexts and gives a competence overall for working in crisis contexts.

7.2. Funding for nexus approaches

Some SPA organisations are multi-mandated and have had both a sizeable development and humanitarian portfolio prior to SPA. These include DCA, the Danish Red Cross, ADRA, and Caritas. For others, the SPA has opened up an opportunity for engaging with a new instrument. DRC received Lot CIV funding for the first time, and Oxfam IBIS and ActionAid DK received Lot HUM funding. The funding windows of the SPA have facilitated a broader engagement base for organisations and a possibility to build new expertise. The split funding window approach to the SPA (with Lot CIV and Lot HUM) has been criticised by the organisations, and in the new SPA funding guidelines (2021) the window approach has been scrapped.

> **OSPA funding for nexus approaches.** SPA funding from Lot HUM and Lot CIV comes with their own financial reporting requirements and while analysis and planning is complementary (also with other donor funding), the separate requirements are said to push nexus work back into silos. A vast majority of the SPA organisations' nexus activities were said to be sourced in development funding (87%), general humanitarian funding (67%) or flexible/unallocated funding (53%). There is limited co-funding. Other donors have very strict reporting requirements which also complicates the packaging of nexus activities from different donor sources.

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24   Feet on the Ground Survey p. 7 https://www.dac-csoreferencegroup.com/post/feet-on-the-ground-csos-weigh-in-the-challenges-of-the-triple-nexus-approach

The pooled funding modalities do not allow for activities outside of their very specific objective (see Box 3). This impedes the organisations from scaling up on cross-cutting activities and joined-up funding, planning and reporting as they do not know from where funding can be sourced. DIB's work in the Philippines provided an example of how the smaller Danish civil society organisations face barriers when working with a nexus approach.

BOX 3: ALIGNING FUNDING STREAMS

Prior to the 2018 MFA Review, the DERF guidelines allowed for projects to engage in slightly longer life-saving and stabilisation interventions (so-called Modality 2), with a duration of up to nine months. The new guidelines cater exclusively to early action and life-saving activities in emergencies, so activities related to recovery or to address humanitarian needs in the context of a protracted crisis fall outside this scope. The CSF, on the other hand, is not intended to address humanitarian needs, and therefore smaller organisations working to link responses face time-consuming and complicated procedures to apply for, and secure funding.

7.3. Partnerships for collective outcomes

Partnerships in nexus approaches speak to organisations working to their comparative advantage in joined-up and complementary efforts towards delivering on collective outcomes. A nexus approach does not mean an organisation must be *trilingual* i.e. being able to cover all aspects of an HDP approach. Working across the nexus means recognising the organisation's weaknesses (and strengths), and the strengths of other actors, and working collaboratively, for example in consortia.

Working to comparative advantages. CARE, DRC and Save the Children work together on an EUTF project in the Sahel region. Save the Children work on early recovery, CARE works on livelihoods, and DRC works on peacebuilding and conflict resolution: "We work in the same communities with the same target groups, with different topics. And it is really nexus, because we work from early recovery to longer-term development".

Traditionally there is a major difference between humanitarian and development actors in the way they work in partnerships. Danish CSOs with a development mandate always implement through partners, and emphasise capacity building. Humanitarian actors may in many cases take on implementation responsibility themselves. When they work with local organisations as delivery agents, generally there is less focus on capacity building and on securing the necessary budget allocations

for this[25]. Moreover, humanitarian organisations traditionally work with short funding cycles. This complicates partnerships to some degree, especially because many donors maintain short funding cycles for humanitarian actors. The SPA modality has been conducive to bridge silos internally within the organisations, and partnerships between different organisations in other Danida funding and EU funding was also reported to the evaluation.

Partnering to cover the 'peace' part of nexus. Internationally, there are interesting partnerships emerging, where dual mandated organisations recognise the need for peacebuilding expertise. For example, the World Food Programme (WFP) established a partnership with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) to assess WFPs contribution to- or unwanted negative impacts on peace. Read more <u>here.</u>

Partnering with peacebuilding expertise seems to be new to many humanitarian and development organisations. A number of the Danish organisations included in the evaluation are currently engaging in partnerships with peacebuilding organisations. From the point of view of promoting an HDP approach, it is important to build stronger linkages to the peacebuilding communities in order to strengthen outcomes.

7.4. Linking to MFA at country level

The organisations interviewed were requested to describe their relationship with the Danish embassies at country level. All respondents said that there were regular and important exchanges (before COVID-19) of mutual benefit. Although in the Philippines and in Sudan, where MFA has no bilateral programmes, there is less contact for obvious reasons. However, no MFA presence does not necessarily mean no contact. In Plan Børnefonden's efforts to respond to the political crisis in Zimbabwe, there was active sparring and exchange with MFA, including for the latter to draw on Plan Børnefonden's analyses of the situation on the ground.

Conversations often centre on HD nexus related issues in as far as the SPA organisations work in areas of crisis, natural disasters/climate change, or forced displacement. Some of the larger organisations play key roles in MFA financed regional programmes such as the Horn of Africa, in Sahel and in MENA, which are financed outside the SPA. With MFA moving towards country strategic frameworks, closer linkages are expected, which are likely to be of mutual benefit because the

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25   Reference is made to Thematic Evaluation 2, Section 4, Table 2 and following explanatory section.

CSOs work at community and local authority levels and are building considerable and valuable experience in nexus approaches.

However, currently there seems to be a gap in the dialogue and collaboration on the HDP nexus. For example, Danish representations in some countries work with international partners with strong peace expertise, more than with the Danish CSOs. With the increased focus on fragile and conflict affected regions set out in the strategy, *The World We Share,* the collaboration on peace dimensions between SPA partners and the Danish representation seems relevant, if and when such expertise is available. Some civil society organisations have joined forces and established networks, including the on-going (MFA-financed) work in Global Focus on the triple nexus and on peacebuilding in order to generate shared learning and strengthen capacities in this area.

7.5. Localisation and coordination

Localisation

Both the Danish CSOs and their partners pointed to the importance of localisation in nexus approaches[26]. Partners were in particular emphasising the point that nexus approaches already are at the core of local organisations' approach, because silos and demarcations that exist for INGOs are less prominent for local actors and crisis-affected populations[27]. One example is the Danish CSOs work under the leadership of the Office of Prime Minister in Uganda.

> **The Localisation in nexus approaches.** OECD/DAC Recommendation aligns the triple nexus approach to the localisation agenda. It calls for opportunities to be given to affected populations to identify needs, risks and vulnerabilities; prioritization of funding to local organisations present in crisis areas; and incentives for international actors to invest in local capacities. The link between localisation and nexus approaches should also be seen as a coherence issue and as the key to address vulnerabilities and marginalisation.

The point is also reaffirmed in DCA's study on the intersections between local faith actors' practices vis-à-vis the triple nexus, which notes that they operationalize the triple nexus approach by *"responding to the needs of the communities they are located within and serve, which transcend*

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26   Global Focus. (2021). *Experience of Danish CSOs working with the operationalization of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus.*

27   Barakat, S., & Milton, S. (2020). *Localisation Across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus.* Journal of Peacebuilding & Development, 15(2): pp.147-163.

humanitarian-development-peace silos. Community needs are rarely isolated within one categorization or another"[28]. Consequently, it may be easier to work across different instruments at this level, but other parts of the nexus, such as coordination or collective outcome setting are more difficult. Localisation is not limited to humanitarian or development actors. In the past decade, peacebuilding has taken a 'local turn', moving away from internationally driven or national level peacebuilding programmes that miss local understandings of peace and which disempower local actors that may have valuable contributions to peace.

> **Localisation and peacebuilding.** There are many good examples in international practice of how local understandings of peace can inform activities, including working with local peace builders and involvement of communities for example through use of the Everyday Peace Indicators (EPI). EPI is a bottom-up approach that allows communities themselves to define what daily markers or indicators they use to measure peace in their own communities. Oxfam IBIS is using the EPI approach in their work in Uganda, with plans to expand to other country contexts as well. Local understandings of peace can serve to demystify what peace is in each context, and thereby also which entry points exist for engaging on peace.

Coordination

CSOs can play a key role in coordination fora, but noted that they often are side-lined and not included in established coordination mechanisms such as the cluster system, and development cooperation sector groups. In Uganda, coordination is well organised around durable solutions, but often the local partners of international organisations are excluded. Some of the Danish CSOs who are part of larger conglomerates or federation, and therefore have leverage, have taken steps to address the problem of local under-representation in the humanitarian coordination structures: *'we have called for more space for local actors [in coordination spaces]".* The underrepresentation of local partners limits the possibilities for CSOs in general to formulate and work towards collective outcomes and to implement a nexus approach because the local organisations, i.e. the implementers, are not part of coordination discussions. Furthermore, the finding that local actors tend to work less in siloes (as noted above with regard to the DCA study), means that their inclusion in coordination fora may help reduce the siloes that exist in coordination structures.

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28   Wolf, F. and O. Wilkinson. (2019) *The Triple Nexus, Localization, and Local Faith Actors: The intersections between faith, humanitarian response, development, and peace.* Washington DC; Copenhagen: Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities; DanChurchAid. p. 17.

7.6. Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

The Danish CSOs participating in the evaluation all have organisational set-ups that are suited to working through nexus approaches. Some larger organisations still work to reduce internal silos between their humanitarian and development units/departments. Overall there appears to be no major organisational barriers for nexus work.

Partnerships in nexus approaches centre on organisations working to their comparative advantage in joined-up and complementary efforts towards collective outcomes. Working across the nexus does not mean one organisation must be "trilingual". Partnering with organisations that have strong peacebuilding skills was not seen in the sample, with the exception of a few partnerships with local peacebuilding organisations. Thus, the evaluation finds that organisations approach building up nexus expertise as an internal process rather than looking outward to potential partnerships.

It is a requirement from the MFA that CSOs should have a CHS certification, which in spite of organisations' criticism because of the high costs related to certification, has been enabling for development of nexus engagement skills and application of nexus approaches. The CHS gives a competence overall for working in crisis contexts.

Exchanges between Danish CSOs and Danish representations often centre on nexus related approaches in as far as the SPA organisations work in countries/regions of fragility and conflict. With the MFA's introduction of *country strategic frameworks,* closer relations are expected and these will be of mutual benefit. There is limited engagement around peace related issues, which is an area for improvement given the increasing Danish focus on fragile and conflict affected situations.

Danish CSOs emphasise localisation, and therefore contribute considerably to 'grounding' of nexus approaches. However, local actors are often left out of the fora where coordination takes place. Several Danish CSOs are aware of this issue, and are working to ensure that local actors and conflict-affected communities have a greater involvement throughout the entire project cycle – from analysis and planning to implementation and evaluation.

Recommendations

6. Organisations and the MFA should strengthen dialogue in order to build joint knowledge on nexus approaches, and in particular on *peace within* a triple nexus approach. This is important as Denmark's engagement overall moves more to fragile and conflict affected contexts and in relation to the Denmark's candidature for the Security Council.

7. In order to achieve people-centred collective outcomes, **organisations** and their international and local partners should strengthen their advocacy roles and engagements for interlinkages and coherence between different engagements and different actors in coordination mechanisms.

8. RESULTS AND SUSTAINABILITY OF NEXUS APPROACHES

The chapter presents ongoing efforts to document, report on nexus approaches and ways of measuring the added value. The chapter also discusses sustainability issues as requested by the ToR[29]. The evaluation asks if *'sustainable results have been achieved when working across nexus approaches?'* (EQ2).

8.1. Nexus and results

Approaches to nexus results

Looking at the issue of results in the project sample, in interviews and in organisations' Annual Reports, there are different views and approaches to how nexus approaches can be included in results. There are both conceptual reflections, as well as attempts of "isolating" nexus approaches and qualitative statements on nexus results.

Measuring results of nexus approaches. The question of results of nexus approaches raises the complex problem of attribution – can results, or positive or negative changes to results, be attributed to 'the nexus'? And what does 'the nexus' mean in this regard – is it a discourse, is it interlinkages between instruments, the approach itself, or is it collective outcomes – and not least, is it possible to draw out outcomes of a nexus approach at a horizontal level across programmes?

There are no easy answers to these questions, and therefore the international community has invested in joint learning efforts through the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Working Group 4 on Humanitarian Development Collaboration to capture and disseminate good practices of HDP collaboration, including building a shared understanding of what 'success' looks like in a nexus approach.

In interviews all organisations noted the value of nexus approaches and said that a nexus approach strengthens their attention to the need for comprehensive analysis, joint planning and collective outcomes, and the value and risks of different instruments, and in this

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29   The evaluation does not assess the organisations' monitoring systems and re-sults measurement more generally.

way adds quality to projects and their outcomes.
The assumption is then that a nexus approach, if well understood and if there are opportunities in the context, is likely to enhance results.

Organisations gave narrative examples of how nexus approaches strengthen existing outcomes for example in the areas of durable solutions, building of community resilience, DRR and climate change. Qualitative approaches such as 'outcome harvesting' and 'change stories' that describe social change seem to be one way of capturing the additionality of nexus approaches. In Uganda, Oxfam IBIS has used a 'change story' approach to monitor standalone peace interventions that aim at foregrounding women's voices in peace processes. In Palestine, ActionAid DK has adopted an outcome harvesting approach to describe a multi-dimensional programme aimed at fostering youth and women's participation.

Operationalisation of results measurement

The evaluation did not come across collective outcomes being reported in the results frameworks of the sample. This may be happening in the new generation of projects that some organisations shared with the evaluation. A yardstick of the complications of measuring results of nexus approaches is that the adherents to the OECD/DAC Recommendations have themselves embarked on a larger five-year exercise to learn about good practices of achieving collective outcomes and monitoring of results. Several organisations also make attempts to "measure" the degree to which nexus approaches are being operationalised across their portfolio, to see how well they are living up to commitments (see for example Oxfam IBIS in Box 4).

BOX 4: OXFAM IBIS' PROPOSITION OF A NEXUS MARKER

In Oxfam IBIS' policy brief (draft version) on the nexus, the organisation puts forward the idea of a nexus marker, similar to the ones OECD/DAC uses to track members' gender equality and climate programming, which based on context, needs, vulnerabilities, and availability of resources, could help determine what degree of nexus alignment is called for (e.g. 5-10% nexus-aligned, 15-35%, or over 35%). Alternatively, the organisation considers adapting the IASC RG4 Nexus Indicators for Covid-19[30] to be used more generally across other interventions, in a form of traffic light system of nexus-alignment of programming measuring, for example, the degree of collective outcome setting.

In the same vein, Mission East has marked 'nexus outcomes' of their programme in their results framework, indicating in which outcomes they bridge humanitarian and development instruments. Their results

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30   IASC Results Group 4. (2020). *Nexus indicators for Covid-19 – A set of process indicators to support complementarity in planning processes.*

framework includes "Livelihoods Security (as a Nexus outcome)", where they measure "strengthened and diversified livelihoods through support to primary and alternative livelihood activities"[31]. Caritas has, in the period covered by the evaluation, had a nexus approach as the key theme in the annual consultation with MFA, reporting on a study on lessons learned and best practices in their programmes. CARE operates with a nexus component in four countries with specific nexus indicators.

The indicators mainly show general outputs and impacts of activities, but they marked where CARE sees nexus approaches in their interventions. Nonetheless, the nexus application is vague, as is seen in the following example: *'Nexus impact indicator: # and % of people of all genders that have actively engaged in reducing their vulnerabilities to the shocks that affect them.'* A more clear indicator of a nexus approach is seen in CARE's indicators on nexus-related processes, such as interlinkages, coherence and complementarities in the approach taken. However, these do not shed light on value addition of a nexus approach. As such, most organisations continue to struggle with the task of isolating the additionality of a nexus approach, and the "measuring" attempts are not necessarily successful in this regard.

8.2. Sustainability related to nexus approaches

All organisations and their partners were asked whether nexus approaches made projects more sustainable. Some did not have a concrete answer, but those who replied said that there was a direct correspondence between adopting nexus approaches and enhancing sustainability. For several interviewees, 'sustainability' was taken to refer to the survival of project investments, structures or outcomes after the end of the project's lifecycle. However, fragile and conflict affected situations were pointed to as a main barrier to sustainability beyond the project level.

Sustainability in very fragile contexts is difficult. Participants in an inclusive education project in Sudan noted that sustainability is complicated in a protracted conflict situation and requires interlinked institutions and sustainable funding: "The project is designed to be sustainable through creating social bodies, as partners, and involvement of official and social efforts to support the project in the long run. But sustainability requires many conditions. It needs to link humanitarian efforts with development goals and peace building in their broad understanding, but this is the most complicated issue under this situation of no war no peace."

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31   Mission East, Annual Reports, 2018 and 2019.

A local committee in a project in Mali found that the project they were part of would be sustainable, because it has *"strong synergy" created between the different actors* [CSO partners, local authorities, state technical services and beneficiary groups]". For these beneficiaries, joined-up development which makes people aware of their rights has more of a sustainable future than humanitarian assistance. This could be interpreted to reflect that many interviewees come from situations where earlier interventions seem to have had primarily a humanitarian focus, and a nexus approach has been felt by local partners and beneficiaries to contribute to longer term investment thinking and potential sustainability.

The view of other beneficiaries interviewed on nexus and sustainability was summed up by one interviewee in Uganda: *'Better to have a hook than a fish.'.* Refugee self-reliance, in this context, is the end goal, and (as discussed in Section 4.1) inclusion of peace activities between host communities and refugees in Uganda has taken strides towards improving the self-reliance of refugees, as it has improved access to land. Sustainability, in this view, is a characteristic of joined-up humanitarian-development-peace programmes.

8.3. Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusion
Organisations understand the challenges of measuring results attributed to a nexus approach, and internal reflections led organisations to test different approaches. Some organisations now include a nexus dimension into their results frameworks, a nexus marker is one way to determine which projects in a portfolio and narrative approaches are also seen as valuable to show the additionality of a nexus approach.

The results achieved by the organisations at this point in time is, by and large, outputs and outcomes achieved by tested approaches of projects in crisis contexts – without necessarily showing a nexus dimension.

Recommendation
8. The organisations should continue to systematise and aggregate learning gained from introduction of nexus markers, and a combination of existing indicators and narrative/qualitative approaches that spell out the nexus interlinkages. It is important to include a focus on peace and conflict variables in order to show the potential value or unintended negative consequences of nexus approaches. Such monitoring will also be valuable for the overall monitoring of results of *The World We Share,* as well as feed into the international workstream related to the OECD/DAC Recommendation.